



Dial-a-Bus (Edinburgh): 'Quality of Life' Survey 2016

Survey Results

July 2016

v.1.0



Introduction

HCL surveyed 100 Edinburgh Dial-a-Bus passengers to ascertain their opinions on the level of service they had received using the service. The survey consisted of 20 questions and gave customers the opportunity to express their thoughts and provide any comments on the service's availability, fares, drivers, vehicles, bookings, office staff, complaints procedure, accessibility and safety. Out of the 100 passengers surveyed, 73 responses were received¹. This report highlights the responses of those who participated along with any comments that were included. Some of the results from this year's survey have been compared against the feedback received from the Edinburgh DAB 2008 questionnaires.

Key Points

- ✚ The majority of passengers who use the service are very satisfied with the availability of trips (81%), while the remainder were reasonably satisfied (19%).
- ✚ All passengers who responded to the survey were satisfied with destinations offered by Dial-a-Bus, however a few did comment that that they would like more variety.
- ✚ 88% of participants stated they were very satisfied with Dial-a-Bus fares and 12% advised they were reasonably satisfied.
- ✚ Passengers are happy with the cleanliness of the DAB vehicles.
- ✚ The majority of passengers rated Door-through-Door as the most important aspect of the service.
- ✚ All of the participants were satisfied with the level of service provided by DAB drivers and positive feedback was provided (see 6.1).
- ✚ When questioned on the courtesy of office staff, 65 out of 73 responses of very satisfied were received.
- ✚ A number of passengers found difficulty with the steps in the DAB vehicles, commenting that they were too high.
- ✚ Some of the customer suggestions to improve the service included a wider variety of destinations and choice of day, more buses, an increase in availability and lower steps in the vehicles.

¹ At the time of results collation, 73 responses to the Edinburgh DAR survey had been received.

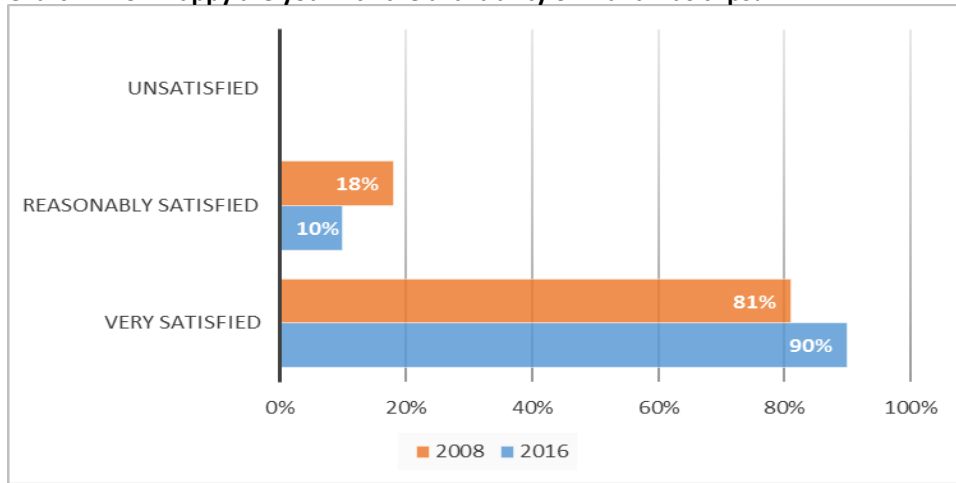


Survey Results

1. Availability (Question 1)

Passengers were asked how happy they were on the availability of Dial-a-Bus trips. The presented options were listed as Very Satisfied, Reasonably Satisfied or Unsatisfied. Out of the 73 persons who responded, 64 were very satisfied with the availability of trips, with 7 passengers reasonably satisfied. Two participants did not respond to this question. See Chart 1 for a breakdown of the responses in comparison to the Edinburgh DAB 2008 survey results.

Chart 1 - How happy are you with the availability of Dial-a-Bus trips?



