East Gateshead
Quality Bus Partnership
Partnership Agreement
East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Partnership Agreement

This Agreement is between:

1. **The Borough Council of Gateshead** of Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH (“the Council”)
2. **Nexus** the Tyne and Wear Transport Executive of Nexus House, St James Boulevard, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4AX (“Nexus”)
3. **Go North East Limited** a private limited company registered in England under company number 02057284 whose registered office is at 3rd Floor 41-51 Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6EE (“GNE”)

1. **Introduction**

   1.1. This partnership document is a commitment by the Council, Nexus and GNE (“the Partners”) to deliver improved bus services in East Gateshead (otherwise known as the area).
   1.2. This is a voluntary quality partnership agreement to establish a framework by which the Partners will work together to achieve improved bus services and the objectives set out in this Agreement.
   1.3. The East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership (“the Partnership”) is not a partnership under the Partnership Act 1890 and is a voluntary joint working partnership.

2. **Period of Operation and Termination**

   2.1. The Partnership will come into operation on the 27th day of January 2008 and will continue until the 30th day of May 2010.
   2.2. If any of the Partners wishes to terminate the Partnership six months notice in writing of termination is required.
   2.3. In the event of a notice of termination being received, this Partnership shall terminate between all the Partners at the end of the six months period of notice.
   2.4. On or around the 28th January 2009 the parties to this agreement agree to review the terms hereof in order to assess the performance of the partnership. In the event the review concludes that the performance of the partnership fails to meet current industry best practice the parties agree that the partnership will be reviewed to reflect prevailing best practice.
3. **Purpose and Objective of East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership**

3.1. The Council, Nexus and GNE agree by working in partnership to deliver improved bus services in the area.

3.2. The purpose of the Partnership is to deliver in the area the objectives of the Local Transport Plan bus strategy (a copy of which is available from Nexus or Gateshead Council) which are:
- to increase the number of people using buses by retaining existing users and attracting new users;
- to increase the market share of buses relative to transport as a whole;
- to ensure more reliable and punctual bus services;
- to improve integration between modes and services;
- to increase personal accessibility through developing services, fares, vehicles, infrastructure and information suitable for all;
- to raise the image and profile of bus travel and to remove practical and perceptual barriers to bus use.

4. **Scheme Area and Scope**

4.1. The area covered by this partnership, and roads served, are shown in East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Area and Bus Network set out at Appendix 1 (the boundary lines being the Gateshead District Boundary to the north, east and south east plus Old Durham Road to the west and Wrekenton to the south west).

4.2. The local bus services covered by this Partnership are all stopping services within the area defined in 4.1 operated by GNE as shown in Appendix 2.

5. **Management**

5.1. The Partners agree to establish a Stakeholder Board, (hereinafter referred to as the Board) which will include at least one representative from each of the Partners. The role of the Board is to oversee delivery of the East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership and the monitoring of partner performance, by meeting on a regular basis, sharing information, and where appropriate consulting each other on proposed changes to services.

5.2. The remit of the Board is detailed in Appendix 3.

5.3. Four meetings of the Board will be held each year and Chairmanship of the Board will rotate meeting to meeting, the first being the Nexus Officer.

5.4. Board composition:
- 2 Council Members
- 1 Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority Member
- 1 Nexus Officer
- GNE Managing Director
- GNE Operations Director
- GNE Commercial Director
- GNE Finance Director
- GNE Divisional Manager (North)

5.5. The partners agree to determine and keep under review the membership of the Board to ensure active delivery of the East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership, and can from time to time, where agreed, invite other interested parties to attend meetings of the Board.

6. **Bus Network Design**

6.1. The Partners agree to take a partnership approach with the aim of providing a bus network for East Gateshead to best meet the agreed partner objectives of:

- Sustainability recognising the benefits that a stable bus network will bring in terms of user and non user confidence, the provision of quality information and cost savings from no change, and a commitment that if a service(s) do change that the overall level of service (bus miles) remains constant or improves;
Commercial Viability - recognising that the network operated by GNE must be capable of delivering a commercial return, with likely revenue support from Nexus for socially necessary services and journeys (see 13.1 regarding Nexus commitment to revenue support);

Accessibility - good access for residents by bus to both main travel objectives (Gateshead Town Centre and Newcastle City Centre) plus a number of significant secondary travel objectives in East Gateshead (including Heworth Interchange, Fewster Square, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Wrekenton and Felling Square);

Simple and Integrated a simple network providing frequent and direct links to main and secondary travel objectives, and improving the opportunities for bus to bus interchange and bus to Metro Interchange.

