



Accessible Travel Policy

April 2024

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Introduction

TransPennine Express is the intercity train operating company for the North of England and into Scotland, connecting key towns and cities with fast, high quality rail services. Our vision is ‘Taking the North Further’.

To deliver this vision, we have invested over £500 million since 2016 to introduce brand new fleets of NOVA trains, increasing capacity on our network. We have also invested in our stations to provide the facilities our customers want and need, such as Changing Places toilets, waiting facilities, improved seating, British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation services, tactile maps, and Room Mate devices, and we continue to explore new opportunities in line with our policy commitments.

We are committed to delivering consistently excellent customer service, making journeys accessible and convenient for all our customers. Our aim is to provide an accessible and welcoming railway for all that can be used at ease, and we will ensure that your needs are properly considered in all aspects of service delivery.

The end goal is enabling you to travel confidently and as independently as possible, now and in the future.

To help you plan your journey, and to know what to expect, we have produced this Accessible Travel Policy. This is made up of three elements:

- **Our Accessible Travel Policy:** A guide to our policy commitments and practices which explains our strategy and vision for delivering accessible services (this document).
- **Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled Passengers:** A summary of practical information about travelling on our services and the wider UK rail network. This leaflet also includes a summary of the arrangements and facilities at each of the stations which we manage and those where our services call.
- **Our trains accessibility information:** Which explains the accessible features on the trains we operate.

Together these documents form this Accessible Travel Policy. You can find all three elements online at www.tpexpress.co.uk/help/accessibility/guides-and-policies where they are available for download in various accessible formats.

You can also pick up a printed copy of our Making Rail Accessible Guide at any staffed station where our train services call. Or you can request a printed copy from our Passenger Assist Team.

We also offer our Accessible Travel Policy in alternative formats, specifically:

- Braille
- Audio
- Large Print
- British Sign Language
- Easy Read

You can ask for an alternative format by contacting our Passenger Assist Team. We will respond to your request within seven days.

We will review and update our Accessible Travel Policy each year to make sure that it includes any improvements we have made to our services.

A. Our Commitment to Providing Assistance

We are committed to providing a reliable and easy to access service that allows older and disabled customers to arrange the assistance they may require to help them access any part of our network with confidence, using the national Passenger Assist system.

We continue to work closely with rail industry partners to improve the consistency and reliability of the Passenger Assist service, particularly in relation to journeys that involve more than one operator.

A1. Booking and Providing Assistance

You can book assistance on our services and those of other train operating companies by contacting our Passenger Assist Team on **0800 107 2149** who are available 24 hours a day. Please note that lines close at 23:59 on Christmas Eve and reopen at 00:00 on the morning of 27th December. Any enquiries made by app or webform during this time will be actioned as soon as possible upon reopening. You can also purchase tickets at the same time. We will ensure our Passenger Assist Team is resourced to meet demand by monitoring volumes of requests and response times and adjusting our service provision accordingly. As detailed in section B6: Staff Training, our Passenger Assist Team receive training that ensures they understand the needs of our disabled and older customers. The team have an in-depth knowledge of the accessible facilities and features of our network, enabling them to provide the most appropriate advice for your travel needs.

You can request assistance for your journey up to 11 weeks in advance. The amount of notice we ask you to give for requesting assistance is at least 2 hours before you are set to travel to ensure that we are able to make the necessary arrangements, but you can also 'turn up and go' as explained below.

Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist is the national system used by all train operators in Great Britain to coordinate assisted travel. Because it is a national system, it means we can book assistance for your entire journey irrespective of the number of connections or train services you need to take, all in one request. Where possible, seat reservations will also be made, including priority seats, wheelchair user spaces and companion seats.

Passenger Assist draws station information from National Rail Enquiries, including station facilities and features as well as the latest information about access arrangements on stations and trains across Great Britain. Our Passenger Assist Team will use this information when making your booking. To deliver a reliable assistance service, we will ensure that the information on National Rail Enquiries for the stations that we manage is regularly reviewed and updated where necessary. If for whatever reason one of the accessible features or facilities on our stations or trains is not available, or you make us aware of an issue with the information provided, we will ensure that information is updated on National Rail Enquiries within one business day. Where facilities that you may need on-board are out of use (for example accessible toilets) staff will try to advise you of this before you join the train.

When you call to make a Passenger Assist booking, our team will confirm the station accessibility features and the arrangements they have made for you, so that you are aware of what to expect when you travel. You will receive a confirmation email with the details of your assistance booking.

In addition, station accessibility information can also be provided to you by post or email upon request.

To improve the co-ordination of Passenger Assist across Great Britain's rail network, we have worked with other train operating companies and Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to introduce the new Passenger Assist system, including the staff mobile app, which has enabled real-time communication between station teams showing the live status of your assistance, along with any amendments.

Where Passenger Assist has been booked, we aim to provide a member of staff to help you on and off the train as soon as possible. When you arrive at a station where a train terminates its journey (such as Manchester Airport) it may take a little longer to meet you, and we will endeavour to assist you within five minutes of the arrival of your train.

Unbooked Assistance

We can also provide help when you travel, even if it has not been booked in advance. You can turn up at any station that is accessible to you and request assistance onto a train from a member of staff directly (where available), by using a help point, or by calling our freephone number **0800 107 2149**. To help you understand which stations may be accessible to you without staff assistance, the accessible features of each of the stations where our services call are detailed on our website www.tpexpress.co.uk/travelling-with-us/station-information.

Our Passenger Assist Team will also be able to provide these details and advice about your journey.

Every TransPennine Express service has on-board staff who will be able to assist you to get on and off the train at any station where there are no staff available. We have ramps on board all our trains and strategically placed at stations where our services call.

We will always do our best to assist you and all members of our team are briefed to look out for customers with specific needs and offer appropriate help. Please bear in mind that if you need assistance and have not contacted us in advance, particularly during times of disruption it may take some time to provide or wheelchair user spaces on our trains may already be taken. We may instead arrange alternative accessible transport (at no additional cost) for you to an alternative station. If you need help getting off the train and have not booked assistance in advance, you should advise on-board staff who will arrange this for you.

Accessing Unstaffed Stations

We always do our best to provide the assistance and help you need. If access to and from platforms at the station you plan to use is not possible, (for example if the station is not staffed at the time you wish to travel or because of a physical feature) we can arrange alternative transport to a convenient accessible station (at no additional cost) from where you can continue your journey by rail. When you book assistance, we will discuss with you the type of alternative transport you require so that we can make sure that the vehicle provided meets your needs.

Connections To Other Train Services

When making train connections, please allow yourself enough time to transfer between trains. Depending on your needs, it may be that the time needed to transfer is longer than the times allocated in journey planning systems. Our Passenger Assist Team can advise you on recommended connection times when you are making your booking and can find alternative journeys for you when more time is needed.

Station Wheelchairs and Buggies

All TransPennine Express staffed stations have wheelchairs which are able to be used by staff to assist customers for transfers around the station. We have invested in new station wheelchairs which feature luggage attachments, and in some locations the wheelchairs are power assisted which enables staff to help more than one customer at a time, increasing the amount of assistance we can provide to customers. At some of the larger stations we serve such as Manchester Piccadilly, Leeds, Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central, buggies are also available.

If you require use of a station wheelchair or buggy, please request this when booking Passenger Assist in order to ensure availability. If you have not booked Passenger Assist and require the use of a station wheelchair, you may experience a short wait whilst it becomes available. Please ensure you arrive at the station at least 20 minutes before your departure time to ensure you can gain the support required.

Handover Protocol

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) have developed a Handover Protocol, which is a set of rules which station staff must follow to ensure that all relevant information about your assistance is effectively communicated between boarding and alighting stations.

