

Edinburgh Accessibility Commission – Minutes

Monday 9 March 2026, 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM – Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees

1. Accessibility Commission members

Zara Todd (Chair); Councillor Stephen Jenkinson ((Vice Chair, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC)); Councillor Kayleigh Kinross-O'Neill (CEC); Councillor Neil Gardiner (CEC); Robin Wickes (Edinburgh Access Panel); Euan Hamilton (Equality and Rights Network); Elizabeth Campbell (HCL Transport); David Hunter (Living Streets Edinburgh Group); Olivia Sklenar (Lothian Buses); Kirstie Henderson (Royal National Institute of Blind People Scotland); Amanda Whitfield (Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans); David French (Spokes Lothian); Kevin Wood (Taxi Trade representatives); Amy Bailey (The Scottish Assembly); Maureen Morrison (Spinal Injuries Scotland); Eleanor Ryan-Saha (The Yard); Ken Talbot (Spokes); Michael Moore (The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association).

2. Guest attendees

3. Secretariat

Rurighd McMeddes (CEC); Deborah Paton (CEC); Micheal Mackenzie (CEC); Simon Boxall (CEC).

4. Apologies

Antonia Lee-Bapty (Euan's Guide); Matthew Freckelton (Private Hire Car representatives); Chiquita Elvin (Walking Wheeling Cycling Trust); John Lauder (Network Rail); Jon McCulley (Edinburgh Trams).

Summary of meeting and actions arising

1. Welcome and introductions

Zara Todd welcomed everyone to the meeting and each member introduced themselves.

Members shared any individual access needs relevant to the meeting.

2. Accessibility Commission – Planning for the year ahead

Rurighd McMeddes, Placemaking and Mobility Strategy and Development Manager, stated the Accessibility Commission was originally set up for an initial two-year period in March 2024. To close out by the end of the year, the Commission will provide deliverable recommendations to the Council. This year's meetings will be structured around discussing the Commission's six priorities. A final meeting may be held in-person.

Members should note that although the meetings will be structured to discuss the priorities, if there are any subjects commission members may request agenda items.

3. Q&A

The meeting was opened for questions:

One Commission member asked if this year's plan was brought forward due to the questionnaire from the previous meeting.

- Rurighd and Deborah Paton responded that the questionnaire did influence the structuring of this year's meetings.

A point was raised that it may be important for Commission members to have a choice to attend in-person or online and the inclusion of people with lived experiences may want to attend meetings with a member of staff.

- Zara responded that the Commission had previously decided to remain online, but it may be time to reevaluate how the Commission shall proceed.
- At the beginning of the Commission, several individuals asked to be involved but were rejected since they were not with a member organisation. If individuals with lived experiences attend the meetings, there should be transparency as to who is in the meetings and how they got there.

A request was made for a short report to be produced off the feedback from the questionnaire and sent to the Commission.

- Deborah Paton stated that there were results and read some of the findings off to the Commission.

Action:

- Zara requested a short summary of the questionnaire findings be sent to the rest of the Commission.

The last question asked was about information being disseminated to disabled people and how (or if) those not attached to an organisation can be involved with the Commission.

- Zara answered that the Commission was set up to be a way for the council to communicate with representatives of the disabled community. Since the Commission is not

meant to replace a structure or a network to hear from individuals, but rather to establish a plan to address accessibility in the city. Deborah reiterated these points.

4. Key Priorities Discussion

The Commission broke into three breakout rooms to discuss the following question:

What would your one priority be for the Accessibility Commission going forward?

- Group 1 stated:
 - The top priorities would be guidance on design, ability to engage with Blue Badge Holders, accessible communications and potential to ‘walk the life’ of accessibility issues as part of developing proposals.
- Group 2:
 - Ensuring design is made in a holistic way, acknowledging the needs that may conflict. Developing good solutions to these competing elements.
- Group 3:
 - Correcting the lack of consistency in accessibility and improving the involvement of the disabled community in designs.

5. Workplan Priorities Discussion

The Commission broke into breakout rooms again, to discuss what are the key actions to make meaningful change on two of the priorities:

Priority 1: Guidance on the design of the city's public streets and spaces should reflect best practice on accessibility

- Group 1:
 - New Street Design Guidance to be updated and how best practices are determined.
 - Review of whether the designs provide the benefit they were made to provide.
- Group 2:
 - Street Design Guidance needs to be reviewed, such as consideration on rental bike parking.
 - Tracking and review of deviations from the Street Design Guidance to understand their impact on the disabled community.
- Group 3:
 - Equality Impact Assessment including engagement with Access Panel.
 - Protections for pedestrians from cyclists with adequate segregation.
 - Allow Blue Badges to park in previously restricted spaces (bike lanes).

Priority 2: Maintenance of the city's public streets and spaces should RETAIN and, where possible, improve accessibility

- Group 1:
 - Focus on improvement rather than maintenance.
 - Fix the inconsistency in dropped kerbs with a standard to create more step-free streets.
 - Site management of Road works.
- Group 2:
 - Improving accessibility when utilities dig up roads and pavement, during and after works.

- Creating a mechanism for disabled people to provide feedback for old developments, improving existing infrastructure.
- Group 3:
 - Post signs for walking directions to nearest alternative bus stop at closed bus stops.
 - Equal Pavements Pledge – improve delivery of EPP.
 - Ensure maintenance is coordinated and carried out correctly, including by third parties.

Action:

- Findings from today's discussion be compiled, compared and dispersed to the Accessibility Commission.

6. Any other business

No other business.

8. Meeting Close

The next meeting will be held on the 6th of May 2026.

Zara Todd thanked everyone for their time. The meeting closed at 4:13 PM.