1.1 Comments

A few of the passengers included comments with their answer to question one, these are as follows:

Comments	Survey Response
Excellent Service	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Can be difficult to book sometimes but the drivers are wonderful, pleasant and helpful	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Excellent, very satisfied	<i>Very Satisfied</i>

2. Destinations (Question 1a)

Passengers were asked how happy they were with the destinations available on Dial-a-Bus. All 73 participants answered this question, with 58 reporting they were very satisfied and 15 answering reasonably satisfied. A number of passengers provided comments and suggestions in answer to this.

2.1 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
Would be nice to try other shopping areas, but satisfied	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Would like bus to go to Asda one week and Morrison's at Priesthill the next.	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Having booked the bus I would like a phone number to notify the driver on the morning of the booking if you are unwell and have to cancel	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Would like a change of shops	<i>Very Satisfied</i>

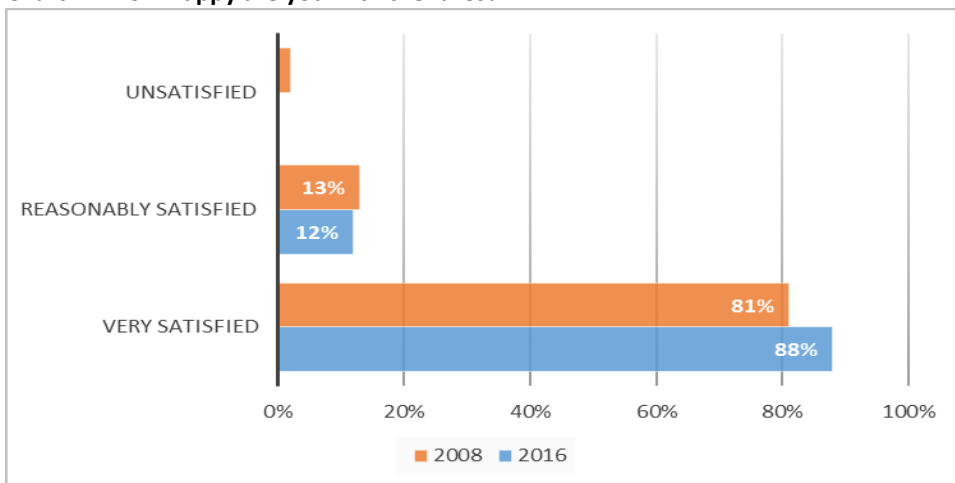


Wish you had another day available for Morrisons	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Although Morrison’s is fine, perhaps Lidl, Asda or Aldi could be considered.	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Shopping would be a big problem without DAB	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
We would like a change of supermarket sometimes	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Sava Centre access is no longer easy for folk with mobility issues	<i>Reasonably Satisfied</i>
I would prefer another store instead of Morrisons as the variety is not good.	<i>Reasonably Satisfied</i>
I would like to go to another supermarket occasionally instead of Morrisons	<i>Reasonably Satisfied</i>

3. Fares (Question 2)

Passengers were asked how happy they were with the Dial-a-Bus Fares, they responded as follows:

Chart 2 – How happy are you with the fares?



As highlighted in Chart 2, all of those surveyed in 2016 were happy with fares, with 100% of passengers advising they were very or reasonably satisfied. This is consistent with the previous Dial-a-Ride survey (2008) when the majority of participants, with the exception of one, answered very satisfied or reasonably satisfied when asked if they were happy with fares.

3.1 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
Excellent Value	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
You would be justified in charging more	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Worth More	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Very fair price for the service	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Feel we could donate more to fares	<i>Very Satisfied</i>



4. Service Needs (Question 3)

Question 3 asked customers what they considered to be most important to them when using the service. Their responses are highlighted in the following table, please note that some participants ticked more than one answer.

Option	Total
Door Through Door	50
Reliability	14
Vehicle Accessibility	10
Vehicle Comfort	6

5. Dial-a-Bus Service Use (Question 4,5 and 6)

Customers were questioned on whether or not the service enables them to do things without having to rely on others. Out of the 73 survey responses, 78% (57 participants) felt that the service did help them to do things without having to rely on others, 14% (10 participants) felt it did not and 8% (6 participants) left the question blank or responded as unsure.