We will use the new Passenger Assist system to transfer all information between stations about Passenger Assist bookings, or unbooked assistance requirements. Until all operators are using the passenger assistance system at stations, we will use dedicated passenger assistance telephone numbers for each of the stations on your journey to pass information about your journey between operators, ensuring

that there is an audit trail behind these calls. At staffed stations, supervisory staff or ticket office staff will be responsible for receiving calls. For unstaffed stations, calls or messages will be directed to the nearest hub station who will relay the information to the relevant on-board staff member. For those stations that are partially staffed our supervisory or ticket office staff will be available to answer these calls in hours where the station is staffed, out of these hours these calls will be picked up by the nearest hub station, where the information will be relayed to the relevant onboard teams. If any call goes unanswered, it will be transferred to a member of our Control team who can take the required action.

We will ensure that all information for every passenger assistance journey is correctly communicated to operators to ensure that your destination and any changing stations are prepared for your arrival; ensuring that any alterations to your journey are clearly noted.

Platform Alterations

If platform alterations occur at short notice at stations we manage, our station staff can assist you to the correct platform. They will also:

- Update the Customer Information Screens at the station and make additional announcements.
- Seek to identify any customers with disabilities and provide any assistance needed.
- Try to give enough time for all customers to board the re-platformed train.

Arrangements at stations we call at but do not manage may vary slightly, but we work very closely with other train operating companies to ensure a smooth experience for all customers.

Intermodal connections

If you are changing between modes of transport (for example, from train to bus or taxi), we can provide assistance to help you make the connection as long as the interchange is within the immediate station area. Working with local taxi suppliers, we ensure that wheelchair accessible taxis can be made available at our station taxi ranks within 20 minutes of you requesting one. We work closely with local councils who license taxis to encourage taxi companies that have a permit to operate from our stations to provide wheelchair accessible vehicles.

We provide all drivers who have permits to work at our stations with disability awareness training. As this is not a TransPennine Express managed service, we cannot guarantee that such taxis will be available at all times, and there may be a short wait to provide a taxi suited to your needs.

Our staff can help you to and from the station taxi rank. The contact details of local taxi operators for each station are displayed on our on-board digital screens as the

train approaches the station, online at www.nationalrail.co.uk and on station welcome posters should you need to arrange a taxi for your onward journey.

Seats on trains

Seat reservations can be made on the majority of TransPennine Express services. These are available from as much as six months in advance, up to the day before your travel for services operated by Class 185 trains, and up to 2 hours before travel on services operated by Nova trains, although we recommend reserving a seat as soon as you can (preferably when you book your ticket / assistance).

Seat reservations may not be available on some shorter distance journeys and are not available to season ticket holders. However, if you are mobility impaired or have a disability where it is beneficial for you to have a seat for your journey, we strongly recommend you make a reservation for a priority seat by contacting our Passenger Assist Team.

If you are travelling with others, we will do our best to reserve them a seat close to you but cannot guarantee this, particularly if the train is heavily reserved.

Wheelchair user spaces and priority seat reservations

All our trains have priority seats in each carriage, located near to an entrance door, and with additional leg room. We ask our customers to give up priority seats for people who need them more when they have not been reserved in advance, but it is not always obvious why someone with a non-visible disability needs a seat. These seats can also be used by pregnant women and people less able to stand.

Our on-board team will be happy to help ensure priority use of these spaces is given to customers who need them most. All our trains have two spaces for wheelchair users, accessible by wheelchairs with a maximum width of 70 centimetres and a maximum length of 120 centimetres. You can find the spaces for wheelchair users by looking for the wheelchair symbol on the outside of the carriage. Staff will deploy the ramp and help you to board or alight the train. Wheelchair user spaces can also be used by parents, guardians and carers with prams and push chairs if they are occupied by a child with a disability or medical conditions which means that they cannot leave the pram or push chair for it to be folded down.

Class 185 Trains



Each three coach Class 185 train has two wheelchair user spaces located in coach C or G (depending in the orientation of the train). The wheelchair user spaces are C/G98 and C/G99.

Each wheelchair user space has a folding table, plug socket with USB charging point, and call for aid button. Fold down seats are available in this area for companions.

The wheelchair user spaces are in standard class only. There is no access for wheelchair users to First Class on these trains.

When two class 185 trains are coupled together to form a six carriage service, we will only board wheelchair users into the front train. This is because some stations we call at have platforms which are too short to accommodate all six coaches.

Transferring to a fixed seat on Class 185 Trains

If you need your wheelchair positioned adjacent to the seat, you will not be able to transfer to a seat on Class 185 trains.

If you can walk a small number of steps from your wheelchair to a seat, you can transfer to a seat in Coach C. The seating closest to the wheelchair user spaces are in First Class. Any wheelchair user transferring to a seat on these trains can travel in the First Class carriage at no additional cost where seating is available and not required by First Class ticket holders. If you transfer to a seat, you will be entitled to a complimentary hot or cold drink and a snack whilst catering is available.

Customers wishing to enjoy the full First Class offering, including alcoholic refreshments and larger meals, have the option to upgrade to a First Class ticket.

Our retail offering will also be available for the purchase of drinks or snacks. A companion seat can be booked in first class where your companion will be entitled to the same hot drink and snack, if they wish to access the full first class offering, they will be required to purchase a First Class ticket.

Nova Trains

Each five carriage Nova train has two wheelchair user spaces located in coach E, which on these trains is First Class. The wheelchair user spaces are E01 and E02.



Each wheelchair user space has a table, plug socket with USB charging point, and call for aid button.

There are no wheelchair user spaces in standard class. The space within first class offers the following benefits:

- Our on board catering host is predominantly located in First Class meaning that they can be on hand to assist wheelchair users should the Conductor or station staff be unavailable.
- We recognise the guarantee that the wheelchair user space will be available, and not taken up by other customers, pushchairs (except those being used by children with disabilities), bicycles, or luggage is crucial. With the wheelchair user spaces in First Class, we can guarantee the space, with easier access to get to and from them, even when the train is busy.
- The availability of the accessible toilet on board the train is recognised as being of paramount importance. With the toilet in the First Class section of the train, the demand for this facility is reduced, adding to its reliability and availability for wheelchair users who may not be able to use or access other toilets on the train.

Ticket Validity on Nova Trains

Wheelchair users with standard class tickets will travel in the First Class carriage at no additional cost and will be entitled to a complimentary hot or cold drink and a snack whilst catering is available. However, customers wishing to enjoy the full First Class offering, including alcoholic refreshments and larger meals, have the option to upgrade to a First Class ticket. Our retail offering will also be available for the purchase of drinks or snacks.

Companions on Nova trains

There is one allocated companion seat per wheelchair user space. These are seats E03 and E05. Companion seats can be reserved through our Passenger Assist Team when a wheelchair user assistance request is made.

Where a wheelchair user is travelling with a companion and assistance has not been booked, our conductors will endeavour to make the companion seat available. The offers for Disabled Persons Railcard Holders and reduced fares which apply for wheelchair users and one companion remain unchanged.

Seat E04 is permanently non-reservable, and so may be available for additional companions when not required by First Class ticket holders. The carriage of additional companions in the First Class carriage with a standard class ticket will be at the discretion of the Conductor, determined through consideration of the demand for First Class at the time of travel. Companions will similarly benefit from a free hot or cold drink and a snack whilst catering is available, with the option to upgrade to First Class to benefit from the full catering offer, or purchase drinks or snacks separately.

Transferring to a fixed seat on Nova trains

There are two options available to customers wishing to transfer from a wheelchair to a fixed seat whilst on board. Customers who need their wheelchair positioned close to the seat enabling transfer with minimal steps should access the wheelchair user spaces in the First Class carriage of the train and transfer to one of the designated companion seats. An additional companion seat can be booked to ensure two seats are available.

Customers using a station wheelchair can board any coach, and then make use of the priority seats on board. Our Passenger Assist Teams can discuss your preferences with you and book assistance and reserve seats based on these.

Whichever TransPennine Express train you are travelling on, use of the wheelchair user space will always be prioritised for wheelchair users or mobility scooter users with a valid scooter card.

If you have not reserved a wheelchair user space, we will allocate any unreserved wheelchair user spaces on a first come first served basis.

Some of our services can be busy, particularly at peak times or when events are taking place across our network, so we strongly recommend you reserve wheelchair spaces or priority seating and book assistance in advance.

