



## **Imtac Work Programme 2024 / 2025**

**(September 2024)**

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](http://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.”

## Our approach

Our advice, including the delivery of our Work Programme, will reflect two fundamental principles which underpin the ethos of the Committee. The first is the importance of understanding and promoting the **social model of disability**, recognising that it is the decisions taken by society that disable people not their impairment. The second is promoting the right 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.

## **Work Programme priorities 2024 / 25**

The Committee welcomes the recent restoration of the Executive and Assembly. The potential now exists to progress longstanding key issues for Deaf people, disabled people, and older people such as tackling issues created by pavement parking and improving access to taxi services. We recognise, however, that progress may be limited by the short mandate of the Assembly and the sheer pressure of wider issues.

We also recognise the continuing significant pressures on Departmental budgets. In this environment 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.

Our priorities also reflect some specific issues and priorities for Deaf people, disabled people and older people including:

- Ongoing impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ongoing impacts from the cost-of-living crisis
- Ongoing impacts from climate breakdown and the impact of a transition to Net Zero

## **How our work programme is structured**

Our work programme is normally divided into two parts covering firstly routine core and secondly specific tasks and priorities. This format is retained for our work programme for 24/25 but because it is a significant and cross cutting piece of work, the task initiated in 2023/24 to “Develop a policy paper highlighting the key role access to transport should play in the modernisation of health services across Northern Ireland” has its own section,

The tasks and priorities in the second part of the work programme are grouped under the 4 key principles set out in the Imtac New Approach paper published in 2023. These principles are:

1. Putting Deaf people, disabled people, older people and carers at the centre of every stage of decision making
2. Ensuring a shift in our cultures
3. Ensuring public and private investment contributes to an accessible and inclusive society
4. Ensuring end to end journeys are straightforward and accessible

## **Core Work Programme Tasks**

Imtac routinely undertakes 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

## 2024 / 25 Work Programme Tasks & Priorities

### Cross cutting tasks & priorities

#### Task one

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

This task cuts across all four key principles of New Approach.)

We have heard from most of our members and those we consult with over recent times that transport is a major issue when accessing health services. Accordingly, we have initiated this project. We have already had a brief engagement with the Regional Health and Social Care Disability Forum and are establishing a project team that will engage widely with stakeholders (including people with lived experience) to gather evidence of the barriers being faced. An initial briefing paper based on that engagement will be debated at roundtables including representatives of key providers with responsibilities for decision making as well as Deaf people, disabled people, and older people. The output from these discussions will form the basis of an agreed report that will be presented to Government. It is hoped that a final report will be finalised for publication by June 2025.

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

#### Task two

Involving broader groups of Deaf people, disabled people and older people in the development of projects as well as evaluating the impact of recent investment is a priority. Examples of this type of engagement in the coming year will include:

- Direct engagement in Task 16, examining access to transport and health
- 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 lead by Deaf and disabled people with key people who design policy and services

### Task three

The Committee will continue active participation of fora of Deaf people, disabled people, and older people. These include:

- The UNCRPD Independent Monitoring Mechanism Disability Forum
- The Accessibility 4 Nations Group (A4N)

## **Priority 2 Ensuring a shift in our cultures**

### Task four

The Committee will seek to ensure that the development of key Strategies reflect the changes in culture outlined in New Approach. These include:

- The Programme for Government
- The development of a Disability Strategy
- The implementation of the Climate Change Act

### Task five

The Committee will seek to ensure that the new suite of Transport Plans reflect the changes in culture outlined in New Approach. These include:

- The new Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland
- The Eastern and North West Transport Plans
- The Sub Regional Transport Plans

### Task six

The Committee will seek to ensure that the next steps in developing and implementing the Bolder Vision for Belfast reflects the changes in culture outlined in New Approach.

### Task seven

The Committee will encourage the wider adoption of Disability Equality Training amongst service providers and policy makers.

### Task eight

The Committee will provide a policy position on addressing pavement parking in Northern Ireland.

### Task nine

The Committee will provide feedback to DfI Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch (ASRB) about the recent published accessibility statistics report.

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

### Task ten

The Committee will provide advice to local councils and the Department. For Communities to ensure that public realm schemes meet the highest Standards.

### Task eleven

The Committee will work with Translink and the Department for Infrastructure to ensure that new and upgraded bus and train stations meet the highest design standards with a particular focus on the Belfast Transport Hub.

### Task twelve

The Committee will work with Translink and the Department for Infrastructure to ensure that investment in buses and rolling stock meet the highest design standards.

### Task thirteen

The Committee will work with the Department for Infrastructure to ensure that Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2 is designed to the highest standards.

#### Task fourteen

The Committee will work with the Department for Infrastructure to ensure that the Belfast Cycling network is implemented to ensure the highest possible standards for people walking, wheeling or cycling.

#### Task fifteen

The Committee will work with the Consumer Council to ensure that the Electric Vehicle Task Force delivers infrastructure that is inclusive and accessible.

### **Priority 4 Ensuring end to end journeys are straightforward and accessible**

#### Task sixteen

The Committee will work with the Department for Infrastructure to ensure the Active Travel Plan for Northern Ireland makes walking, wheeling and cycling an option for all.

#### Task seventeen

The Committee will republish it's Policy Paper on Taxis as part of a wider call for change.

#### Task eighteen

The Committee will continue to input into the ongoing reviews of the Concessionary Fares Scheme and Community Transport services in Northern Ireland.

#### Task nineteen

The Committee will continue to input into research into automation including the pilot of an autonomous vehicle in Belfast.

## **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 tasks and priorities may arise requiring our input more urgently. It 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 19 Independent living** – the equal right of all disabled people to live in the community, with choices equal to others.

**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.