Question 5 of the survey asked when you use the Dial-a-Bus service are you able to get out and about and interact with others. The majority of passengers answered yes to this (82%), with 7% of passengers advising that the service did not enable them to get out and interact with others. The remainder of the participants were unsure or left the question blank.

Passengers were also asked if when they used the service they were able to do things that they would be otherwise unable to do (question 6). Out of the 73 responses, 60 answered yes, 7 people answered no and 8 passengers were unsure or left the question blank. The comments to these three questions are listed on below:

5.1 Comments

Question 4 – When you use Dial-a-Bus are you able to do things without having to rely on others?

Comments	Survey Response
Can shop knowing driver escort is there to help	Yes
I need DAB or would not be able to do my shopping	Yes
I am very self-reliant, I don't need anyone with the help of DAB	Not Sure
I appreciate the drivers help to bring the shopping up to the house	Yes
I need help stepping on and off the bus	No
I need assistance to get on and off the bus	No
I need the driver to carry my shopping up the stairs	No
Sometimes if my leg is stiff I need a helping hand	Not Sure
I am very grateful to the help given to me by the drivers when I am struggling	Yes
Very helpful staff	Yes
Driver always helps me up the step and straps me in	Yes
I rely on drivers to get me on and off the bus	Not Sure


Question 5 - When you use the service are you able to get out and about and interact with others?

Comments	Survey Response
Not as much as I would like	Yes
Everyone is pleasant	Yes
If it wasn't for DAB I would be stuck at home	Yes
I use a walking aid	Not Sure

Question 6 - When you use the service are you able to do things that you would otherwise be unable to do?

Comments	Survey Response
Mobility is very limited, so I am unable to go any further	No
Peace of mind shopping	No
It enables me to buy a monthly food supply	No
Could not get my shopping without DAB help. Helps me be independent.	Yes
Do my weekly shopping as I am unable to carry shopping.	Yes
I am unable to walk to bus stops	Yes
I depend on DAB for getting my shopping as it is a 'door through door' service.	Yes
Can still manage thanks to family and friends	No

6. Drivers & Vehicles (Questions 7 -11)

Customers were asked how happy they were with the attitude and courtesy of Dial-a-Bus drivers (question 7). 71 of those passengers who responded advised they were either very satisfied or reasonably satisfied with the drivers. Two participants did not answer this question. A number of passengers included comments with their answer to this question, these are as follows:

6.1 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
All genuine and courteous, very helpful	Very Satisfied
The drivers are wonderful	Very Satisfied
Drivers are so helpful	Very Satisfied
Very Pleasant and caring	Very Satisfied
Nothing seems to be any bother to them	Very Satisfied
The drivers have the patience of saints at times	Very Satisfied
The drivers are super	Very Satisfied
All drivers are very, very good	Very Satisfied
All drivers are wonderful and very kind and helpful	Very Satisfied
Lovely and polite	Very Satisfied
Excellent	Very Satisfied



Questions 8 and 9 enquired if the driver was displaying identification and if the passenger was required to wear a seat belt. The results are provided in the following table:

Question	Yes	No	Don't Remember
8. Was the driver displaying identification?	56	1	13
9. Did you have to wear a seat belt?	73	-	-

All of the passengers who responded to the survey advised that they were required to wear a seat belt whilst travelling in a Dial-a-Bus vehicle. When asked if the driver wore identification, 56 participants responded yes and one answered no. The remaining passengers advised they either didn't notice or could not remember.

The survey asked if the vehicle arrived at the time requested, with participants able to answer before/after 15 minutes or before/after 30 minutes. Out of the 73 responses, all advised the service arrived before/after 15 minutes of the requested time. The comments received regarding the arrival time of vehicles are shown in the table below:

6.2 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
Always on time	Before/after 15 minutes
Drivers try very hard to be on time but sometimes passengers hold them up as we are all slow	Before/after 15 minutes
Normally on time	Before/after 15 minutes
If a new driver, they change their route due to not knowing the area - hence the lateness	Before/after 15 minutes
Always on time	Before/after 15 minutes

Question 11 related to vehicle cleanliness and asked customers if they would rate Dial-a-Bus vehicles as clean, very clean or dirty. None of the 73 participants were dissatisfied with cleanliness, with 62 advising the vehicles were very clean and 11 rating them as clean. There was one comment on this issue, 'could do with a newer bus, one is very old and rusty'.

