

webwatch

Site makes right move on transport

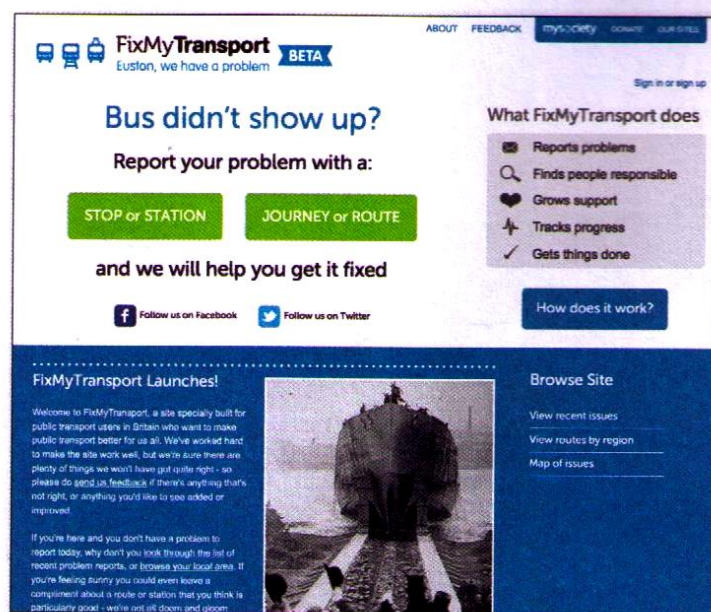
In this season of leaves on the line, **Annie Makoff** looks at a new initiative for airing our grouches over late trains and other transport problems

British transport isn't exactly what you would call reliable. Not when you compare it to the likes of the German or French systems, which are renowned for their efficiency. And when it comes to being fully accessible, well, it's better than it was...

One good thing about British transport, though – it gives us Brits a great excuse to complain. We complain about delayed or cancelled trains, overcrowded buses, signal failures, bus stops not in use, out-of-service toilets etc. But does it actually change anything?

Up until now, probably not. But following the launch of a website called **FixMyTransport.com** recently, we now have the chance to turn our complaints into something more constructive.

It's simple to use and sets out exactly what it



does in no uncertain terms: Users report an issue or problem, FixMyTransport informs those responsible (maybe a transport operator or a government department), users add their support to the issue while tracking its progress, and the issue ends with a satisfactory result. Hopefully.

At every level, the site is easy to navigate: it uses bright, contrasting colours and clear text. The options available while reporting an issue are presented in large, colourful text boxes that make the reporting process quick, easy and accessible.

And, as the website is UK-wide rather than primarily London-based (unlike some

sites), users can report problems from anywhere in Britain, from large towns and cities to little-known villages. Any mode of transport (including river transport) and any route or station stop can be reported to the site.

The issues reported are just as diverse. The specific ("Put a seat on Platform 1 at Stone Station"), the practical ("Leaking Bus Shelter"), even the vague ("Do Something About Smelly Trains").

Users can track the progress of these issues by

status buttons located to the right of each report: "Current" (in orange) or "Fixed" (in green). They can also check specific routes for any reported issues that may affect their journey.

Submitting a report doesn't guarantee it will be resolved: the ratio of "current" statuses far outweighs the number of "fixed" ones, although this could be because the website is still relatively new. It also depends on the amount of support an issue has gathered and how easily (or not) a raised issue can be fixed.

The site also encourages a "praise" element. If a user was impressed with an aspect of their journey, they can use the cheery blue "say something nice" button, found under "View routes by region" on the homepage.

FixMyTransport enables dialogue between the public and transport service providers, giving an element of control to the public while enabling providers to respond directly to issues and concerns as they happen.

→ Have your say

- write to us **Disability Now**, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW
- email us editor@disabilitynow.org.uk
- phone us 020 7619 7323