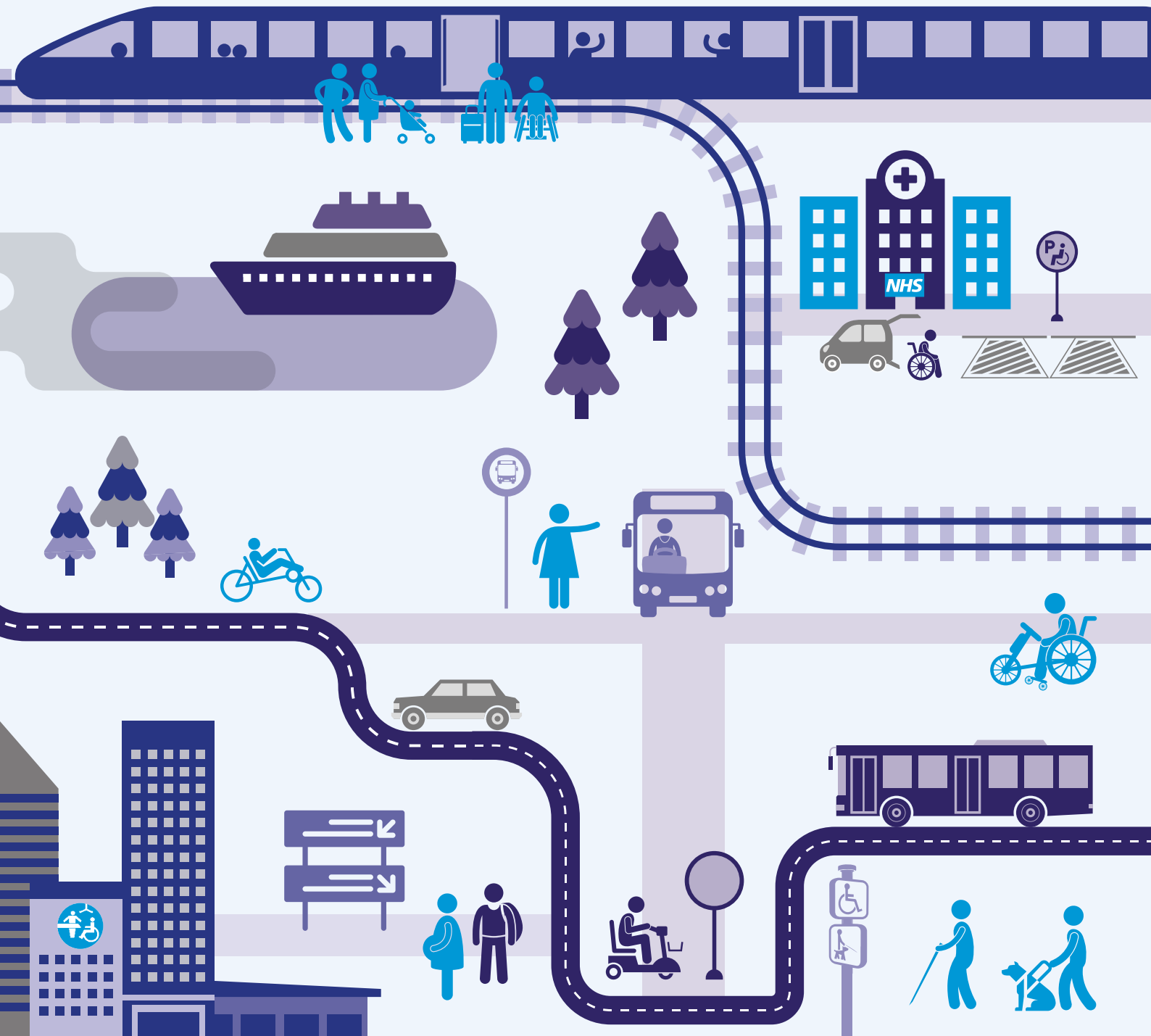
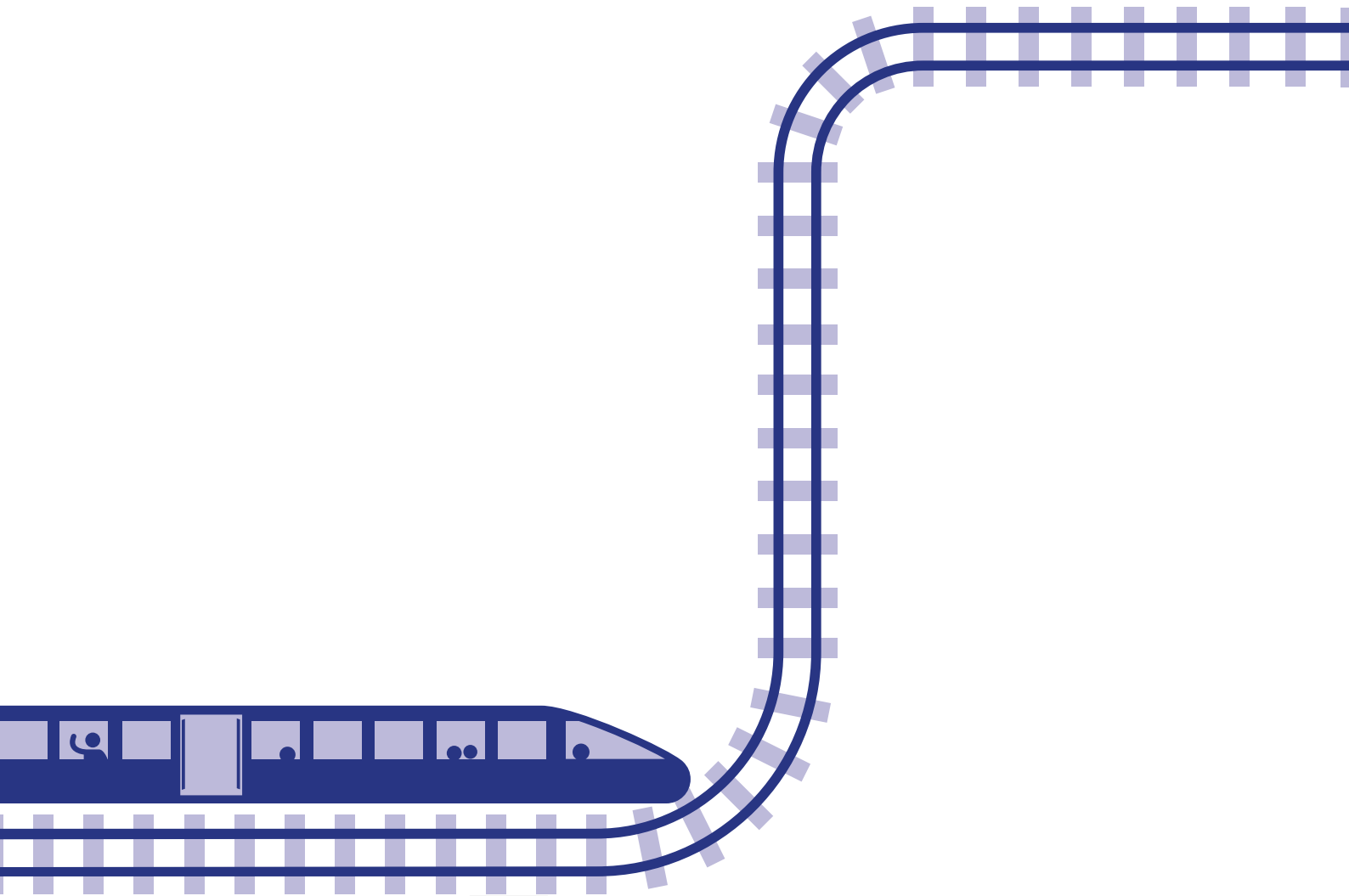
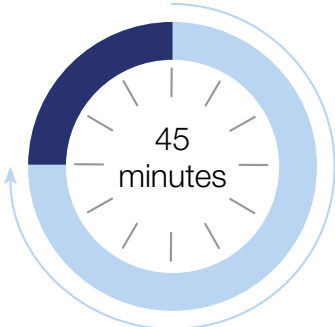


# Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland Annual Report 2023-2024