7. Office/ Office Staff (Questions 12 – 15)

Participants were asked how satisfied they were with the courtesy of office staff when making a booking. Sixty five survey responses advised customers were very satisfied with office staff and six persons were reasonably satisfied. Two participants did not answer this question. The comments received are shown in the table below:

7.1 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
Great Service	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Greatly improved	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Courtesy with a capital C, very satisfied	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
Everyone is very nice	<i>Very Satisfied</i>
I've booked a few times but not been on the list	<i>Reasonably Satisfied</i>
Sometimes they speak too quickly/mumble	<i>Reasonably Satisfied</i>



Questions 13 and 14 enquired about participant's experiences when contacting the office via telephone, asking was the phone engaged and how often it rang before being answered. The results to both these questions are outlined in the table below. Please note, some of the participants did not answer these questions.

Question	Less than Twice	More than Twice
13. Was the telephone engaged when you rang the office?	55	17
	Less than Five Times	More Than Five Times
14. How often did the telephone ring before you were answered?	49	12

7.2 Comments

Question 13 - Was the telephone engaged when you rang the office?

Comments	Survey Response
If they are very busy the phone is sometimes engaged	<i>Less Than Twice</i>
Need to phone after 10am. You can't book more than a week in advance so usually book again the day after I have done my shopping - Go on Thurs book on Fri am.	<i>Less Than Twice</i>
Soon after 10am usually my call is not answered, but my number is somehow unrecorded. If someone rings me back quite soon this is ok	<i>More Than Twice</i>
I phone in the afternoons as the mornings are too busy	<i>More Than Twice</i>
Varies, sometimes answer is immediate	<i>More Than Twice</i>
It is sometimes very busy	<i>More Than Twice</i>
Not engaged, just not answered although it was within the opening hours. I believe a new phone system is getting installed but I prefer to speak to a person rather than leave a message	<i>Less Than Twice</i>
May not be engaged, but occasionally unanswered	<i>Less Than Twice</i>
Sometimes more than twice but usually first or second call	<i>More Than Twice</i>
It's got a lot better	<i>More Than Twice</i>
Phone is always busy	<i>More Than Twice</i>

Participants were asked when they first registered to use the services, when did they receive a telephone call or letter to acknowledge the receipt (question 15). Out of the 73 passengers who took part in the survey, 44 advised they received a response within seven working days with two people advising their acknowledgement was outwith seven working days. The remaining 27 participants either did not answer this question or could not remember as it was so long ago.

8. Complaints

Question 16 of the survey asked customer's if they had cause for complaint how they found the procedure. Out of the 73 participants, 10 people had previously had cause for complaint. All of these persons advised that they found the procedure satisfactory.



9. Vehicle Accessibility (Questions 17 -20)

In question 17, survey participants were asked does the Dial-a-Bus service meet your needs. Sixty six passengers answered yes to this question, two passengers advised that the service did not meet their needs and five declined to answer. The comments received in answer to this question are shown in the table below:

9.1 Comments

Comments	Survey Response
I am always last home	Yes
Very much	Yes
Yes, although I still get out and about thanks to friends and taxi service	Yes
I need assistance to access vehicles	No
Not frequent enough	No

Questions 18 and 19 of the survey focused on vehicle accessibility. Out of the 73 participants, 62 advised they were satisfied with the accessibility of Dial-a-Bus vehicles. Three people advised they were unsatisfied commenting that lower steps would be helpful and sometimes the vehicles were difficult to get into.