If you have arrived at a station and not reserved a seat or wheelchair user space in advance you may need to wait for the next available service with a space or seats available.

Our Passenger Assist Team can make reservations for seats and wheelchair user spaces where available for you at the same time as booking your assistance and buying your travel tickets. They also can make seat and wheelchair user space reservations on trains run by other train companies who provide this facility if you are not making your entire journey with us. Where assistance has been booked but a specific seat or wheelchair space has not been reserved, (for example, where reservations are not possible on other operators services) we will make this clear to you at the time of booking and confirm this in the Passenger Assist confirmation email.

If you do not have a seat or wheelchair user space reserved, and we are unable to provide travel on an alternative service within an hour of your intended journey time, we will provide alternative accessible transport for you and your companion to the nearest convenient station where a service to your destination with capacity is available.

If you have not made a seat reservation

If you are an older or disabled customer and you have not made a reservation, we will make every effort to ensure you can find a seat. If you are unable to find a seat on board, please inform the on-train staff, usually located at the rear of the train or in First Class who will be pleased to assist you.

Assistance Dogs

We welcome assistance dogs, including guide dogs and hearing dogs on all our trains in any carriage.

Our on-board staff will be happy to provide drinking water for assistance dogs if required.

If you have an assistance dog, we recommend you contact our Passenger Assist Team and reserve two priority seats to make sure there is space on the train for your dog to lie down safely and comfortably.

We offer the Assistance Dogs Travel Scheme, supported by Assistance Dogs (UK) and recognised by all train operating companies in Great Britain. The scheme aims to raise awareness of the needs of assistance dog owners among rail staff and customers.

The scheme helps assistance dogs and their owners travel comfortably and safely on our trains by giving a 'protected space' for the dog. You get a personal, highly visible and reusable 'Assistance Dog Under Seat' card that either slots into the seat reservation holder on top of the seat (where these are available) or can be placed upon the cushion on the seat next to the one where you are sitting. This lets other customers know the seat and the space under it should be kept free for your dog.

If you would like an 'Assistance Dog Under Seat' card printed and posted direct to your home free of charge, you can email or telephone National Rail Enquiries Customer Relations using the following details:

Email: customer.relations@nationalrail.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 022 3720 (Open Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00 including Bank Holidays but excluding Christmas Day)

Text: 60083 (Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 17:00)

Textphone/minicom: 0845 60 50 600

Assistance Cards and Lanyards

Sunflower Lanyards

We actively promote Sunflower Lanyards to customers with non-visible disabilities who want railway staff to be discreetly alerted to their possible need for assistance during their journey.

Assistance Cards

You can use an assistance card when you travel to help us understand what help you need. The card has space for key information including your name and emergency contact details in case these are needed whilst you are travelling. You can also write a message on the card so staff can quickly understand what help you need, for example "I need a priority seat".

We recognise Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme cards, JAM cards, assistance cards issued by the National Autistic Society, and many more, meaning that you can choose one most suited to your needs and use it across the rail network or with other recognising organisations, and staff and customers should quickly understand that you may need help whilst travelling.

We also recognise 'Prams as Wheelchairs' tags for those parents, guardians and carers who wish to use them for children with a disability or health condition using a pram or push chair as a wheelchair.

A2. Passenger Information and the Promotion of Assisted Travel

A2.1 Accessible Travel Policy Documentation

We will ensure our Accessible Travel Policy (and in particular the Making Rail Accessible Guide) are widely available, helping you to understand the services and assistance available and how to obtain it.

In addition to being available on our website to download in PDF format, the Making Rail Accessible Guide can also be provided on request from our Passenger Assist

Team and from staff at all staffed stations where our trains call (where the information will be printed for you).

We will be happy to provide alternative accessible formats of our Accessible Travel Policy documents.

A2.2 Stations and Rolling Stock Accessibility

Station Accessibility Information

Details to help you plan your journey are available on our website

www.tpexpress.co.uk where you can find information on the accessible features at each of the stations we serve. The same information for every station on the UK rail network is provided on the National Rail Enquiries www.nationalrail.co.uk/ website.

We regularly review the station information within the National Rail Enquiries system for the stations we manage and make use of the station alert feature to communicate any changes to facilities or services which may impact your journey. This includes any temporary restrictions, for example, because of building work or when facilities such as lifts and toilets at stations are out of order. If you book assistance via our Passenger Assist Team, they will advise you of any accessibility issues reported on the Passenger Assist system relevant to your journey.

Train Accessibility Information

Details to help you understand what facilities are provided on board our trains are available on our website www.tpexpress.co.uk. This includes train layout diagrams and key information such as the number of priority seats and toilets.

Social Stories

For customers who require them, we have Social Stories available on our website at www.tpexpress.co.uk. They can be viewed using a smartphone or tablet whilst travelling or printed out beforehand. The Social Stories will aid in understanding what to expect when travelling by train to help with preparation and familiarisation.

A2.3 Passenger journey information

We recognise that you may use the railway infrequently or be an occasional user of our services and may not know how to best access information which will help you to travel with confidence. This can be a particular problem when services are disrupted. We have various solutions in place to provide this information.

At the Station:

Train Arrival and Departure Information

All our stations are fitted with audio and visual real-time information systems, giving clear and consistent information for train departures and advice regarding any delays or disruption. This includes up to date train running information on customer information screens on all platforms where our services call. We also make audio

announcements when there are any changes to the schedule and when a train is approaching a station. At times of disruption, information screens are updated automatically based on train running information. We will also make announcements to keep you informed of the situation and staff will actively seek to identify those customers who may need assistance.

At stations we manage, customer information screens also show information about the formation and facilities on our trains, helping you to easily find each coach, the wheelchair user spaces and bike spaces.

At most of the stations we manage, departures and disruption information is also available on touch screens using BSL.

Wayfinding and Connections to Other Transport

All our stations have posters displaying information about the station, facilities, and accessibility information. The posters include a station map, the contact details of our Passenger Assist Team and those of any other train operators whose services call at the station.

At stations we manage, we have worked with local authorities to provide wayfinding signage at the station giving the direction and distance of key attractions, for example the Town Centre, Library, Town Hall etc.

Within our stations, signage is provided directing customers to platforms and key facilities such as accessible toilets and Changing Places where provided.

Delays, Diversions and Disruption

We recommend you check before you travel to determine whether there have been any changes to the service which may affect your journey. You can do this by visiting our website www.tpexpress.co.uk, checking our social media channels, using our mobile app or checking the National Rail Enquiries website at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

We also offer a service called JourneyCheck, available at www.journeycheck.com/tpexpress. This can be used to check the status of any of our routes or services, and you can also set up an alert, so that you get a notification in advance if there is a change to services which may affect your journey.

If you have booked assistance, and we know more than 24 hours in advance that the journey is no longer viable due to engineering works, industrial action, severe weather or other issues affecting the service, our Passenger Assist Team will try to contact you to discuss your journey and make alternative arrangements or provide a refund if you choose not to travel.

Where we identify an issue which will affect your journey less than 24 hours before you travel, information about alternative arrangements will be provided when you arrive at the station. Larger disruption will also be communicated via our website,

app, social media channels and JourneyCheck. Where replacement transport is in operation we will provide, where possible, visual information on our customer information screens and make audible announcements to direct customers to the vehicle pick up point.

Our station and on-board staff are trained to anticipate your needs, which also covers physical, sensory, speech, and language impairments and to support individuals who are neurodivergent. They will communicate news of any service disruption and provision of alternative transport via the Passenger Information Systems or, where possible, in person.

On the Train

All our trains have public address equipment and visual displays in each coach showing the destination of the train and the next station stop, as well as key safety information. Our on-board staff are trained to provide timely, helpful and clear announcements and will ensure these are made in sufficient time for you to prepare to alight, at least two minutes before arriving at each station.

Our team will make announcements about any alterations to the normal service, including delays.

If you have difficulty hearing such announcements, please advise on-board staff at the earliest opportunity.

