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# Making rail accessible

A guide to policies and practices

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# Our strategy

London Overground is managed by **Transport for London** (TfL) and operated by **Arriva Rail London Limited** (ARL).

Six routes make up the London Overground network:

- Richmond and Clapham Junction to Stratford
- Watford Junction to Euston
- Gospel Oak to Barking
- Highbury & Islington to West Croydon and Clapham Junction
- Liverpool Street to Enfield Town, Cheshunt (via Seven Sisters) and Chingford
- Romford to Upminster

At London Overground, we are committed to providing you with a safe, reliable and friendly service. We want to make sure that you can use our services safely and in comfort.

We recognise that our customers may have different requirements when they travel with us and are committed to making your journey as easy as possible. This applies not only to wheelchair users, but also:

- customers with visual or auditory impairments or learning disabilities
- customers whose mobility is impaired through arthritis or other temporary or long term conditions
- those with mental health issues
- older people
- customers accompanying disabled children in pushchairs
- disabled customers requiring assistance with luggage

We maintain a fund to be used to support disabled persons groups and to develop practical solutions to help our employees better assist persons with reduced mobility. We are committed to working with **Network Rail**, **TfL** and the **Department for Transport** (DfT) to support the delivery and development of Access for All schemes.

Aside from physical adjustments to stations and trains, we regularly review our arrangements as part of our wider Equality and Inclusion agenda.

We welcome your feedback on the service we provide and any suggestions you may have for improvements. Our contact details are shown on the back page of this leaflet.

# Management arrangements

The Customer Experience Director is responsible for our **Disabled Persons Protection Policy** (DPPP) which is comprised of this policy document and a separate customer information leaflet.

These are titled as follows:

- **Making rail accessible:** guide to policies and practices (this policy document)
- **Making rail accessible:** helping older and disabled customers (customer information leaflet, available from stations and online)

Our Customer Experience Director ensures that both these documents are reviewed on a regular basis.

Our team of Customer Service Managers and Station Delivery Managers are responsible for frontline delivery, and for ensuring the arrangements described in our DPPP are delivered at stations and on trains.

Through our governance arrangements, this policy has been approved by the Directors of the business and signed off by the Managing Director.

We have a number of processes and systems in place to communicate the requirements of this policy to frontline staff, including a simple overview guide to our key policies and arrangements.

All frontline staff who are likely to have a direct role in the delivery of the arrangements described in this policy have attended an **Equality & Inclusion** and **Disability Awareness Training** course. Separately, all new entrants to the business (regardless of role) attend a briefing session as part of the company induction training arrangements.

To ensure that the business and senior managers receive feedback on the effective delivery of the arrangements described in this policy, frontline staff are required to report any issues encountered by disabled customers when using our network to our Control Room. These issues are reviewed by the Directors of the business on a daily basis. In addition, our Customer Services Team monitors all customer complaints and comments relating to the services we provide to disabled customers. Where appropriate we will take action to improve the service we provide.

The Customer Experience Director will review our DPPP every twelve months, the results of which will be formally considered by the executive team of the business. If necessary, the Customer Experience Director will ensure that the relevant Directors implement corrective action if any deficiencies in our arrangements are identified. Additionally our DPPP will be reviewed annually with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR).

We produce and review a number of reports to ensure continuous improvement. These include the Accessibility Mystery Traveller Survey, Customer Service Dashboard (which includes data on assisted journeys), customer feedback, TfL's Customer Satisfaction Survey and the National Rail Passenger Survey. These documents are presented to the executive team and the senior customer service team led by the Customer Experience Director and used as part of our business planning process.

We recognise the importance of working to ensure that any special arrangements requested by our customers are seamless. In order to achieve this we maintain regular contact with others within the rail industry and our Control and Customer Services teams liaise with their counterparts to make arrangements for assistance for an entire journey, including where this starts or finishes beyond the London Overground network.

