

# Bus Passenger Information Strategy

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# Bus Passenger Information Strategy

2003/4 – 2008/9

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## 1.0 Introduction /Background

Fife Council, like all local transport authorities, is required, under Sections 33 and 34 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001, to develop and implement a strategy which defines what local bus information should be made available to the public in the area for which they have transport responsibilities and also the way in which this information should be made available.

Fife Council acknowledged the need to consult on this strategy at the development stage with transport providers and passengers and also with the Traffic Commissioner. The Council undertakes to periodically review the strategy to ensure that it takes account of national and other external influences and also the advancements of new technology which influence the way in which information can be provided. The Council also undertakes to continually monitor the way in which bus information is being provided in Fife to ensure that this strategy is achieving the aims and objectives defined below.

## 2.0 Aims & Objectives of the Strategy

The overriding objectives of the strategy are:-

- To ensure that passengers and potential passengers have access to accurate and comprehensive information at all stages of any bus journey they are making or are planning to make.
- To define the 'required' levels of information for the above and identify how these can best be provided.
- To clearly identify and define the responsibilities of both Fife Council and the transport providers in respect of information provision in Fife so that both parties can discharge their own responsibilities effectively.
- To provide a framework for the delivery of information.

By ensuring the 'required' level of information for bus passengers, as defined within this strategy, Fife Council believes that the following aims of the strategy can also be achieved:-

- The encouragement of social inclusion through improving access and awareness of public transport opportunities.
- The improvement, in terms of community safety and increase in confidence, in the use of public transport through the provision of reliable information.
- An overall increase in the number of public transport journeys being made and an increase in their use as a more sustainable travel choice.
- An assurance that the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act are better met in respect of information.
- An increase in awareness of existing travel interchange opportunities and encouragement of the development of further inter-modal options.
- The promotion of local economic development and regeneration by raising awareness of travel opportunities for specific travel purposes such as employment and tourism.

## 3.0 The 4 Levels of Information

**Section 4.0** and the relevant appendices define 'Level 1' information or the agreed 'basic level of information required' by Fife passengers.

The financial responsibility associated with the provision of this level of information is primarily seen as the responsibility of the bus operators in Fife.

The various types of information are categorised and details are given of both the current and desired standards.

**Section 5.0** identifies 'Level 2' information.

This information is seen as 'one step beyond' the basic level and covers initiatives where the costs of implementation would be seen as being the joint responsibility of both the Council and the bus operators.

**Section 6.0** identifies 'Level 3' information.

This information is seen as being considerably more than would be described as 'basic level' and covers initiatives where the costs of implementation would be seen as being the responsibility of the Council.

**Section 7.0** identifies 'Level 4' information

The information within this section is for future consideration and discussion between Fife Council and Fife bus operators. Initiatives within this section are currently not seen as priority measures for Fife but should not be overlooked as possible future partnership projects.

## 4.0 Defined Base Level of Bus Information in Fife (Level 1)

### - Current Provision & Desired Standards.

#### 4.1 Printed Bus Timetable Leaflets

##### 4.1.1 Current Provision

**Standard and Content**  
(all following references to current practices refer to situation in Fife as at August 2003)



The bus operators in Fife currently undertake to produce printed timetable leaflets at their expense. On tendered routes, this is a specified condition of tender.

The type and standard of timetable leaflet in Fife varies by operator. Stagecoach in Fife (SiF), the main operator, produce a glossy, coloured leaflet which, in many cases, now includes a line diagram and more comprehensive information on related travel issues. Reference was previously made to the Council's PTi number on all SiF timetable leaflets although this has been superseded by the new Traveline number.

Other larger operators such as First Edinburgh and Strath Tay produce less glossy but equally comprehensive leaflets for a small number of services which cross into Fife. These also tend to contain line diagrams and other relevant information. Smaller operators tend to produce very basic typewritten timetable sheets which are photocopied for distribution.

##### Quantities and Distribution

In total, Stagecoach in Fife produce around 90 different timetable leaflets which tend to be in the form of 'individual' service leaflets.

The smaller operators in Fife are producing around 6 or 7 leaflets of a considerably lower standard.

Fife Operators currently provide Fife Council Transportation Services (FCTS) with a supply of leaflets to stock information carousels/ racks at 65 locations across Fife (see Appendix 1). FCTS provide and maintain the carousels/ leaflet racks.

