

Government offers £1 million accessibility boost to ferries to the Isle of Wight and Isles of Scilly

News story

£1 million fund to improve accessibility for disabled and reduced mobility passengers on ferries to the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly.



- operators can now bid for funding to improve accessibility of ports, ferries or hovercraft
- £1 million funding will ensure vital ferries are made accessible to all
- latest step in the government's National Disability Strategy to build back fairer

The Department for Transport (DfT) is now welcoming bids for a [£1 million grant to boost accessibility for ferries to the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly](#).

From today, operators can pitch projects that will help elderly and disabled people travel with confidence on the vital transport links connecting them to the mainland. This funding was initially announced as part of the government's [National Disability Strategy](#) and reinforces its pledge to improve the network for everyone – no matter the mode of transport.

Bids can either be for equipment, such as wheelchairs or accessible ticket machines, or building works like ramp levelling or the installation of Changing Places toilets. All ideas will be considered, so long as they are geared towards improving accessibility.

Accessibility Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

These ports provide vital connections to the islands of the United Kingdom and it is imperative that they are accessible to all.

We look forward to hearing some innovative and life-changing ideas as we take another step towards creating a fully inclusive transport network.

Ferries from the Isle of Wight and Isles of Scilly to the mainland provide vital connections for around 140,000 residents and are crucial for businesses and tourism. There is currently no expectation this funding will be repeated, so the government is urging operators to come forward now to support this important initiative.

Bids received will be assessed on the number of passengers likely to benefit from the improvements and value for money. Applicants are asked to provide a supporting letter from local disability charities or individuals, as well as 3 quotes to ensure good value is being obtained.

The government's National Disability Strategy is already underway – with a nationwide audit of all train stations to drive up standards, the urgent rollout of tactile paving on platforms, grants to improve bus services and new laws to ensure proper support in taxis and private hire vehicles.

This follows the [‘It’s everyone’s journey’ campaign](#), launched in 2020 to champion equal access across all forms of public transport and encourage people to be more considerate and supportive of others when using the transport network.

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