6.2. GNE agree that they will endeavour to limit service changes to occur only on the predetermined change dates published by Nexus. For the avoidance of doubt these would be:
- 26th October 2008
- 31st May 2009
- 25th October 2009

6.3. Changes will, except where required by urgent operational need, only be undertaken following consultation and agreement with the Board in accordance with Appendix 3. Those services covered by this Partnership Agreement which do not operate wholly within the Partnership area may change outside this agreement because of the impact of factors outside this agreement in other areas. This is likely to apply particularly to longer distance services within this agreement operating through East Gateshead to or from other areas. GNE agree to use their best endeavours to keep the Stakeholder Board informed and consulted on changes as a consequence of actions elsewhere on longer distance routes.

6.4. The Partnership does not exclude Nexus from securing links in East Gateshead to meet social need that are not provided for by the agreed network design, but Nexus agree to use reasonable endeavour to ensure such services shall not undermine the agreed partnership network.

6.5. This Partnership does not give any exclusivity to GNE to operate bus services in East Gateshead.

7. Fares & Ticketing

7.1. GNE agree to limit fare increases to only reflect a direct increase in costs, and will endeavour to fully inform and consult with the Board before implementing any changes to fare levels or ticketing arrangements. GNE may revise fares to offer special fare offers by notification to the Stakeholder Board where full consideration by the Stakeholder Board is not possible due to timescales in implementing special offers.

7.2. GNE agree that they will use their best endeavour to not to increase fares more than once a year.

7.3. GNE will keep under review their fares policy in East Gateshead with the objective of offering a reduced price network ticket and moving to a simpler flat fare system.

7.4. GNE and Nexus will keep under review the opportunities to develop a more integrated Bus/Metro fares strategy where:
- this meets customer needs;
- where income can be evenly and justly apportioned;
- that it is easy to implement and simple to understand by the passenger;
- and where it meets the commercial and financial objectives of both Nexus and GNE.

8. Fleet

8.1. GNE will ensure that all bus Services covered by this agreement and operated by GNE in East Gateshead will be Disability Discrimination Act compliant (easy access) with on bus CCTV.
9. **Quality Standards for Bus Service Delivery**

9.1. The Partners have agreed bus punctuality and reliability targets, which are set out at Appendix 4. The Partners agree that where targets have not been met, GNE will, in consultation with the Board, take steps to compensate passengers for poor bus operation within the control of GNE (such as failure for the bus to operate or non-adherence to timetable). Such compensation may include reduced fares or free bus journeys. GNE will meet the costs of such compensation.

9.2. The Partners agree that GNE will not be obliged to take steps to compensate passengers for poor performance, where that poor performance was as a result of circumstances outside of their control, such as delays due to ad-hoc traffic congestion.

9.3. The Partners have established a robust methodology for determining baseline bus quality performance standards and the monitoring of these. The methodology and monitoring programme is detailed in Appendix 4.

9.4. The global monitoring detailed in Appendix 4 will replace specific monitoring and reporting of secured journeys as required under Nexus standard contract conditions for tendered services within the Partnership area.

9.5. The overall quality of the area bus network will be measured by Mystery Shopping surveys procured and funded by Nexus.

9.6. The parties agreed to provide the Board with quarterly reports on their performance.

10. **Consultation and Communication**

10.1. A joint plan has been developed to promote the area Quality Bus Partnership. Details are contained in Appendix 7.

10.2. As part of this plan GNE agree to consult with the Board, bus users and their representatives in advance of any change proposed by GNE to services run by GNE within the area.

11. **Highway Measures to deliver effective Bus Priority**

11.1. The Council agrees to endeavour to implement bus priority measures in East Gateshead to overcome delays to buses arising from highway congestion subject to:
- financial resources being available to deliver planned schemes (primarily through the LTP process);
- the necessary legal consultation enabling the proposals to be delivered;
- a balance being achieved between the resources and commitment to effective bus priority in the area and the need to ensure that this does not have a negative impact on other areas in Gateshead.

