

Bus pass campaign

Campaign update: landmark local ruling

On 2 October 2009, the local government ombudsman ruled that a local authority did not treat a deafblind man properly. The man in question was Roger Mulholland - whose mother Jane contacted Sense about national bus passes in 2008, leading to our involvement in this vital campaign.

Prior to the national bus pass scheme, Roger had a local bus pass, which gave both him and a companion free local travel. When national bus passes were introduced, Roger's local authority changed their scheme, meaning that travel for a companion was no longer free. This made travel impossible for him, and seriously impacted his lifestyle.

Have you been affected by this issue? Sense would love to hear from you. Contact us at campaigns@sense.org.uk.

[Send a message to the Secretary for Transport](#)

Bus pass campaign: the background

The national bus pass scheme was introduced in April 2008, giving eligible disabled people free off-peak travel on all local bus services in England. Bus passes are administered by local authorities, who can choose to add local concessions, including free travel for companions, or discounted peak travel. Some local authorities do this, but many do not.

National bus passes are welcome, but a number of changes are needed to make daily travel a real option for deafblind and disabled people.

- free travel for companions

Many disabled people cannot travel alone, and cannot afford the cost of travel for a companion. The national bus passes should provide free travel for companions of disabled people who cannot travel alone.

- free travel at all times

Many disabled people need to travel during peak times, before 9.30am and after 11pm - to get to work, college or for morning appointments. Travel should be free at all times

- free travel for all disabled people

At present, only some disabled people are eligible for a national bus pass. All disabled people should be eligible for a pass.

- fairness across the country

Local authorities can add local concessions, such as free travel for companion. However this has led to a postcode lottery. Disabled people should have the same concessions wherever they live.

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