

SATA

Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance

Scottish Charity No SC027600

Better Transport Access

ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014



Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA)

Annual Report 2013-14

1. Introduction

The chairman and committee members (charity trustees) have much pleasure in presenting their annual report for the year ending 31 March 2014.

SATA is an unincorporated association founded in 1995 and registered as a charity in Scotland. It brings together individuals and groups whose aim is to work for the provision of accessible transport as a basic right for everyone. This report outlines its concerns and activities over the year to the Annual General Meeting on 17th September 2014

2. Membership

The membership of SATA is made up of individuals and representatives from a mix of voluntary, statutory and commercial organisations, including many groups of disabled people, local authorities, national agencies and transport operators. The total number of members at 31st March 2014 was 85 made up 50 corporate bodies and 35 individuals. These are listed in the Appendix.

Membership is based on the payment of an annual subscription unless waived by the Management Committee, the rates to be agreed at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting.

All members are invited to 'full' and 'open' meetings and receive copies of agenda, minutes and other papers. Between meetings they are kept abreast of new developments. Numbers 11 and 12 of the newsletter 'SATA News' were sent to members in September 2013 and April 2014. They are posted on the website.

3. Full and Open Meetings of Members

SATA's constitution says that meetings of SATA members should be held not less than three times a year. Following the AGM on 25th September, a meeting was held at the Forth Valley Sensory Centre at Camelot, Falkirk on 7th November, one at the SPT Consort House headquarters in Glasgow on 12th February and one at Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey, Stirling on 14th May..

Agenda items have included information exchange and feedback from other meetings and conferences. The following gave presentations:

November: Emma Taylor on the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games

February: Alex Scott on SPT's MyBus service

May: James Linklater and Fiona Anderson on Serco's North Link Ferries services

4. Management Committee and Office Bearers

SATA is governed by an annually elected Management Committee of members acting as trustees. It met on the mornings of members meetings on dates given above. An 'Away Day' was held at the Quaker Meeting House in Glasgow on 26th February 2014.

At the AGM in September, Douglas Gilroy was elected as Chairman, Terry Robinson as Vice Chairman, Mike Harrison as Secretary and John Ballantine as Treasurer. The following were elected as Committee Members: Amanda Burt, John MacDonald, Rod Murchison, Alan Rees, Jim McKay, Terry Barlow. Pauline Nolan was co-opted at the February meeting. Frances Simpson was re-appointed as Meetings Organiser/Minute Secretary and Alan Rees was re-appointed as Assistant Secretary. Brian Masson continued as Development Worker under the DPULO project (see below).

Sub groups to consider matters to do with different transport modes were continued and it was also decided to support the establishment of regional groups.

5. SATA Achievement Awards

The second SATA Achievement Awards ceremony took place at the AGM in Edinburgh on 25th September. Awards were presented by Dennis Robertson MSP to Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey and *in absentia* to Peter Carrol, an Aberdeenshire taxi driver. A Special Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Alan Rees MBE.

6. DPULO Project

The project was started in April 2013 with a grant of £29,250 from the Facilitation Fund provided by the Office of Disability Issue under its Strengthening Disabled Persons' User Led Organisations (DPULO) programme. It is due to continue until September 2014. A large part of the funds was to pay a monthly fee to a Development Worker and Brian Masson was appointed after interview. The objects of the project are to:

- increase and engage new members to sustainable levels
- improve SATA's database of information and improve dissemination
- review and stimulate research into transport accessibility/inaccessibility.

The main focus in the first three months was on recruiting new members and collecting data. Over 750 organisations were contacted across the voluntary sector, local authorities and bus, train, taxis and ferry operators. Three press releases were circulated to over 45 Scottish publications. Survey Monkey questionnaires were sent to transport operators, community transport organisations, voluntary groups, local authorities and SATA members.

The initial response from members was encouraging with many expressing a willingness to get involved in the development of the organisation. It is important to use the wealth of local knowledge, experience and contacts that exists and that Brian's research reflects the wide range of needs across Scotland. With this in mind, a further SATA members' travel survey was circulated and Brian attended local meetings in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Fort William, Inverness, Glasgow and Aviemore to promote the project and get feedback on issues.

A workshop for members was held on 16th April 2014 at the Quaker Meeting House, Glasgow under the title 'Developing and Strengthening SATA - the future?'

Whilst the outreach to SATA members has been greatly enhanced and the database of information and potential members substantially improved, the aim of increasing the number of subscribing members has not been realised. Although some new members have joined, others have not renewed. Expectations may have been too high and the current squeeze on corporate and individual finances is undoubtedly a factor. However, there is now a much clearer understanding of the need for on-going efforts to attract more resources which will continue to involve members, provide them with the information and services they need and so make an impact on transport accessibility for everyone wherever they live.

7. Campaigns

7.1 Welfare benefits and concessions

SATA members continued to support Inclusion Scotland and other disability organisations in a campaign to mitigate the impact of changes arising from the UK Coalition Government's 'Welfare Benefits Reform' measures, including the loss of travel concessions.