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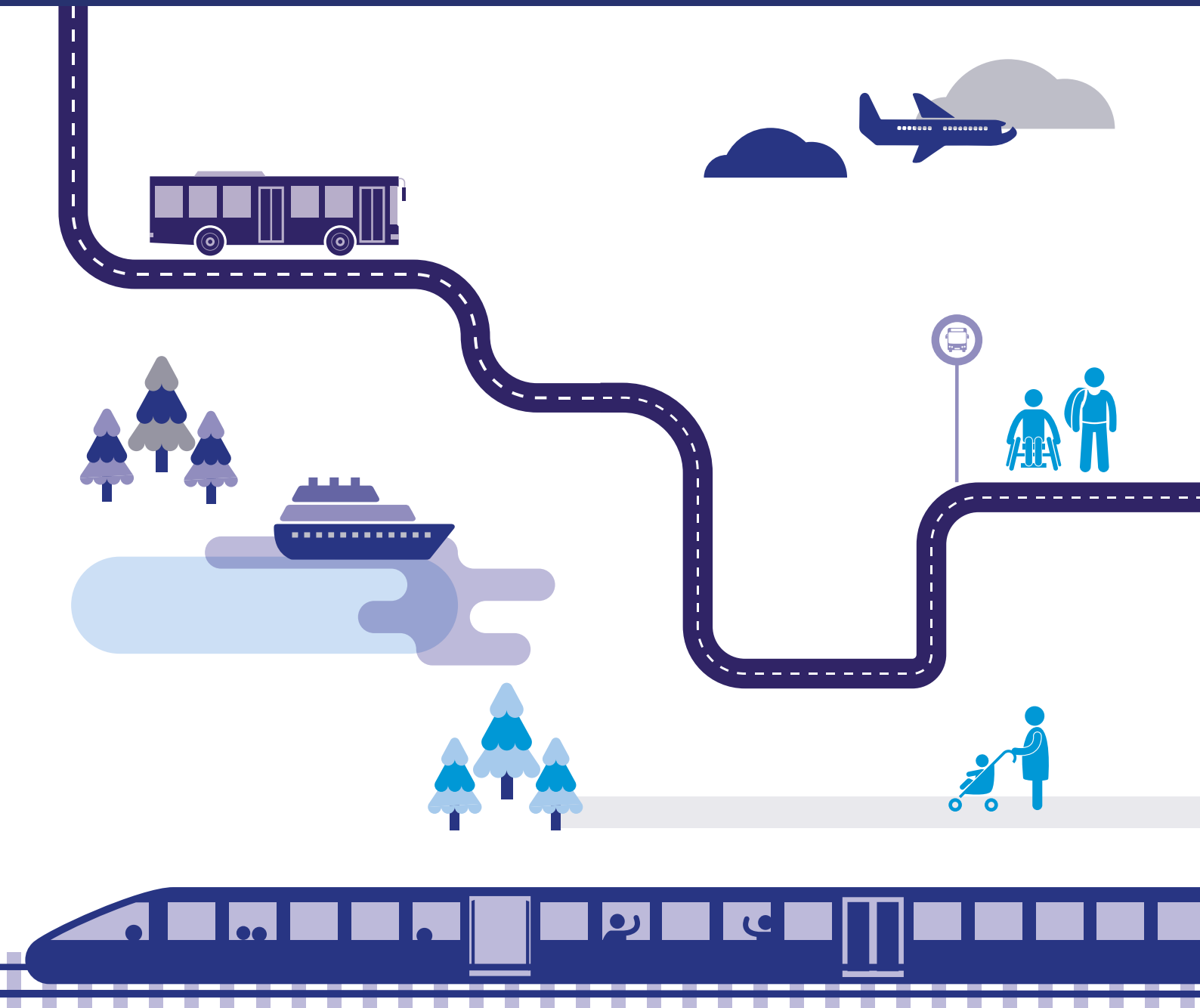


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# 1

## Convener's Introduction



## Convener's Introduction

I write this year's Annual Report in the knowledge that this will be my last opportunity to update you in this way as my eight years with MACS ends in December 2024.

They say the "last mile" of the journey can be the hardest and I look on my last year as that last mile and want to make sure I get my team home safe and in an outstanding position for the next stage of their journey, with a new leader and fresh ideas.

This has been another busy year for my team as three of our long serving members stood down and we welcomed four new members into the fold. Our succession plan and approach to recruitment ensured we minimised the loss of knowledge and experience by building in sufficient handover and mentoring time.

This year, and after several years of advocating and messaging, our approach was acknowledged with the focus on MACS Triple **A** Check (that public transport should be **A**vailable, **A**ccessible and **A**ffordable) in the [First Ministers Policy Prospectus](#) (A Fresh Start for Scotland) in April 2023, dropping into Programme for Government (PfG) in September 2023 and Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Net Zero and Just Transition and Minister for Transport's portfolios for sustained focus.

This is a very welcome development, and we hope it will strengthen the focus on how essential it is for our transport system to meet disabled people needs, particularly as we seek to switch (where we can) to more sustainable modes of travel whilst ensuring a just transition in our journey to net zero.

We are aware that many disabled people rely heavily on their car as their mobility aid, and we have been strong in our approach to ensure these needs are central to plans and strategies and to make sure disabled people are treated as individuals and are not inadvertently designed out. It is important that we can all get about and stay connected. We have continued to promote transport as an enabler of human rights.

We are hopeful that this increased focus on MACS Triple A check through the First Minister's Policy Prospectus, PfG, and across ministerial and government portfolios will, in turn, "close the mobility gap", thus reducing inequalities and helping to close the "Disability Employment Gap" by making it easier to travel to retain and seek employment.

Before moving into the body of this report I would like to thank my Team once again, a board of dedicated individuals who work tirelessly for our cause. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with my team and previous MACS members over the years and have learned so much from their sharing of knowledge, experiences and in the knowledge of their unwavering support over my two terms as Convener.

It is worth saying again that they really are a board of human right defenders who take every opportunity to speak up for the needs of disabled people, so no one is left behind.

I would like to thank our Sponsors from Transport Scotland's (TS) Transport Strategy and Analysis Directorate, the other policy teams within TS and the stakeholders we have engaged with this year. We are grateful for your time and contribution to help progress our valuable work. Thank you for working so productively with us to deliver much needed change.

I would also like to thank Scottish Government Minister's and in particular the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Fiona Hyslop MSP, for always having an "open door" to MACS and for being so receptive to our asks aimed at improving transport and travel for disabled people and older people. We have seen a few Cabinet and Ministerial changes this year and, during this, doors (and ears) have remained open.

The MACS journey continues, and we give you our commitment that our work will focus on the delivery of a transport system that is accessible, easy to use and affordable for all. We continue to advocate the need for a strengthened focus on pedestrian infrastructure, inclusive environments and tackling the barriers within the first and last mile of every journey. This approach will also assist with reducing social isolation and loneliness.

Our strengthened work-streams stand ready to work with you all.

We know that access and inclusion should "be a given" and can at times be an afterthought but I do believe with the work of MACS, and the strengthened focus from the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland, that we will see further improvements that will close the mobility gap and reduce inequalities. We all deserve no less!

I would like to sign off my final Annual Report by thanking you all once more for your support during my two terms as Convener of a Board that has been tasked with a demanding and crucial role, especially in challenging times, and particularly challenging for disabled people.

Yours Sincerely



**Linda Bamford**

National Convener

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)

During April 2023 to March 2024, MACS consisted of the Convener and up to 14 members. The committee members were:

Linda Bamford (Convener)

Simon Watkins (Vice Convener)

Anne MacLeod (appointed 2023)

Catherine Barile

Elliot Cooper

Joanne Devitt

Leslie Macinnes

Lynn Pilkington (appointed 2023)

Lynsey Shovlin

Michael Tornow

Naghat Ahmed

Nariese Whyte (appointed 2023)

Susan Fulton

Zara Todd (appointed 2023)

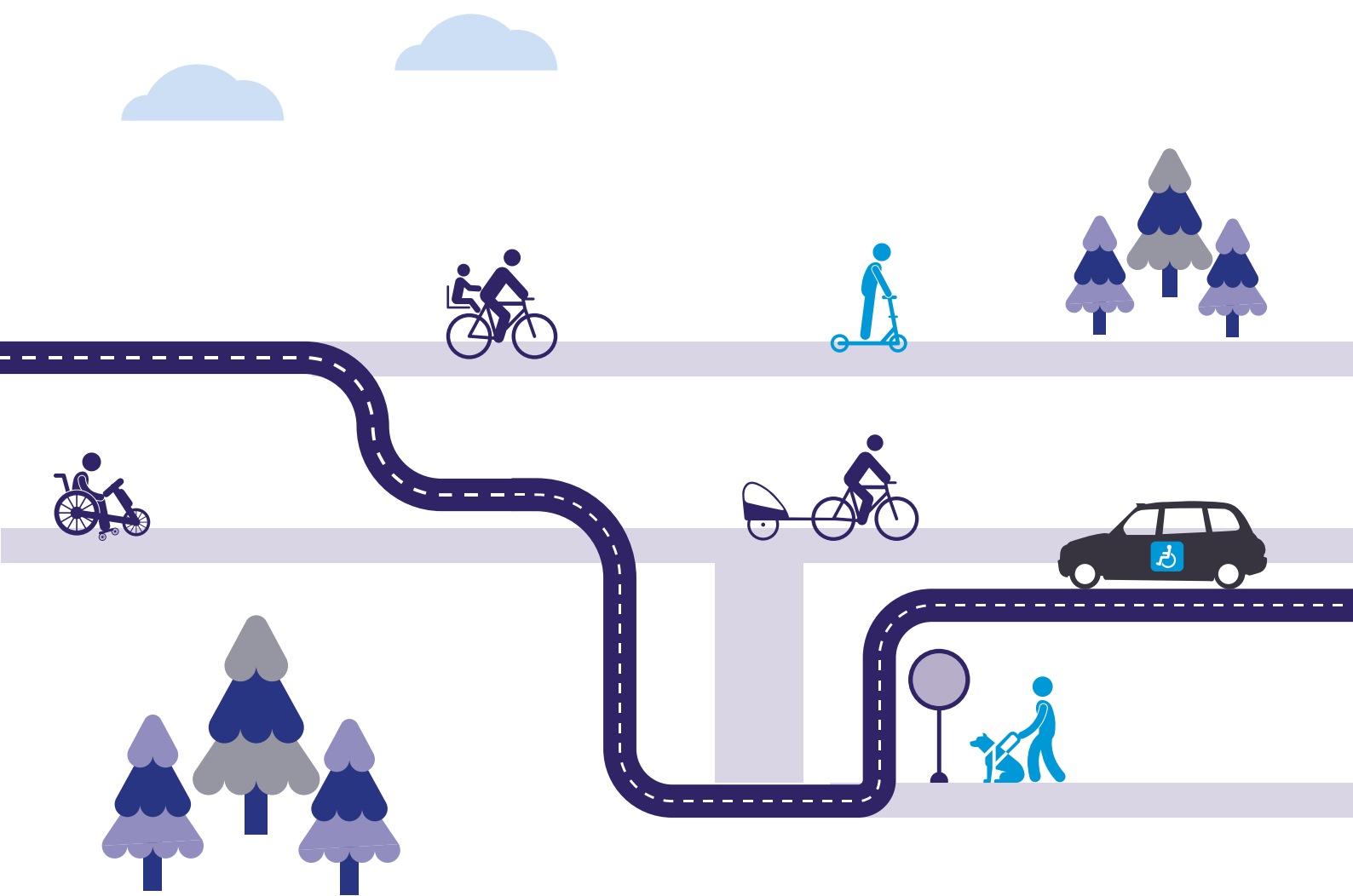
David Hunter (stepped down in 2023)

Hilary Stubbs (stepped down in 2023)

Graham Dunn (stepped down in 2024)

# 2

## How MACS Works





## How MACS Works

The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) is an advisory non-departmental public body. Within the founding legislation Scottish Ministers have defined the overall aim for MACS as:

“MACS consider such matters relating to the needs of disabled persons in connection with transport as the Committee think appropriate and give advice to Scottish Ministers.”

