

RNIB Scotland - The Bus Charter

In planning, delivering and monitoring our services we will work with blind and partially sighted people to remove barriers from independent travel. We will achieve this by implementing the following charter principles as part of our ongoing programmes of continuous improvement.

What we expect from our bus drivers

1. It will be our policy that bus drivers stop for any waiting passengers at bus stops, and we will ensure that the driver positions the bus safely, always trying to ensure that the door entry or exit is not obstructed by street furniture or other obstructions.
2. Our bus drivers will tell blind and partially sighted passengers which service they are and what their destination is, and ask if they need assistance with payment or finding a seat.
3. Our drivers will not pull away from a bus stop until blind and partially sighted passengers have found an available seat. Drivers will assist passengers by providing information about which seats are free or where priority seats are located.
4. We will ensure that where we have talking buses our drivers will not switch off or turn down the audio announcements. If a service does not have a functioning audio next stop announcement, the driver will advise the passenger when their stop is reached, and provide any necessary assistance in helping them to get off the bus.

Working with others to make improvements

5. We will check all of our customer feedback systems with blind and partially sighted passengers, and ensure that they are as accessible as possible. We will also promote our feedback procedures using the most accessible means – including websites, mobile sites and apps as well as more traditional methods.
6. We will review our timetable and bus stop information in conjunction with blind and partially sighted people, local authorities and other stakeholders to ensure it is as accessible as possible.

7. We will ensure that all of our bus drivers are fully aware of the rules around concessionary passes and we will support the scheme with a travel assistance card. The assistance card will indicate that additional assistance is needed and our bus drivers will provide this in a discreet way.

The bus environment

8. We will seek to improve the way sound can be heard through the assault screen, between the bus driver and passenger, or where possible remove the assault screen.

9. We will actively promote the priority seating and areas for disabled people through awareness campaigns and materials on buses – this will include promoting this priority space for guide dogs.

10. We will make the pass scanners as visible as possible and ensure that our drivers are as consistent in their approach to scanning passes for blind passengers.

11. We will explore all options for providing audio announcements on our buses, including making use of new technologies when they become available.

12. When introducing buses with audio announcements, we will choose routes in consultation with passengers with sight loss and will prioritise the busiest routes and those which enable people to travel to key locations and facilities, such as hospitals or leisure centres.

13. In order to achieve the above we will build interactive sight loss awareness training into our driver training. We will involve blind and partially sighted people in the design of the training materials and activities and seek endorsement for our training from organisations representing blind and partially sighted people.