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SQPS

Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme
Nottingham City Centre



A Bus and Coach Operators Guide

Effective from 2 May 2010



What is SQPS?

SQPS is short for Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme and is a legally binding partnership between Nottingham City Council and local bus operators.

Over the last few years the Council has carried out improvements to bus stop infrastructure in the City Centre, including providing modern clean shelters, electronic displays, raised kerbs and public transport information. The Council is keen to protect this level of investment and will therefore be introducing minimum quality service standards for any bus operator that wishes to use the facilities in place, from Sunday 2nd May 2010.

Furthermore, the planned growth of the City and the surrounding area will inevitably place additional strain on bus stops which will need to be managed in an effective way. To help us achieve this, the Council will be introducing a slot booking system for all bus stops within the City Centre.

Other Bus Quality Partnership Schemes have been introduced in Nottingham as voluntary agreements. However, these lack the power of enforcement and do not prevent other bus operators from providing a lower quality of service. The SQPS will help us to create and maintain a higher standard of service for all bus users.





What is the City Council's role?

As you may be aware, the Council has provided a large number of bus facilities in the City Centre over the last few years, to improve the environment for bus users. The facilities include:-

- Installing modern clean, illuminated bus shelters for passenger comfort
- Providing electronic displays showing either real-time or scheduled information
- A bus stop information pole with up to date timetable information and co-ordinated mapping, along with bus stop plate information
- Installing raised kerbs to improve accessibility for passengers
- The introduction of a slot booking system to effectively manage the use of City Centre stops
- A new Public Transport Information Centre at Broadmarsh Bus Station providing information for all bus operators in the City Centre
- A free Centrelink service which operates between Victoria Bus Station and Broadmarsh Bus Station via the City Centre

What is the bus operators role?

If the bus operators wish to use the bus facilities provided by the Council then they will be required to meet a minimum standard of service. In return the Council undertakes to maintain the facilities that have been provided. The standards of service will include:-

- All services to be operated by low floor vehicles to improve accessibility*
- Minimum engine standards for all vehicles, with higher standards for the most frequent services
- Improvements to customer care and driver training to improve the image of bus services for passengers

* exemptions will apply to high quality coaches used as local services.





Will passengers notice anything different?

Most passengers won't notice anything very different as to how bus services operate currently. The main changes "on street" are that the Council has changed some of the existing BUS STOP markings to BUS STAND. A bus stand will allow local services to layover for up to 10 minutes, whilst a bus stop will allow local services to layover for a maximum of 2 minutes.

How does the Slot Booking System operate?

To regulate the number of buses using bus stands and bus stops, a slot booking system will be introduced. The main point to note is that bus stands and bus stops will be treated differently under this scheme. Bus stands will be used as terminal layover points for bus services, while bus stops will be available for passing bus services to use. Bus stops will usually have an upper limit of 20 scheduled departures each hour operating from them, but with no specific departure times being imposed on operators. At bus stands the situation will be more rigid in order to allow all services a reasonable period of layover time. 27 stops will be designated as bus stands comprising about one-quarter of all stops within the SQPS area. At most bus stands there will be 12 departure slots in each 60-minute period.

At these stands each slot will be 5-minutes long and a service may be scheduled to arrive and leave the stand at any point within its slot. In circumstances where the slot immediately before your departure slot has not been booked, you may remain on-stand for up to 10 minutes and this arrangement will have been agreed between the operator and the Council with appropriate arrival and departure times shown on your scheduled timetable.

The following example shows the pattern of departure slots for one stand over a 60-minute period between 10.00 am and 11.00 am :-

Mins past	1000-1100
01-05	Service 91
06-10	Service 97
11-15	Service 91
16-20	Available
21-25	Service 91
26-30	Service 83
31-35	Service 91
36-40	Service 97
41-45	Service 91
46-50	Available
51-55	Service 91
56-00	Service 83

A bus should not be scheduled to arrive on stand before the start of its slot. It should be scheduled to leave the stand at or before the end of its slot.



If your journey is not operating on time it must still try to use its normal bus stand but should keep obstruction to any other services trying to use the stand at the same time to an absolute minimum as they will have a slot booked there themselves. In these circumstances, the delayed journey should not remain on-stand any longer than is absolutely necessary.

What about coaches?

Coaches will still be allowed within the scheme area. However, as the Council will be restricting the use of all bus stops and bus stands to local services only, coaches will not be permitted to use them.

Boarding and alighting of passengers can still be carried out on both single or double yellow lines, providing the driver is not causing an obstruction. However, once the passengers are off the coach, then the coach must move off. If the coach turns up early and the passengers are not ready for collection the coach cannot wait. Any vehicle deemed to be just waiting may be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

A number of coach boarding and alighting points are shown on the map for the main tourist attractions, which are not used by local services. Furthermore, the Broadmarsh Bus Station is also available for use, although a departure charge will be payable, and you will need to book in advance. Contact details for booking Broadmarsh Bus Station can be found on the reverse of this leaflet

Who enforces the SQPS?



The Council is responsible for the enforcement of all of the bus stand clearways, bus stop clearways, bus lanes and bus gates. The Civil Enforcement Officers who are employed on behalf of the Council will enforce contraventions of bus stand clearways and bus stop clearways.

Enforcement of bus lanes and bus gates will be carried out using the latest CCTV technology.

The Council will employ Bus Facilities Officers to ensure that bus operators are complying with the standards of service. Incidents of non-compliance will be monitored and, if necessary, will be reported to the Traffic Commissioner. The Traffic Commissioner can enforce compliance standards on bus operators and also impose penalties for non-compliance.



Operators involved in the SQPS

K & H Doyle Coaches

Littles Travel

Marshalls of Sutton-on-Trent

Nottingham City Transport

Nottingham Community Transport

Premiere Travel

Skills

Trent Barton

Veolia Transport

Yourbus