MACS Strategic Remit is:

- To give Scottish Ministers advice on aspects of policy, legislation, and practice affecting the travel needs of disabled people.
- To take account of the broad views and lived experiences of disabled people when giving advice.
- To encourage awareness amongst disabled people in Scotland of developments which affects their mobility, choices, and opportunities.
- To work closely with Scottish Government (SG) and ensure our work programme complements the work being undertaken by the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Committee (IMTAC), the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), the Scottish Human Rights Commission, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and other organisations, voluntary and statutory.
- To promote the travel needs of disabled people with designers including transport planners and operators so that these are fully considered in the development of vehicles and infrastructure and delivery of services.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our work against the above aims and objectives in improving travel opportunities for disabled people in Scotland.

In doing so, the Convener and Committee aim to ensure that MACS' policies and actions supports the wider strategic policies of Scottish Ministers. This aligns with the Framework Document between MACS and Transport Scotland (TS), our Sponsors.

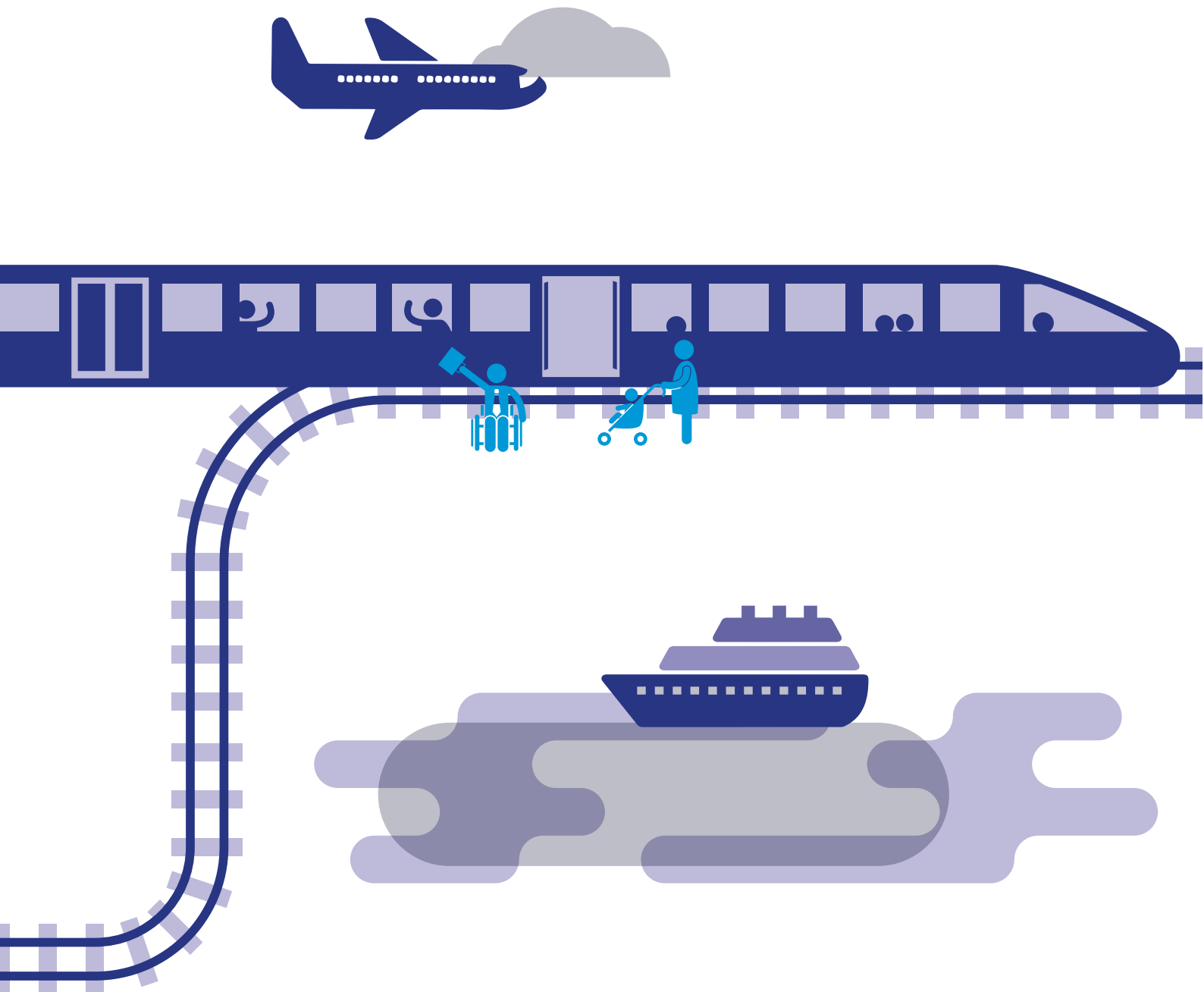
MACS continues to use workstreams with remits focussed on different modes of transport. Each workstream has a lead, with several other members supporting the work.

### MACS Vision

MACS believes in a Scotland without the barriers that isolate and exclude disabled people from making their choice of successful door-to-door journeys.

# 3

## MACS Five High Level Objectives



## MACS Five High Level Objectives

MACS has previously set out five high level objectives around which Committee activities are focussed. These objectives are:

**Objective One:** To build on the commitments in Programme for Government (PfG) to promote a fair, accessible and inclusive Scotland.

**Objective Two:** To work across Cabinet and Ministerial portfolios to ensure the need for an accessible transport system is recognised and cited as an enabler.

**Objective Three:** To ensure that the Scottish Government makes it clear that public bodies and local authorities have a duty to respect the legislation regulating improvements of the accessibility of public transport service provision and the surrounding infrastructures.

**Objective Four:** To advocate for engagement with MACS when developing or revising policy, plans or contracts by officials to gain expert advice and ensure accessibility is given a priority consideration. This includes using procurement and franchise opportunities when awarding contracts to promote accessibility in transport provisions.

**Objective Five:** To advocate for an effective and inclusive “just transition” in our review of the National Transport Strategy, the Accessible Travel Framework and supporting strategic plans and route maps. Our reviews will acknowledge progress, identify barriers and gaps, and make recommendations to assist with the delivery of these commitments as we make transport more accessible and sustainable.

# 4

## The Committee's Activities



## The Committee's Activities

### Objective One

**To build on the commitment in Programme for Government (PfG) to promote a fair, accessible and inclusive Scotland.**

During the year, the Convener produced briefings to support Ministerial request to ensure our areas of focus aligned with the First Minister's (FM) Policy Prospectus, Equality, Opportunity, Community – New Leadership, A Fresh Start and with the PfG Commitments announced in September 2023.

This publication was reviewed alongside the September 2023 PfG announcements to refresh MACS Work Plan for 2024-2025, developed at the November 2023 Scoping Day and agreed at the January 2024 Board Meeting.

To inform Committee activities and gain greater knowledge, the committee continued to observe, give evidence, and provide our views to specific Scottish Parliament (SP) Committee sessions such as discussion and evidence on the National Islands Plan; Transfer of Operations to ScotRail; and input to "A Modern and Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland."

The Transport to Health and Social Care Subgroup continued to meet with the Scottish Government Primary Care Directorate to discuss how MACS recommendations from the phase one work could be embedded in the NHS Recovery plan commitments from PfG. This work progressed to support the development of the Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan. The Subgroup also met with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) to discuss and remain engaged with their work in relation to the review of the scheduled care service.

The MACS Transport to Health and Social Care and Motability Subgroups met with the Highlands and Islands Regional Transport Partnership (HITrans) and Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (TACtrans).

HITrans – MACS received an update on the Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) project that HITrans are running, which includes Motability customers. Discussions and feedback were provided and covered how the project works, the scope, what are the intended outcomes and benefits, any risks and how is this being monitored.

TACtrans – MACS received an update on the MaaS project looking to improve transport planning and access to hospital/medical appointments. This was initially running to cover travelling to Ninewells Hospital. MACS discussion was focussed on the parameters of this project, i.e. how it works, benefits currently realised, and their thoughts from the project outcomes and benefits so far, including, if there was potential for the project to be rolled out to other sites.

MACS emphasised the importance of gathering monitoring and evaluation data, i.e. was there a reduction in missed appointments/did not attends, were waiting lists reducing? MACS also discussed how the app works and how easy it is to use/plan a journey, which transport providers are signposted within the app and how it accommodates booking using concessionary travel entitlements.

SEStrans – MACS Convener sits as a Non-Council Member on the Board of SEStrans RTP. This supports MACS influence in the region and ensuring the work and strategies have a strong focus on reducing inequalities and enhancing inclusion and accessibility. It also helps with MACS understanding of how RTPs work and link to the work of TS around the NTS and Local Authorities remits.

During this year MACS continued engaging with Sustrans Scotland (SS), meeting with the new Director and Deputy Director. These meetings presented opportunities to agree key areas of collaboration and engagement given the funding that is distributed from the Scottish Government via Transport Scotland to SS through PfG commitments on active travel.

Throughout the year, MACS continued to advocate the need for disabled people's voices and lived experience in SS projects from early design stage and in Equality Impact Assessments (EqlAs) that need to be undertaken early in the project planning/design stage to ensure disabled people's needs are planned and designed in from concept stage and not an afterthought.

MACS Convener met with Dr Ruth Wilson and Simone Piras (James Hutton Institute – Scotland) to discuss the findings from research around rural and islands transport and connectivity.

Following the 2023-2024 Programme for Government announcements, and linking to the First Minister's Policy Prospectus, a commitment was given to introduce a Rural Development Plan. MACS attended subsequent meetings to discuss participation in this work. It was pleasing to see that MACS had been included in the scoping rounds with a commitment to engage as the Plan develops. This work will carry forward into 2024-25.

