

FEEDBACK FROM 4TH MEETING OF THE AAA TRANSPORT WORKING GROUP:

22ND JANUARY 2014 AT UCL, LONDON

I attended this, the 4th meeting of the Age Action Alliance's Transport Working Group on behalf of Future Years.

Chaired by Professor Roger Mackett, Head of UCL's Centre for Transport Studies, with representation from the Forums in NE, EM, NW, SE and YH, as well as professionals from: Greater Manchester Transport, transport planning engineer and the Community Transport Association.

The discussion focused on next steps following 2 papers presented by the Chair on "Overcoming the Barriers to Access for older People" and "Improving accessibility for Older People- investing in a valuable asset". I can supply electronic copies of both papers should anyone wish to see.

The following actions were agreed in discussion:

- Ken Cooper (DWP Secretariat) to circulate a copy of a credit card sized card being piloted in Blackpool that alerts, for example, bus drivers, to an individuals impairment. It was agreed that dementia needed to be added.
- Ken to circulate details of meeting being held in London on 1st April on transport issues organised by the Chartered Institute for Transport (CILT). Previous meetings had addressed accessibility issues and training for public transport staff. The focus of the April had yet to be agreed but this Group would be kept in the loop.
- That all members of the WG should let Ken have transport related papers\ links etc that would be of interest to others for inclusion on the AAA website.
- Reference was made to a recent paper from the British Academy for the Humanities and Social Services giving tips for a healthy life (see www.britac.ac.uk). Ken to circulate to Group members.
- Greater Manchester Transport to provide a briefing paper (1 x A4 sheet only) covering demand responsive transport (DRT) and community transport initiatives. A scheme in Lincolnshire-CONNECT-was mentioned as a good example which has been expanded. It uses a mix of core routes and connector\feeder routes to join up journeys.
- The Community Transport Association (www.ctauk.org) is also a useful source of information on schemes across the country. (will be useful to consider as part of LOPF's work on progressing thinking on loneliness and social isolation). There are two useful state of the sector reports on the website covering 2010 and 2012.
- DH need to be made more aware of the health benefits of adequate transport provision.
- It was agreed that, at some point, it would be useful for this Working Group to be aware of the BOG Fulfilling Lives bids and how they were addressing transport and accessibility issues in their Vision and Strategy documents. Were there any innovative ideas emerging?
- The work of the AAA Transport Working Group to be conveyed to the AAA Loneliness and Social Isolation WG because of the strong linkages.

There followed a brief discussion on the design of bus shelters and seating with an accepted need to adopt some form of design standards. The Group will be a watching brief.

- It was agreed that an A4 briefing sheet should be produced outlining best practice design tips.
- “Years Ahead”-the Forum on Ageing for the North East- to take its report on “Older Person Friendly Seating” to a future UKAFA meeting. I suggested that it should also go to the AAA Environmentally Friendly Working Group and to the WHO Age Friendly Network (which includes Leeds)
- There was another brief discussion on the DfT mobility vehicles questionnaire. There had only been a limited response to date but there was no deadline for submission. The majority of Forums said that pushing the questionnaire was not a priority given limited resources and other priorities.

It was agreed that the Group should focus a future meeting on Community Transport. What is clear is that there is a growing need for adequate and accessible transport but at a time when cuts are hitting hard and such services are under increasing threat because of costs. Some of the bigger CT schemes are becoming commercial enterprises and it would be useful to consider ways forward. It needs very strong LA leadership to pull it all together (Devon and Norfolk were cited as good examples of innovation in this area).

We were informed that there is currently a case being considered by the European Commission in Brussels as a result of representation from private sector transport providers contending that competition rules were being broken. Watch this space.

Date of Next Meeting: to be set in May 2014 at a venue to be confirmed.

John Welham

Vice- Chair, Future Years.

27th January 2014