London Dial-a-Ride: Croydon Mobility Forum

November 2013

Service updates

- Dial-a-Ride has launched a new telephone number 0343 222 7777 which is a one stop shop for all Dial-a-Ride related queries including:
  
  o Making and cancelling bookings
  
  o Checking on the progress of your vehicle
  
  o Membership queries and updates of details
  
  o Comments, complaints and suggestions

0343 numbers are charged at a local rate like 020 numbers and are much cheaper than 0845 numbers. Most telephone providers offer call packages that allow certain types of call to be free of charge at certain times of day and 020 and 0343 numbers are included in these packages. Dial-a-Ride is changing its telephone number in line with all other TfL services. The old number will remain in operation for a few months to enable customers to get used to the change.

- Mystery traveller vacancies – TfL commissions a mystery traveller survey from a market research company called GfK Mystery Shopping. This involves Dial-a-Ride customers giving confidential feedback on what it is really like to use the service. GfK are currently looking to recruit some more regular Dial-a-Ride passengers to help with the survey. Training and on-going support is provided and a small fee is also paid for each completed questionnaire. If you are interested in becoming a mystery traveller, please contact Nicola Blackmore at GfK by email to AMTS@gfk.com or in writing to Nicola Blackmore, GfK Mystery Shopping, King Charles House, Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1JD

- Local area meetings – the next Local Area meeting for Croydon will be taking place on Tuesday 14th January at Dial-a-Ride offices in SE1 between 11am to 1pm. If you would like to attend, please contact Dial-a-Ride on the new number – 0343 222 7777 to book your place. Transport is provided for Dial-a-Ride members.
  
  o The topic for discussion at the meeting will be improving staff training. If you are unable to attend but would like to have an input, please post any comments to Training Review, London Dial-a-Ride Passenger Services, PO Box 68799, London SE1P 4RD
Updates from previous meetings

- **Dial-a-Ride posters** - Dial-a-Ride posters and flyers are currently being updated with the new telephone numbers and new versions will be available after Christmas. Copies will be provided to the Mobility Forum member who requested them at this point.

- **Booking to attend meetings at hospital venues** - Dial-a-Ride can put a note on the record of any member who are genuinely attending a hospital location for meetings and not hospital appointments. The two Mobility Forum members who raised this have had such a note placed on their records.

- **Data protection issues** – Dial-a-Ride policy has now been amended in line with the suggestion made by a Mobility Forum member so that a customer will be able to give their postcode and membership number to verify their identity when ringing from a public location, to avoid any potential security issues.

**Performance update**

Dial-a-Ride provided slightly more journeys for residents of Croydon between July and September 2013 than it did in the same period last year 2012, although the number of requests fell slightly. The proportion of journeys that were accommodated increased slightly from 88% to 89%.

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<th>Quarter 2 (July to September)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>17,466</td>
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<tr>
<td>% accommodated</td>
<td>88%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passenger cancellations</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>Completed journeys</td>
<td>13,316</td>
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Department of Adult Services, Health & Housing

Mobility Forum Report

1. Following the last meeting of the mobility forum there has been a great deal of work being undertaken in taking forward the work started by Trevor Mosses.

2. By far the greatest activity has been around the work stream concerned with the use of taxis and private hire vehicles by the council. A major piece of work has been done to review current usage in order to optimise routes (ie where vehicles run with more than one passenger where possible) and transferring the management of bookings to Croydon Transport Services (thereby taking advantage of better rates).

3. Work on the Transport Policy has also progressed at a pace. A specific work-stream is being developed to investigate alternative travel options beyond those traditional ones such mini buses and taxis including using community transport facilities, public transport, travel training and travel buddying.

Simon Wadsworth

26\textsuperscript{th} November 2013
Blue Badge Enforcement

It may be helpful to explain how we have dealt with Blue Badge abuse.

We receive a number of complaints from various sources claiming that persons are using a Blue Badge fraudulently. These complaints may come from work colleagues or neighbours who are aware that the permit is being abused or by our enforcement officers when patrolling on and off-street.

In cases where we receive reports we take details of the vehicle, its registration number and where it is being parked. Our enforcement officers would establish that the vehicle was parked at the reported location and we then contact Travel Services to ascertain the contact details of the authorised user. To ensure the complaint is genuine we will telephone the user, usually at home, to see if they are there and establish;

- Who is using the permit, and
- Are they using it with the Blue Badge Holders permission

If we are unable to contact the registered keeper no action will be taken at that time but we will continue to try to contact them.

Where we find abuse the Enforcement Manager can authorise the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice and remove the vehicle to the car pound. We are not allowed to enter the vehicle until the registered keeper arrives at the car pound, but on arrival we request that they leave the Blue Badge with us to forward to Travel Services for further investigation. Clearly, the person is not obliged to hand the permit over.

Parking Services then informs Travel Services of the actions we have taken.

If the badge is issued by another authority we will contact them to ascertain the contact details of the authorised user and the same process will take place. Parking Services then informs the issuing authority of the action we have taken.

Where our enforcement officers, when patrolling, become aware of potential permit abuse they will report their findings to the Parking Services office and the same process will take place to establish the validity. Where abuse is found to be taking place the enforcement officer can issue a Penalty Charge Notice and request removal of the vehicle.

If the driver of the vehicle returns to the vehicle while the officer is still there they will request to see the permit, try to establish whether the permit is being used correctly and if appropriate ask the person to leave it with them and advise them that the details of the incident will be forwarded to Travel Services. Clearly, the person is not obliged to hand the permit over.

