



Keep on Moving

**A transport for all report from
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Partnership Boards**



Picture shows Partnership Board member Kirsten, and her dog Kip, supporting Hate Crime Awareness Week.

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This report has been put together for the Partnership Boards and members of the public in our area by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Healthwatch Peterborough.

Our job is to make sure that those who run local health and care services understand and act on what really matters to people.

We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. And focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed.

We work to get services right for the future. And we also help people find information about local health and care services and support groups in our area.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who attended our meetings and told us about their transport experiences.

Thank you to the councils, transport companies and CamCycle Campaign who came along to answer our questions and listen to what people with disabilities, carers and older people had to say.

Introduction

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Partnership Boards give people with experience of using adult social care services a say on current and future care.

Each Board's role is to support and improve care for people who use health and adult care services.

Healthwatch organises and develops five Partnership Boards for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council:

- ⇒ **Carers' Partnership Board**
- ⇒ **Learning Disability Partnership Board**
- ⇒ **Older People's Partnership Board**
- ⇒ **Physical Disability Partnership Board**
- ⇒ **Sensory Impairment Partnership Board**

The Partnership Boards wanted to talk about transport and some of the issues that cause problems for their members and especially elderly and disabled people locally.

In August 2020 four meetings were held to talk about:

- ⇒ Roads and footpaths
- ⇒ Taxis
- ⇒ Public transport
- ⇒ Community transport

Roads and footpaths

Who looks after them?

Peterborough City and Cambridgeshire County Council look at the state of footpaths every two years.

What the problems are

Work repairs

If paths are dug up for telephone, gas, water, or electricity work, the companies should repair them. Often, this doesn't happen and it causes problems for people who are blind, visually impaired, have mobility issues or use wheelchairs.

Keeping footpaths clear

A lot of litter or leaves on the pavement looks untidy and can also block or be a trip danger to people using the paths.

Parking on pavements

It's not against the law to park cars on pavements. But they can block the path and force people to walk in the road.

Keeping paths open for everyone

Disabled people should be thought about when a footpath's rights of way are changed – such as across fields.

Sometimes, things are changed to make it safer for people, like adding a gate. But this can make it difficult for people with mobility issues and those using wheelchairs, pushchairs or cyclists.

Cafe chairs and tables on the pavement

Cafés, restaurants and bars are putting tables and chairs outside to help with social distancing. But what's being done to make sure they are not a danger to people who are blind, use wheelchairs, walking sticks or mobility scooters?

To put tables and chairs outside, a business must get a pavement licence from their local council. And the council must think about the needs of disabled people before it says yes or no.

The East Cambridgeshire Access Group told us that there are laws about where tables and chairs are placed. So they must not block the main entrance, road or path; there must be clear space around them so people can pass by.

Sometimes there needs to be a barrier around the tables and chairs so that people with sight problems can move around it. A barrier must be strong and secure so that it won't blow away and hurt people or cause people to trip over. It might need to be lit up if used at night.

Advertising boards outside shops and businesses'

A' Boards can take up pavement space and should not block the door to the business or stop people walk along the pavement.

Bikes on pavements

CamCycle told us there should be less cycle parking on pavements. They want to see more roadside parking for tricycles, hand bikes and cargo bikes. And want to work with local councils and disability groups to improve transport options including reduction of shared space where pavements and roads are merged for all users.

Changes to the Highway Code

The Highway Code is a booklet that explains the rules for road users in the UK.

The Government wants to make it safer for people like cyclists, people walking and horse riders when they are on any road.

Our members say many issues faced by pedestrians also affect cyclists. And they think more awareness is needed about pedestrians with canes:

Do you know ...

- **White canes** are used by people who are blind/visually impaired.
- **Red/white striped canes** are used by people who are Deaf/deaf and blind/visually impaired.

Listening to disabled people's views

The Combined Authority plans transport across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough so that people can get around as easily as possible.

All local people are asked to give their views. And one example of consulting with people was asking about electric scooters - also called E-Scooters.

The Combined Authority set up a group to hear what people were worried about. They are also coming to hear what our Sensory Impairment Partnership Board thinks about these scooters.