11.2. A schedule of the intended programmed works based on priorities is attached as Appendix 6.

12. **On Street Passenger Information & Infrastructure (Facilities & Maintenance)**

12.1. The Council will endeavour to ensure that all bus stops in the area will have a shelter provision subject to practicalities of locating a shelter, proximity to terminal locations (where the stop may be set down only), budget and consultation (council members and local public). Currently the Council fund all new shelters.

12.2. Within the area Nexus will maintain and clean bus shelters on a regular basis to provide an attractive environment for waiting passengers with protection from the elements and access to clean, well presented timetable information. The current agreements provide for shelter damage to be made safe in 24 hours and repaired with 5 working days with cleaning on a four weekly cycle and shelter refurbishment every 4 years. The parties agree that the current agreement falls within the definition of 'regular basis' for the purpose of this clause.

12.3. Within the area Nexus will maintain, clean and manage all bus stations and interchanges to provide a clean and attractive waiting area with protection from the elements and access to clean, well presented timetable information. Service level agreements for interchange and bus station provision will be implemented when developed.
12.4. Nexus will maintain accurate and up to date on street passenger information within East Gateshead (bus stop timetables and bus station information regarding departure stands, index to places served, and timetable information) subject to sufficient notification of timetable changes as per Section 6 Bus Network Design. Any errors in information notified to Nexus will be rectified within 7 working days.

12.5. Where practical and within budget constraints, Nexus will provide electronic departure information.

12.6. Bus stop infrastructure in the area Partnership will be delivered according to the template at Appendix 5

12.7. The Partners, as appropriate, will improve passenger infrastructure and information at key informal interchanges within East Gateshead at:

- Felling Square
- Fewster Square
- Wrekenton
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- Windy Nook

13. **Network Support from Nexus**

13.1. Nexus will retain socially necessary journeys on services operated by GNE within the Partnership area (and as detailed in Appendix 2) by de minimis payment to GNE subject to (and keeping under review):

- agreement on the expected cost and revenue of the agreed network;
- agreement on the level of increase in profitability (examining costs and income) which would trigger a reduction in Nexus contribution (de minimis payment) and agreement on review dates;
- agreement on the level of decrease in profitability (examining costs and income) which would trigger a review of the network (and agreement on review dates);
- the delivery and performance of bus services in East Gateshead as detailed in Section 9 (repeated poor delivery would trigger a review of revenue support).

13.2. Services covered by this Agreement funded by Nexus which do not operate wholly within the area may change outside this agreement because of the impact of factors outside this agreement in other areas. This is likely to apply particularly to longer distance services within this agreement operating through the area to or from other areas. The Board will be informed and consulted on changes to secured services and journeys as a consequence of actions elsewhere on longer distance routes.

14. **General**

14.1. The parties to this agreement recognise their obligations under the Competition Act 1998 and nothing in this agreement intends to breach that Act.

14.2. The parties to this agreement shall keep confidential any information not in the public domain which is obtained under or in connection with this agreement and shall not divulge the same to any third party other than in compliance with their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act.

**Appendices**

1. East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Area and Bus Network.
2. Bus services included within the East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Area.
3. Remit of Stakeholder Board
4. East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Monitoring Methodology and Quality Standards and Targets
5. East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership bus stop infrastructure standards.
7. Communications and Consultation Programme
East Gateshead
Quality Bus Partnership
Partnership Agreement

Signatures

Signed on behalf of
The Borough Council of Gateshead
by

Signed on behalf of
Go North East
by

Signed on behalf of
NEXUS
by

Name:
Title:
Date:

Name:
Title:
Date

Name:
Title:
Date
## Bus Services included in the Agreement as at 27th January 2008

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**TOTAL** 114535
Objective of the Partnership

Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, Nexus (Tyne & Wear Passenger Transport Executive) and Go North East Limited agree through a voluntary partnership to deliver improved bus services in East Gateshead.