Participants were also asked what aspects of the vehicles they find to be problematic, the results are as follows:

18. Did you find any of the following a problem?	
Steps	32
Ramp	1
Seating	1
Seat Belts	5
None	0

As highlighted in the table, 32 participants found the steps problematic, commenting that they were too high or steep. Several advised they had difficulty using the steps and needed help from the driver. There was also feedback received that the ramp was sometimes difficult to use due to shaky handles and the seatbelts could be problematic to clip in.

Question 20 concentrated on wheelchair users and whether or not they felt safe and secure whilst using the Dial-a-Bus service. Out of the 73 participants 4 responded to this question, with 3 passengers advising they felt safe and one answering that they did not.



10. Suggestions

Participants were given the opportunity to provide further comment on the service or offer suggestions. The following comments were received:

Comments/Suggestions:
Having been a member for 22 years it is a wonderful service, keep going!
Smaller steps in the buses, getting into the bus is difficult and getting out of the bus is very difficult
Twice this week I have vaguely heard a lady recording a message, not a word of which I can distinguish. The sound is faint – hearing aid in or out.
The service offered is excellent
Service is great except when bus is full as it takes a while to pick up everyone. This shortens our shopping time, would another 15 minutes be possible?
I think that access to the bus is a problem for some. I am very happy with the service, very helpful and friendly. Thank you very much.
I have completed this for my mother, she is delighted with the service and it is the highlight of her week. She loves the social aspect as well as shopping. She would like a longer shopping period but if this is not possible she is very happy with the service as it is.
If the steps could be lowered this would be a great help. Getting on and off is difficult, drivers are very helpful
When parking at Cameron Toll the bus stops at Gilmeton side – finding steps difficult and if windy difficult to keep my balance. Would be helpful if bus could let us off and on at Little France side. There are no steps at this end and is much more sheltered.
I find your service excellent, without it I would not be able to go to the supermarket to do my own shopping. I could not carry the shopping myself. Thank you very much.
It could be advertised more, some people have told me they did not know about Dial-a-Bus
It would be good to try other shops
Delighted with the service, staff always helpful and pleasant but sometimes hard to get through to book by phone. Maybe more office staff
Vary the day and supermarket visited
Better access to the buses, lowered steps
Only problem but not a complaint, I wish we had a little longer at shopping centres – say two and a half hours. We do not get enough shopping time, hard to rush if you have bad legs etc.
Perhaps an occasional visit to another shop, eg. Morrisons, not the Gyle as you already go to the Gyle.
A new bus please
It would be nice to get a change of shops
A better variety of shops and more time for visits.



What does the service mean to you...?

Finally passengers were asked what the service means to them, the responses received are as follows:

'DAB is a God send to me, I can get out and about and the fare is great. All the bus drivers are great, kind helpful and polite – the office staff are exactly the same. The whole service is wonderful.'

'I have used DAB for several years and find it a very good service. It lets me get to the food stores for a big shop where I can choose for myself what I buy. I cannot use public transport and carry shopping at the same time.'

'It helps me to retain my independence and to remain in my own home. Without it I would find it very difficult to shop and would almost be housebound.'

'Very happy – my scooter fits on the lift/ramp well.'

'This is my only means of doing a bit of supermarket shopping without relying on friends and neighbours – always rather awkward and not a permanent solution.'

'The only way of getting my shopping for a week done and also mixing with other people. Without this service I would be lost'.

'I couldn't do my shopping without your help'.

'Makes shopping much easier'.

'DAB is a help to me'.

'I could not do my shopping without this service. It gives me my independence and it gives me a social life meeting everyone on the bus.'

'Without DAB I would find it extremely difficult to do my shopping.'

'DAB and DAR are both fantastic service, both beneficial to our disability needs.'

'I have used DAB for 12 years now and I find it very handy and could not manage without our lovely bus and excellent drivers.'

'Could not shop without it.'

'Keeps me independent – I am 81 and have used this service for years.'

'My DAB service means that I can still live at home and remain independent.'

'The DAB service is a life line for me. I have been using the service for many years. Living alone and no immediate family locally I find I manage a weekly shop.'

'It is a great service, we prefer to be as independent as possible not to rely on neighbours although they are willing to be helpful. Also it is good to have a chance to chat with other people who are in similar circumstances.'