A2.4 Information Points, Help Points and Contact Centres

Information Points

We have information points at some of our busier stations, including Manchester Airport and Hull. These are located in key areas of the station, including on the concourse or on platforms. Signage is provided to direct you to these where they are not immediately obvious. At stations which do not have an information point, the ticket office provides this service. Our station information points are staffed at the same times as our ticket offices and can provide you with information about:

- Station facilities.
- Train services, including timetables, connections, fares, and the accessibility of the train.
- Delays, disruption, diversions or emergencies taking place along the route which may affect your journey.
- Confirm your Passenger Assist arrangements.

They can also help with any other general enquiries you may have.

At each of our staffed stations we place timetables, posters, information leaflets and other materials in a position that both wheelchair users and standing customers can access.

Help Points

We have help points at our stations available 24 hours a day, both in the station and in the car parks we manage, installed at a height usable by all customers including wheelchair users. These are large, round, white units with push buttons for information or emergency contact. Staff answering these help points will be able to help you with local information, train running details, assistance requests and information relating to other operators and stations.

A2.5 Websites

Our website www.tpexpress.co.uk is designed to provide easy access to read and download information, that covers everything you need to know about our Accessible Travel Policy and processes.

In July 2020 the ORR alongside the Shaw Trust undertook a review of our website against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) AA standards. After analysing the results we formulated a development plan that ensured we reached this standard by December 2021.

Due to the number of required improvements, we received an extension to this deadline. As of December 2022, all issues raised previously were resolved and Shaw Trust carried out another audit in January 2023. Further improvements were identified in the results and addressed by November 2023 when Shaw Trust carried out their latest audit, the latest results are currently pending.

A3. Ticketing and Fares

Buying a Ticket

Tickets can be bought from the ticket office at staffed stations, at stations with a ticket machine, by phoning our Passenger Assist Team (if you're also booking assistance with your journey), online at www.tpexpress.co.uk, or via our mobile app which is downloadable from the App Store (iOS/Apple) or Play Store (Android). Third party retailers are also available.

If you prefer to communicate using BSL, ticket offices at stations we manage can accommodate this through a video interpretation service. They will do this using a tablet. You and a BSL interpreter (provided by a third-party company at no cost to you) will be able to see each other, and they will relay your conversation to station staff audibly. To access this service, please indicate to a member of staff at the ticket office that you would like to use it.

We are committed to providing you with impartial and accurate ticketing information and advice about the best ticket options for you, irrespective of which train operator

provides the service you wish to use. We also want you to purchase the right ticket for your journey.

On some trains, it is not possible for permanent wheelchair users to access First Class. On our website, app, and ticket machines, we include a notice to warn you when you select First Class and advise checking the rolling stock information for the operator you are planning to travel with or contacting our Passenger Assist Team before making your purchase.

Where it is difficult for you to purchase a ticket before you travel due to your disability, you will be able to buy tickets on board the train or at your destination. You will still receive any fare reductions that you are entitled to, and no penalties for ticketless travel will be applied.

Railcards

Disabled Persons Railcard

A Disabled Persons Railcard is available to people with one or more of a range of disabilities. They are valid for one or three years and they give you and your companion discounts on standard and First Class tickets throughout the Great British rail network. Currently a one-year Railcard costs £20 and a three-year Railcard costs £54.

If you have a Disabled Persons Railcard, we will give you a discount of up to 34% when you buy your tickets online or at a ticket machine. At the ticket office, you just need to show your Railcard when you buy tickets. You also need to carry your Railcard with you when you travel for when your tickets are checked.

If you do not already have a Disabled Persons Railcard, you can find out more and apply for one by going online to www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk, by calling National Rail Enquiries on 03457 48 49 50 or 0345 605 0600 (minicom for those with hearing impairments), or by picking up a leaflet from your local ticket office. You will need to supply proof of disability as part of your application.

Disabled Persons Railcards are also available for children aged 5 years old and over. They do not further discount the child fare (which is already 50% of the adult fare), but do discount the fare of an adult companion by a third.

Family & Friends Railcard

Depending on the number of adults and children travelling in a group, a Family & Friends Railcard may provide a larger discount than a Disabled Persons Railcard. A Family & Friends Railcard can be used any time an adult is travelling with at least one child and provides up to a third off adult fares and up to 60% off child fares. The card costs £30 for a one year card or £70 for a three year card. If you do not already have a Family & Friends Railcard, you can find out more and apply for one by going online to www.familyandfriends-railcard.co.uk, by calling National Rail Enquiries on

03457 48 49 50 or 0345 605 0600 (minicom for those with hearing impairments), or by picking up a leaflet from your local ticket office.

Senior Railcard

Senior Railcards are available to anyone aged 60 and over. They are valid for one year or for three years and give you up to a third off standard and first-class tickets for journeys throughout Great Britain.

If you have a Senior Railcard, we'll give you a discount when you buy your tickets online, at a ticket office or from a ticket machine. At the ticket office you just need to show your Railcard when you buy your tickets. You also need to carry your Railcard when you travel for when your tickets are checked.

If you do not already have a Senior Railcard, you can find out more and apply for one by going online to www.senior-railcard.co.uk, by calling National Rail Enquiries on 03457 48 49 50 or 0345 605 0600 (minicom for those with hearing impairments) or by picking up a leaflet from your local ticket office.

Concessionary Fares – without using a Railcard

Discounts are also available in some cases, which may not require you to have a Railcard.

If you are blind or visually impaired or you travel in your own wheelchair, you are entitled to the concessions detailed below. Please be aware these cannot be purchased from the ticket machine and should be purchased from station ticket offices. If there is no ticket office at the station where you board you may pay the concessionary fare, without penalty, during the journey or at your destination.

Blind or visually impaired customers travelling with a companion

If you are registered as blind or visually impaired and you are travelling with another person, the concessionary discounts below apply to adult fares only for both you and your companion. You cannot get a discount if you are travelling on your own unless you have a railcard. You must show a document confirming your disability when you buy your ticket and when travelling. It must be either a CVI/BP1/BD8 certificate or documentation from a recognised institution, for example, Social Services, your Local Authority or Blind Veterans UK.

If you are blind or visually impaired, you can buy one adult season ticket that enables a companion to travel with you on National Rail services only at no extra cost (so two people travel for the price of one). It doesn't have to be the same person travelling with you on every journey. Please take evidence of your visual impairment (as described in the paragraph above) with you to prove your eligibility.

People who stay in their own wheelchair for a rail journey

If you stay in your own wheelchair during a journey (including children who use a pram or a push chair as a wheelchair, as long as they are aged 5 or above), and you do not have a Railcard, you are eligible for the concessionary discounts below on both adult and child fares. The discounts below apply if you are travelling alone and are available to one adult travelling with you. The discounts apply to both standard and first class tickets.

Concessionary Fare Discounts

Anytime Singles or Returns: 34% off.

Anytime Day Single: 34% off.

Anytime Day Return: 50% off.

In many cases, Off-Peak, Super Off-Peak, or Advance tickets may cost less than the discounted Anytime Fare. Ticket office staff will make you aware if there is a cheaper fare available.

Ticket machines

We have at least one self-service ticket machine at every station we manage. They sell a range of tickets and can issue reduced-rate tickets to holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard and their companions as well as holders of Senior Railcards.

Our ticket machines meet the latest standards and include a function to lower the content on the screen to make them easier to use for wheelchair users. The card reader and keypad are located between 700mm and 1200mm from the floor, making them easy to reach for as many people as possible.

Ticket gates

Ticket gates are used at many train stations. Where there are ticket gates in operation at our stations, there is at least one wide aisle gate, perfect for customers with luggage or wheelchair or mobility scooter users.

Our ticket gates are normally staffed but we will ensure that they are kept in the open position if this is not the case.

A4. Alternative Accessible Transport

We will ensure you can make as much of your journey by rail as possible, but the accessibility of the stations at which our services call and across the UK rail network does vary considerably.

If you cannot access a train service because of a physical feature at a station the station operator will provide alternative accessible transport for you and your companion(s), usually a taxi, at no extra cost to you, to the nearest most convenient

accessible station from where you can continue your journey by rail. We can arrange this for you when you contact us to request assistance.