7.2 Government advisory bodies.

In 2011 the UK Coalition Government announced its intention to abolish the **Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC)** as part of its desire to reduce the number of quangos. The enabling legislation was passed as the Public Bodies Act. However, after consultations and strong opposition from disability groups including SATA, the government relented but made a decision to reconstitute the committee with a smaller secretariat and reduced membership, including the regrettable loss of regular Scottish representation from the **Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)** which had been most ably carried out by John Ballantine (SATA's Treasurer) since 2009. John retired as a member of DPTAC at the end of December 2013. Amongst five new appointees to MACS in October 2013 were SATA members Hussein Patwa and Keith Robertson.

In February 2012 SATA asked the Scottish Government's Transport Minister Keith Brown to set up a **Scottish Bus and Coach Access Forum** along the lines of the Scottish Rail Accessibility Forum and the Roads for All Forum which are convened by Transport Scotland and on which SATA is represented. SATA's proposal was rejected and a **'Bus Stakeholders' Group'** was subsequently formed charged by the Minister to look at strategic issues for the industry in Scotland. SATA has not been invited to send a representative, although the Community Transport Association (CTA), the Bus Users' Scotland (BUS) and the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) are now all represented.

8. Events

8.1 Conferences

SATA has not itself organised a major conference this year but its members have attended other events including the annual Scottish Community Transport Conference and SCVO's 'The Gathering'.

8.2. The Edinburgh tram

Scotland's only, long-awaited and controversial tram finally came into service in Edinburgh on 31st May 2014. Since responding to the first consultation on accessibility was undertaken in January 2009, SATA members have been involved to ensure that it meets the required standard. Before too long it is hoped that the route can be extended beyond its present single track between the city centre and the airport. Holders of the Scotland-wide Entitlement Card who are not Edinburgh residents are also disappointed that they are unable use their cards to travel free when visiting the city, however the Scotland wide blind person's free concessionary travel card (irrespective of issuing authority) will be accepted on the trams.

8.3 Mystery shopping

In January 2014 SATA was approached by a third party who asked it to arrange for a number of mystery shopping train journeys to be undertaken by disabled people on its behalf and this was agreed. SATA made a profit of £874.30 and financial information related to the project is shown in Note 2 to the Accounts.

9. Issues

9.1 The 'SEStran Thistle Assistance Card'

In 2011 the South East of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran), working with its Equalities group on which SATA is represented, produced a version of the original Thistle Card for use in its area. The distribution of the card increased from a total of 6,891 in the financial year 2012-2013 to 8,352 in 2013-2014, demonstrating that initial stocks distributed to bus companies etc are depleting. This suggests a positive uptake by end-users.

The Regional Transport Partnership for the Tayside region, 'Tactran', has launched its version of the card. There has also been a request for the scheme to expand to taxis. However as taxi travel is a one-to-one experience anyway, it was thought the cost and logistics of training taxi drivers would be unnecessary.

9.2 Equality Duty and transport

In February 2014 David Hunter of Not for Profit Planning produced a report entitled '**Transport for all?**' which was an analysis of the statutory equality outcomes of Scottish local Councils. His survey showed that many authorities had not made the link between their new equality duties and their policies for transport services. There was some good practice and it was hoped that by publishing the report it would be widely adopted. A copy is posted on the SATA website.

9.3 Accessible ferries

After consultation, the Scottish Government produced its draft Ferries Plan in December 2011 and it included a proposal to establish an **Accessibility Improvement Plan**. SATA welcomes this initiative and will monitor progress. As well as government money, other contributions are to be invited. It will run for an initial two years starting in April 2014 and will be administered by Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) with a management group including a representative from the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland. Full details have still to emerge.

9.4 Responsible parking

Since 2009 SATA has been a member of an alliance led by Living Streets and Guide Dogs Scotland supporting the **Responsible Parking (Scotland) Bill**. The private member's bill sets out to provide local authorities with increased powers to control parking on pavements and dropped kerbs. In October 2013 responsibility for it was taken on by **Sandra White MSP** and it finally came before the Scottish Parliament in October 2012 with the support of 58 MSPs.

However difficulties have since been encountered regarding interpretations as to the powers of the Scottish Parliament vis-à-vis Westminster. So an alternative approach is now being considered to find a way to proceed, the aim being to have a bill into the Scottish Parliament in 2014 and Living Streets has one drafted by Dundas and Wilson.

9.5 Rail travel

Representatives of First ScotRail, Network Rail, East Coast Trains and Transport Scotland have attended SATA meetings and reported on developments. Members were regularly up-dated on projects funded under the '**Access for All**' programme and other small scheme and minor work improvements at stations, such as lifts and step-free access, signage and customer information systems.

Invitation to Tender documents for the next **ScotRail franchise** were quite specific and demanding. Several items about which SATA members regularly complain were required in the specifications. All of the five preferred bidders asked to meet with SATA representatives. They were Abellio, Arriva, First ScotRail, MTR and National Express. It now remains to be seen if the company that gains the contract will implement the suggested improvements.

Extensive work to upgrade Edinburgh's **Waverley and Haymarket stations** has been completed and in general will greatly improve access. But poor consultation with users has been a concern and further measures are needed such as better signage and drop-off facilities.