In November 2023, the Convener attended the Scottish Parliament's first summit to mark the "International Day of Disabled People".

## Objective Two

**To work across Cabinet and Ministerial portfolios to ensure the need for an accessible transport system is recognised and cited as an enabler.**

MACS remit to give advice to Scottish Ministers is actualised through engagement with officials to inform policy and delivery.

The November 2023 “scoping day” provided an opportunity for the full committee to revisit the FM’s Policy Prospectus and PfG commitment to ensure our work remained current and supported wider ministerial objectives (part of MACS remit).

As part of the MACS planning cycle the committee gathered in November to review our work to date and to scope and assess emerging ministerial commitments and policies from Programme for Government and this year including our response to the First Minister’s Policy Prospectus. This session allowed us to discuss and sense check that our work plans and areas of engagement remain current and to agree where best to focus our finite resources for the following year, including identifying stakeholders to engage with to progress our work.

The Sponsor Team and Convener prepared briefing papers in advance to stimulate discussion and assist members with identifying key areas for engagement from various emerging policies and strategies. A summary and revised work plan was presented to MACS January 2024 Board meeting for discussion and agreement before being approved by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport in February.

### Ministerial Engagements

Earlier in 2023, MACS Transport to Health and Social Care Subgroup had a positive meeting with the then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf, MSP. The meeting focused on challenges around the delays in the SG Health Directorate, Primary Care Team, producing the delivery plan that was agreed would be used to progress MACS recommendations from our Phase One Work on Transport to Health and Social Care. Following this meeting, progress was seen through 2023/24 and joint working has been productive with the Health Directorate.

In June 2023 MACS met with the Minister for Transport (MfT), Fiona Hyslop MSP, within her first week in her new portfolio. This meeting helped the MfT to understand areas MACS were working on and allowed MACS to raise some areas of concern, such as the lack of data and performance measures to evidence progress on the Reducing Inequalities pillar of the National Transport Strategy and the progress of the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF).

In January 2024 MACS met again with Ms Hyslop, now as Cabinet Secretary for Transport, on the Accessible Travel Framework, and her priorities, to inform and discuss the development of the MACS work plan for 2024-25.

## Ministerial Correspondence

### **Fiona Hyslop MSP, Minister/Cabinet Secretary for Transport**

Regarding Mobility Centres in Scotland, MACS received correspondence from the Minister for Transport, confirming that because of the issues MACS had raised, officials had engaged with the Health Board Directors of Planning regarding the Driving Assessment Service and whether the current services are sufficient for the needs of patients.

This issue was raised with Jenni Minto, MSP, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health who has responsibility for the Service. The Minister for Transport requested that the Chief Operating Officer ensure that the review is conducted at pace and asked that officials update MACS on this review as it progresses.

This was also supported with the suggestion that this issue was included alongside the work in the Transport to Healthcare Delivery plan, to enable officials in Primary Care Directorate and Transport Scotland to provide further information to MACS as part of that programme of work at the regular meetings.

Further correspondence with the Minister for Transport related to the statutory review of the National Performance Framework (NPF) and the Pavements Parking prohibitions.

### **Shirley-Anne Somerville, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice**

MACS wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice in relation to mobility centres and to ask what the Scottish Government can do to influence Motability to curb the profiteering from disabled people's support payments.

Motability continue to make annual profits more than £1 billion and our position is that these excessive profits should be returned to customers who are being over charged for their Treasury subsidised lease. This ask aligns with the SG's commitment in the Child Poverty Delivery Plan (Fresh Start, Bright Future) and PfG announcements to use every lever at its disposal to reduce poverty and inequality.

Family groups with a disabled member as part of the household are one of the six priority groups in the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

## Other Notable Engagements

Naghat Ahmed attended the Cross-Party Group on Sustainable Transport in March 2024. This meeting discussed the future of micro mobility in Scotland and featured presentations from Jenny Box, the Deputy Director (e-cycles) of Cycling UK, Peter Eland, Technical and Policy Director of the Bicycle Association and Farr Out Deliveries. Focus was on e-bikes.

Anne Macleod attended the Cross-Party Group on Islands that focussed on the National Islands Plan review and the Islands Connectivity Plan.



## Objective Three

**To ensure that the Scottish Government makes it clear that public bodies and local authorities have a duty to respect the legislation regulating improvements of the accessibility of public transport service provision and the surrounding infrastructures.**

During various engagements MACS continued to message on objective three taking opportunities to remind stakeholders of this legislative requirement at the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) Steering Group meetings, with TS and SG officials during meetings and in consultation responses.

MACS responded to the DfT Consultation on “The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) 2000 Call for Evidence” – where areas of focus included:

- Coaches – including the adequacy of regulations both for passengers using wheelchair lifts and ambulant passengers.
- Small vehicles – under 22 seats being exempt from all PSVAR. MACS advocated that it is time to bring them into PSVAR (Note: for both coaches and small vehicles, this issue is likely to be more relevant to rural Scotland).
- “Ordinary” buses – MACS asked for clarification on the position regarding mobility scooters on buses as part of an individual’s mobility equipment. MACS also raised the issues that at least two wheelchair spaces should be provided, while also noting that this may have adverse impacts on availability of priority seating etcetera, but a debate is needed.
- MACS also asked that DfT take stock of (and end) all the continuing exemptions that have been permitted i.e. for rail replacement vehicles.

MACS Ferries and Aviation Workstream continued to attend several sessions at the invite of Transport Scotland’s Ferry Team to assist with the development of the Ferries Plan and the Islands Connectivity Plan. MACS advice in these engagements has always been taken “on board” and reflected in plans and strategies. Sessions this year included:

- Accessibility (physical, mental, digital)
- Community voice and transparency
- Infrastructure
- Capacity and Demand
- Accessibility (timetables, unplanned, essential travel)
- Integration

MACS also remained engaged with the Roads for All forum. Updates and discussions this year focused on pavement parking ban and enforcement; continuous footways, and floating bus stops. This activity will carry forward in the work plan for 2024-25.

The Roads for All Forum also facilitated further engagement with the Scottish Roadwork Commissioner (SRWC), who attended the forum this year for the first time. MACS view this as a positive development as it will provide opportunities for the disabled community to discuss the problem of roadworks – and what the SRWC can do about it directly.

Another achievement this year saw MACS joining the TS Aviation Accessibility Group. The first meeting was held this year, which allowed MACS to provide detail on the work on accessibility for air travel:

- MACS work with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to provide advice on “special assistance”, travelling with assistance dogs and developing a compensation system for lost or damaged mobility equipment.
- MACS engagements to advocate what is needed from a pre-notification service to support People with Reduced Mobility (PRM), across all airlines, including aligning with the Airline Accessibility Framework to improve customer experience. This needs to be end to end, including website designs and ease of use.
- MACS advocate that focus is placed on connecting airports to other sustainable transport modes, example – discussions with TS rail colleagues and the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) in relation to the fact that Prestwick also own Prestwick Rail Station and assistance and support services should include transferring from rail to the airport. Likewise for other airports such as Edinburgh and onto the bus or tram.
- Sharing good practice examples across airports (such as the lanyard schemes, support dogs and quiet routes through airports) and sharing good practice in passenger assistance between airports, ferries, and rail assistance services.
- Suggesting a four nations approach to glean best practice or innovation from across the UK

MACS will continue to engage with this forum to push for improvement for disabled people travelling by air.

## Objective Four

**To advocate for engagement with MACS when developing or revising policy, plans or contracts by officials to gain expert advice and ensure accessibility is given a priority consideration. This includes using procurement and franchise opportunities when awarding contracts to promote accessibility in transport provisions.**

During this year, the Sponsorship role for MACS was realigned and is now provided by TS Transport Strategy and Analysis (TS&A) Directorate. This transition allows MACS to tap into the wider resources of the TS&A Directorate, including in MACS activities to develop enhanced monitoring and evaluation methods and tools to measure the progress of the National Transport Strategy (NTS2), the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) and the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF).

The new Sponsor Team also assisted by actively seeking opportunities for MACS to be consulted early by TS policy teams, proactively approaching TS and SG officials to open doors for MACS in policy development or revision and when defining contract for procurement to promote accessibility from the off. This was a welcome development, which led to more targeted engagements earlier in the planning process, which in turn increased opportunities to influence policy design and development.

In conjunction with the Convener, MACS Sponsor initiated spotlight sessions at Board meetings inviting TS colleagues as guests to pitch their policy development and benefit from the opportunity of early scrutiny and for guests to get advice from the full committee. These spotlight sessions were a remarkable success and will continue into 2024-25.

MACS Planning and Strategy Workstream engaged with John Lauder (Deputy CEO of Sustrans and seconded to Scotland's Railways as Strategic Lead, Sustainable Travel to Stations Project, ScotRail) to inform the [Practitioners Guide to the Sustainable Travel to Stations Strategy](#). This strategy (published June 2023) focused on helping make it easy, convenient, and safe for most passengers to get to and from stations without a car. Our engagement was to ensure the needs of disabled people were central in this developing strategy, including concentrating on the pedestrian infrastructure, transport links and promoting inclusive active travel opportunities.

During this year, MACS Convener and Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel Workstream Lead engaged with TS Accessible Travel Team (and other key stakeholders) who had been working towards producing the consultation document on [Inclusive Design Guidance for Busy Streets](#). This non-statutory national guidance is being developed to support the premise that considering the needs of disabled people in all aspects of design will deliver environments that meet the needs of everyone.

Although the guidance focuses on the needs of disabled people, previous research identified that street design should consider the needs of everyone and should consider all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

This guidance document needed to be agreed in principle prior to public consultation. MACS Workstream Lead not only offered input into the guidance but also ensured that the full working group had a say to promote collaboration.

