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Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Minister for Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Thank you for your letter of 28 November about the petition from Mencap Cymru regarding access to parking provision and other services for disabled people.

In January 2010, the Welsh Government published an Action Plan that set out our priorities for modernising the Blue Badge scheme. One of the priorities in the Action Plan is to produce guidance on the provision of disabled parking spaces by local authorities and others. We are working closely with local authorities, the British Parking Association and key partners on this guidance and this will be published in due course. In addition, we are working closely with the UK Government on the Disabled Person's Parking Bill that will provide local authorities with new powers to tackle the abuse and misuse of the Scheme. These plans will help to address many of the concerns about parking for people with disabilities that were raised in the petition.

In taking forward these plans we will explore with the British Retail Consortium the opportunities for introducing a scheme for displaying a sign where fixed or portable ramps are available.

I understand that building regulations cover the requirements for WC provision for ambulant and wheelchair users, but are only applicable where building work is being undertaken e.g. new buildings and where alterations or refurbishments are undertaken (provisions may not always be required in some alterations or refurbishments depending upon the work being undertaken).

However, the Welsh Government is currently part of the Changing Places Charter which includes MENCAP, transport operators, shopping centre and tourist organisations. The intent is to try and increase the provision of Changing Places facilities in the UK. These are specialist changing areas that include hoist, changing bench and are larger in size to allow carer assistance. Because of the specialist nature and cost of the facilities the Welsh Government are undertaking research to try and identify "hotspots" where there is a need for further facilities in Wales.

You also mention the need for taxi companies to carry the correct clamps and inertia reels for use with motorised wheelchairs. We are working closely with the Law Commission on plans for modernising the regulatory and licensing regime for taxis and private hire vehicles. This will provide an opportunity for us to explore how we can use the licensing arrangements to improve the provision of accessible taxi services for people with disabilities.



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