Purpose of the Partnership

By working together within the voluntary Partnership to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to improve bus travel by:

- Providing a stable bus network that best meets passenger needs;
- Providing a reliable and punctual bus services with effective bus priority to overcome congestion delay to buses;
- Operation by modern easy access buses;
- Improving passenger waiting facilities and maintaining and cleaning such facilities to ensure quality is maintained;
- Providing comprehensive information and raising the image of the bus by effective marketing.

The Stakeholder Board

The Stakeholder Board role is to oversee delivery of the East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership and the monitoring of partner performance.

The composition of the Stakeholder Board is:

- 2 Gateshead Members
- 1 PTA Member
- 1 Nexus Officer
- GNE Managing Director
- GNE Operations Director
- GNE Commercial Director
- GNE Finance Director
- GNE Divisional Manager (North)

Meetings of the Stakeholder Board will be held every 3 months and Chairmanship of the Board will rotate meeting to meeting.

The membership of the Board will be kept under review to ensure active delivery of the East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership.
Duties

The East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership Stakeholder Board shall oversee the delivery of the partnership by providing the mechanism through which;

a) Go North East explain and advise on any changes proposed to the bus network in East Gateshead, the implications of any change and the consultation planned or undertaken in relation to the changes;

b) Go North East explain and advise on any changes proposed to fare levels or ticketing arrangements on bus services in East Gateshead;

c) Nexus advise on any changes proposed to the bus network in East Gateshead arising from contract renewals;

d) Reports are received on the performance of the partnership relating to:
   • Bus punctuality and reliability;
   • The overall quality of the bus journey experience through mystery shopping surveys;
   • The delivery of the bus priority programme;
   • The status of passenger waiting facilities.

e) Where a partner fails to deliver to agree remedial action to ensure delivery.

f) Where Go North East punctuality and reliability fails to meet agreed targets due to factors within the control of Go North East the Stakeholder Board will receive information of the penalties that apply and how penalty payments will be used.

Responsibilities

Board members will be in receipt from Go North East of confidential information relating to the operation of bus services and planned changes to bus services in East Gateshead. This information should not be disclosed to any other party without the specific written approval of the Managing Director of Go North East Limited.

Meetings of the Stakeholder Board will be held every 3 months and Chairmanship of the Board will rotate meeting to meeting.
Appendix 4

East Gateshead Quality Bus Partnership

Service Performing Monitoring

Analysing Reliability and Punctuality

'Reliability' will be recorded and reported by exception to the stakeholder board as operated mileage in percentage and mileage terms in relation to scheduled mileage. The target for reliability is a minimum of 99.8%.

'Punctuality' will be measured in one of two ways depending on the frequency of the individual service.

Frequent Services

A 'frequent service' is described as one that operates at least every fifteen minutes. Frequent services are classed as 'turn up and go' services where the majority of customers are unlikely to consult a timetable and do not go out for a specific bus during Monday to Saturday daytimes. Customers will therefore be more concerned with the time they have to wait for a bus rather than how individual journeys have performed.

For frequent services we will produce the following based on data collected by our electronic ticket machines fitted to each vehicle:

- A 'Hailstorm' plot.
- An estimate of the 'Excess Wait Time'.

The time that the ticket machine records is the time at which the first ticket was issued at the fare stage. A Hailstorm plot displays the stage times for each journey as a 'track' on a time-distance plot. The distance between stages is specified so that they are proportionately spaced. Each track has a mark at those stages where some ticket transactions took place. Intermediate stages where no such transactions occurred are ignored. These typically happen as the driver increments the stage key, which does not necessarily happen at the correct place. The tracks can be plotted for single or both directions.

In addition to the hailstorm plot we will produce what the estimated 'excess wait time' was for a given period of time for individual services or groups of services on agreed 'corridors'. This is done by:

- The ticket machine recording the 'spacing' between consecutive buses to give an 'actual waiting time'.
- Taking the 'scheduled waiting time' being equal to half of the scheduled frequency between buses.
- The 'excess waiting time' being equal to the actual waiting time minus the scheduled waiting time.

The target for the 'excess wait time' will be 50% of the service frequency. This analysis will be done for specified days to achieve a representative sample of the given period under review.
Less Frequent Services

A 'less frequent' service is described as one that operates less often than every 15 minutes. On these services customers are more likely to come out for specific journeys. They are therefore more likely to be interested in how punctual the specific service journeys are.