The numbers of each leaflet per print vary depending upon the service, from around 20,000 for the more comprehensive ones, such as the express services, to around 5,000 for the more confined services, such as local towns.

Leaflets are delivered by hand to Fife House and dispatched from there through either the internal mail system, the external post or delivered by hand. Fife Council meets the costs of all delivery from Fife House.

The operators issue timetable leaflets from their own ticket offices.

Re-stocking is done at the request of the stockist or when timetables change and leaflets are reprinted.

#### **4.1.2a Standards**

##### **Required Content**

- The Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers' (ATCO) Printed Public Transport Information - A Code of Good Practice should be used as a baseline guide to printing styles and layouts - the standards listed below are in addition to those defined in this document.
- Leaflets must carry 'effective from' or 'start' date.
- Leaflets must be reprinted and redistributed for all service changes. When the effective start date on a leaflet becomes 12 months 'old', in order to reassure users that the leaflet has not expired, it must be reprinted and carry a supplementary notice as well as the 'effective from' date, advising 'no change, reprinted xx/xx/xx'.
- Leaflets must alert passengers to dates on which services are likely to be affected by local holidays or school holidays. Particular attention must be paid to holiday information when leaflets are being reprinted as described above.
- Where relevant, leaflets must carry confirmation that service is supported in whole or part by Fife Council. The Fife Council logo and a contact telephone number must be included.
- Leaflets may carry advertisements but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the leaflet or influence the layout.
- Wherever possible, codes/abbreviations used to identify standard variations (eg school days only) must be in accordance with guidance given within the ATCO Printed Public Transport Information - A Code of Good Practice. They should be common to all timetables and also be accompanied by clear explanations.
- All leaflets must contain either detailed route maps, 'spider diagrams' or 'line diagrams'.
- All leaflets must indicate (by agreed logo) rail interchange points and park and ride facilities.
- Leaflets which indicate transfer to other services must indicate if through ticketing is available or not.
- Reference must be made to Traveline with logos.
- Information on how to make complaints or compliments must be given by using agreed BUCT wording.
- Where an extension to a service is secured by the Council through a tender and another operator wins the contract, timetable leaflets must carry the times, service number and operator name for all journeys operating along the same or reasonably similar route - both commercial and tendered. The operators of the commercial and tendered journeys along reasonably similar routes should be encouraged to provide one leaflet and share costs.

- There should be no charge for individual timetable leaflets other than administrative costs that arise when complete sets are dispatched.

#### **4.1.2b Desired Content**

- Where appropriate, a detailed route description should be provided as well as the route map or diagram.
- Operators should provide information on service leaflets that will offer guidance to passengers in wheelchairs as to the accessibility of the service being offered. Assurances of accessibility to wheelchairs should of course only be given where relevant low floor operation can be guaranteed.
- Operators should demonstrate continuous improvement in terms of presentation of leaflets and pursue methods of improving clarity eg through using graphical representation to minimise the use of codes.
- Where useful connections exist (between operators or modes), these should be highlighted within timetable leaflets - either graphically on route maps, as information within leaflet text or within timetables.

#### **Quantities and Distribution**

- Stockists (of all relevant timetables) must include:
  - all FC local offices*
  - all Kingdom of Fife Tourist Information Centres*
  - all Fife Acute Hospitals*
  - all Fife further and higher educational establishments*
  - all Fife Bus Stations*
  - and others by agreement*

In addition, all Fife libraries must be supplied with a reference set of timetables

- Timetable leaflets must be with the distributor 10 days before 'start date' and with the stockists at least one week before.
- Operators holding more than 50 operators discs must produce, update (at least every 6 months), and circulate to timetable outlets (electronically if preferred), a summary of all current publications (service timetables, fares leaflets etc), giving the date they last changed and their current reference number. Operators with less than 50 discs would be required to produce a similar summary and update it at least every 12 months. This would not apply to operators who provide both start and end dates on all timetables. These summaries must indicate which local services are wheelchair accessible and which can accommodate bicycles. They must also clearly indicate where through ticketing or integrated ticketing is available.

#### **4.1.3 Sourcing Proposals**

- Operators will be responsible for production of leaflets to above standard and content and incorporate the necessary resource requirement into their business strategies.
- Where an operator fails to produce a timetable to the above standard and content, FCTS will reserve the right to procure or produce in-house leaflets and recharge all costs incurred in so doing to the operator (see Section 8.2).
- Operators will be responsible for the distribution of relevant leaflets in accordance with the above requirements.
- Where operators are unable to take on the distribution responsibilities outlined above, Fife Council will co-ordinate and procure the required distribution on a rechargeable basis.

