

Appendix B
Access for Disabled People Task Group
Questionnaire Responses

- 1) What type of disability do you have? (Please circle the appropriate answer). (You do not have to answer this question if you do not feel comfortable doing so).

Mobility – 21
Sensory – 6
Combination – 5
Other – 1
No answer – 1
None - 1

- 2) How difficult is it for you to access Redditch? (Please circle the appropriate answer).

Very easy – 2
Easy – 7
Average – 14
Difficult – 4
Really difficult – 3
No answer - 2

- 3) How do you access Redditch?

Car – 19
Bus – 17
Train – 0
On foot – 1
Other – 3

- 4) How do you access entertainment venues in the town?

Car – 11
Bus – 8
Train – 0
On foot – 0
Other – 8
No answer - 6

- 5) What is your experience, as a disabled passenger, of using bus services to access the town?

Excellent – 0
Good – 3
Average – 8
Poor – 4
Very poor – 7

No answer - 10

Please provide any further information about your experience using bus services in Redditch below:

- Because of visual problems the bus station is very dark and very hard to find my way around. The frequency of buses is poor at the moment at every half hour. I'm furious to find they have been reduced even further.
- We try not to use the bus as it is easier in the car.
- Drivers are not giving disabled passengers time to sit down. Also, they are not giving enough time for disabled people to stand without being thrown when the bus stops.
- I do not use the bus as I cannot get to the bus stop.
- I am physically unable to get to the bus stop.
- It's too far for me to walk to a bus stop.
- I don't use the bus service as I can't walk to the bus stop.
- If the bus has a ramp – not stairs – and room to move around in and park properly then all is well. But I often have to wait 5 or 6 buses for this to be the case. Different drivers have different rules.
- At present access is easy because of the half hourly number 68 bus from Webheath. This is due to cease in January 2012 and will make things very inconvenient using the number 43 bus. I cannot go to events in the evening as there are no buses.
- The nearest bus stop which WAS accessible had been withdrawn. The present one is beyond my walking reach. Bus timetables are hard to find for certain areas.
- At the moment services are good. I use the number 68 bus (Webheath) and the proposed change in January is not acceptable. I know an elderly gentleman who travels into town daily to stock up at Farmfoods and Wilkinsons.
- Unless your seat is positioned in front of the bell to tell the driver which stop you wish to get off at it is difficult to get up when the bus is in motion without the risk of being thrown off balance.
- The front seats for disabled people do not provide a big enough space to sit in.
- It is RUBBISH waiting for buses that don't always turn up.
- No bus service to hospital which is disgusting as I can not get there and I have to take two buses.
- Buses to the centre are regular but erratic and never to the timetable. It is a real problem to get to the hospital – I have to go into the town centre to access transport to the hospital.
- Stressful – have you tried (to access a bus) with a walker plus bags etc. with an impassive driver that does not wait for you to sit down before driving off?
- Buses are ok and run regularly but I find it very hard to get to the hospital now the buses have been stopped.
- There is no support provided from the door to the seats!!! The drivers never let you sit down before the bus starts. The bus drivers

do not lower the step down unless they are asked and some have no lowering step.

- I feel that bus services are getting worse – i.e. there are no bus services to the Alexandra Hospital from Matchborough. A lot of the buses do not have a lowering platform.

6) What is your experience, as a disabled passenger, of using taxis in the town?

Excellent – 2
Good – 6
Average – 4
Poor – 3
Very poor – 0
No answer – 17

Please provide any further information about your experience using taxis in Redditch below:

- Taxis are easily obtainable and cheap, although I fear taxi drivers aren't making a living out of it. It's good for the punters not for the drivers.
- We try not to use taxis as it is easier in the car.
- The drivers are very helpful and will put the wheelchair or shopping into the car boot. The majority of drivers will also carry the shopping to your door for you.
- You can be dropped off outside the mobility office with easy access to powered equipment.
- I have had use of one to go on holiday with my husband.
- I only use private hire.
- The taxis are good and I don't usually have any problem taking my wheelchair.
- A good service is provided.
- I do not use taxis.
- I find most taxi firms obliging, some providing a taxi with higher seating. They are good for access and egress. The drivers are accommodating and understanding. The cost limits my use of taxis. Their responses to requests for pick ups are very good.
- Most of the time I use Dial a Ride.
- There are not enough taxis for disabled people to travel in.
- I don't have to use them very often.
- I can't afford to travel by taxi.
- I do not use taxis due to the cost being too high. Also, the cars they use are not good for disabled people.
- I don't use taxis.
- I never use taxis as I cannot afford them.
- I do not use taxis.