For these services we will produce a reliability measure from agreed selected key points and list how many departures on a given day:

- Operated on time (-1 to +5 minutes)
- Operated more than 5 minutes late

This will offer a measure that is in line with the current guidelines set out by the Traffic Commissioner i.e. 95% of journey to operate 'on time'.
Appendix 5

East Gateshead
Quality Bus Partnership

Template for bus stop infrastructure in Tyne and Wear

In formulating this template it is assumed that articulated buses and buses with more than one set of doors will not usually be stopping on street in Tyne and Wear. On routes where such vehicles are anticipated alternative design standards are available.

Bus stop geometry

The critical dimensions in achieving accessible boarding at a stop are the vertical gap, or step height, and the horizontal gap from the edge of the kerb to the entrance step of the bus.

The bus should stop parallel to and as close to the kerb as possible and the target maximum horizontal gap is 200mm.

Kerb Height

The size of the vertical gap will affect the gradient of a ramp when deployed. Regulations under the DDA 1995 require all new buses to be capable of deploying a ramp giving a 1:8 or 12% gradient onto a kerb at least 125mm in height.

Whilst 125mm is generally an adequate minimum standard, variables such as crossfall of the footway and carriageway can influence the gradient of the ramp. A minimum of 140mm, with a maximum of 160mm, is desirable where these can be achieved. A kerb height of 220mm will eliminate the need for a ramp. This height should only be considered at sites where the bus can approach and depart with no likelihood of any obstruction that would prevent pulling parallel to the kerb without hitting it. Where there is a likelihood that buses will regularly override the kerb a maximum height of 140mm is recommended.

Note that the kerb need only be raised at the point(s) where the bus doors will open. A minimum length of 2.0m is generally adequate. Where there may be constraints at an existing stop this point should be determined by observation. The identification of a boarding / alighting point in this manner encourages the driver to stop in the correct position relative to the bus stop infrastructure.

Where kerb heights are changed, carriageway and footway crossfalls will need to be carefully considered. As a general rule, carriageway crossfalls in the region of 1 in 40 (2.5%) should not present any additional difficulties for low flow buses.

Footway crossfalls are also important and a steep backfall from the kerb is undesirable. A gradient of no more than 1 in 25 (4%) is suggested. For short distances a maximum gradient of 1 in 8 (12%) is acceptable. Ideally, footways should be regraded as far as is necessary to achieve the desired gradient but this may add significantly to the cost of the works.

Where footway levels are being altered careful consideration should be given to drainage, particularly in relation to adjacent properties.
Bus Stop Markings

The bus stop marking on the carriageway, according to Traffic Signs Regulations and general Directions (TRSGD) 2002 diagram 1025.1 (or variations), is used to delineate the limits of the bus stop. The marking does not merely identify the stopping point. It defines an unobstructed area of the carriageway where the bus can approach, straighten up, stop and exit.

The designated bus stop marking includes a clearway marking. This is mandatory if the carriageway is to be marked and must be accompanied by a plate to diagram 974. TRO's are no longer required for these bus stop clearways. Where buses are to stand for more than two minutes other than for the purposes of picking up and setting down passengers or a crew change, a plate to diagram 975 should be erected.

Ideally the stopping restrictions should apply during the hours of bus operation. If no time is shown on the plate the default restriction is 24 hours.

Highlighting the bus stop cage either through a coloured bituminous surface dressing or a coloured bituminous surface course can be effective in indicating to other road users that it is a restricted area. Where this is done it is recommended that the colour is red.

In areas where parking does not occur in the vicinity of the stop the carriageway marking should be 15m x 3m.

A straight length of kerb, with parking both on approach and departure, requires an overall protected length of 37m. This comprises an approach of 13m, a straightening/stopping length of 15m and a departure zone of 9m.

The departure length of 9m is required if the rear of the bus is not to overhang the kerb in the vicinity of waiting passengers whilst pulling around parked vehicles.

Consideration should be given to the impact of high bus frequencies at stops. In such instances stops should be designed so as to accommodate two buses.

Where appropriate the length of the cage may be reduced by taking advantage of areas that will remain free of obstruction, such as the exit side of a pedestrian crossing or the exit side of a junction. It is important to plan for the frequency of buses; otherwise following buses could block the crossing or side roads. Note that buses are permitted to stop on the exit side zig-zag markings at Pelican and Zebra crossings to pick up and drop off passengers.