E-scooters like these are - above - are being trialled in various cities across the UK, including Cambridge. In these trials, e-scooters can be used on a road and in cycle lanes but not on a pavement. But scooters cannot go more than 10mph.

Riders must have a provisional driving licence and be at least 18 years of age. Outside these trials, e-scooters can be used only on private land and riders must get permission from the person who owns the land.

Our report recommends ...

That all local councils and the Combined Authority make sure that local people with disabilities are properly consulted when they plan to make changes to roads and pavements.

How to report a problem

Roadworks, faults, changes to footpaths, cycle lanes and roads

Contact your city or county council.

Online

[Cambridgeshire](#)

[Peterborough](#)

Phone

0345 045 5212 (8am -6pm, Mon to Fri, 9am - 1pm Sat)

01733 747474 (9am-5pm, Mon to Fri)

- Tell them about your route and how it makes things difficult for you
- Send in a photo or a video to show them
- If you report the problem, write down the reference number so that if it is not fixed properly, you can follow it up.

Tables, chairs and advertising boards

If they cause you a problem, you can tell the shop , business and/or your council.

In Cambridgeshire this is your local district council:

- Fenland
- Huntingdonshire
- East Cambs
- South Cambs
- Cambridge City

If you live in Peterborough, contact the city council.

Litter

If you live in Cambridgeshire, contact your district council. If you live in Peterborough, get in touch with the city council.

Parked cars blocking a path

Report it to police using the 101 number

Taxis and cabs

Questions and answers from our Partnership Boards

Do social distancing rules stop taxi drivers helping people with visual impairments?

Taxi drivers should still be able to support someone getting into the taxi. There may need to be some reasonable adjustments.

Can a taxi driver refuse to take a visually impaired person because they may need help?

No.

Assistance Dogs

Drivers must take an assistance dog. If you book a taxi, tell them that there is an assistance dog too.

Some drivers may have a medical problem that gets worse if they take an assistance dog. But if they do, they must put a notice to explain this on their taxi window screen.

If a driver says they cannot take an assistance dog, remind them that they must. If they still say no, take their details and ask the council to investigate.

A driver breaking the law could go to court.

Taxis cannot charge more for taking an assistance dog.





Wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Car drivers can help people who use a manual wheelchair to get into a car seat and they can put the wheelchair in the boot.

But some taxi drivers will not take wheelchairs with motors as these might be too heavy for their cars.

Booking wheelchair accessible vehicles

This is a problem for our Partnership Board members who want to know why it's so difficult for physically-disabled people to book a taxi in advance.

At our meeting, local councils heard how hard it is for people to book ahead for a vehicle that can load big wheelchairs on the side or at the back.

People were being told to phone on the day they needed the tax. But they could not be sure a vehicle would be available. This caused problems because they often had to be somewhere at a certain time – like a doctor's appointment.

Our members felt they did not get an equal service to non-wheelchair users.

If someone uses a mobility scooter, do taxis have to take them?

Again, this is a personal choice for drivers. Bigger scooters may be too heavy for their cars and some drivers may not be able to lift a scooter into the boot.

How do people become taxi drivers?

If someone wants to be a taxi driver, they must get a licence from their district council.

They must complete a course that tests how good they are as a taxi driver. This might ask if they know where important routes and buildings are - like train stations, hospitals or theatres.

They must have had a UK driving licence for at least one year. And their background will be checked to see if they have a criminal record.

Taxi driver training

The training lasts a day and there is an exam at the end.

Peterborough City Council is thinking about giving taxi drivers more training so they know how to support people with disabilities

In South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, taxi drivers could get safeguarding training. This means they learn how to protect children, young adults and people with disabilities who are using the taxi.



Our report recommends ...

That all councils should make taxi drivers do disability and safeguarding training to get their taxi licence.

Public transport

Bus and train design

How can disabled people be more included in the design of these vehicles?

Buses and trains are built by companies and they must make sure that all passengers can use them. Some have advisory groups to make sure vehicles are accessible.

Bus routes

Our members had lots of questions about routes and timetables.

Why don't many buses go across the whole of Cambridge /Peterborough City?

This means people often have to take two buses just to go across the city.

Why don't buses go around the towns, or village to village, rather than to a town/city centre? This means that people must get several buses to get to a neighbouring area.