## 4.2 Static Printed Timetable Displays

### 4.2.1 Current Provision

#### Standard and Content

FCTS currently produces printed information at bus station stances, at selected transport interchange sites and at selected bus stops across Fife.

The displays have, in the past, been produced from information taken from registrations using a word processing package. The bus stop displays are now mostly produced using an automated software package linked to the Council's Routewise database.

The bus station stance displays list times in a 'service by service' format. The bus stop displays list times either in a 'service by service' or 'chronological' format – the type used depends upon the quantity of information being provided, the complexity of the information, location etc.

The Council has recognised the need to improve the quality of information being provided at bus station stances and is currently exploring alternative printing methods. The Routewise bus stop displays are based on best practice guides and standard templates have been produced by Anite to meet Fife Council's specification.

#### Quantities and Distribution

At the present time, FCTS maintain information at 5 bus stations (51 stances in total) and at 236 bus stops.

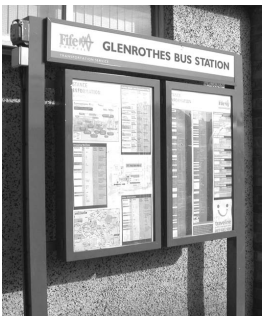
In addition, static bus timetable displays are maintained at Ferrytoll Park and Ride, Dunfermline Queen Margaret Rail Station and Dalgety Bay Rail Station.

FCTS are currently responsible for the distribution/erection of the static information. This normally takes place the day prior to changes becoming effective which usually involves paying premium rates for Sunday working.

### 4.2.2 Desired Standards

#### Content

- Bus stop static displays must be 'stop-specific' and display specific departure times for that stop.
- Presentation should be in accordance with the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers' (ATCO) specification for 'Printed Public Transport Information - A Code of Good Practice'.
- Route description must be included
- Displays must be composite and should be produced in colour.
- Graphical route representation should be included wherever practical.
- Displays must carry 'effective from' or 'start' date.
- Displays must carry, where practical, information on common fares on that corridor
- Reference must be made to Traveline with logos.
- Information on how to make complaints or compliments must be given
- Displays may carry transport-related advertisements but these advertisements must not detract from the purpose of the display or influence the layout.



## Quantities and Timescales

- The target is to have information available at every stop throughout Fife which is 'regularly' used. This will be defined initially as 'used as a boarding point by at least 20 passengers on either an average weekday or any one Saturday or Sunday'.
- It is hoped that the target will be 'phased' in the following way:-

*By December 2004 - Comprehensive static information at all bus station stances and at 600 bus stops.*

*By December 2005 - Comprehensive static information at all bus station stances and at 800 bus stops.*

*By December 2006 - Comprehensive static information at all bus station stances and at 1000 bus stops.*

*By December 2007 - Comprehensive static information at all bus station stances and at all stops 'regularly' used as defined above.*

- Static displays should be updated for every registered service change and should be displayed at the appropriate stop/location prior to, but no more than 2 days before the service change becomes effective.

### 4.2.3 Sourcing Proposals

- The operators will be ultimately be responsible for producing and displaying printed static information at bus stops. Fife Council, will however have a role to ensure that the information on static timetable displays is composite and comprehensive. Information on services operated by different companies will be displayed in an integrated and logical fashion with services grouped by corridor or destination. If necessary, the Council will co-ordinate the provision of comprehensive static timetable displays in accordance with the above standards and quantities and recover the costs of doing so from the appropriate operators in a fair and equitable manner.
- To achieve the above targets in terms of quantities and timescales, and to reach the position whereby operators are able to assume the sourcing responsibilities in terms of static information, it is envisaged that Fife Council will initially be required to work in partnership with the operators. Responsibility for the printed static information that exists at present will become the responsibility of the operators over a 2 year period from implementation of the strategy.
- Fife Council will continue to meet the costs of providing, erecting and maintaining the information display cases.
- Provision of static information at bus stations will continue to be provided by the Council under the terms of their agreements with operators in respect of bus station departure charges.

## 4.3 Fares and Ticket Information

### 4.3.1 Current Availability

Fares information on bus services in Fife is currently available from the operators' own ticket/enquiry offices.