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Bradford & District
disabled people's forum

**“WHAT’S IT REALLY LIKE?”
THE AVAILABILITY OF
WHEELCHAIR-ACCESSIBLE TAXIS
IN BRADFORD**

**A REPORT CARRIED OUT FOR THE CITY OF BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL, 2006**

By BRADFORD ACCESS ACTION

“Bradford Access Action” was concerned about the City Council’s decision in 2005 to restrict the number of Hackney Carriages in general and the number of wheelchair-accessible taxis in particular.

In response, Bradford Access Action carried out a questionnaire survey to gather disabled people’s views on the taxi service in Bradford and carried out a *“mystery shopper”* type exercise in Spring 2006 to find out how good or bad the service really is.

The “mystery shopper” exercise found that wheelchair users needed to wait on average 15 minutes for an accessible taxi to arrive, compared to non-disabled people who could get a taxi straight away. The worst locations were the most popular ones, namely, the Interchange and the Kirkgate Centre. Waiting times were longer at peak times and the worst case recorded was a 30-minute wait at the Kirkgate Centre. *During this time, 26 saloon taxis passed through the rank before the first accessible taxi arrived!*

A wide variation in the knowledge and quality of care offered by drivers was identified by the survey, *many not adhering to basic safety requirements*. Bradford Access Action considers there to be an urgent need for drivers to undergo disability awareness training and urges the Council to ensure a consistent and professional service.

The survey concluded that there are not enough accessible taxis currently operating in Bradford and that this discriminates against disabled people. *The Council is requested to address this problem as a matter of urgency.*