Some of the key points raised by MACS included asking what this guidance document delivered that the [Inclusive Mobility Guidance](#) did not, and how it would contribute to real world improvements. Our overall conclusion reflected a degree of disappointment, that after three years in production, the draft for consultation didn't say anything new or in our opinion add value with the potential to cause confusion by repeating sections of other guides (i.e. Departments for Transport's (DfT) Inclusive Mobility Guide) in a way that did not add clarity. MACS made the following asks to move the project forward:

- That the framing of the document and language used reflects the Social Model of Disability.
- The introduction to the guidance should clearly identify the benefits Inclusive Design Guidance for Busy Streets will deliver that the Inclusive Mobility Guidance doesn't.
- The introduction of the guidance needs to clearly articulate what the document is i.e. an inclusive design guide or an overview of the high-level principles for inclusive design.
- Areas of the guidance need more clarity and clearer measures, such as low flow and low speeds, carefully designed crossings etcetera or to be removed.

MACS were pleased to note that TS Accessible Travel Team accepted the advice and guidance by amending some sections of the document prior returning it to the working group for further discussions and agreement prior to sign off.

During this year MACS were represented at the Edinburgh Accessibility Commission (EAC) meetings. These meetings planned quarterly for 2023 and 2024. The EAC was formed to provide a forum to give independent advice to Edinburgh City Council on the challenges, opportunities and actions required to ensure the public streets and spaces are fully accessible to disabled people. As this was the first citywide accessibility commission MACS took the decision to join as intentions may be to have similar city-wide Commissions.

**Of Note:** MACS Board member Zara Todd is the independent Chair of EAC, and a MACS member also continues to sit on the Commission.

This year MACS Convener contributed to the work and the strategy development of the Scottish Rural and Islands Transport Community (SRITC) by sitting on the strategic advisory board and regular attendance at meetings and virtual café discussion.

This allowed MACS a dual role including: to hear about the current and emerging transport challenges faced by rural and islands communities, whilst providing the opportunity to steer their strategic plans, ensuring disabled people's needs remain central.

## Objective Five:

**To advocate for an effective and inclusive just transition in our review of the National Transport Strategy, the Accessible Travel Framework and supporting strategic plans and route maps. Our reviews will acknowledge progress, identify barriers and gaps, and make recommendations to assist with the delivery of these commitments as we make transport more accessible and sustainable.**

### National Transport Strategy

Engagement opportunities on the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) have been sparse since the change in set up of the Delivery Board in 2021/2022. MACS raised the need to re-establish a forum like the previous Transport Equalities Network. We are delighted and encouraged to see the establishment of a Transport Equality Group to provide advice to Transport Scotland officials and Ministers on equality and diversity-related issues relating to transport, and our engagement in this group will carry forward in work in 2024-25.

In December 2023, the Third Annual Delivery Plan for the NTS was published. As a committee MACS focused scrutiny and challenge remits to ensure disabled people's needs were not only acknowledged but opportunities were sought to speed up progress in key areas to ensure that policy outputs (including in sustainable and active travel and the journey to net zero) did not negatively impact on disabled people. MACS sought opportunities to boost improvements and pick up the pace of the much-needed change and the areas agreed were included in the [2024-25 work plan](#).

### Accessible Travel Framework (ATF)

During the year MACS played an active part in the Accessible Travel Framework Steering Group. Following updates at the spring meeting, MACS sought further engagement with Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Team during the Summer, including a Board spotlight session in July 2023.

This afforded time for TS's Accessible Travel Team to consider the [DES Evaluation Research Report](#) (work commissioned by TS to Disability Equality Scotland) to assess the progress of the ATF.

MACS noted and raised the risk that the ATF lacked clarity and direction and recommended the Framework should avoid duplication of the work of others, and should seek to add value to projects that were progressing under the scope of other TS policy teams (modal) or through stakeholders' actions such as being driven by Regional Transport Partnerships, by transport providers or by Local Authorities.

In December 2023 MACS provided additional advice to TS's Accessible Travel Team on the accountability and governance arrangements for the remainder of the framework's lifespan. Our advice was heavily based on the findings of the DES evaluation report as this was drawn from evidence available (limited data –

quantitative) and the views and experiences of disabled people (qualitative). MACS worked collaboratively with TS Accessible Travel Team with a specific focus on the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation report seeking consensus on how they could respond to address the issues raised and areas of concern, and this took place in Feb 2024.

These activities and the advice given to TS link directly to MACS scrutiny role and our role as a critical friend, as well as linking to the work plan and Objective Five.

MACS discussed the development of the ATF during meetings with the Minister for Transport in June 2023 and January 2024, highlighting the need for the scale and pace of the ATF to be picked up with clearer monitoring and evaluation of progress to build confidence within the disabled community (and with key stakeholders) that the intentions of the ATF would be delivered as it enters the last 2 years of the framework's lifespan.

It is of critical importance that our public transport system is fit for purpose and meets everyone's needs if we are to ensure no one is left behind on our journey to net zero. If we are to reduce the reliance on cars, we need to ensure our public transport system is Available, Accessible and Affordable for all. The Minister welcomed our insights and advice, agreeing to investigate this and respond.

In summary, MACS felt that the DES report needed to raise more directly the question of whether the ATF was any longer a suitable vehicle for guiding TS's work on making transport more accessible. MACS noted that a lot of the evidence (i.e. about taxis, clear pathways, etc) suggests that little or no progress was being made, even in the areas directly within the current ATF delivery plan. It was agreed (by all) that the report should raise this question directly and seek to remedy this position.

While it is a matter for TS, rather than DES or MACS, to decide if and how to continue the ATF. MACS recommendation remains that the Framework should take a more strategic, mainstreamed approach.

Considerable progress has been made and MACS welcome the efforts of the TS Accessible Travel Team and their open dialogue with Committee in our role as critical friend. This engagement will carry forward into the 2024-25 work plan.

## **A Just Transition in Transport**

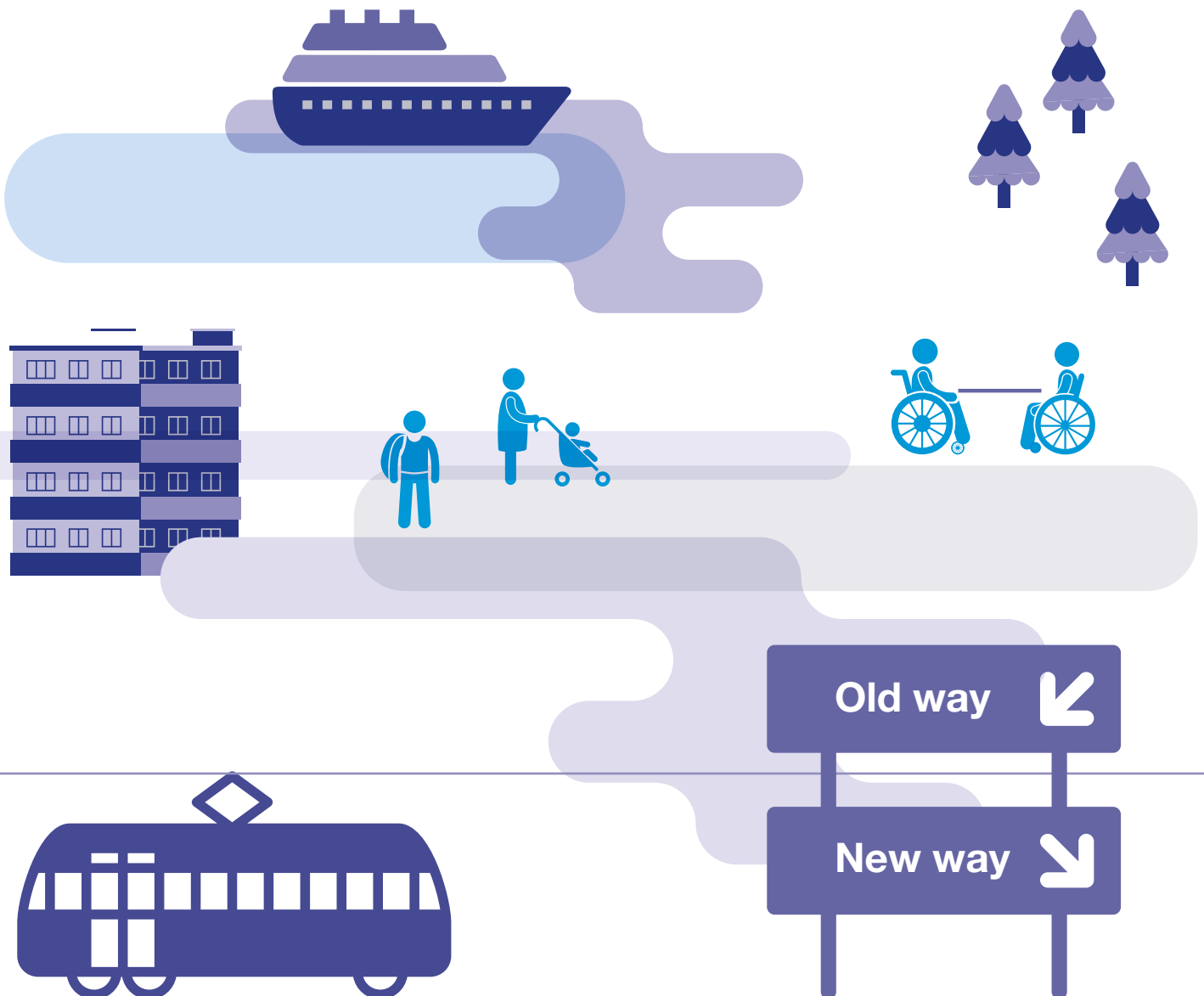
During this year MACS also attended meetings focusing on transport and mobility with the Just Transition Commission (JTC). MACS input contributed to their reports and recommendations to Scottish Ministers and should cement our productive future relationship with the JTC.

In June 2023, Scottish Government published their report: [Just Transition, Transport, A Discussion Paper](#). Following publication, Committee had discussion with our Sponsor Team and TS Transport Strategy and Analysis Directorate to agree where MACS could best feed into developing areas, including through the next stages and discussions this report prompts.



