



1st December 2005

David Lee-Kong
Concessionary Travel Implementation Project
Scottish Executive
2E D/S
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

**Scottish Accessible Information Forum response to:
Consultation on the Scotland-wide free bus scheme for older
and disabled people**

SAIF

Background

The Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) was set up to take forward the recommendations of the Scottish Working Group on Information Services for Disabled People and Carers in its final report *Enabling Information (1995)*.

Aims and objectives

SAIF supports the rights of disabled people and carers to have access to timely and accurate information to meet their needs. SAIF aims to improve the provision of information to disabled people and carers and make information more accessible to everyone who needs it. Rather than being forced to rely on others, disabled people should receive information directly and in their preferred format, enabling them to make informed choices and live independent lives as equal members of society.

Advisory body

SAIF acts as an advisory body to the Scottish Executive on issues relating to the accessibility of information for disabled people and carers.

Members

SAIF is made up of 21 people representing providers of information and advice and organisations of and for disabled people and carers. Over half of the membership of SAIF are disabled people or carers themselves.

Remit

The key elements of the remit of SAIF are:

- to develop and promote quality standards in information provision to disabled people and carers
- to represent and promote the interests of disabled people in having access to information services
- to promote communication between national and local information providers
- to advise the Scottish Executive on policy relating to accessible information
- to improve disabled people's access to information.

The Scotland-Wide Free Bus Scheme for Older and Disabled People

SAIF welcomes the proposal for a new Scotland-wide Free Bus Scheme for Older and Disabled People.

Information provision for users and potential users of the scheme

The provision of information which is accessible for disabled and elderly people is essential for the success of the scheme and yet there is no reference to this in any of the articles in either draft order.

Information will need to be provided in a range of formats and using a variety of mechanisms:

- about the existence of the scheme
- about the availability of the scheme
- about the eligibility criteria
- about how to access the scheme
- at the actual points of booking and using the scheme.

The SAIF **Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland** (Revised 2004) ISBN 0-9546700-1-9 may provide useful guidance on these matters.

SAIF would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the process of ensuring that information accessibility is a key and successful feature of the scheme.

As well as the Standards referred to above, SAIF has produced a range of publications which can assist service providers and they can be downloaded from the SAIF website:

<http://www.saifscotland.org.uk/publications/publicat.htm>.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Harvey
SAIF Project Officer

Scottish Accessible Information Forum
SCC
100 Queen Street
Glasgow
G1 3DN

Tel: 0141 226 5261
Email: sharvey@saifscotland.org.uk