Our Passenger Assist Team will ask you the type of alternative transport is most suitable so that we can make sure the arrangements are considerate of your needs.

If you are not aware until you arrive at the station that you cannot access it, contact numbers are provided on the station welcome poster which you can use to contact the Passenger Assist Team who will make arrangements to transport you to the nearest convenient accessible station. You can also use buttons on the station help point to request assistance. Where this has not been arranged in advance, there may be a wait whilst the correct vehicle to meet your needs is sourced.

A5. Mobility Scooters and Mobility Aids

We understand that mobility scooters are useful for many people – but carrying them on trains can cause problems because of their size, weight, and manoeuvrability. Your safety and the safety of our other customers and staff is our top priority.

If your scooter fits within the dimensions below and has a combined weight of less than 300Kg when you are riding it, you can be issued with a scooter card, meaning that your scooter can be taken onto any TransPennine Express train.

3 Wheel Scooter

Length: 120cm

Width: 70cm

4 Wheel Scooter

Length: 110cm

Width: 55cm

These dimensions have been informed by Department for Transport (DfT) standards, specifically the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) and Persons of Reduced Mobility Technical Specification for Interoperability (PRM-TSI). We have also used risk assessments to determine these requirements, considering the manoeuvrability of the scooter, and the weight limit is determined by the maximum allowed weight on the ramp between the platform and the train.

To apply for a scooter card, visit www.tpexpress.co.uk and either complete your application online or download the application form and post it back to us. We recommend that where possible you transfer from your scooter to a seat whilst travelling, and when disembarking, drive down the ramp facing forwards, then wait

for the ramp to be removed before manoeuvring so that you have more space on the platform.

If you have a scooter which is folded and carried as luggage it can be taken on any of our trains, even if you don't have a scooter card, however if it is too big to be issued with a scooter card, and cannot be folded, you will not be able to bring it with you on our trains. In this case you may wish to instead consider requesting a station wheelchair to help you when travelling.

If you are travelling with a scooter, we recommend contacting our Passenger Assist Team who will be able to arrange assistance for you for boarding or alighting the train.

Remember that when making a journey that involves more than one train operator you may find that each operator's policy relating to scooters varies. Our Passenger Assist Team will be able to help by advising you on each operator's policy on scooter carriage and booking assistance where possible.

Full details of our trains, with diagrams illustrating the layout and the location of facilities and features of relevance to disabled customers, are shown on our website at www.tpexpress.co.uk.

Walking Frames and Rollators

Walking frames and rollators may be carried on board any TransPennine Express service.

We recommend booking assistance to help you with any luggage you may have, with boarding and alighting from the train, and to assist you to your seat. Where your journey starts or ends or a transfer is needed at a larger station, you may find it helpful to make use of a station wheelchair or buggy. Our Passenger Assist Team can arrange this for you in advance.

If you use a walking frame or rollator, we recommend that you use the priority seating which is available throughout the train. Once on the train, please fold your walking frame or rollator and store it in one of the luggage racks provided or between the seats, taking care not to block any aisles or exits. If you use a walking aid which is unable to be folded, you may reserve the wheelchair user space for it so that adequate space is provided to transport it safely. This can be arranged for you by our Passenger Assist Team.

Prams and Push Chairs Being Used As Wheelchairs

We recognise that it may be more suitable for some children with disabilities or medical conditions to travel in a pram or push chair instead of a wheelchair and therefore wheelchair user spaces on our trains can also be used by parents, guardians and carers with prams and push chairs if they are occupied by a child with

a disability or medical conditions which means that they cannot leave the pram or push chair for it to be folded down.

We also recognise 'Prams as Wheelchairs' tags for those parents, guardians and carers who wish to use them for children with a disability or health condition using a pram or push chair as a wheelchair to identify this.

A6. Delays, Disruption and Emergencies

We understand that disruption to services and facilities can cause particular difficulties for older and disabled customers. We are committed to improving the management of service disruption for all our customers.

When services are disrupted, we will do everything possible to ensure that you are able to continue with your journey, proactively taking your needs into account in both our contingency plans and the service we provide on the day.

In advance of travel

When you plan your travel, our Passenger Assist Team will be able to advise you of any planned engineering works or amended train operations that might affect your journey and advise you of the best options, which may include taking an alternative route, using alternative transport, or travelling at a different time of day.

Rail Replacement Transport

Planned Rail Replacement Transport

To enable Network Rail to carry out repairs, maintenance, and upgrades to the rail network, it is sometimes necessary to replace train services with road transport. If replacement buses are required for any reason to replace part or all of your train journey, we will ensure that suitable accessible transport is available instead.

We will be alerted to major planned engineering works up to 12 weeks before they are set to take place, therefore we will take appropriate steps to secure accessible substitute coach or busses to fulfil this proportion of your journey.

We work closely with third party suppliers and local transport companies to provide accessible coaches and buses wherever possible however this may not always be achievable. It is mandated as part of our contract that we commit to resolving this and we continue to strive for a fully PSVAR (Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations) compliant rail replacement service.

If you cannot access the coaches or buses which are available, we will provide you with a taxi suited to your needs. This can be arranged in advance at the time of

booking assistance for your journey. If you have not booked in advance, there may be a short wait whilst we source a vehicle suited to your needs.

Emergency Rail Replacement Transport

Occasionally, events occur on our network such as flooding, service disruption, fatalities, trespass, or other issues which mean we are unable to operate trains. Where there is a gap in service of over an hour, we will seek to provide road transport to keep all our customers moving.

We work with third party suppliers and local transport companies to try and provide accessible coaches and buses, but this will not always be possible, especially at short notice due to a general lack of supply of accessible vehicles across the coach and bus industry.

Where assistance has been booked in advance, and the service you are booked to travel on is replaced by road transport, our control team will review Passenger Assist and ensure your requirements are communicated to our road transport supplier so that a suitable vehicle is ordered as early as possible.

If you do not have Passenger Assist booked, and the coach or bus in use is not accessible to you, staff will make arrangements to provide a vehicle suited to your needs, although there may be a short wait whilst we source this.

Transpennine Route Upgrade

Transpennine Route Upgrade engineering works will impact services between Manchester and York through 2024 and beyond. We will work closely with our industry partners including Network Rail, Transport for the North, other Train Operating Companies, and other public transport operators to ensure that onward journeys are well managed and that arrangements for customers requiring assistance will be identified and communicated including suitable alternative routes for all customers to use when parts of the network are closed.

Our Passenger Assist Team are aware of all the planned Transpennine Route Upgrade works. If you need help planning an alternative journey during these works, please contact them and they will make arrangements for you to travel via a different route or using alternative accessible transport if required.

We have worked closely with several charities and organisations representing a range of accessibility needs to ensure that all alternative arrangements during Transpennine Route Upgrade works are accessible and inclusive.

More information about the Transpennine Route Upgrade can be found at www.thetrupgrade.co.uk.

During your journey

At the Station

We make announcements at all our stations to update you should disruption occur and update our customer information screens with latest travel information. You can also use help points provided at stations to contact our team who can give more specific service information.

Station welcome posters at the entrance to our stations show contact details for both our Customer Relations and Passenger Assist Teams, as well as for other operators serving each station. Severe disruption will be communicated at stations, and in the form of banners across the top of rail websites such as www.nationalrail.co.uk and www.tpexpress.co.uk, via our social media channels, on our mobile app and on JourneyCheck.

If disruption occurs before your train has left the station, we normally offer travel on the next available service and station teams will help you to rearrange your assistance.

Where facilities that affect disabled travellers are out of use for example accessible toilets, we will try to advise you of this before you join the train. We will also report the fault to our maintenance teams so that it can be fixed as soon as possible.

On the Train

If service disruption occurs whilst you are on the train our on-board team will be able to advise and assist you. If you haven't booked assistance in advance but require help or advice, make yourself known to a member of on-board staff, who are usually located at the rear of the train or in First Class.