# 5

## Key Highlights by Workstream



## Key Highlights by Workstream

### Planning and Strategy

David Hunter co-led this workstream with Elliot Cooper. The Convener sharing responsibility. In November 2023 David completed his second term with MACS and Lynn Pilkington joined Elliot. This team also includes the other Workstream Leads ensuring connection across all areas of the committee's work, facilitating the sharing or knowledge, and preventing silo working. This year's main achievements include:

### Monitoring and Evaluation Subgroup

MACS was instrumental in establishing the need for routine and robust data collation and monitoring to help assess and evaluate the progress of transport strategies and frameworks. Transport Scotland's Analytical Team responded to our call and helped develop a group to work in this area and agree a data set that would help us to monitor and evidence how we reduce the mobility gap. The group consists of MACS Planning and Strategy Leads, TS Analytical Team, TS Accessible Travel Team, and Disability Equality Scotland (DES).

This work also focused on Transport and Disability – where MACS were again instrumental in establishing the need for routine monitoring and publication of data (annual reports such as Disability and Transport first published in 2019 and again in Oct 2023) that shows how disabled people travel; an essential complement to our work to reduce the mobility gap between non disabled people and disabled people.

The findings of these reports will assist with identifying not only the mobility gap but how we can improve the Availability, Accessibility and Affordability of transport as we look to shift, where possible, to more sustainable modes of travel on our just transition to Net Zero.

### Motability

MACS prepared briefings, engaged with Motability and Motability Operations, as well assigned Social Security directorate to update on the position we (and others) identified that has resulted in the inequity of Motability business model. MACS continued to place their business model and profiteering from disabled people under scrutiny at the request of disabled people and Motability customers in Scotland.

MACS believe that this made a significant contribution to Motability accepting the need to return some of the vast profits being made through the charging/lease mechanism to their customers (disabled people). There is more work to do here as Motability continues resist the level of change needed, which includes stopping the practice of charging disabled people more than needed for the government subsidised leases and automatically "clawing in" disabled people's support payment uplifts resulting in the accumulation of annual profits of over £1.2 billion routinely.

## **Mobility and Driving Assessment Centres**

MACS Motability Subgroup raised awareness of the need to explore the suitability, location and capacity of Mobility Centres and Driving Assessment Centres in Scotland. It is pleasing that the Minister for Transport (Ms. Hyslop) gave a commitment to respond and work across portfolios and directorates to explore this issue.

## **Bus, Taxis and Community Transport**

Graham Dunn and Lesley Macinnes were our Workstream Leads for Bus, Taxis and Community Transport supported by Joanne Devitt, Catherine Barile and Nariese Whyte. This year's main achievements include:

### **Development Day**

In April, our first development day of the year was themed around Bus. Guests included TS Bus Policy officials, Greig MacKay (Bus Users UK), Olivia Sklenar (Lothian Buses), Ralph Roberts (McGills Buses), Gordon Dickson and Donald Booth (SPT).

The day was an enormous success and allowed MACS to build and strengthen relationships with the guests. The day presented opportunities for us to inform guests of MACS work and allow them opportunities to hear directly what disabled people were raising as the barriers when attempting to use bus. More information on this themed Development Day can be found in Section Nine – Development Days.

### **Hate Crime Charter**

During this year MACS continued to work with Disability Equality Scotland, and Transport Scotland on Disability Hate Crime with a focus on public transport. Having previously contributed to the work on the Hate Crime Charter and the proposed hate crime awareness videos, this was continued with input on the revised hate crime training workshop facilitated by Disability Equality Scotland, Police Scotland, and British Transport Police.

The Hate Crime Charter takes an intersectional approach and aims to encourage transport providers, members of the public and other service providers to support a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime in Scotland's public transport network. This work underpins the Scottish Government's commitment to tackle hatred and prejudice in Scotland.

## Ferries and Aviation

Hilary Stubbs led the Ferries and Aviation Workstream until her second term ended in November 2023. Prior to this a period of succession planning allowed Anne MacLeod to pick up seamlessly from Hilary, tapping into MACS established networks for all things Ferries and Aviation, strengthened by Anne bringing her own existing networks, stakeholders and community voices and experiences to the fore in our work as an Islander. Anne is supported by Naghat Ahmed, Lynsey Shovlin, Zara Todd and the Convener, Linda Bamford. This year's main achievements include:

### Development Day

In August, our second development day of the year was themed on Ferries. Guests included TS Director of Ferries, the Repopulation and Islands Communities Policy Lead from the Islands Team Ferries and CALMAC's Transport Planning Manager.

The day was an immense success and allowed MACS to build and strengthen relationships with the guest speakers. More information on this themed Development Day can be found in Section Nine – Development Days.

### Islands Connectivity Plan

During this year MACS welcomed the approach from TS Ferries Team to be involved in the ten initial engagement sessions to inform the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP). These sessions were also attended by various key stakeholders and Regional Transport Partnerships and were used to identify the options that would be considered as part of the scoping work on the ICP. The workstream look forward to continuing to engage in this developing policy area to ensure the needs of disabled people are central as the various elements of the ICP develop.

Anne quickly defined her own approach to work-stream activities, which included early engagements with TS Ferries Team, responding to the draft Island's Connectivity Plan (ICP) Strategic Approach paper, receiving an updated draft of the Long-Term Plan for Vessels and Ports – (now Vessels and Ports Plan). These strategies and plans were undergoing final review and preparation for publication in 2024 and MACS input from an islander's experience and perspective was welcomed and greatly beneficial.

### Ferries Engagement

Anne also met with Transport Scotland's Ferries Strategy Programme Manager and some members of the Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services Team (CHFS3) at a stakeholders engagement event in Stornoway as well as accepting an invitation to attend a meeting with the Ferries Community Board to promote the work of MACS and discuss ways of working together to influence positive change which will benefit all ferry users.

## Rail

Simon Watkins is our Workstream Lead Rail supported by Michael Tornow, Catherine Barile, and Lynsey Shovlin. This year's main achievements include the following:

MACS advocated for improvements in the accessibility of rail travel (including the need for level boarding and accessible rail stations) and were pleased to hear ScotRail is now committed to their future rolling stock (other than Inter-City trains) being designed to allow level boarding. This is a huge move forward for an accessible railway in Scotland, and will eliminate issues with ramps etcetera, giving disabled passengers an enhanced level of independence (and indeed others, such as people with buggies and luggage).

MACS very much welcome this progress, and it is so good to see Scotland at the forefront of accessibility improvements.

Our rail workstream submitted a Freedom of Information request to ScotRail on its booking office closures Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) to seek an understanding of how any impacts were identified and measured on those sharing protected characteristics, such as disabled people. Our initial submission was refused leaving the route to obtain this information being through an appeal to the Information Commissioner. However, due to our Workstream Lead's perseverance, in April 2023 ScotRail released the EqIA prior to the Commissioner having to come to a decision. MACS are hopeful that this has established a precedent for the publicly owned ScotRail.

Our Rail Workstream (via Michael Tornow) engaged with ScotRail managers to highlight accessibility constraints with the journey planner on ScotRail's website. This led to a review of the National Rail Enquiries Journey Checker, which ScotRail's information uses. MACS identified the changes made by National Rail Enquiries that had made the information inaccessible and ScotRail took actions to discuss this with National Rail Enquiries.

As a result, the National Rail Enquiries Journey Checker has now been improved.

## Roads, Infrastructure, and Active Travel

Susan Fulton is our Workstream Lead Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel supported by Michael Tornow, Naghat Ahmed, Nariese Whyte, Zara Todd and Graham Dunn. This year's main achievements include the following:

### Pavement Parking

MACS engaged with TS Road Policy Team in the run up to the Pavements Parking going live on 11 December 2023. Our message was clear – there should be no street exemptions.

Committee continued to raise concerns with TS Roads Policy Team around the potential for some Local Authorities to take an approach that supported excessive exemptions; asked how this would be monitored to ensure exemptions guidance was complied with, including evidenced through robust and collaborative Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs); that they liaise with TS Communication Team to request that they raise the profile of the ban through their social media as it did not seem to be getting the level of exposure needed. This push from MACS was a follow up to our previous engagements in 2022-2023 and earlier in 2023-2024, where we ensured the Minister for Transport was aware of our position and the rationale behind our call for no street exemptions.

This included the need to keep pavements free of obstructions, which are barriers to disabled people being able to complete the first and last mile of their door to door journey and the need to ensure pavements are kept clear to avoid pedestrians (who can) needing to use the road to pass the obstructed pavement, putting themselves in danger.

MACS advice set out the links between the need for clear, well maintained, well-lit and unobstructed pavements to enable more disabled people to safely switch modes and engage with sustainable and active travel as we seek to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030 and promote liveable local neighbourhoods.

Our other ask in this area being that the Accessible Travel Framework Annual Delivery Plan focused on the Pavement Parking Ban and advocating against excessive exemptions to progress the clear pathways work areas of the framework, which was prioritised within the 13 work packages in 2016.

### Low Emission Zones

Our Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel Workstream engaged with TS Blue Badge Team to ensure the needs of disabled people and blue badge holders were considered in the run up to the first live LEZ in Scotland (Glasgow – 1 June 2023). This work included testing the website to applying for exemptions before the go-live date and ensuring that exemptions could be applied for in several ways and not only on-line. This included ensuring people could apply in writing, by phone and that information was available in various formats.

MACS also attended the webinar run by Disability Equality Scotland (DES), Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) and Transport Scotland (TS) to discuss Low Emission Zones (LEZ) and Blue Badges to safeguard the needs of disabled people and to hear of any concerns from the wider disabled community.

MACS will keep a light touch on this work as further LEZs go live from 2024 onwards.

### **Glasgow Avenues Project**

During engagement on the Avenues project in Glasgow, Michael Tornow was able to influence the design including kerbs heights being raised to 60mm, or in some cases 100mm so that they are detectable and in line with current guidance. This increase in height enabled more people including those whose vision is impaired to easily detect the different areas.

