

### **Sarah Champion MP on board with Guide Dogs' Talking Buses campaign**

Sarah Champion MP showed her support for a campaign led by the charity Guide Dogs to make travelling by bus easier for people with sight loss.

The MP for Rotherham went to a reception at the Houses of Parliament in support of Guide Dogs' campaign to make sure all new buses have audio visual (AV) next stop announcements, which are vital for blind and partially sighted bus travellers.

The reception, which was addressed by Business Minister Baroness Kramer, highlighted how announcements enable blind and partially sighted people to understand their location and prevent them from missing their stops.

AV systems are only fitted to around one fifth of the bus fleet nationally, with the overwhelming majority of these buses operating in London.

Guide Dogs is calling for the Government to require all new buses be fitted with AV, as currently bus operators are under no obligation to include this technology when upgrading their fleet.

James White, Guide Dog's Campaigns Manager, said: "Buses are a lifeline for people who are blind or partially sighted, and we welcome the support of Sarah Champion MP for people with sight loss to be able to travel safely and independently."

"Without AV, bus travel for people with sight loss can be especially difficult, stressful, and dangerous when stops are missed and they end up in an unfamiliar area.

"Safe and accessible bus services give people with sight loss much greater freedom to work, socialise and participate in the community."

#### Note to Editors

- 1) About The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association: The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association is a British charitable organisation founded in 1934. Guide Dogs provides independence and freedom to thousands of blind and partially sighted people across the UK through the provision of guide dogs, mobility and other rehabilitation services. It also campaigns passionately for the rights of those with visual impairments. Guide Dogs is working towards a society in which blind and partially sighted people enjoy the same freedom of movement as everyone else.
- 2) For more information about Guide Dogs and its Talking Buses campaign, contact Fiona MacAulay in the press office on 0118 983 8156 or [fiona.macaulay@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:fiona.macaulay@guidedogs.org.uk)