

Miles secures debate on station traffic



Lothians MSP Miles Briggs has made it one of the principal aims of his new position to get accessible taxis back into Waverley Station.

Despite Scotrail having said when they banned all vehicles except delivery trucks that this would bring the station in line with all the others they own and run, Briggs has not been dissuaded.

He is adamant that many groups of travellers need the convenience of getting a taxi down in the station, and set up a [petition](#) to gather support in August.

He has also secured a Members' debate at Holyrood next Thursday 24 November 2016 to ensure proper discussion of the matter at the highest levels.

Miles made representations to Scotrail Alliance's Chief Executive and the Transport Minister Humza Yousaf.

He hopes that his [petition](#) will demonstrate the significant level of public support for bringing back accessible taxis to the station.

Speaking earlier Miles said : "Since being elected as a Lothian MSP in May many constituents, especially elderly and disabled people, have contacted me to express their deep unhappiness with the current taxi arrangements at Edinburgh's Waverley Station.

" In 2014 taxis were banned from previous taxi ranks within the station, meaning passengers have to leave the station to get a taxi, or be dropped off, on neighbouring streets. Older

people regularly tell me about the inconvenience and difficulties they face as a result. Disabled and infirm travellers say they find it very hard to navigate their way to the lifts to leave the station to get a cab while the escalators also pose a particular challenge to those visually impaired people with guide dogs. Tourists, for whom Waverley is often their first experience of Scotland having travelled north, struggle with heavy luggage to stand outside in all weathers waiting for a taxi on crowded streets with no overhead shelter.

“ It is well over a year since the Scottish Parliament’s Infrastructure Committee investigated this issue and concluded it was “essential that suitably located, accessible taxi facilities are available at Waverley.” Constituents and visitors are frustrated that no action has yet been taken to address this matter.

“ I am pleased that my Parliamentary motion on better access at Waverley Station has gained the support of 34 fellow MSPs from across the political spectrum and that I have now been able to secure time in Parliament for a Member’s debate on this subject.

“ I am very clear that the current access arrangements at Waverley Station aren’t good enough, especially for blind, disabled and elderly residents who sadly feel they are second class citizens when it comes to using the station and who wish to see a better drop off and pick up system. It is the Scottish Government’s responsibility to ensure disabled travellers have equal access to transport services in Scotland and I feel Ministers should have been doing far more to work with Network Rail to resolve matters.

“ I look forward to the debate on the 24th and hope MSPs from across Lothian and further afield will join me in putting pressure on the Scottish Government and Network Rail to make sure one of Scotland’s key transport hubs is truly accessible

for all travellers including those with visual impairment and mobility issues.

“ In the meantime I am keen for my online petition to demonstrate the level of public support that exists for the return of taxis to the station and therefore I am urging constituents and others to sign my petition. It can be accessed

at: www.change.org/p/scotrail-alliance-bring-back-taxi-ranks-to-within-edinburgh-waverley-station”