'Very good, reliable service.'

'DAB means we can travel to friends and outings door to door at a reasonable price. The drivers are always friendly and helpful, helping us up the steps and putting seat belts on.'

'It means I can rely on getting out once a week to go shopping, particularly for food and being brought back to my front door.'

'Without DAB I would be unable to go to the supermarket as I could not afford taxis on a regular basis. Also I have made many friends and enables me to get out without troubling my son and daughter.'

'It enables me to do all my heavy shopping in one go. I am tremendously grateful for it as shopping would be a struggle.'



'It enables me to get all my shopping for the week in one visit. I always have a heavy load and without your service I would have to do a walk of 12 minutes, each way at least three times a week. Long live DAB!'

'The DAB service means a great deal to me – after my hip joints were replaced in 2005 and I stopped driving. The service helps me to do my regular food shopping. I could not manage without the service – a big thank you to everyone.'

'The DAB service is the greatest thing. I would be lost without it. It's like having your own car without the bother of parking.'

'DAB is good for getting me about the places as I constantly use a wheelchair.'

'It means I can do a lot of shopping at the one place.'

'I appreciate the help the driver gives to carry the bags of shopping on to the bus and to my first floor flat at home. This is a great service to me and others. Thank you.'

'It is a life-line.'

'I would be lost without the DAB service. The door to door service is wonderful, it allows me to be a bit more independent.'

'The DAB service means my one day I always look forward to, I call it my best day of the week. I look forward to the drivers who are so nice and are always helpful as are those who take our phone calls.'

'It means I can do my weekly shopping. It gives me freedom and independence.'

'It means that I can get things that I can't carry, e.g. Pet food. The staff are very helpful.'

'Since last summer the arthritis in my knees has been getting worse – the bus takes away that problem.'

'I look forward to my usually twice weekly trips on DAB. I could never cope carrying my shopping from bus to home and I enjoy my meetings with the other passengers and the run round town we have.'

'I can see what is on offer in the supermarkets and I enjoy the ride seeing all the houses. I want to do as much as I can for as long as possible – you are helping me do that.'

'Helps me remain independent and also enjoy the company of the other passengers.'

'Allows me to get out and do my shopping, this means a lot to me.'

'I have found DAB and DAR great services in the past – I hope to get back to using them soon.'

'I can't get out without the bus or private hire car.'

'The service is excellent. I have difficulty getting out, this service provides a way of getting out and meeting others. I enjoy the company and chat.'

'A service people can't do without, especially me now I'm older (not old!), plus knee replacement.'

'I can't use LRT buses so I rely greatly on this service to do my shopping. A taxi is much more expensive, so therefore the DAB service is a necessity. Thank you very much to everyone.'

'I am totally dependent on DAB for my food shopping, as I am unable to carry heavy shopping. I have come to depend on DAB for this service as I have no one in Edinburgh who can help me.'

'As I am registered blind I wouldn't be able to access public transport. This service is a great help for me to get out and about and feel safe.'

'It means a lot for me as I would not get out very often. I would like to thank you for all your help and for everyone being so friendly.'



'I have found it very satisfactory and reliable. It would be nice to go to Tesco or Sainsbury's for a change but not too early. The later time is more convenient.'

'The DAB service means a lot to me and my sister. We are both in our nineties and the drivers help us a lot, carrying our shopping upstairs for us. We are very grateful for the service we receive and also the kindness from the drivers who are a great help.'

'It's the best thing just to know the bus is waiting there for you when you come out of the shops.'

'I have used this service for patients when I was working as a home help. I think it is wonderful now that I use it myself.'

'Can't always get a booking when I call a week in advance but I suppose there are not enough buses and a lot of people needing the service. Thank you so much.'

'DAB is the difference between being stuck at home and having contact with people and being more independent and confident. I have made lots of friends with DAB and for that I am grateful.'

'It means one word to me – independence. I can do my own shopping and choose my own food. I don't need to rely on my family. It gives me independence in a lot of ways.'