

10 Key Asks for inclusive mobility aid regulations

- response to the government consultation on “Powered Mobility Aids

The UK government are consulting on changing the laws affecting use of “Powered Mobility Aids” from January to April 2026.

Wheels for Wellbeing have developed these key principles through three years of intensive consultation with other Disabled People’s Organisations, disability charities and Disabled individuals, using a pan-impairment approach working towards consensus on Disabled people’s right to mobility.

The underlying principles gained from this collaborative work have been applied to the contents of the government “Powered Mobility Aids” consultation to develop these 10 essential principles for new regulations.

Key Asks:

- 1) Regulations must be based on the Social Model of Disability and the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (which the UK has signed, giving obligations to the Government), and in particular article 20: “a) facilitating the personal mobility of persons with disabilities in the manner and at the time of their choice, and at affordable cost; b) Facilitating access by persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including by making them available at affordable cost;”
- 2) Regulations must not introduce or make use of a definition of disability that is more restrictive than the Equality Act 2010. Everybody who has disability rights under Equality Act 2010 should thereby have full rights to use mobility aids. Disabled people are the people who are best placed to judge what mobility aids are essential to our lives. Regulations should be designed on a pan-impairment basis, recognising the needs of disparate Disabled people, including those with visual impairments and who are neurodivergent. Professionals must not be allowed to gatekeep which Disabled people get full rights to use mobility aids.
- 3) Regulations must be compatible with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and work on the presumption that, if adult, Disabled people have mental capacity (including to judge our own safety). Where the Disabled person does not have capacity (whether due to impairment or because they are a child), their responsible adult should similarly be presumed to be able to judge what is safe for them as an individual from day-to-day, and implement suitable bespoke restrictions on any particular device that individual uses.

- 4) Mobility device regulations must provide equal rights to access pedestrian, cycling and cycling-equivalent mobility for Disabled people. This must include rights for:
 - a. Disabled people to use diverse mobility aids at pedestrian speeds in all pedestrian spaces, and at cycling-equivalent speeds wherever cycling is permitted; It needs to be recognised that mobility aids may in future take very different shapes from those in the three current classes of “invalid carriage”.
 - b. Disabled people of all ages to use our chosen mobility aids to move in equivalent ways to non-disabled peers, including but not limited to:
 - i. The right for Disabled people to transport others of all ages and shopping, luggage, etc. in comparable ways to non-disabled people walking/cycling, e.g., using pushchairs, trailers, child seats/carriers and multi-person/separable aids;
 - ii. The right of all Disabled people, including Disabled children to use devices enabling movement at running and cycling-equivalent speeds (for those who are children or without capacity this will be as their responsible adult deems appropriate).
- 5) Disabled people should not be made to wear protective equipment or meet requirements for reflectiveness or lights that equivalent non-disabled people are not required to meet e.g., there must be no requirement for protective clothing such as helmets for devices where the maximum powered speed is no higher than 15.5mph – the speed for legal e-cycles and e-scooter trials.
- 6) New mobility regulations should not be based on current templates, particularly the class 3 invalid carriage category, which imposes burdens and restrictions on Disabled people which have no equivalents applying to non-disabled people, and exceed what would be considered reasonable for non-disabled people.
- 7) Mobility device regulations must be least-restrictive, future-proofed and clearly worded. Regulations and associated standards must be freely available in accessible formats.
- 8) Disabled people using mobility aids should be subject to the same civil and criminal enforcement against dangerous and antisocial behaviour that apply to everyone.
- 9) Where (and to the extent that) no significant adverse consequences can be foreseen, non-disabled people should also be allowed to use mobility aids. This will help make them be more mass-market items, and thus cheaper and more widely available for the Disabled people who rely on them.
- 10) The principle of “nothing about us without us” should apply, and the voices of Disabled Peoples’ Organisations and Disabled people should not be overridden by the voices of non-disabled people, and organisations run by non-disabled people, no matter how well-meaning and experienced.