This engagement also brought about further one to one discussion with Glasgow City Council's project lead for their Avenues to explore their plans for the changes proposed for Argyll Street. This led to a 3D model mock-up of the proposed "floating" bus stop arrangements being developed, which was then presented to the Inclusive Accessible Design Forum.

MACS's participation in this Forum resulted in several wins for accessibility in the Argyll Street design example; where the street is one way street the Council are now placing bi-directional cycle lanes on the right-hand side of the street, which avoids the need for floating bus stops to be introduced – as recommended by Michael Tornow. The Council now have a wider policy in place for the Avenues of avoiding "floating" bus stops where possible.

### **Monklands Hospital**

MACS had discussions with Keppie Design, the team leading on the design of the new Monklands Hospital. Our particular interest lay around their consultation and engagement processes, which Committee see as an exemplar of good practice in terms of the benefits from early engagement with communities, groups representing disabled people and how the site was designed in relation to patient transport; how patients arrive at the hospital, their journey to the assessment centre and, the location of any discharge lounges. MACS were also able to confirm the importance of patient transport drop off locations in relation to discharge lounges.

### **Scottish Roadworks Commissioner**

MACS have had strong engagement from the Scottish Roadworks Commissioner and will carry this forward into our 2024-25 work plan to emphasise the barriers faced by disabled people if roadworks are not accessible.



## Position Papers

Our RIAT Workstream Lead developed a suite of position papers for the Committee covering the areas below. These are extremely valuable to ensure agreement and transparency on of our position and that all members are messaging on the same lines.

MACS Position Papers:

- 20-Minute Neighbourhoods
- Active Travel
- Engagement and Co-Production
- Equality Impact Assessments (EqlAs)
- Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging
- Transport to Health and Social Care
- Mobility Centres
- Motability
- Rail
- Train Boarding

# 6

## Other Key Activities



## Other Key Activities

### Work with Scottish Government on Transport to Health and Social Care

Following a constructive meeting with the then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf, MSP earlier in 2023, on the draft Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan, our subgroup agreed to raise further points, focused to reflect what MACS heard during our phase one engagements and from lived and career experience within the team, i.e. MACS subgroup members have lived experience of using our NHS – career expertise from their current and previous roles within the Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS Scotland, Public Health Scotland, the Third Sector, from working in Local Authorities, with the Community Transport Association in Scotland and with Regional Transport Partnerships. Subgroup members also have experienced our NHS in their role as a carer.

Over the summer our subgroup continued to meet and correspond with the SG Primary Care Team and with TS Director of Bus, Accessibility and Active Travel (BAAT) and TS Director for Transport Strategy and Analysis.

**Proposal One from MACS:** That the SG Primary Care Team and Delivery Partners engage and hear directly from disabled people and older people who continue to face transport barriers when accessing healthcare facilities. Committee suggested that Disability Equality Scotland (DES) and Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) are asked to facilitate an online seminar/roundtable discussion to test the draft plan and inform what will work and what is needed at the earliest available stage of the 2023-2024 delivery plan development.

This was agreed and webinars were facilitated from late autumn via Disabled People Organisations.

**Proposal Two from MACS:** MACS asked that the Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan Leads adopt the Theory of Change approach to developing the delivery plan(s) i.e. in the methodology or criterion for planning, engagement opportunities and monitoring and evaluation framework to clearly define intended outcomes, interdependencies, and measures of success (including holistic benefits and efficiency savings) with timeframes.

Again, this proposal was accepted with further discussions between MACS and the SG PCT as the Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan evolves and develops.

MACS would like to acknowledge our thanks to the Team (SG and TS) leading on the Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan. Their approach was heavily based on listening, understanding, and responding.

In July and September 2023 our Transport to Health and Social Care Subgroup had further meetings with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) to discuss their progress on the recommendations from MACS Phase One work and on areas that had

indicated the SAS as the lead organisation within the draft Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan. The SAS have advised that they will not be able to publish a high-level outline of their Scheduled Care Strategy until quarter one or two of 2024-2025 and agreed to reach out to MACS when they are able to give an update on any progress. MACS will keep this under review meantime.

In the autumn, the Convener presented to the Board of SEStrans (South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership) and their Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum on MACS work to date on Transport to Health and Social Care. This covered MACS findings and recommendations from their reports. SEStrans were seeking advice on potential areas of focus as a RTP, and the invite was at the request of SEStrans Partnership Director who looking to set up a subgroup with a specific focus on transport to health and social care.

In September Committee received further updates from the Health and Transport Partnership (HTAP) working in Grampian including through their recent conference paper A Journey produced by Andrew Stewart, HTAP Programme Manager, Aberdeenshire Council (a post jointly funded by Nestrans, Regional Transport Partnership, and NHS Grampian).

### **Motability and SG Accessible Vehicle and Equipment Scheme (AVES)**

MACS Motability Subgroup continued to work with SG Social Security officials. Progress this year included the approval of four new AVES partners to join the AVES (subject to completion of contracts and administrative procurement activity) required before offering their services to the public).

These new providers and their offerings will include opportunities to lease cycles including non-standard cycles through the AVES. Motability have resisted this development for many years even when transport planning and policies increased their focus on delivering opportunities to inclusive active travel and travel by more sustainable modes. The SG AVES will lead the field through the inclusion of non-standard cycles within their scheme.

Naghat Ahmed agreed to take over leadership of our subgroup, supported by Elliot Cooper, Catherine Barile, and Linda Bamford. This allowed us to continue participating in the Scottish Government's evaluation programme for the scheme. Our work around Motability and with the SG Social Security Team on AVES continues, and subgroup have regular meetings to push for improved value for money for customer, more flexibility in the scheme, as well as feeding into the review of the Mobility element of Child and Adult Disability Payments.

As a result of writing to the CEO of Motability Operations (MO) and the CEO of Motability Foundation (MF) to again raise concerns over the continued surplus the lease scheme generates, in November 2023 the Motability Subgroup met MO and MF. MACS have repeatedly asked that the 10.1% be returned to Motability and SG Accessible Vehicle and Equipment Scheme customers.

MACS believes that money should be returned to disabled people's pockets as an end year dividend style payment and future lease costs need to be reviewed through the lens of value for money and charging customer no more than needed to operate the lease scheme. Motability, have themselves, stated that they aim to achieve a 1.5% return of assets. The return of assets currently sits at around 7.8%. Our view is the current financial model needs revisited (a recommendation of the National Audit Office in 2019).

## **Monitoring and Evaluation Through Improved Data Collection**

During this year MACS were instrumental in setting up a subgroup to focus on research and data collection to monitor the progress of the NTS2, STPR2 and ATF. The realignment of our sponsorship to TS's TS&A Directorate assisted this and allowed us to tap into wider resources including through TS Analysis Team. A group was formed including MACS, TS TS&A Directorate, TS Analytical Team, TS Accessible Travel Team, and Disability Equality Scotland (DES) in their role as a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) and to benefit from their work on accessible transport over the years, which includes DES hosting the Accessible Travel Hub.

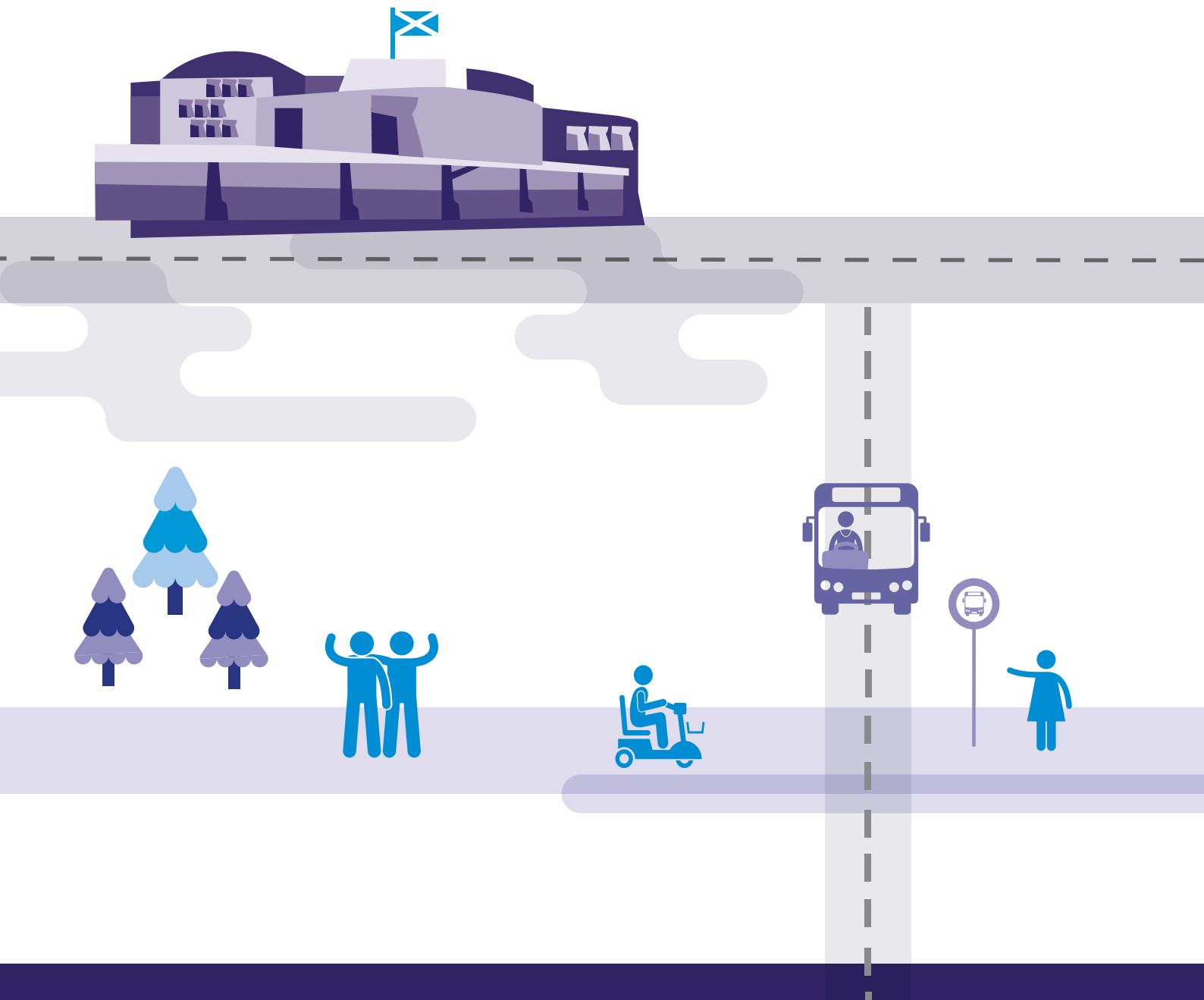
## **Four Nations – Main Agenda Items – Chaired by MACS**

The Four Nations engagement (set up by MACS) took place in September 2023 with the Convener chairing. Other participants and guests included MACS peer committees from across the UK (Inclusive Mobility and Transport Committee – IMTAC – Northern Ireland and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee – DPTAC – England) and officials from Government in Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and England.

- Motability – focusing on obtaining better value for money for customers given the current and historic excessive profit levels.
- Sectoral Climate Change Targets and Budget. Looking at Northern Ireland's targets to reduce transport emissions and have a broader discussion of climate change and a just transition to net zero for all the Nations.
- Discussion on the PSVAR consultation (call for evidence).
- Rail ticket office closures (mainly in England) and each nations view. MACS have explicitly stated that they are opposed to ticket office closures and our consultation response can be found on our website. Link below:
- The future of concessionary travel, acknowledging the progress the SG had made with its concessionary travel schemes, including under 22's to stimulate behavioural change and the long-awaited Fair Fares Review.
- Legislation and practices for the carriage of battery powered mobility devices by airlines.

# 7

## The Last Word



## The Last Word

We hope you have enjoyed reading some of the work MACS has undertaken this year and would invite you to visit the [MACS website](#), which is continually updated as our work progresses. This includes briefings, reports, responses to consultations, position papers, and good practice guides we have developed.

I will end where I began and thank everyone for engaging with and supporting us this year, which helps to deliver on our strategic remit. This year has been another year of change with David Hunter, Hilary Stubbs, and Graham Dunn standing down. I would like to thank them for their service and for the unwavering support and guidance that they have provided me since I took up the role as Convener. I am profoundly grateful.

My second term ends in December 2024 and I pledge my commitment to completing my last mile with the same passion and dedication as my first mile and hope the “in between” was not too bad a journey for my team and those around us.

I will leave the report on a high and introduce the four new members who joined us this year, and please keep up to date with our work on X: @WeAreMACS

## New MACS Members

### Lynn Pilkington

Lynn is a consultant trainer and blogger combining expertise of equalities and engagement, to create content to support employers, facilitators, educators, and HR professionals to build impactful and inclusive workplaces and learning experiences. Lynn is also a childcare support worker/play practitioner. Lynn was previously the Social Movement Support Officer for See Me and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer for City of Glasgow College.

### Anne MacLeod

Anne is a native Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Lewis, graduated from Sabhal Mòr with an Honours degree in Gaelic and Communication. As the Manager of Comunn Eachdraidh Nis, an award-winning heritage centre in the north of Lewis she led on a recently launched project to provide an accessible transport solution for those unable to use public transport. Anne has a passion for community development and a personal understanding of the challenges facing disabled people travelling to and from islands; she travels regularly with a family member with complex disabilities.

### Nariese Whyte

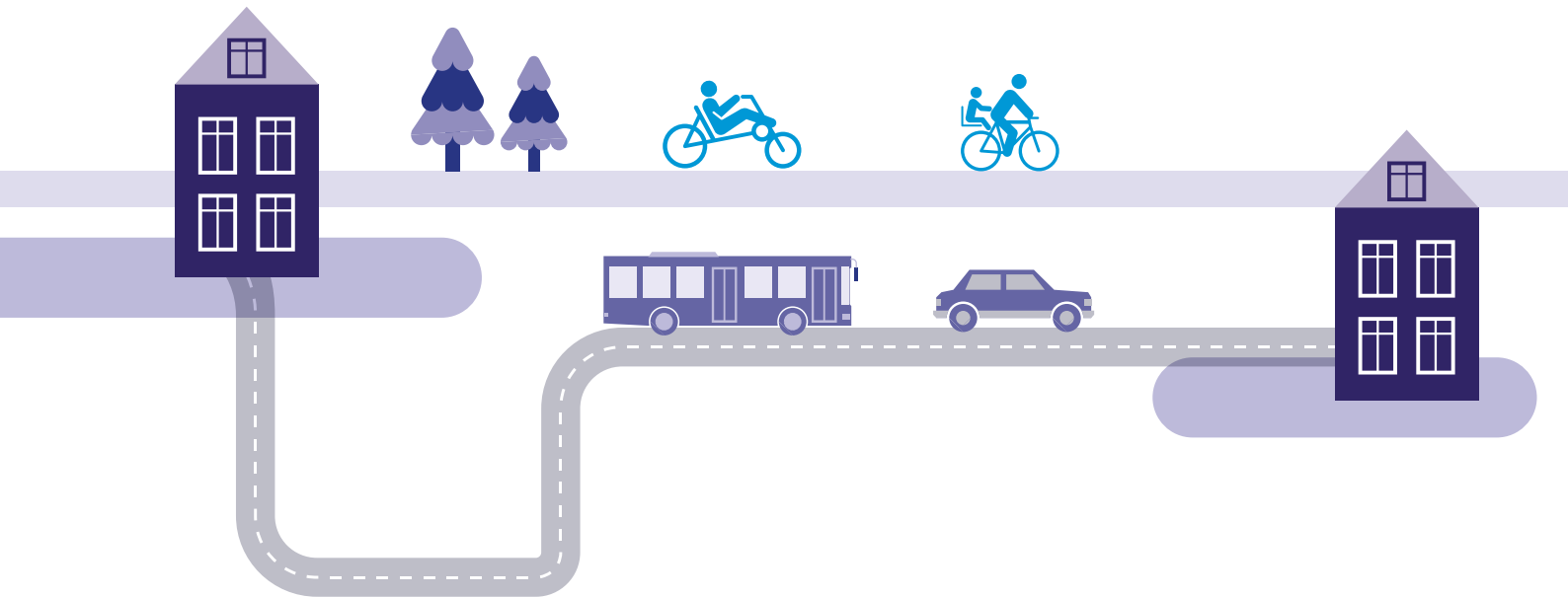
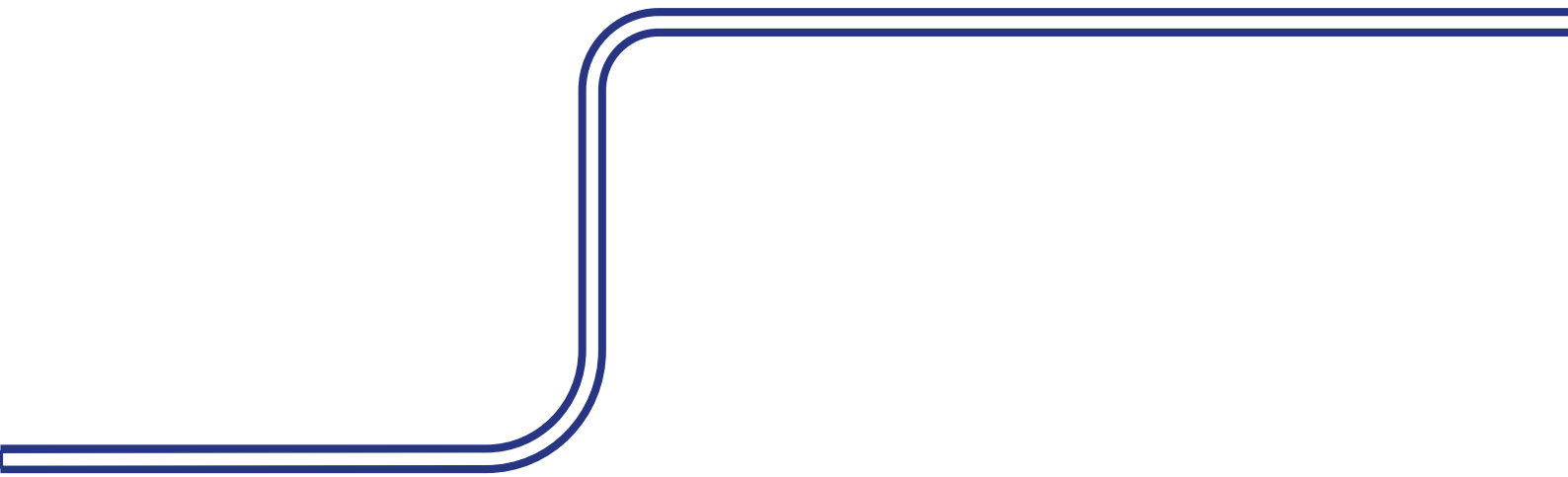
Nariese is a Casework Officer in the Scottish Parliament where they engage with constituents on a local level. Nariese was an elected Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament from 2017-19, and an MYP for Central Scotland from 2018-19. Nariese is a wheelchair user and a disability rights activist being a co-founder of the Disabled Students Association of Stirling.

### **Zara Todd**

Zara is a freelance trainer, facilitator and researcher who has been supporting organisations to be more inclusive and accessible to disabled people for nearly 20 years. She previously advised the UK Government and Transport for London on disability and accessibility. Zara is a wheelchair user, neurodivergent and an active transport user. Zara is also a trustee of Volunteering Matters, Disability Equality Scotland, and a board member of Disabled People's International.

The biographies for our full team can be found on the [MACS website](#).







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