

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

4.17 Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) play an essential role in enabling disabled people to complete door-to-door journeys where other forms of transport may not be available or accessible. Vehicles and drivers are licensed by local licensing authorities (LLAs) which have broad powers to shape the service provided within their jurisdiction.

4.18 Disabled passengers travelling by taxi or PHV have a number of rights, including:

- Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to access their services;
- Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires non-exempt drivers of taxis and PHVs designated as wheelchair accessible to accept the carriage of wheelchair users, to provide them with appropriate assistance, and to refrain from charging them more than other passengers would pay for the same service; and
- Sections 168 and 170 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires non-exempt drivers of taxis and PHVs to accept the carriage of assistance dogs and to refrain from charging extra for them.

4.19 Around 58% of vehicles are already wheelchair accessible, but these tend to be concentrated in urban locations and taxi fleets. The proportion of wheelchair accessible PHVs remains very low, at about 2% nationally.

4.20 This Strategy should help ensure that authorities not only use the powers available to them to ensure that taxi and PHV services not only comply with the legal requirements but that these services meet the needs of passengers more consistently.

4.21 In the longer term we want the service currently provided by taxis and PHVs to be as accessible to disabled passengers as it is for those who are not disabled. This should mean not only that vehicles are sufficiently accessible to provide for people with a range of access needs, but that the means of hiring them is accessible, that passengers can be picked up or dropped off at a location convenient to them, and that no disabled person is ever left at the kerbside or charged extra for their journey. We also want LLAs to understand their role in helping this to happen, both through the licensing system and through other areas of influence, such as traffic management.