9.6 Accessible Transport Strategy and Action Plan for Scotland

SATA has drafted Scotland's first accessible transport strategy and action plan. Looking forward to the period 2015-2020, it is modelled on similar plans elsewhere in the UK and Europe. With the strong support of SATA members, it will be distributed more widely in the autumn of 2014 and with a view to being adopted by a wide range of transport agencies

and operators.

10. Representation on other bodies

SATA is formally represented on the following:

Access for All Forum

Cross Party Group on Disability

Living Streets

Inclusion Scotland

Roads for All Forum

Scottish Rail Accessibility Forum

Scottish Disability Equality Forum

SEStran Equalities Forum

Transform Scotland

11. Finance

SATA's financial year runs from April to March.

Receipts

Regular income is almost wholly derived from annual subscriptions from individual and corporate members. However, a grant of £29,250 was received from the Office of Disability Issues under its Strengthening DPULO programme and ran throughout the financial year. It is due to end in September 2014.

Total receipts for the year were £20,600 including funds for the DPULO project. Other sources of income are bank interest, and individual and corporate donations.

Receipts from membership subscriptions increased from £1,302 in 2012-13 to £1,638 in 2013-14. Subscribing members at 31st March 2014 are listed in the Appendix.

Payments

SATA has no paid staff or office and so currently funds are only required to meet the cost of meetings and the expenses of office bearers and other members working in a voluntary capacity. However, under the DPULO project fees and expenses were paid to the Development Worker and there were other costs.

Total payments for the year were £20,525

Balance

Over the financial year receipts exceeded payments by £76, leaving a balance of £4,397. This compared to a balance of £4,321 at the start of the year.

A separate Financial Statement for the 12 months to 31st March 2014 is available.

Business Plan

The SATA Business Plan sets out its key objectives and the resources needed to meet them. During the year the Management Committee kept the plan under review, recognising the constraints of limited capacity and resources beyond the grant for the DPULO project.

It resolved to make further efforts to increase membership which provides the main regular source of income, whilst keeping firm control on expenditure and seeking new sources of funding.

12. Appreciation

The Office Bearers and Management Committee members record their appreciation to all who support SATA and contribute to its activities. They look forward to this continuing and developing in the coming year to strengthen the organisation and achieve its aims.

For copies of this report, to ask for it in different formats, or to make comments on it, please contact:

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Tel: 0131 448 0930 E-mail: secretary@scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk

Appendix

Subscribing members at 31st March 2014

Corporate Members

Aberdeen Action on Disability
Aberdeen City Council
Aberdeen Shopmobility
Allied Vehicles
Alzheimer Scotland
Badenoch & Strathspey Disability
Access Panel
Badenoch & Strathspey Transport
Company
Calmac Ferries Limited
Community Transport Association UK
Cowal Access Panel
Cumnock & Doon Valley Access Panel
Deafblind Scotland
DG Voice
Disability West Lothian
Dumfries & Galloway Accessible
Transport Forum
Dumfries & Galloway Over 50s Forum
Dundee City Council
East Coast Mainline Train Company
Ecas
ENABLE Scotland
First Group Holdings
First ScotRail Trains Ltd
FOCUS
Glasgow Centre for Independent Living
Glasgow Taxis
Guide Dogs Scotland
HcL, Handicabs (Lothian)
Highland Council
Inclusion Scotland
Inverness Access Committee
LCIL
Living Streets
Lochaber Transport Forum
Lothian Community Transport Services
Midlothian Council
Oban & District Access Panel
Prestonfield Neighbourhood Project

Quarriers
Scottish Council on Deafness
Scottish Disability Equality Forum
Scottish Taxi Federation
SEAG
Serco North Link Ferries
Shopmobility Highland
South Edinburgh Amenities Group
(SEAG)
Stirling Area Access Panel
The Stroke Association
TRANSform Scotland
Visibility Scotland
West Dumbartonshire Partnership

Individual Members

Ballantine, John
Barlow, Terry
Bedwell, Gill
Burt, Amanda
Campbell, Jean
Cross, Kathryn
Cross, Paul
Dewar, Derek
Flett, Stanley (Hon. Life Member)
Gilroy, Douglas (Hon. Life Member)
Gilroy, Margaret
Goodall, Jan
Harrison, Mike
Hush, Douglas
Killin, Maggie (Hon. Life Member)
Logan, Mac
Macrae, William
McGuigan, Pat
McLeod, Roderick
Masson, Brian
Masson, Elizabeth
Meadows, Trevor
Murchison, Rod
Patullo, Thomas
Patwa, Hussein

Porter, Tom (Hon. Member)
Ramussen, Mary
Rees, Alan MBE (Hon. Life Member)
Ritchie, Alison
Ritchie, James

Robertson, Ann
Robinson, Terry
Scougal, Elaine
Webster, Jim
Williams, Muriel (Hon. Life Member)

**For details about SATA including meeting dates, newsletter, proceedings,
links and how to join,
visit our website ~
www.scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk**