



Imtac Work Programme 2023 / 2024

(March 2023)

Imtac is committed to making information about our work accessible. Details of how to obtain information in your preferred format are included on the next page.

Making our information accessible

As an organisation of and for Deaf people, disabled people and older people Imtac recognises that the way information is provided can be a barrier to accessing services and participation in public life. We are committed to providing information about our work in formats that best suit the needs of individuals.

All our documents are available in hard copy in 14pt type size as standard. We also provide word and pdf versions of our documents on our website – www.imtac.org.uk. In addition, we will provide information in a range of other formats. These formats include:

- Large print
- Audio versions
- Braille
- Electronic copies in PDF or word
- Easy read
- Information about our work in other languages

If you would like this publication in any of the formats listed above or if you have any other information requirements, please contact:

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About Imtac

The Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (Imtac) is a committee of disabled people and older people as well as others including carers and key transport professionals. Its role is to advise Government and others in Northern Ireland on issues that affect the mobility of Deaf people, disabled people and older people.

The aim of Imtac is to ensure that Deaf people, disabled people and older people have the same opportunities as everyone else to travel when and where they want.

Imtac receives support from the Department for Infrastructure (herein after referred to as the Department).

About this Work Programme

The role of Imtac was defined in the Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS) 2015 published in 2005. The ATS required Imtac to publish a work programme each year “detailing such transport matters that affect older people and people with disabilities [disabled people] as the Committee thinks appropriate.”

This programme has been developed in the context of ongoing political and financial uncertainties. The lack of Executive limits the delivery of key strategies, policies and project. It also means that only limited progress can be made around key issues for Deaf people, disabled people and older people, such as access to taxis. If we are to deliver key aspects of this work programme it is essential that Government here is fully restored.

We are fully cognisant of the significant pressures on Departmental budgets and the difficulties this creates for officials in the absence of Government. It is essential that engagement with Imtac takes place to ensure that Deaf people, disabled people and older people are not disproportionately affected by spending decisions and that we do not undermine the progress made in recent years in making travel more accessible and inclusive.

Work Programme priorities 2023 / 24

In 2022 we published “A New Approach to travel, our streets and our places¹”. New Approach sets out the following four key priorities which will inform the advice Imtac provides to Government and others, including the delivery of our Work Programme.

1 *Putting Deaf people, disabled people, older people and carers at the centre of every stage of decision making*

If we are to create a transport system and built environment that is accessible and inclusive to all it is essential that Deaf people, disabled people and older people are meaningfully involved at all stages including inception, design, delivery and evaluation. Through our Work Programme Imtac will continue to ensure that Deaf people, disabled people and older people have an effective voice in the design of strategy, policy and services.

2 *Ensuring a shift in our cultures*

The Committee will continue to challenge the culture that often views improving accessibility as an add on or an expensive burden. Through our Work Programme and other activities, we will actively promote the benefits for everyone in society of prioritising accessibility and inclusion in the development of policy and the allocation of resources.

Imtac recognises the huge challenges created by climate change as well as the existing societal inequalities caused by car dependency. The delivery of our Work Programme will reflect the need to prioritise investment in a more sustainable and inclusive transport system and built environment.

3 *Ensuring public and private investment contributes to an accessible and inclusive society*

If we are to build an accessible and inclusive society it essential that we maximise the benefits of any investment in our transport system and built environment. The significant financial constraints faced by Government makes doing this even more important. In all our work, including our Work Programme, the Committee will prioritise the

¹ <https://www.imtac.org.uk/new-approach-travel-our-streets-and-our-places>

adoption of the highest inclusive design standards when investment is made in travel, our streets and places.

4 Ensuring end to end journeys are straightforward and accessible

Most journeys involve using more than one mode of travel. Our Work Programme will prioritise the need to make journeys straightforward and accessible with targeted investment such providing more flexible local transport options, providing more accessible and inclusive linkages for walking, wheeling and cycling and providing better access to services locally, reducing the need to travel.

Our advice, including the delivery of our Work Programme, will also reflect two fundamental principles which underpin the ethos of the Committee. The first is the importance of understanding the **social model of disability**, illustrating it is the decisions taken by society that disable people not their impairment. The second is the rights of Deaf people, disabled people, and others to access travel, our streets and places on an equal basis to others. In doing so we will highlight where existing legal requirements are not being met as well as highlighting wider Government obligations under the Articles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**. Appendix A contains reference to the most relevant UNCRPD articles.

Core Work Programme Tasks

Imtac routinely undertakes a number of core tasks including:

- Responding to consultations
- Responding to requests for advice and information from our stakeholders
- Raising issues relevant to Deaf people, disabled people and older people with our stakeholders
- Distributing information about services and policies to our stakeholders
- Holding an open and accessible recruitment process for members of Imtac each year
- Consulting on our work programme each year
- Providing training and support to members
- Holding at least 4 meetings each year
- Submitting a report annually in June to the Minister for Infrastructure outlining the Committee's achievements and advice to the Minister on transport matters that affect Deaf people, disabled people and older people as the committee think appropriate
- Other measures to involve a wide range of Deaf people, disabled people, older people and carers in the work areas of Imtac

2023 /24 Work Programme Tasks

1 *Influencing strategy, plans, policies and projects*

Task one

The Committee will seek to ensure that our New Approach priorities are embedded in the design and implementation of major strategies. This year key strategies include:

- The formulation of a new Programme for Government
- The finalisation of the proposed Disability Strategy
- The implementation of the Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 including the development a Climate Action Plan and Departmental Sectoral plans
- The development of the proposed Infrastructure Strategy for Northern Ireland 2050

Task two

The Committee will seek to ensure that our New Approach priorities are embedded into the design and implementation of major plans and policies. This year key plans and policies include:

- The development of new Belfast Metropolitan, North West, Sub Regional Transport and Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plans
- The further development of the Bolder Vision for Belfast proposals
- The development of a new Road Safety Strategy
- Implementation of the Belfast Cycling Network Plan
- Proposals for changes to the Concessionary Fares Scheme
- Policy relating to post Brexit arrangements for people travelling with assistance dogs taking account the impact of the Windsor Framework
- The ongoing review of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) by the UK Government

Achieving progress in two further policy areas remains an urgent priority for Imtac in the coming year:

- Changes in policy designed to improve access to taxi services

- The further development of policy to tackle issues created by pavement parking

Task three

The Committee will seek to ensure that our New Approach priorities are embedded into the design and implementation of major projects. This year key projects include:

- The development of Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) Phase 2
- The development of public realm schemes across Northern Ireland
- The planned audit of bus stop infrastructure across Northern Ireland
- The planned audit of the accessibility of bus and train stations and halts across Northern Ireland
- The development of the Belfast Transport Hub, other bus and train station improvements and Park & Ride provision across Northern Ireland
- The further development of the Translink Ticketing Project
- The further development of the Translink Transforming Travel and Social Inclusion Project

2 *Supporting innovation in policy and service developments*

Task four

The Committee will continue to encourage and support innovation in policy and service developments which enhance accessibility and inclusion consistent with our New Approach priorities. This year the following key tasks will include:

- Reviewing current data and research undertaken by Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch (ASRB) and make recommendations about potential improvements to the collection of data around transport and accessibility
- Developing a lessons learned paper based on user testing of recently purchased vehicles used to deliver public and community transport services with recommendations designed to improve future procurement / vehicle design
- Developing a policy paper setting out how mobility for Deaf people, disabled people and older people who rely completely on access

to a car / private transport can be protected in a just transition to Net Zero

- Developing a policy paper highlighting the key role access to transport should play in the modernisation of health services across Northern Ireland

Engage with Wheels for Welbeing to increase participation from across Northern Ireland in the annual National Survey of Disability and Cycling

3 Promoting engagement

Wider engagement with Deaf people, disabled people, older people, carers and organisations responsible for travel, streets and places is a core focus for the work of Imtac and our New Approach paper.

Task five

We will focus our engagement with Deaf people, disabled people and older people to promote their involvement in the development of projects as well as evaluating the impact of recent investment. Examples of this type of engagement will include:

- Before and after site visits to places to evaluate the benefits of investment in public realm
- Site visits to evaluate the benefits of new infrastructure designed to improve access for walking, wheeling and cycling
- Site visits to evaluate the benefits of investment in new / refurbished bus and train stations
- Site visits to evaluate the benefits of investment in new transport vehicles (both public and community transport)
- Participation in guided journeys with key people who design policy and services

Task six

We plan to undertake specific engagement with organisations responsible for travel, streets and places including:

- Maintaining ongoing engagement with the Consumer Council and, in particular, supporting their role in improving access to sea and air travel

- Developing a webinar targeted at the Department for Infrastructure, utility companies and others around maintaining accessibility during after undertaking streets works
- Hosting an event with key stakeholders including Departments, Councils and others seeking to discuss and identify solutions to removing inappropriate pavement clutter

Task seven

We will continue active participation in existing fora to promote accessibility and inclusion and to share expertise. These include:

- The Accessibility 4 Nations Group (A4N)
- The Disability Strategy Co-Design Group
- The Strategic Design Group
- The UNCRPD Independent Monitoring Mechanism Disability Forum

4 *Developing as a Committee*

Task nine

We will ask members about support and training requirements and implement actions agreed by the Committee.

Review and revision of this Work Programme

Our Work Programme covers a very wide range of issues, some of which may only proceed slowly while additional projects and tasks may arise requiring our input more urgently. Progress will be reviewed by Imtac and the Department at the end of each quarter, with revisions made subject to the agreement of both parties

Appendix A – Key Articles of UNCRPD

Although each Article of the UNCRPD is important the Committee will prioritise the following Articles through its work:

Article 8 – Awareness raising – adopt measures that raise awareness and respect for the rights of disabled people, combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices and promotes awareness of the capabilities and contributions of disabled people.

Article 9 Accessibility – ensure barriers that disabled people face in buildings, the outdoors, transport, information, communications and services are eliminated and that these apply to people living in both urban and rural areas.

Article 20 Personal mobility – ensure disabled people can move around with the greatest possible independence.

Article 21 Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information – ensure disabled people have the same right as other people to give and receive information.

Article 29 Participation in political and public life – encourage disabled people to be involved in the work of Government and to participate in public affairs.

Article 31 Statistics and data collection – collect and look at statistics and other information that puts the UNCRPD into practice.