Bus Boarders

There are situations where the recommended kerbside designs cannot be implemented without seriously affecting existing kerbside activity or general traffic operations. This problem often arises at busy stops that would require a very long length to be kept free of any other activity. In many instances stop accessibility may be hampered by legal or illegal loading or parking or site constraints may prevent conventional layouts from being implemented. In such cases a solution may be to alter the kerb line to assist bus access, for example by installing a kerb build out known as a bus boarder.

A full width boarder should project far enough into the carriageway for the bus to avoid manoeuvring past parked vehicles. For cars this should be a minimum of 2m and a minimum of 2.6m where goods vehicles are stopping. The length of the border will depend partly upon bus frequency.
The full width boarder generally offers by far the best solution for bus and passenger access. The benefits include:-

- Minimises the kerb space required;
- Deters illegal parking;
- Maintains the place of the bus in the traffic stream;
- Allows the bus to pull parallel to the kerb;
- Reduces boarding/alighting time;
- Reduces overall time spent at the bus stop;
- Creates additional space for waiting passengers.

The ability of the bus to stop at a full width boarder without manoeuvre provides the opportunity to provide 160mm or 220mm kerbs. Note that particular attention should be paid to the backfall of the footway in such instances.

The build out should be protected by the installation of reflectorised bollards behind the kerb on the approach side as appropriate.

Generally the length of kerb at the boarding point needs to be a minimum of 2m with an ideal length of 3m, although this can be increased in order to accommodate a bus shelter or more than one bus.

**Half width boarders** can be a useful compromise solution. The width can be upwards of 500mm but are commonly 1.0 1.5 m wide. They can be used where frequent delays to other vehicles are to be avoided or where a full width boarder would place the bus in, or too close to, the opposing traffic stream.

Half width boarders deter illegal parking and should extend for the length of the bus stop cage.

Attention should be paid to carriageway drainage where build outs are to be constructed. It may be necessary to install an additional gully where the channel is obstructed by a build out. An alternative is to continue the channel along the original line by 'dishing' the profile of the boarder / footway. Careful consideration should be given to accessibility in these circumstances. There should be no hindrance to the movement of a wheelchair and gradients should be within the maximum advised.

**Lay Bys**

Bus stop lay bays present inherent operational problems for buses and should not be used unless there are compelling safety or capacity reasons. Bus drivers can find it very difficult to rejoin the flow of traffic when departing a lay by and this can contribute significantly to delays. Lay bays also attract illegal parking, rendering it impossible for the bus to pull in to the kerb.

A 3.0m wide bus lay by accommodating a single bus requires an entry taper of 20m, a straightening / stopping length of 18m and an exit taper of 15m.

**A half-width lay** by can be useful in that it is easier for general traffic to overtake the bus but it can more easily move off into the traffic stream when departing.

Existing lay bays are often of a substandard geometry and buses cannot pull parallel to the kerb and the rear end of the vehicle projects into the traffic stream. These are best modified either by reducing their width, constructing a bus boarder within the bay or by removing it entirely. There remedies are also appropriate where buses regularly encounter problems in exiting a lay by.
Passenger Waiting Area

Bus Stop Pole and Flag

The flag indicates to passengers where they should wait. It also serves as a marker to drivers to indicate where the bus should be positioned at the stop. Where a shelter is provided the flag is usually attached to a bracket on the shelter. Where circumstances dictate that the shelter be located a distance from the stopping point a separate pole and flag are required.

Note that attaching the plate relating to the clearway order to the shelter bracket will, where feasible, remove the need for a separate pole.

Waiting Area Layout

The waiting area must be designed so that passengers may board and alight without obstruction. Particular attention must be paid to the location of shelters, poles, litter bins etc. Passengers alighting should not be required to pass through the bus shelter.

At the boarding/alighting point the length of clear footway is determined by the positioning of the bus doors. The minimum area of kerb to remain unobstructed for boarding / alighting is 2m x 2m. Ideally the position of the bus doors is identified by the length of raised kerb in the vicinity of the bus stop flag. Where this is not clear, consideration should be given to the identification of the boarding / alighting point by the use of red paving or a marking of the relevant length of kerb in white. Note that tactile paving is not specified in such areas.