All on board staff are trained to provide the highest levels of customer service and are empowered to resolve appropriate issues "on the spot". If a train terminates before it has arrived at its destination, the on-board staff will arrange assistance for you for your onward travel.

If you need to change your journey due to service disruption, staff will assist you with arranging your revised journey and any assistance you require. If you have booked assistance, we will also inform other operators and stations about the changes to your journey so they can still provide the assistance you need. If we are not able to run train services at all and you wish to travel on a different day, our Passenger Assist Team can help you to make a new booking. We can also arrange accessible transport to take you back to the station where you started your journey if this is more convenient.

If services are going to be disrupted for a longer period of time, or if we are aware more than 24 hours before you travel that there is going to be a problem and you have booked assistance, our Passenger Assist Team will try to contact you to make

you aware of the changes and provide advice, including helping you make new arrangements where appropriate, or arranging a refund.

In the event of an emergency

Keeping our customers safe is our priority. Our emergency plans for stations and trains include how to support people with a disability or who may be less mobile during an emergency.

On-board

All our on-board staff are trained in emergency procedures, and they will supervise any action that needs to be taken. Safety information is provided in the vestibules on all our trains with clear diagrams and pictures, and in the rare event of an emergency on a train, our on-board team will advise and help you. In nearly all cases the safest option is for all customers to remain on the train and wait for instructions until our team have fully assessed the situation.

If you do have to leave the train between stations, the emergency services will provide equipment and assistance to help you get off the train safely.

At Stations

If we need to evacuate a station, we will use the station Public Address System to alert you.

Information will also be shown on the customer information screens. Staff will direct you to a point of safety, including refuge points, and provide assistance where required.

A7. Station Facilities

A7.1 Left luggage

We do not provide a left luggage service at our stations; however accessible left luggage facilities are provided at some of the larger stations where our trains call operated by Network Rail, including Manchester Piccadilly, Edinburgh Waverley, Leeds and Glasgow Central.

A7.2 Blue Badge Parking

We have car parking facilities at the majority of our stations. Wherever we operate car parks, we provide a minimum of 5% marked bays for Blue Badge holders, located as close to the station as possible.

We ensure that the Blue Badge parking bays are located close to the station entrance to reduce the distance which people using them need to travel to access the station.

We offer use of the Blue Badge parking bays free of charge when a Blue Badge permit is correctly displayed in the windscreen of the car. You'll also need to register with APCOA, our parking partner, to avoid being charged. You can register online at bluebadge.apcoa.co.uk.

We frequently monitor the use of our car parks to make sure that designated spaces are not being used by people without Blue Badges. Our colleagues carry out regular checks at each car park operated by TransPennine Express. These checks include usage monitoring and issuing of Penalty Parking Notices to any vehicle which is not displaying the correct ticket or blue badge.

Should all of the Blue Badge spaces be in use when you arrive at the station, you may park in a standard bay free of charge providing the International Blue Badge permit is correctly displayed in the windscreen of the car. Again, you must have registered with APCOA to avoid being issued a Penalty Parking Notice.

A7.3 Facilities and services provided by third parties

Where we provide facilities and services using third parties (such as station retail units, cafes, and platform staff employed by agencies), we will work with them to ensure that these companies are aware of the needs of disabled customers. As service providers they have their own obligations under the Equality Act 2010, but we will monitor the service they provide, share any feedback we receive and work with them to improve the accessibility of facilities and services including highlighting to them any deficiencies that have been brought to our attention.

A7.4 Replacement Facilities

Our station management team conduct regular checks at our stations and our on-board teams report any faults they see on trains, so any defects can be put right as quickly as possible. If for whatever reason one of the accessible features or facilities on our stations or trains is not available, we will take all reasonable steps to fix this as soon as we are able to.

Our Service Quality Regime (SQR) works to ensure we are delivering the best possible standards for our customers across all sectors of our business. Each period, 250 inspections are carried out by independent assessors against a set of standards looking at key areas of our service offering. These include cleanliness, the availability of key assets onboard our trains and our stations (including car parks), the accuracy and availability of customer information and much more. Where shortcomings are identified, these are resolved as soon as possible. We publish our SQR results online at www.tpexpress.co.uk/about-us/customerreport/our-service-quality-regime. We communicate any changes to station facilities on National Rail Enquiries, our website and via social media within one working day of notification, and where known, we will publish an expected timescale for facilities to return to use.

We communicate any changes to train facilities on JourneyCheck.

We invite customers to report faults with our station or on-board facilities using our fault reporting tool.

You can find this on our website at www.railhelp.co.uk/tpexpress or in our App.

A7.5 Station Entrances

If for any reason it becomes necessary for us to permanently alter facilities at any of our stations, leading to restricted access for disabled customers, we will consult the Department for Transport, Transport Focus, Transport for the North and local access groups before any permanent changes are undertaken. These changes will not be made unless approved by the Department for Transport.

We will take into account the needs of disabled people by means of a Equality Impact Assessment when restricting or temporarily closing access points at stations (for example during building works) and ensure that any temporary or permanent reductions in access comply with the Joint Code of Practice in relation to unobstructed progress.

A8. Redress, Feedback and Complaints

Redress for problems with your Assistance

Our staff work hard to provide you with the help and assistance you need to be able to complete your journey with ease, however we recognise that sometimes, things do not go as planned.

Often, problems can be best resolved by discussing them with staff at the time, so that they can address any concerns you have there and then. If you still feel you need to provide feedback after travelling, please contact our Passenger Assist Team. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

Investigation and Improvements

Where you tell us about an issue you have experienced with your assistance, we will investigate, and provide you with an explanation.

Where you have experienced an issue which involves multiple operators, you should contact the operator who's train you were travelling on, or about to travel on when the issue occurred. If this is us, we will respond to your complaint on behalf of all of the train and station operators involved, providing you with an explanation of the root cause. If during our investigation we identify that the bulk of your complaint relates to another operator you have travelled with, we will inform you and with your

express permission transfer the complaint to them so that they may address your concerns directly.

We will reply to your request for redress as quickly as possible, in plain English and jargon free, but it may take a little time to investigate and collect the information we need. Please be aware that it may take up to 20 working days for you to receive a response.

We recognise the importance of learning from your experience, understanding what works well, and what doesn't. We use feedback from our customers to shape our services and inform our decisions, and where required, we will make changes to our processes and procedures to ensure that we address issues to prevent a repeat of issues.

Compensation

It is important to us that you have a smooth and seamless journey, however we recognise that sometimes this doesn't always happen. If you feel like you have had an unsatisfactory experience with your passenger assistance you should report it to our Passenger Assist Team, who will investigate this for you and consider compensation on a case by case basis.

We recognise the importance of giving you confidence to travel, which is why if you have booked Passenger Assist in advance for travel on our services and arrive at your final destination, delayed for 15 minutes or more due to issues with your assistance, (for example, staff not being available to assist you) we are happy to offer you Passenger Assist compensation.

There are two forms of compensation - Passenger Assist compensation and Delay Repay compensation - and these can run alongside one another (for example if your passenger assistance was delayed and the next leg of your journey was also delayed).

You can claim Passenger Assist compensation by contacting our Passenger Assist Team. You will need to provide a copy of your train ticket (or proof of purchase) along with your Passenger Assist booking reference number, which can be found on your confirmation email.

Where Passenger Assist has not been provided due to a delay, and both Delay Repay and Passenger Assist compensation could apply, you will be entitled to compensation for both issues, up to a combined value of your purchased ticket for that journey.

If you have experienced other issues with assistance which have not caused delay, please tell us, again providing your Passenger Assist reference number where available, and we will consider compensation on a case by case basis.

Advanced Purchase, Single or Return Tickets:

Delayed for 15 to 29 minutes

Claim 25% compensation of your single ticket or 12.5% of your return ticket cost.

Delayed for 30 to 59 minutes

Claim 50% compensation of your single ticket or 50% of the relevant delayed portion of your return ticket.

Delayed for 60 to 119 minutes

Claim 100% compensation of your single ticket or 100% of the cost of the relevant portion of your return ticket.