7) If you drive, how would you rate disabled parking provision in the town?
(Please circle the appropriate answer).

Excellent – 1
Good – 7
Average – 8
Poor – 7
Very poor – 0
Don't drive – 2
No answer – 7

8) How suitable for your needs are the pavements in Redditch?

Excellent – 1
Good – 2
Average – 15
Poor – 8
Very unsuitable – 4
No Answer – 2

9) What actions do you think could be taken to improve disabled access to the town?

- The steps at the back of Marks and Spencers are awful for people with visual problems (going into the old market square). There is no definition of the steps showing at all. Access is no longer available from the train station to the bus station without crossing the road.
- I would like to see more disabled parking for people with wheelchairs.
- More parking for disabled people.
- Keep shopmobility going and reconsider Sunday opening especially for working people.
- More dropped kerbs.
- Could be better parking facilities for disabled people when they want to visit the Palace Theatre.
- There are uneven areas. Some shops do not have wheelchair access.
- Retention of the half hourly number 68 bus to Webheath.
- Attention to pavement conditions. It is often reminiscent of a fairground "Cake Walk". Dropped pavements provided by homeowners for car access. The ex Lodge Farm School "dropped" pavement can be dangerous as it is not low enough.
- Better parking.
- A lift from the bus station level to the shopping centre or a ramp situated at the train end of the bus station rather than an uphill walk to the access ramp at the top end.
- More lowered pavements for easy access for wheelchairs and wheeled walking frames.

- There needs to be a complete overhaul of disabled parking around Smallwood Hospital.
- More parking.
- Repair the paths and fit drop kerbs for disabled scooters.
- I can't think of anything yet.
- I can't walk – I have to use a scooter.
- Put the buses on that have lowering platforms. Repair the footpaths. Put drop kerbs in for people that ride in their mobility scooters.

10) Is there anything further that you would like to add for the Councillors' consideration about access to Redditch for people with disabilities?

- As the roof leaks in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre staff are constantly leaving buckets out to catch the drips. I frequently fall over them (the buckets) as I can't see them. This is a very poor environment for a visually impaired person and very embarrassing.
- I am sick of people using disabled spaces and then walking briskly to the shops. These people appear to have a blue badge but do they really need one? I then find all the spaces are taken up and we need the space to get a wheelchair out of the car, whereas these other people do not. It infuriates me. This also happens in the supermarkets.
- Make access to shops better for us.
- Checking on people who abuse the parking.
- I only ever use Car Park 3 as I have to use a scooter from shopmobility. Shopmobility is an absolute joy to use and helps me to get to shops, banks etc. The staff are fantastic!
- I personally find the disabled toilets hard to access alone as I have use of only one hand. So I open the door and by the time I can move the wheel chair the door has closed again.
- Provide free parking to the over 80s. I'm 87 and the parking is expensive so I seldom use the car. Plus later bus services.
- The aisles in some shops are very narrow. Redditch Kingfisher Shopping Centre has good mobility areas. There is occasional seating for the walking disabled. I found the journey from the Library to Shopmobility very taxing when trying to walk the distance. Without a scooter access is expensive or impossible.
- There are not enough seats in the shopping area – none at all round by Debenhams. Older people, whether they are disabled or not, need to sit down and rest occasionally.
- Rarely visit at night for entertainment.
- More visual information would be helpful for people with hearing disabilities – I would also like to see this in the Doctors' Surgeries. Potholes, uneven surfaces and an excess of leaves (Oakenshaw Road area) makes it impossible to use a wheelchair.
- Wider aisles in the shops.
- Free car park especially at the hospital.

- Bus Services (First) give priority to baby buggies over wheelchair users – this is unacceptable.
- If you go around the town and surrounding estates and try and get through barriers, kerbs, steps etc. in either a mobility scooter or a wheelchair it is impossible unless you risk life and limb in the road!!!

11) Would you like to receive a copy of the Councillors' final report?

(The record of names and contact details is being maintained separately).

Yes – 9

No – 23

Total number of responses Received - 32