

News story: Transport Minister visits cycle taxi scheme to highlight Accessibility Action Plan consultation

Transport Minister Paul Maynard has urged people to make their views heard on the government's Accessibility Action Plan, with just 2 weeks of the consultation remaining, during a visit to East London today (31 October 2017).

The Minister was in Hackney to see a demonstration of the Ride Side by Side project, a cycle taxi scheme which received £55,000 funding as part of the government's Innovation Challenge Fund. The scheme helps older people or those with limited mobility make free, short local trips by road, using specially adapted cycles, while accompanied by a co-rider.

Transport Minister Paul Maynard said:

The Ride Side by Side project shows what can be done to help those with limited mobility travel to the shops or clinics for appointments. It is a great innovation and will make life easier for many people.

I take the issue of accessibility across all modes of transport very seriously and that is why I encourage as many people as possible to respond to the Accessibility Action Plan consultation.

This will help us tackle the issues that make it difficult for people with disabilities to use our transport network.

Mobility-impaired transport users, including older people, often rely on services such as Dial-a-Ride or taxis to make short trips. However, they can often be impeded by long waiting times.

The Ride Side by Side service can be booked online or by phone and takes people as far as 2 miles or 30 minutes from where they live. Further support is then offered, such as help to access a clinic or shop.

David Dansky, Head of Training and Development at Cycle Training UK, said:

There has been much enthusiasm for the project from local people who use the service for leisure rides, to go to the supermarket or local market, or to visit friends and family.

There is also an amazing social element where participants sit next to the rider and are able to chat. Ride Side by Side not only offers exercise, practical and social benefits, it is also great

fun.

The government is [consulting on its Accessibility Action Plan](#) until November 15. Among measures to improve transport for people with disabilities are:

- improving accessible toilets on the railways
- ensuring better use of Blue Badges
- trials in autonomous vehicles