Chapter Two:

Accessibility Vision for Greater Nottingham

Overview

2.1. Accessibility depends on the inter-relationship of three components: key populations/user groups (origins), key services (destinations) and the physical and virtual networks that link these together (e.g. transport and communications). The accessibility planning process described in the DfT's *Guidance* [1] sets out a new approach to ensure access issues are considered in the development and delivery of essential services, and offers all partners the opportunity to quantify and evidence how accessible key services are to those users groups who are most in need of those services.

2.2. Accessibility planning techniques are now being used to identify gaps and opportunities across the wider corporate planning, spatial planning and service delivery agendas. The initial stage of the accessibility planning process for Greater Nottingham has directed the development of Local Accessibility Action Plans. Development and delivery of these Action Plans will be lead by the appropriate highway authority in partnership with the relevant organisations.

2.3. Accessibility has always been a core element of the authorities' transport strategy, in particular with regard to the development of the City Council's Bus Accessibility Strategy first published in October 2003 and the County Council's role as a pilot for access to work in rural areas:

- As a Beacon Council for Better Access and Mobility in 2002-2003, Nottinghamshire County Council was asked to participate in the DfT's Accessibility Planning pilots, which started in June 2003. The Bassetlaw district of North Nottinghamshire was selected for the rural access to employment pilot. The pilot trialled the proposed methodology for accessibility planning, leading to refinement of the process and feeding into the guidance issued to authorities on accessibility planning. The pilot provided County Council officers and partners with experience of the accessibility planning methodology, which has been useful in wider work in building partnerships in the development of the Greater Nottingham Framework Accessibility Strategy;

- The Framework Accessibility Strategy also draws on a detailed study of accessibility across the City conducted for the *Accessibility Planning For Bus Travel*[2]. This work is being taken forward through the City and County Councils' Greater Nottingham Bu Strategy 2006 -2011.

2.4. The LTP2, the Accessibility Strategy and the Greater Nottingham Bus Strategy have therefore continued to build on this approach:

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1 Guidance on Accessibility Planning in Local Transport Plans, Department for Transport, December 2004
2 Bus Accessibility, Accessibility Planning for Bus Travel, Nottingham City Council, 2003

The Accessibility Vision for Greater Nottingham

The overall vision for the Greater Nottingham Accessibility Strategy is to integrate the delivery and development of high quality core services and transport networks to create a sustainable, accessible and healthy living environment.
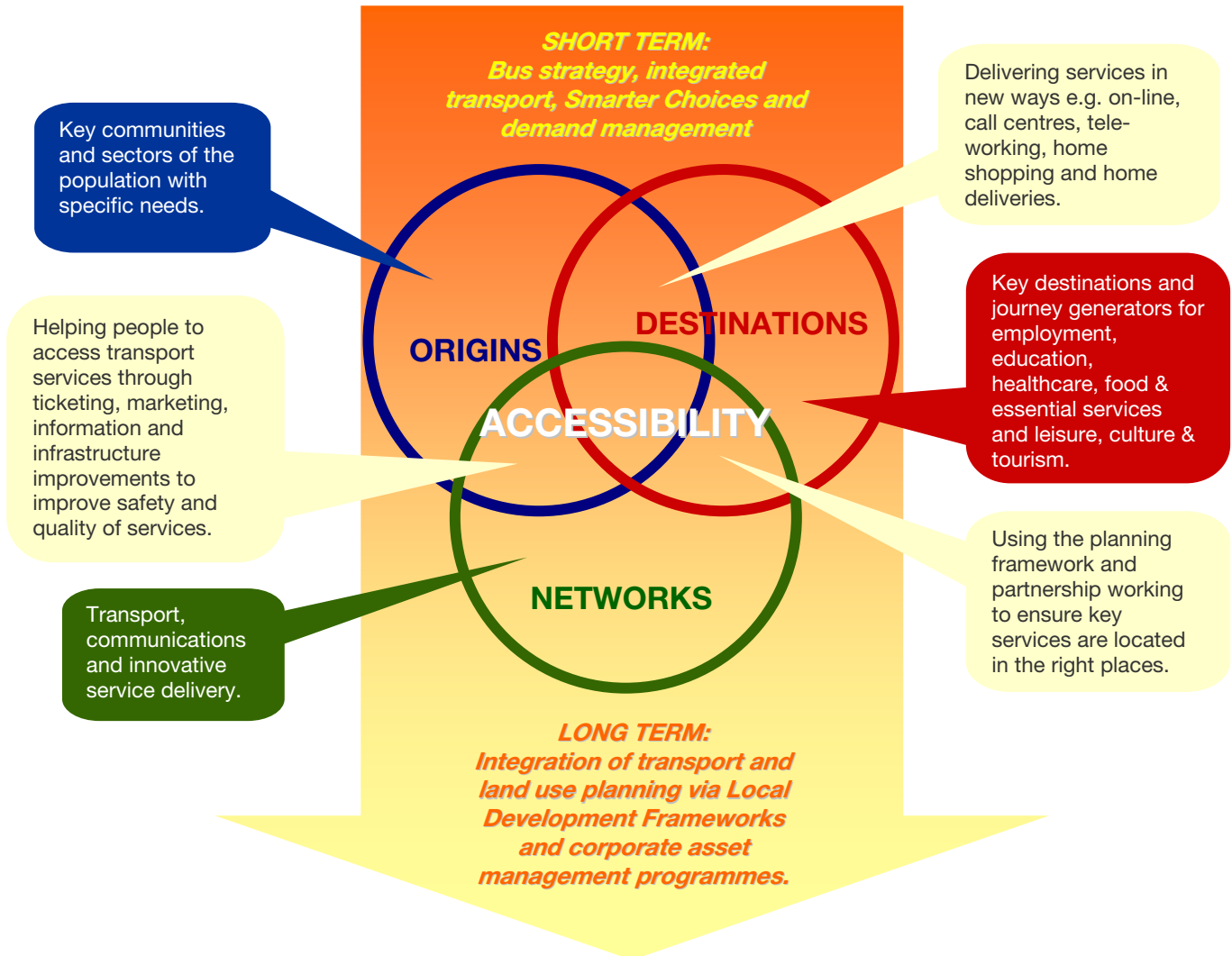
This will be achieved by:

- Partnership working to ensure strategies and programmes are working together to offer the most effective services, in the right places, to those that need them most;
- Sustaining a vibrant economy to ensure communities in Greater Nottingham have the maximum opportunities to live rich and fulfilling lives;
- Creating sustainable communities where a full range of high quality key services are readily available to all.

2.5. The City and County Councils as local transport authorities have a lead role to play in this by:

- Offering high quality, safe and accessible transport choices for all, and
- Ensuring long-term integration of transport and land-use planning.

The vision and how the different aspects of accessibility interrelate to deliver this is summarised in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Greater Nottingham Accessibility Strategy Vision

SHORT TERM:
Bus strategy, integrated transport, Smarter Choices and demand management

Key communities and sectors of the population with specific needs.

Delivering services in new ways e.g. on-line, call centres, tele-working, home shopping and home deliveries.

Helping people to access transport services through ticketing, marketing, information and infrastructure improvements to improve safety and quality of services.

ORIGINS

DESTINATIONS

ACCESSIBILITY

Key destinations and journey generators for employment, education, healthcare, food & essential services and leisure, culture & tourism.

NETWORKS

Transport, communications and innovative service delivery.

Using the planning framework and partnership working to ensure key services are located in the right places.

LONG TERM:
Integration of transport and land use planning via Local Development Frameworks and corporate asset management programmes.

2.6.   The Vision explains how the authorities aim to improve accessibility by improving the interface between key communities (origins), key location and services (destinations) and transport and communication networks (networks) by:

- Making access to transport services easier through ticketing, marketing, travel information and infrastructure improvements to improve safety, quality of services and perceptions of public transport;

- Reducing the need for people to travel by supporting the delivery of services in new ways through the Smarter Choices programme: e.g. on-line; call centres; tele-working, home-working and home deliveries;

- Using the planning process, partnership working and accessibility mapping to ensure key services are located in the right places and with the right facilities to create an environment in which it will be possible to deliver the Smarter Choices agenda including the development of school and workplace travel plans.

2.7.	The key elements of the joint Bus Strategy, the Smarter Choices agenda and demand management approaches are already well established through the first Local Transport Plan and so their impacts will be felt earlier on in the second Plan period. However it will take longer to deliver improved accessibility through the planning process and more integrated planning of service delivery.

2.8.	The Greater Nottingham Accessibility Strategy sets out five strategic objectives to achieve this vision:

Objective 1: Employment: Improve access to employment for the most disadvantaged communities;

Objective 2: Health: Reduce the health inequalities gap by improving access to healthcare provided by core health services (hospitals, NHS Direct, GP services);

Objective 3: Education: Improve access to education and training opportunities from early years through primary, and secondary education and on to further education in response to Education White Paper and the Extended Schools agenda;

Objective 4: Food and essential services: Ensure access to a range of essential services including a choice of healthy affordable food outlets by maintaining the viability of local and district centres;

Objective 5: Leisure, culture and tourism: Ensure access to a range of leisure, culture and tourism opportunities for residents and visitors through marketing and information opportunities and local infrastructure improvements.

2.9.	Priority action areas have been identified for each of the strategic objectives using information gathered in the strategic accessibility assessment stage as set out in Chapter 8. This builds on existing work programmes and has been developed to respond to work with partners and significant development programmes in the accessibility theme areas. Each of the priority action areas is at a different stage of development. The Local Accessibility Action Plan Programme 2006/7 – 2010/11 in Chapter 9 sets out the timetable for the accessibility analysis and development and implementation of Local Accessibility Action Plans for each priority. A number of Local Accessibility Action Plans have been included in the Accessibility Strategy for priority areas where work programmes are already delivering accessibility benefits or where opportunities for early action have been identified using the pro-forma given in Appendix B. These will act as pilots for the roll-out of the accessibility planning process from 2006/7 onwards and are set out in the accompanying Local Accessibility Action Plan document.