Other dimensions are determined by the requirement for a wheelchair or pushchair to manoeuvre. A minimum of 1500mm x 1500mm is required for manoeuvring and 1200mm is the ideal minimum for unobstructed passage.

All street furniture must be set back at least 500mm to avoid it being hit by vehicles. It is particularly important that pedestrian guardrail etc is not installed at a bus stop where pedestrians walking alongside the bus would be at risk of being crushed when the bus pulls away.

Footway Widths and Pedestrian Flows

There should be a minimum unobstructed width of 2m available to accommodate the through movement of pedestrians but at least 3m is preferable in busier locations. Where possible the footway should be widened to accommodate this.

Shelters

In ideal circumstances a fully enclosed shelter should be provided. The size of this should relate to the number of passengers boarding at the stop. However in practice the size and nature of the shelter is often determined by the topography and geometry of the site. Where a cantilever shelter is appropriate it should be installed on the site in such a way to provide the most protection for the public, usually with the solid wall adjacent to the carriageway.

Shelters should, as a minimum, be cleaned and inspected on a monthly cycle.

An identification reference and phone number should be provided in order that the public can report faults.

All glazing damages should be cleared and made safe within 24 hours of reporting and fully repaired within 5 working days.

All other damages should be made safe within 24 hours of reporting and fully repaired within agreed periods subject to the extent of damage.
**Passenger Amenity**

Waiting areas should be secure and well lit. Identified problem areas could be considered for CCTV coverage.

Litter bins in close vicinity (minimum 1.5 metres) will help to maintain a clean and tidy environment.

**Information**

Each stop will be identified with a flag attached to the pole or shelter, normally this will carry a unique number identifying the stop along with the service numbers of all buses using the stop.

An information cabinet attached to the pole of shelter will hold the liner consisting of the timetables for all the services using the stop. This will identify the route and travel times for the onward journey for each service. The liner also holds the stop number, date of installation along with the travel line phone number and Web sites for further more detailed timetable data.

Each shelter will display the shelter number and help desk number to ring in case of damage or complaint regarding the state of the shelter.

**Access To Stops**

There is little point in installing accessible bus infrastructure when the approaches to stops are inaccessible. Footways and footpaths should be reconstructed as necessary so as to be wheelchair accessible on the approaches to the bus stop.

The question arises as to how far to take this as part of a bus stop audit and this very much depends on the nature of the area. All heavily trafficked pedestrian routes should be accessible as a matter of policy and works could be funded from sources other than bus stop infrastructure. Certainly routes to well used local facilities such as health centres served by the stop should be examined for their entire length.

Road crossings in the vicinity of a stop should be accessible. Consideration should be given to the provision of a new accessible road crossing where none is available in the vicinity of well used stops. Ideally such a crossing should be located between a pair of stops located 'tail to tail' on either side of the road.
East Gateshead
Quality Bus Partnership
Bus Priority Work Schedule

2007/08
Sunderland Road Clearways & Superoute Audits
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Parking Restrictions

2008/09
Durham Road North Clearways & Superoute Audits
A184 Felling Bypass eastbound, slip roads to/from A195
Town Centre Improvements (Interchange-Prince Consort Road-Wellington Street)

2009/10
Durham Road Bus Rapid Transit (block funded elements)

Tyne & Wear Bus Corridor Improvement LTP Major Scheme
The Partners are committed to the submission of a Bus Corridor Improvement LTP Major Scheme bid for Tyne & Wear. It is intended that the first phase of the bid will be presented to the Department for Transport in May 2008, with phases two and three in 2009 and 2010. Projects funded through this route will be programmed from 2010/11 onwards. Development of the bid elements and their phasing will be reported to the Stakeholder Board, currently they are likely to include:
- Sunderland Road Link to Town Centre (Phase 1 bid)
- Wardley Bus Link (Phase 1 bid)
- Follingsby Park & Ride (Phase 1 bid)
- A195 Lingey Lane, junctions with A184 eastbound slip road and Meresyde (Phase 2 bid)
- Heworth Interchange and roundabout (Phase 2 bid)
- Durham Road Bus Rapid Transit (Phase 2 bid)

Enforcement Issues
Gateshead Council will work in Partnership with Go North East to address situations where parking enforcement is required to assist bus operations. An initial list of locations has been identified:
- High West Street between Jackson Street and Charles Street
- Gateshead High Street
- Jackson Street
Appendix 7

East Gateshead
Quality Bus Partnership
Communications and Consultation
Programme

The following plan is an outline of activities, which is intended to be regularly expanded and updated with contributions from partners and reported to Stakeholder Board.

