

## CULTURE VULTURES - BY TRAIN?

Steer Davies Gleave looks into how much of a barrier transport plays in people's participation in cultural events and activities in Scotland.

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The attitude of potential customers has not kept pace with the reality of modern public transport developments. Modern buses, for example, are a huge step forward against the stereotype view of public transport held by many cultural event visitors.



### Culture vultures – by train?

In 2007, the Scottish Government made a commitment to improve peoples' participation in cultural events and activities. Steer Davies Gleave was asked by the Scottish Government to investigate how far transport was a barrier to participation.

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Culzean Castle in Ayrshire is a popular cultural tourist destination in Scotland, and is one of eight sites chosen as case studies to explore public transport access.



Access by public transport to cultural sites and venues throughout Scotland was the focus of an in-depth study lasting one year. Other modes of transport were also investigated, including walking, cycling and community transport.

The Scottish Government had five objectives to meet:

- To map key cultural sites/events within Scotland and identify the scope and limitations of existing transport provision
- To identify key cultural sites/events that are only accessible by private transport or have limited public transport availability, and to explore the reasons for this
- For these sites/events, to assess how much of a barrier transport is perceived to be
- To explore how we might overcome existing limitations in public transport provision to cultural sites/events, including identifying innovation or good practice from Scotland and elsewhere
- To provide advice on actions to overcome limited public transport availability within different locations and the contributions different stakeholders can make

Stakeholders, including representatives from transport, tourism and the arts, along with central government, were invited to suggest case study sites or venues, and were also asked for their views on the barriers to participation in events and activities. Accessibility mapping was undertaken for approximately 40 sites and venues throughout Scotland, and eight case studies were selected for more detailed study. These were:

- Burrell Collection, Glasgow
- Culzean Castle and Country Park, Ayrshire
- Eden Court Theatre, Inverness
- Kilmartin House Museum, Argyll
- Lyth Arts Centre, near Wick
- Mull Theatre, Mull
- Pittenweem Arts Festival, Fife – an annual event, for one week in August
- Scottish Seabird Centre, North Berwick

The sites and venues were selected to reflect good and bad examples of public transport access, as well as those places where good accessibility by other forms of sustainable transport was in place. There is a lot of good practice throughout Scotland, such as the web site for Glasgow's Burrell Collection, which provides excellent public transport information, and the Scottish Seabird Centre, which offers a joint public transport and entry ticket.

At the same time, an extensive review of approaches of enhancing public transport and other sustainable modes of transport in the UK and overseas was undertaken to draw out good practice. An example of good practice in the UK is the annual music and performing arts festival at Glastonbury, which attracts in excess of 150,000 visitors each year. In order to address the logistics of moving such a large number of people, the event organisers have developed a traffic management strategy that is updated and included as part of the entertainment licence application submitted to the local council each year. The Museum of New Zealand is another great example of providing transport information,

# press cuttings

## Barriers to enhancing public transport and sustainable transport access to cultural activity throughout Scotland

Barrier	Recommendation
Lack of information and poor quality information on existing public transport services and other travel options	<p>Maximise the availability and use of existing successful public transport information resources, such as web sites, maps and leaflets</p> <p>Good sources of public transport information exist that could be promoted and utilised more effectively than at present – for example, cultural activity providers and promoters could provide links to the Traveline Scotland web site and phone number, and other marketing and local information sources</p>
Little motivation to promote and achieve access by public transport	<p>Promote the importance of public transport access for audience growth</p> <p>In many cases, complacency about current audiences and how they reach venues appears to override consideration about alternative ways to access sites other than by private car; importantly for audience figures, promoting public transport access to cultural sites and events can help to open up such attractions to those with no or limited access to a car, as well as those people keen to adopt a greener lifestyle</p>
Limited understanding and clarity over who is responsible for promoting public transport	<p>Clarify processes and responsibilities to deliver improved public transport services – and facilities – to sites and venues; cultural providers would benefit from guidance on working with local authorities or transport operators to achieve their aims</p> <p>Cultural activity providers and promoters need to work with local authorities to improve signage, the condition or availability of pathways, lighting and other infrastructure; furthermore, they need to contact transport operators to negotiate new or amended services</p>
Little networking opportunities for sharing successful initiatives or ideas	Sharing good practice initiatives between activity promoters, owners and event organisers
Limited use of integrated entry and travel ticketing options	Make greater use of smartcard technology for entry discounts and travel – for example, an entitlement card where local authorities could include cultural attractions on the card to improve access to these sites and venues, as well as linking up with travel deals
General lack of consideration of the end-to-end journey for the visitor	Cultural activity providers need to consider the whole journey experience of visitors, particularly the final leg from a public transport node to their entrance; they need to work with local authorities in particular to improve signage, condition and availability of pathways and cycleways, lighting and a general sense of safety and security for those visitors on foot or cycling
An underutilisation of community transport (CT) and demand responsive transport (DRT) solutions	Cultural activity providers need to become more aware of local solutions to CT and DRT – see barrier on lack of information – through liaising with Community Transport Association and local authorities for guidance

Table 1

such as 'How to find us' through its official web site. Access on foot and by public transport is detailed first, which includes specific bus routes and frequencies, followed by access by taxi and private car.

There are a number of barriers to enhancing public transport and sustainable transport access to cultural activity throughout Scotland – see Table 1. Many of these barriers are common to efforts to promote public transport whatever the activity, destination or group of people. Organisations involved in tourism, culture and heritage, and transport all have a role to play in reducing or eliminating these barriers.

### Conclusion

It was clear from this study that there are many areas requiring further investigation. For example, an

individual's travel behaviour and motivation to travel by public transport to sites and venues requires more examination. Negative perceptions of public transport – compared with the reality – are plentiful. Often a lack of knowledge of public transport services or the conviction that an individual would rarely consider using public transport requires investigation. In addition, mechanisms for promoting public transport access, including incentives and funding, need to be explored.

Improving access to cultural sites and venues by public transport and other less polluting modes of travel is a win-win situation. It helps to grow audiences, visitors and passenger numbers, can improve local economies and can help Government meet its CO<sub>2</sub> targets.



Information

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A full list of all stakeholders interviewed is given in the final report, which can be found on the Scottish Government's web site: [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/08/08123433/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/08/08123433/0)