

P-04-438 Shopping Access – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Chair,. 06.06.2013

Thursday 6th June 2013

Response to Correspondence from Cardiff County Council and St Davids Dewi Sant.

Mencap Cymru welcomes Cardiff County Council's invitation to meet with the young people from Ysgol Erw'r Delyn and look forward to arranging a meeting.

With regards to the letter from St Davids Dewi Sant, Mencap Cymru accepts that it needs to do more to publicize the existence and location of the Changing Places Toilets around the country. A stick man sign was designed for changing places toilets along the same lines as standard male / female and standard disabled signs. Like all facility signs it was designed to be recognizable for people with communication issues. If this sign is not displayed alongside other facilities it makes it harder to spread the word.

The young people we have worked with were unaware of the Changing Places facility despite visiting the centre on numerous occasions. In the past they have correctly assumed that a standard disabled toilet was available and visited it without asking centre staff or making advanced plans.

We also accept that sadly, many disabled people and their carers need to carefully plan trips out. However we believe that we should strive as a society to arrive at a place where people with complex needs can assume that adequate facilities are available, much like the rest of the population does. Obviously this is not yet the case, but we believe that small changes, like erecting a sign are the types of changes that make real differences to people's lives. These are the changes that people really notice in their day-to-day business.

Taxis

Mencap Cymru would also like to highlight again the issue of taxis not being able to transport users of all types of wheelchairs. Earlier this week a volunteer was told by a taxi company that he couldn't be strapped or clamped into the taxi because they didn't have the correct equipment. They routinely send out taxis with ramps but no clamps, the assumption being that a wheelchair user would be ok for the journey.