Introducing the new network (effective 27 January 2008)

- Survey findings and joint work on the commercial and secured network to be included in press release, on website, in e-newsletter to stakeholders, and in East Gateshead summary leaflet to households. (This will incorporate the A-Z bus promotional campaign theme and partners’ logos)
- Set of new timetables appropriate to each area within East Gateshead will be included with the summary leaflet in the door to door distribution)

Introducing the Partnership

Signing of the partnership agreement (provisionally 30 January)
- Photo opportunity with stakeholder board members
- Press release introducing the purpose of the plan and outlining its pledges

Ministerial endorsement
- An invitation be extended to Transport Minister to visit and endorse the Partnership at the signing event or as soon after as possible
- Photo opportunity and press release

Communication to stakeholders
- E-newsletter to all Gateshead Council members
- Printed leaflets introducing and explaining the partnership to all households (incorporating A-Z theme)
- On-bus promotions upon introduction
- Web page to be created and updated by Go North East including links with Nexus and Gateshead Council web pages

Ongoing Community and Partner Communication

Feedback to Community
- Main points from Stakeholder Board meetings to be included as bulletins on Go North East website with links between Nexus and Gateshead Council web pages
- Contact details for Go North East to be included in bulletins above to enable hard copies of accessible versions to be printed off and sent out on request
- Regular news features to be carried in Gateshead Council News
- Monthly performance results published on buses and on website
- Satisfaction surveys will be undertaken twice per year within the community and reported to the board and back to the community
- Complaints will be responded to within 5 working days and summaries of complaints will be reported to the stakeholder board
- Annual report to report on the level of success achieved against the objectives of the partnership, distributed to Gateshead Councillors, Nexus, PTA and other stakeholders and available to the community in either full or summary form from the Go North East, Nexus and Gateshead Council websites, and reported on in Gateshead Council News
Stakeholder Consultation

Planned service changes (planned to meet the agreed service change date schedules and within the provisions of this agreement)

In the event of planned service changes to be introduced within the provisions of the partnership agreement, either by Go North East or by Nexus, three strands of consultation will take place where material changes to the frequency levels or routes of services within the agreement are planned. Material changes will be considered to be any reduction in frequency, any change to route within the partnership area and any withdrawal of journeys. Minor timetable changes will not be considered material.

The three strands will be a) stakeholder board members, b) other Gateshead Council members and c) bus users, and other stakeholders within the partnership area.

Consultation will take the form of a written outline of proposals, proposed implementation date and a brief summary of the effects of the changes. Consultees will have the opportunity to respond via pro forma questionnaires, via the Go North East website, and via other recognised methods. Stakeholder board members will have the additional opportunity of consultation and involvement via board meetings. Council members will have the additional opportunity of meetings with company representatives where appropriate.

The consultation will be timed to take place such that responses can be gathered, assessed and reported to stakeholder board members before final proposals are registered. Where necessary ad hoc board meetings will be convened for this purpose. Typically this will see consultation commence approximately four weeks or more in advance of registration date.

It should be noted that provisions within this agreement recognise that some routes principally serve other areas and the timing and notice for changes to those other routes will be driven by the decisions made for those other networks, but that the communities in East Gateshead affected by such changes will still be consulted prior to registration of those changes.

Extraordinary service changes

In the event that service changes are deemed necessary outside of the provisions of this agreement, either by Go North East or by Nexus, the full membership of the stakeholder board will be consulted on the wider consultation process most appropriate to the circumstances. As a minimum, proposals will be publicised in advance of registration other than in emergency situations such as emergency route diversions or curtailments due to unforeseen extraneous factors. In such circumstances, the change and reasons for the change will be publicised to the community within East Gateshead as soon as is practically possible.