At a policy level London Overground is a member of the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) and participates in all relevant ATOC initiatives associated with improving access to railway services. Our Stakeholder & Community Manager attends ATOC's Disability Group & TfL's Accessibility Working Group to participate in joint projects and facilitate best practice.

# Monitoring and evaluation

In addition to our routine reviews, our Directors review our performance through our Customer Service Dashboard on a four-weekly basis. This review ensures that any issues highlighted are addressed.

This review includes:

- The number of assistance requests received in advance
- The number of customers using our turn up and go service
- The number of complaints regarding our services to disabled customers

The data collected as part of the review will be formally considered by the Directors of our business in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our policy and ensure that any deficiencies in our arrangements are identified and resolved.

All incidents relating to assisted journeys are recorded in our Control log which is reviewed daily by our management team. We are proud of our high success rate (currently running at over 99% of assistance correctly delivered) and investigate the circumstances of any failures to prevent recurrence. We benchmark the number of complaints we receive against the data available on the ORR website.

# Access improvements

We are committed to making every possible effort to meet the standards of the DfT's Code of Practice for Accessible Train Station Design. In addition London Overground complies with the European technical specification for interoperability relating to persons with reduced mobility (PRM-TSI). Wherever possible we will adopt a best-practice approach to access for disabled customers.

However, there may occasionally be circumstances where we are unable to comply fully with the Code regarding:

- New or enhanced station facilities
- Refurbishment of existing trains
- Station or on-train services

In this case, we will approach the DfT to seek dispensation from the relevant section of the Code at the earliest possible stage after all possible options have been considered.

A number of access improvement schemes have been completed since 2014 which include:

- The installation of lifts, enabling wheelchair access to all platforms at Brockley, Honor Oak Park, Kensal Rise and New Cross Gate
- Accessible ticket office windows have been installed at Brondesbury Park, Gospel Oak, Headstone Lane and Queens Road Peckham
- Accessible waiting shelters at Camden Road, Gospel Oak and Kensington (Olympia)

In the last year the following step-free changes have taken place:

- Kensal Rise lift opened to Platform 2 making station fully step-free
- New Cross Gate lifts opened to all platforms making station fully step-free
- South Tottenham lifts opened to all platforms making station fully step-free

Work is currently in progress to install lifts and improve the station entrance at Blackhorse Road, funded through the DfT's Access for All programme, in partnership with TfL. These improvements are expected to be completed in 2017. Access for All funding has also been agreed for step-free schemes at Brondesbury, Peckham Rye, and Queen's Park planning for these schemes is now underway with expected completion in March 2019.

Additionally the new fleets of trains introduced since 2009 on most routes are Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) compliant and include designated wheelchair spaces, priority seating, wider gangways and improved customer information systems.

The new Concession Agreement includes commitment to a new fund to be used to support disabled persons groups and to develop practical solutions to help Concession Employees better assist persons with reduced mobility (the PRM Fund).



# Working with others

We maintain contact with key stakeholders on key issues affecting our network. These include: London TravelWatch; Transport Focus; Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC); relevant London Boroughs; Campaign for Better Transport (CBT); Railfuture and the British Transport Police (BTP).

We consult on the content of our minor improvements programmes and maintain a regular dialogue with local user groups and local councils. We endeavour to attend the majority of user group, local transport liaison, Local Authority mobility forums, and industry-related accessibility meetings.

# Staff training

All new staff receive disability training as part of their company induction, whilst existing staff receive regular updates. Our training provides delegates with information on our legal obligations to customers and staff and covers:

- Disability and discrimination, including in relation to the Equality Act 2010
- The Social Model of Disability
- Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations
- How to provide the most appropriate help for people with different types of disability
- Communication with disabled customers and colleagues

We include in our training a number of simulated and practical activities, including:

- Methods of guiding visually impaired people
- Assisting a wheelchair user on and off the train
- Communicating and assisting customers with learning disabilities
- The use of induction loops

Members of staff in customer facing roles are provided with specific training to assist them when speaking to the public, which focuses in particular on the clarity of speech, intonation, emphasis, timeliness and language. This training is designed to raise awareness of potential communication issues and emphasise how ineffective communication can impact upon disabled customers.

