MOBILITY INFORMATION

APPS TO ASSIST WITH INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

If you have a Smartphone, Apps can be an effective way to assist people with a visual impairment, to travel independently. Using an App to help with way-finding, planning a journey, bus, tube and train travel can support independent and punctual travel for some visually impaired people. If you find it difficult to see when your bus or train is approaching, arriving or to see the electronic display which informs you of travel times, there are many Apps which are available to help you. Some Apps are free, while others charge a one-off fee. While some of the Apps are exclusively available for IOS (i-Phones), others are for Android phones and there are some Apps which cater for both.

Below are some of the Apps which some visually impaired users have already found useful. However, if you go to a search engine or an App store, you may be able to find more suitable Apps.

Bus Times – (Free to download – IOS only)

This App is available on i-Phones only, is linked to Transport for London and:
- Instantly lets you know when your bus is due to arrive.
- Using the GPS device on your phone, will automatically find a bus stop near you
- Journey Planner using the 'Get Route' section - tap start and end location
- Search for bus stops by postcode or bus stop name
- Hold down anywhere on the map to show the directions where the buses are heading
- Save your favourite buses and bus stops
- Check Oyster balance (if you have one)
- View bus route and road disruption

Citymapper (London Transport App IOS and Android phones)

City Mapper will:
- Find bus, tube and train times (using real time data)
- Check your recent journeys
- Save a journey stop (tap the star icon or a stop to save it)
- Set journeys to get you to your destination

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- Find out if there are any delays by tapping an icon
- Off-line tube map that can be enlarged (also includes rail and night time)
- Find out how long your journey will take
- Share directions with others
- Set to alert you when it's time to get off (handy if you fall asleep!)
- Bookmark frequent routes and destinations beside home to school.

This App is good if don't have an address but have a vague idea of your route. For example, you may not know the address of your friend's house but can recognise the building and any landmarks nearby (e.g. Sainsbury's). You set your destination as if you were going to the supermarket close to their home and walk from there.

Google Maps (IOS and Android)

Helps to:
- Get directions for walking or public transportation
- Set home to school/college/work route
- Search for destinations using the address, name of location
- See current location (search for places around you and get directions more quickly)
- Navigation (turn by turn directions visual and voice-over)
- Look at street view imagery and zoom in and out (includes 3D)
- See distances between points

TFL's live bus arrivals (IOS and Android)

Good for:
- Finding out when your bus will arrive at your local stop.
- Text your local bus stop code and receive live bus arrival information.
- A few bus stops may have a QR code which you can scan and means you do not have to key in any digits

Zuti London Underground (IOS and Android)

- Latest London Transport tube map (which you can pinch to zoom in and out). You do not have to be connected to the internet
- Route planning
- Key in the name of station and the location will be highlighted
- Map locations such as Museums, Hospitals, Theatres
- Live information
- TFL night services
- Add your own markers
- Switch to Google map

BlindSquare (IOS, soon to be on Android)

Helps to:
- Find important places (such as the nearest post office or popular cafes) within a 200 metre radius
- Track your destination and periodically announce the distance and direction while you are traveling
- Mark your position, so it can help you to find this spot again later

Good for:
- Announcing the names of streets
- Pinpoint accuracy not available on GPS alone
- Those whose first language isn't English

Supplementary Information

- Remember to switch Voiceover on or download a voice-over App.
- Check if your phone has magnification. If not, download a suitable App
- You can use your smartphone camera to take a photograph such as a road sign, electronic display, general signs and time- tables. You can then enlarge ('pinch') the photo enough for you to see more clearly.
- Additionally, you can 'screenshot' (photograph) information you have brought up from the App and then enlarge it enough for you to see it more clearly.
- Please be aware that these Apps require internet connection and location services for full functionality.
- Note that continued use of a GPS running in the background can dramatically decrease battery life.
- Although some Apps are free, you may receive regular advertisements that may 'clutter' the screen and making it difficult to read.