

Plaxtons Nat Ex wheelchair accessible coach goes to Brussels

Plaxton has now completed the development of a coach offering direct wheelchair accessibility via the front entrance coach for National Express. One of its first outings was to Brussels for inspection by Members of the European Parliament. The visit



coincided with the COST 349 (Committee of Senior Officials for Scientific and Technical Research) exhibition.

The Plaxton Panther coach in question is built on a Volvo B12B chassis. Parks of Hamilton have taken delivery of it to operate on the recently awarded 538 Inverness - Coventry service. Another will follow later this year and then they will both operate as an easy access service.

Bill Cahill, Operations Director,

packaged around the additional mid chassis mounted Volvo fuel tank and encapsulated within an ABS panel for protection against ingress of road dirt. The raised floor has been maximised to assist

National Express said, 'Several British MEP's and other dignitaries at the exhibition in Brussels were very impressed. This solution meets our requirements to ensure the best results for our disabled customers and we are happy to have a second solution following the Gaetano Levante.'

Kevin Wood, Sales Director, Plaxton said, 'Plaxton has been closely involved in supplying vehicles to National Express for almost 20 years. The development of the easy access coach involved maximising the benefits of the existing design and incorporating the needs of accessibility to produce a vehicle which we believe ranks as the best possible current practice.'

On the Plaxton Panther easy access vehicle, the single leaf entrance door is significantly wider than a standard entrance, which allows for greater space for passengers boarding the vehicle and for accommodating the PLS NX Magic Floor lift. The vehicle also incorporates the NMI's wheelchair restraint system. The step well has been increased in width to package the NX Magic Floor lift into the bottom step and the lifting mechanism has been

wheelchair manoeuvrability and Volvo's seat-mounted gear-selector has been repositioned to the driver's nearside to clear the moving floor.