

## **WMCA Bus Access Standards** – *the so called 400/700 metre standards*

Even before bus de-regulation in October 1986 as the bus operator the West Midlands PTE was using the 400 Metre daytime and 700 Metre accessibility standards to evaluate proposed bus route changes. This process continued in an informal way after de-regulation in October 1986 when West Midlands PTE became a bus service tendering Authority.

It wasn't until September 1989 Members formally adopted the 400 Metre daytime and 700 Metre accessibility Standards as Policy which are referred to as the "Service Quality Standards". From this date West Midlands PTE was asked to undertake a systematic check was done across the whole of West Midlands to identify any the gaps in the standards and where practical provide solutions to ensure the standards are met. Once that process had been undertaken any bus service change to the network are evaluated against the standards to access whether a subsidised facility is required.

From September 1989 until April 2014 the minimum requirement for any sort of subsidised bus service was five passengers a trip or per hour. From April 2014 this requirement was increased to at least eight passengers.

The standards are split into four categories and what is used to evaluate the implications of all changes to bus services (and is based on current minimum demand standards of eight a trip and that bespoke school services are not subsidised)

### **DEMAND**

Any journey must have at least **EIGHT** passengers to provide a feeder service so users can interchange. If there are more than **TEN** per journey then where possible a direct facility is provided

Within the demand standard services are categorised in the following order of priorities, to be provided subject to available finance.

1. Journeys to work
2. Shopping and Medical journeys
3. Evenings
4. Sundays
5. Town and City Centre distributor services
6. Night Services
7. Bank Holidays

There is no specific policy for the provision of subsidised Boxing Day Bus Services other than Bank Holiday services are the lowest priority for a subsidised service

### **ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In the built up area no one should be more than 400 metres from a bus service between 0700 and 1900 and within 700 metres other times. In areas of lower density, 700 metres standard applies.

The above distances are reduced by 20% to 320 metres and 560 metres in areas of severe gradients or where a high proportion of elderly people or people with mobility difficulties reside.

Accessibility in this context relates to the ease of potential passengers being able to access a bus service at particular times of the day at various locations.

**Residential Areas** - maximum desirable walking distance to bus services at different times and localities, taking into account both gradients and the elderly.

**Hospitals** - minimum standards of service calculated according to total trips per annum using all modes of transport, to individual sites.

**Major Urban Centres** - arrangements should be equivalent to or better than those provided for car users.

**Suburban District Shopping Centres** - to be served as closely as road layout will allow during shop opening.

**Places of Entertainment and Recreation** - attractions within 400 metres of a trunk service to be served by public transport.

**Rural Areas** - shows maximum distance from homes of passengers to a bus stop.

## FREQUENCY

Relates to frequency of bus services over particular geographic areas.

**Mondays to Saturdays** - minimum standard frequency for:

Continuously built up areas: between 0700 and 1900 is two journeys per hour.

Low density residential areas: between 0700 and 1900 is one journey per hour.

Rural areas: between 0700 and 1900 is one journey per hour.

**Sundays** - services in all areas before midday and 1900 to be provided according to demand.

**Bank Holidays** - services will be provided at a level no higher than that provided on such days by commercial operators.

## VALUE FOR MONEY REQUIREMENTS

Research will identify demand for services which are deemed to be socially necessary.

Specific Journey Requirements - per trip

8 people or less:	no service
8-10 people:	feeder facility considered
more than 10 people:	through facility considered

Regular Journey Requirements - per hour

8 people or less:	no service
8-10 people:	feeder facility considered
more than 10 people:	minimum hourly service