Why don't timetables provide what people may need? For example, buses going to hospitals during visiting times.

What's being done to improve routes so that town and village areas don't become more isolated?

Local bus company Stagecoach told us that bus services and timetables are based on demand (how many people want or use a route).

All bus companies want their services to make money and cover costs. They work with local councils to provide what communities need as much as possible. They also discuss how much it costs to run services.



Buses - audio and visual announcements

When will these be used in all Stagecoach buses in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough?

The Government is giving money to small bus companies to help pay for equipment that lets passengers see and hear where they are and when to get off.

This gives people confidence that they are on the right vehicle and travelling to the right place.

It's part of the Government's Inclusive Transport Strategy to provide equal access to public transport by 2030.

Why don't all Stagecoach buses automatically lower at the entrance?

Most buses can be lowered when they are at a bus stop to make it easier for passengers get on or off. But sometimes the drivers have to tell the bus to do this.

Our report recommends ...

All bus services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough should have audio and visual announcements.

Bus companies to ask local people with disabilities, carers and older people for their views on bus routes.

Help for train passengers

Our Partnership Board members wanted to know if travel assistance available on train services would change or stop because of social distancing rules.

This service is still running - find out more below.



Assisted travel on trains

All train companies offer a helping hand for any trip through Passenger Assist.

They can arrange for someone to:

- ⇒ meet you at the station entrance or meeting point
- ⇒ help you navigate around the station and accompany you to your train
- ⇒ help you on and off the service
- ⇒ provide a ramp on and off your train
- ⇒ meet you from your train and take you to your next train or the exit
- ⇒ carry your bag (up to three items of luggage as per the National Rail Conditions of Travel)

Simply call for free on 0800 0223720 or text 60083. For textphone/minicom 0845 60 50 600.

Read more on the [National Rail website](#)

Community Transport Schemes

Car schemes

These are run by volunteers with cars. There are more than 60 car schemes across the county but not many in the city centre of Cambridge or Peterborough.

You normally have to become a member to use the scheme.

Read more about the voluntary car schemes on the [Combined Authority website](#).

Taxi card schemes

These help towards the cost of taxi journeys for people who have difficulties getting to or using public transport in particularly under-served areas.

Cambridge City Council, for example, has a Taxi Card Scheme which makes the cost of a journey cheaper.

Cambridge residents can apply for this card if they have a disability and are on a low income.

Find out more about the Cambridge taxi card on the [City Council website](#) and other schemes on the [Combined Authority website](#)

Dial a ride schemes

These community transport schemes run minibus services. They include Dial-a-Ride in Cambridge, FACT (Fenland Association for Community Transport) which runs services in Fenland, Huntingdon and East Cambridgeshire.

You must become a member to use them.

Find out more about Dial-a-Ride schemes on the [Combined Authority website](#)

What training do transport scheme drivers get?

Community transport schemes provide different types of training. Some drivers learn about looking after passengers, keeping people safe and any rules.

Drivers are checked to see they are safe and if they have a criminal record. They must give references and have special insurance.

Minibus drivers must take the MIDAS (Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme) training.

Find out more on the [County Council website](#).

Changes because of Covid-19

Some organisations have changed their services because of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown and social distancing rules.

Instead of driving people to places, the drivers run errands, fetch medication or shopping for people and deliver things to them at home.

Lots of people have found this very helpful in lockdown. So some schemes are deciding whether this should keep going once the lockdown is over.

Running the scheme during the pandemic has meant extra cleaning, using hand sanitisers and wearing face masks. If possible, passengers should also sit in the back of a car with their window open.

Our report recommends ...

Community transport schemes ask their members about how they deliver services in the future.

What should happen now?

The Partnership Boards want to see five changes to transport in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

We are writing to people to ask if they will think about our ideas.

Our recommendations are:

- ⇒ All councils and the Combined Authority should make sure that people with disabilities have a chance to give their views on changes to roads and pavements.
- ⇒ All councils should bring in disability and safeguarding training as part of licensing taxi drivers.
- ⇒ All bus services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough should have audio and visual announcements.
- ⇒ Bus companies should ask local people with disabilities, carers and older people for their views about bus routes.
- ⇒ Community transport schemes should ask their members about what services they would like in future.

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