Delayed for 120+ minutes or unable to complete your journey

Claim 100% compensation of the cost of your single ticket or 100% cost of your return ticket (i.e., both portions, not just one way).

Season Tickets

If you have a season ticket, we will compensate you a proportion of the value of your season ticket where you have experienced a delay to your journey due to issues with your assistance. Use the table to calculate the amount of Passenger Assist Compensation. Divide the cost of your Season Ticket type over the number underneath delay times.

| Ticket Type | 15 - 29 minutes | 30 - 59 minutes | 60 - 119 minutes | 120 minutes plus (or unable to complete your journey) |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Weekly | 40 | 20 | 10 | 5 |
| Monthly | 160 | 80 | 40 | 20 |
| Quarterly | 480 | 240 | 120 | 60 |
| Annual | 1856 | 928 | 464 | 232 |

For example, if you have a weekly season ticket for travel between Huddersfield and Leeds which cost £35.20, and on one journey, due to assistance not being provided, you were unable to complete your journey, you will receive a guaranteed refund of £7.04.

Concession Card

If you have a concession card entitling you to free travel with TransPennine Express, and you have experienced a delay to your journey due to issues with your assistance, we will compensate you:

Delayed for 15 to 29 minutes

Claim 25% compensation of the equivalent anytime day single ticket.

Delayed for 30 to 59 minutes

Claim 50% compensation of the equivalent anytime day single ticket.

Delayed for 60 to 119 minutes

Claim 100% compensation of the equivalent anytime day single ticket.

Delayed for 120+ minutes or unable to complete your journey

Claim 100% compensation of the equivalent anytime day return ticket.

Feedback and Complaints

We appreciate that you may have received all of the assistance you need to complete your journey, but you may still wish to contact us about other elements of your journey, such as facilities on the train or at stations to meet your needs, policies and procedures, or the conduct of staff.

You can provide this feedback by contacting our Customer Relations Team. Their contact details can be found on the last page of this document.

Where you tell us about an issue you have identified, we will investigate, and provide you with an explanation. If when investigating your feedback, we identify that the bulk of your complaint relates to another operator's station, trains, or staff, we will inform you of this, and with your consent, transfer your complaint to the most appropriate operator to respond to you directly.

We will reply to your complaint as quickly as possible, in plain English and jargon free, but it may take a little time to investigate and collect the information we need. Please be aware that it may take up to 20 working days for you to receive a response.

We recognise the importance of learning from your experience, understanding what works well, and what doesn't. We use feedback from our customers to shape our services and inform our decisions, and where required, we will make changes to our processes and procedures to ensure that we address issues to prevent a repeat of issues.

If you book passenger assistance with us, we will ask you if our research partner can contact you after your journey to ask for your feedback. This is entirely optional; however, your feedback helps us to improve our services. Your responses will be anonymous and combined with the responses of other customers before we receive the data, so we won't be able to identify you from your answers.

We will consider compensation for complaints about the accessibility of our stations, trains and services individually.

Escalation

Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your request for redress or complaint. If you are unhappy with the response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman.

The Rail Ombudsman is there to help resolve complaints between us and our customers. It's free to use their services and they are independent of the rail industry. They don't take sides, but just look at the evidence available. They will help us both to try to reach an agreement, but if this doesn't happen, they will make a decision based on the evidence they've received. If you agree with their decision, then we have to act on what they say.

You can appeal to the Rail Ombudsman if:

- You're unhappy with our final response to your complaint which will be contained in a letter or email (sometimes called a 'deadlock letter'); or
- We haven't resolved your complaint within 40 working days of receiving it; and;
- No more than 12 months have passed since we sent you our final response.

There are some complaints that the Rail Ombudsman won't be able to look into, for example if it's about the way one of our services has been designed, industry policy, or if your complaint relates to an event which took place before the Rail Ombudsman service was established.

If that's the case, then they'll contact you to let you know. If possible, they will transfer your complaint to another organisation that may be able to help you further, such as Transport Focus, the independent consumer watchdog for the rail industry. They will independently review your complaint and where appropriate, follow things up on your behalf.

Online Portal: www.railombudsman.org

Telephone: 0330 094 0362

Textphone: 0330 094 0363

SMS / Text: 07427 580 060

Sign Language Interpreter: www.railombudsman.org/sign_language_interpreter/

E-mail: info@railombudsman.org

Post: FREEPOST – RAIL OMBUDSMAN

B. Strategy and Management

B1. Strategy

We are committed to making strides to consistently give everyone the confidence to travel with us.

Recent years have seen us deliver significant investment in our stations and trains for the benefit of our customers, which will continue through our National Rail Contract. Our Accessibility Engagement Plan, which is available from our website or by request from our Customer Relations Team, sets out how we engage with customers who have accessibility requirements throughout the year to get their feedback and opinions. We have a range of ways our customers can get involved with our future plans as little or as much as they choose.

We recognise the importance of providing consistency in approach and service provision across the rail network and we will continue to proactively work with industry partners to deliver continuous improvement, engaging with customers, their representatives, and user groups.

B2. Management and Arrangements

Our Accessibility and Transport Integration Manager is responsible for the development and maintenance of our Accessible Travel Policy along with our strategy to improve the accessibility of our stations and services.

At an executive level, this policy and strategy is owned by the Customer Experience Director.

Our strategy is informed by:

- Customer insight.
- Industry guidance and legislation.
- Best practice from the railway and other industries.
- Stakeholder feedback.

We ensure accessibility is a consideration in all projects delivered across the business, with an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) being required for all business cases. These reviews are provided by the Accessibility and Transport Integration Manager, with project managers required to make amendments or take forward actions to meet the needs of customers with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 before the project may proceed. Where significant changes are proposed, Through the EqIA process, we will also ensure our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Our Customer Experience Managers will ensure all aspects of our Accessible Travel Policy are delivered consistently and reliably across all aspects of the customer journey partnered by our Fleet directorate in relation to the quality of our trains.

We will ensure that every member of our team understands their responsibilities in relation to improving the travel experience of our older or disabled customers.

Training programmes, online learning modules, internal briefings, and communications (for example newsletters, employee online information and apps) all help ensure that accessibility and the needs of people with disabilities are considered and embedded in all aspects of our service and business. This includes our enhanced Disability & Equality training course and refresher module (outlined further in this document) and training for Managers on Equality Impact Assessments.

B3. Monitoring and Evaluation

We closely monitor the delivery of all aspects of our Accessible Travel Policy and processes. We track compliance with this policy, legislative requirements and industry guidelines as well as measuring our performance against our goals and targets in relation to Accessibility, particularly focusing on feedback from our customers. The results will inform and help us to prioritise our efforts to deliver improvement in relation to accessible travel.

Our approach includes monitoring and evaluating:

- Response times in relation to Passenger Assist bookings on all channels.
- Any failure to provide booked assistance.
- The volume of booked assistance requests.
- The volume of unbooked assistance requests.
- The availability of accessible features for example accessible toilets, lifts, Changing Places etc.
- The delivery of improvement plans to projected timescales.
- Customer complaints received in relation to any aspect of accessibility.
- The results of post-trip Passenger Assist surveys.

We evaluate results every four weeks and carry out an annual review.

We share this information and the results of our evaluation across industry forums, such as RDG and with the ORR, fully complying with their Core Data reporting requirements including providing details of any key actions to improve our performance.

We measure customer satisfaction in relation to the accessibility of our accessible services, to inform improvement and identify best practice, using:

- Mystery shopper exercises.

- Feedback to our Passenger Assist Team.
- Feedback from our customer panel, disabled customer groups and other organisations.

B4. Access Improvements

We are continually exploring new opportunities to improve access to our stations and services.

We comply with the PRM-TSI (Persons with Reduced Mobility Technical Specification for Interoperability) when developing proposals for improvement across our business.

If compliance is not possible, we apply for any necessary derogations but only after every effort has been made to comply with the relevant requirements.