The introduction of the new enforcement changes on 8 October 2013 will significantly assist in reducing the level of abuse by enabling our officers to both inspect and seize the badge either on-street, where the driver is present, or at the vehicle car pound when the registered keeper claims their vehicle back. However,
before we seize Blue Badge permits we will ensure that all investigations have taken place to determine that abuse is taking place

Thank you.

Matt Shannahan
Civil Enforcement Officer Supervisor
Croydon Accessible Transport

Report to CMF, Wednesday 27th November 2013

During the past couple of years community transport in the Boroughs of Newham, Bromley and Hammersmith & Fulham have gone out of business following withdrawal of funding from their Councils.

CAT loses all of its funding next year; does this mean that we will follow?

Not necessarily, as there are various ways we are looking to survive. We do have an important advantage over the other CTs in having good (albeit small) premises courtesy the CVA and thus indirectly LBC, for which we are grateful.

Importantly we are seeking to obtain Council contracts for school SEN runs, of which we now have 2 for Croydon and 1 for Wandsworth (on the behalf of Wandsworth CT). This means we have to prioritise this work for the sake of continuing to run the CT and accessible side of our business which is of course the reason we exist.

Secondly we are looking to work in partnership or even in the longer term to merge with other suitable bodies. We work closely with Bexley CT and are jointly bidding with them for hospital patient transport and also commercial bus work using CAT’s “O” licence.

Thirdly we are planning to hugely increase our training potential and develop a large training consortium which will cover all of east London (i.e. all north-east and south-east London). I have also developed an accessible taxi training module which, in partnership with Brighton & Hove Streamline taxis, I hope to market wider afield.

Fourthly we will be trying to engage volunteers in doing some of the core work of CAT, for example administrative and office work. We now have 2 administrative volunteers. CAT is built around volunteering and our future is to a large extent in our users’ hands. We also need suitably qualified volunteers as Trustees.

Basically we have now only 2 options; become significantly bigger and raise enough revenue to run the charity ourselves or contract to a tiny operation with just one person and their dog. We are however going in the right direction; 10 years ago grant funding was 88% of turnover and that is now 12%, with turnover increasing by 644% in the same period. I am moderately confident that we will have the time to achieve sustainability.

Rob Macchi, CEO, CAT
Croydon Public Transport News November 2013

Buses

Recent Tender Awards

54 awarded to Stagecoach Selkent (currently Metrobus) with new double deck, PVR 16 (currently 14). Start date 3 May 2014

75 awarded to Stagecoach Selkent (currently Metrobus) with new double deck, PVR 13+1 cross linked from 54 (AM peak) or 269 (PM peak). Start date 26 April 2014

T31 re-awarded to Arriva London South with existing single deck. Start date 10 May 2014.

409 peak hour journeys withdrawn through tickets are available on 64 and T33.

407 out for retender start Nov 2014

Trains

East Croydon Lifts are now open between Platforms, northern entrance will be open on Dec 5th towards Dingwall Road roundabout.

Thornton Heath Lifts now finished and open

The extra trains will extend the metro 377 electrostars will enable all 377 on trains to be 5 car or 10 cars to help solve overcrowding.

West London Line which is one of the most overcrowded on the Southern network will get extra coaches in May 2014

Gatwick Airport platform 7 opens in February enabling Gatwick Express trains not having to cross all the slow lines to get to and from the main fast lines north of Gatwick Airport

Engineering work will include over Christmas which include

Victoria Station closed 26/27th December, Purley to Coulsdon

Gatwick will be served by a bus from East Grinstead with extra trains to and from London Bridge.

Merry Christmas and New Year to all of you

Stephen Aselford
SOUTHERN RAIL

East Croydon

The new western entrance officially opens on Thursday 5th Dec although it will be in operation from early next week. This brings the footbridge, complete with lifts to all platforms into full use. The lifts on the footbridge have been in use since the end of July enabling passengers to transfer between platforms. The new entrance will have lifts, ticket machines and a drop off point.

Redhill -

Between 6th January and 18th March the lifts at Redhill station are being renewed and will be out of use for this whole period. The lifts are life expired and need new mechanisms and interiors.

At the same time a lift is being built from the main ticket office to the subway that houses the new lifts so for the first time passengers will be able to gain access from the ticket office to the platforms step free without having a long walk to the rear entrance.

We have been informing passengers by -

emailing all passengers who travel currently to/from Redhill, posters and leaflets are up round the station.

putting a message on National Rail Enquiries.

putting a message on the Disabled Persons Railcard website in the news section.

During this time there will be additional staff to assist with luggage and pushchairs up the stairs. The additional staff can also give assistance to passengers who can manage stairs. For passengers who need step free access – mainly wheelchair users or mobility impaired passengers, there is no step free access to North bound services from Redhill for this period. There is also no step free service to or from Reading on the First Great Western services as these arrive and depart from the island platform. Taxis will be provided.

There will be step free access to Southbound services from Redhill including services on the Tonbridge line. The platform where these services depart from can be accessed from the rear of the station so it would be very helpful to staff at the station if passengers requiring assistance booked in advance.

Christmas blockade –

There are major engineering works at Victoria, Gatwick and the junction between Purley and Gatwick which means that a special timetable will be in operation from Christmas Day until 1 January inclusive. These include bus replacement services. We have contacted passengers who have booked assistance in the last 6 months and those who booked last Christmas to warn them of the changes and to book assistance if they wish to travel.
London Bridge

We have a new “bendy” ramp for wheelchair users at London Bridge to assist during the building works when platform widths may be restricted and the existing ramp would not be possible to use.