Information and Assistance

We have worked closely with RDG to support the introduction of a new Passenger Assist system that is consistent across the UK rail network and provides an easy to use and reliable assisted travel booking service enhancing clear and direct communication between customers and our teams which provide assisted travel. More recently, this also included the introduction of a Passenger Assist mobile app to make booking and managing your assistance easy.

At most of the stations we manage, departures and disruption information is now also available on touch screens using BSL. We also now offer a BSL service in our ticket offices via a video interpretation service, as well as with our Contact Centre via our website.

At our Stations

Minor Works

Each year we invest a dedicated budget agreed with the Department for Transport through our Minor Works scheme to make small scale changes to our stations for the benefit of customers with disabilities. This has included fitting handrails to steps, introducing drop kerbs, upgrading accessible toilet facilities, installing improved seating, and renovating ticket offices to provide low-level counters. We will continue this programme of work each year.

Access for All

We have been successful in securing funding for Access for All schemes at Northallerton and Selby stations. This has led to Northallerton station having lifts installed in 2022 and will see the same at Selby before the end of 2024.

We also continue to explore opportunities to secure funding for further access improvements at our stations.

On Train

Our Nova trains have been designed with the needs of disabled customers in mind, meeting the latest accessibility regulations, benefitting from features such as tactile notices, and the ability to place the train ramp at any set of doors on the train.

Other Improvements

Customer & Professional Panels

In 2020 we created our dedicated panel comprised of people with a range of visible and non-visible disabilities and some of the groups that represent them. These panels focus on accessibility providing feedback on a range of initiatives to ensure that the needs of older and disabled customers are being thoroughly considered. The panels bring together a wide range of customers and stakeholders with varying knowledge and experience to ensure that we are considering all aspects of accessibility before proceeding with projects and alterations. These panels are vital sounding boards for TransPennine Express, and their opinions have a notable impact upon the work that we do.

If you would be interested in joining the customer panel, please contact our Passenger Assist Team who can provide more details.

Staff Accessibility Panel

In 2022, we also launched a Staff Accessibility Panel consisting of a mixture of staff who identify as having a disability themselves, and allies who want to be involved in supporting customers and staff who do. Similar to our customer and professionals' panels, the staff panel will be consulted regarding all aspects of accessibility before proceeding with projects and alterations but will also look at the impact that changes may have on disabled members of the TransPennine Express team.

B5. Working With Disabled Passengers, Local Communities and Local Authorities

Our Accessibility and Transport Integration Manager represents TransPennine Express on industry forums such as the Rail Delivery Group Accessibility & Inclusion Group meetings (which take place every four weeks) and is an active participant in associated working groups.

We play an active role in the Accessibility & Integration Group, working with our fellow operators to improve the accessibility of the UK rail network by sharing best practice and implementing consistent approaches.

We widely consult and engage relevant stakeholders on our plans in relation to accessibility across our network. In addition to the Department for Transport, Transport for the North, Transport Focus, and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee we also work with, amongst others:

- Rail North Partnership.
- Chambers of Commerce.
- Charity and Community groups.
- Community Rail Partnerships and Rail User Groups.
- Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- Local government members and officers at Unitary, County, District and Parish level.
- Members of Parliament.
- Members of the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.
- Station adoption groups.
- Transport Scotland.

We engage with local groups representing those with disabilities and offer free travel for customers to try the train through our 'Try the Train Day' initiative, where staff can accompany groups and provide advice on Passenger Assist, railcards, and discounts, and where to find more information, with the aim of boosting customers confidence to use rail independently.

B6. Staff Training

We recognise the importance training plays in delivering consistently excellent customer service. We provide all our staff (including the majority of our staff through third party suppliers) with training and development appropriate for their role to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to always provide consistently high quality, reliable and safe services appropriate to the needs of older or disabled customers.

All our staff have completed Disability & Equality Training developed in partnership with Action on Hearing Loss, Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and Dementia Friends. This training meets the standards set by the ORR. This training is also provided to all new starters with the business as part of our corporate induction.

The aims of our Disability & Equality Training course are to enable our teams to:

- Identify and meet the needs of customers with disabilities, ensuring the service we provide reflects their needs at all points of the journey.
- Understand the requirements of relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010.
- Gain an appreciation of the different types of disability (including non-visible) and what this means for customers.
- Learn about our policy and processes in relation to our Accessible Travel Policy including the accessible features of our trains and stations.
- Learn how to assist customers safely using the correct etiquette.

- Recognise customers with additional needs whether they be physical or cognitive and demonstrate effective ways of communicating with them.

We will ensure the lived experience of customers with disabilities continues to be included within the training, making use of e-learning modules and video content building on the success of this approach in our previous training. We are committed to updating our training on an ongoing basis.

Our training covers:

Understanding disabled people and their everyday challenges

Through sharing the experiences of disabled customers and exploring what behaviours encourage customers to have the confidence to travel by train.

Equality legislation

Staff will gain an understanding of the Equality Act 2010, its origins and how it influences their day-to-day duties.

Defining Disability

Focusing on attitudes, staff will gain an appreciation of the broad range of disabilities and impairments which customers may have, and how best to meet their needs.

Recognising Customers who need assistance

Considering all disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as learning difficulties or mental health, staff will gain skills and be provided with tools to help them identify those customers who may need assistance, and how best to provide this. We also give our staff an awareness of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard scheme.

The Railway Regulatory Framework

An appreciation will be gained of the policies, procedures and processes which exist throughout the industry for the benefit of customers with disabilities, including the Accessible Travel Policy, Minor Works scheme and Access for All.

Passenger Assist

An in depth understanding of Passenger Assist, how it works, its features and benefits will be gained, with a solid understanding of the part staff play in delivery of the service.

Communication

Understanding how best to Communicate with customers with a range of disabilities, and the importance of effective communication between staff providing assistance, for example, communicating a change to an assistance booking.

Accessibility in stations and on trains

Ensuring staff are aware of the importance of certain station features, where they can find information about other stations, and the process to follow should a facility become unavailable.

Providing safe assistance (including providing assistance in an emergency)

Providing new staff and reminding existing staff of the safest way to provide assistance, including guiding blind or partially sighted customers. We also train our staff based at stations or on trains in the safe deployment and use of the ramp.

This training began in February 2020, with staff attending a one day training course delivered by our Learning and Development team. The course combines classroom teaching, practical exercises and videos, along with E-Learning modules for those who are new to the business.

The elements covering communication, accessibility in stations and on trains, and providing safe assistance have been completed by our Passenger Assist Team based in our Contact Centre.

Disability and Equality Training will not be provided by TransPennine Express to any temporary staff or rail replacement bus, coach, or taxi drivers (excluding those who have permits to operate at our stations) due to the practicalities of resourcing this, but these suppliers will be compelled through our contractual arrangements to have their employees complete similar training, raising awareness of the needs of disabled customers using the railway and the services they are providing.

We last reported progress with the delivery of Disability and Equality Training to the ORR in January 2024.

Our staff are required to refresh their Disability & Equality training every two years and as such a refresher course has been produced by our Learning and Development team.

Contact Us

We value your feedback on this policy and our approach to meeting the needs of customers with disabilities.

You can share your thoughts by contacting our Passenger Assist Team.



Call: 0800 107 2149



Text Relay: 18001 0800 107 2149 (for deaf or hard of hearing customers)



British Sign Language (BSL):

www.tpexpress.co.uk/help/accessibility/british-sign-language



Online: Visit www.tpexpress.co.uk/help and complete our easy to use webform to provide your feedback.



By Post: FREEPOST TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS



Comments Form: Fill in one of our FREEPOST customer comment forms available at any of our staffed stations.

Our Passenger Assist team are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except during the festive period. The lines will close at 23:59 on Christmas Eve and reopen at 00:00 on the morning of 27th December.

Our Customer Relations Team are available 06:00 – 23:00 daily, except during the festive period. Their festive opening times are as follows; Christmas Eve 08:00 – 20:00, closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day 08:00 – 20:00, December 27th to 30th 06:00 – 23:00, New Year's Eve 08:00 – 20:00, and New Year's Day 08:00 – 20:00.