A training programme was delivered to 348 frontline station staff between March and October 2014. The objective of which was to refresh customer service skills including how to provide excellent customer service to disabled customers.

We have recently completed delivery of the World Host customer service training programme to all our customer service employees. This programme has been used to train over a million people worldwide including the thousands of volunteers and staff involved in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The training was designed to help staff take into consideration the differing needs of all our customers, including those requiring assistance to access our service.

The new Concession Agreement also requires that all customer-facing staff attend a further 1-day training course on assisting customers with reduced mobility by March 2019. Additionally, 4 half days of training will be provided each year.

# Emergency procedures

Every station managed by London Overground has a local emergency plan which details the actions that station staff must take in an emergency. It includes detailed evacuation arrangements and takes into account the needs of disabled customers. All station staff are fully trained in their responsibilities for the emergency plan and evacuation exercises are held annually.

Should our emergency procedures have to be applied at a station that does not have step-free access, wheelchair users may have to be taken to a place of safety, such as a safety refuge, until the emergency services arrive with suitable aid and support to evacuate the wheelchair user.

# Communications strategy

We follow TfL's design standards to ensure that all our printed information is designed to meet the needs of disabled customers. We support TfL to promote and market London Overground services. This includes:

- Alternative format maps
- Information leaflets in a variety of formats
- Short films online explaining how to use transport in London
- Dedicated pages on the TfL website
- Engagement with local groups representing disabled and older customers

We also work with local authorities to ensure stations are consistently signposted within the local area. Another initiative includes the provision of signage from our stations to nearby bus stops to help customers when rail replacement bus services are running.

Within our existing stations, our station enhancement programme has renewed the majority of station signage in line with TfL branding guidelines. This permanent signage meets the requirements of the DfT's Code of Practice. This enhancement programme has also equipped all our stations with modern customer information, PA and Help Point systems. All audio based systems are equipped with induction loops. A similar programme is being developed in conjunction with TfL and Network Rail to enhance the stations which joined the network during 2015.

For customers who wish to contact our Customer Services Team, a Minicom textphone service is available which supplements the existing email and standard telephone communication channels.

Recorded information given by telephone is clear and provides either an option to be connected to a human operator or quotes a number where a human operator can be contacted

Online information about London Overground's services can be accessed via the TfL website. This website has been carefully designed to meet the needs of all users.

# Car parking

TfL manages car parks at Bushey, Crystal Palace, Forest Hill, Hatch End, Norwood Junction and Penge West. The designated disabled parking spaces at these car parks are monitored jointly by our CCTV network (with direct access to our Control Room) and by the car parking contractor, Meteor.

Enforcement of parking scheme is undertaken by the car parking management providers, and it is TfL's policy to prosecute persons who infringe the regulations (ie parking in designated disabled spaces without the appropriate permit) that apply to the car parks.

While we only have a small number of stations with car parks, we view our car parks as part of the entire journey experience. Our Infrastructure & Projects team regularly review the demand for car parking and commit to providing to the DfT the usage figures for Blue Badge spaces where the number of designated disabled parking spaces is less than five per cent of the total number of parking spaces available.

# Contact information

There are several channels available for customers to contact us. We have given consideration to each of these options to ensure that concerns raised can be captured and handled effectively and efficiently.

**Phone:** 0343 222 1234  
**Online:** [www.tfl.gov.uk/contact](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/contact)  
**TextPhone:** 0800 112 3456  
**Post:** TfL Customer Services,  
4th Floor,  
14 Pier Walk,  
London, SE10 0ES

We offer a local rate and easy to remember phone number that is included in a majority of call packages for landline and mobile providers. The Customer Services team is available 24 hours a day.

If for any reason the phone lines are not open, a recorded message is played giving details of opening hours and alternate contact options, such as the website. A TextPhone service is available on a Freephone number for customers with a hearing disability.

If after contacting us you wish to take your comments further, please write to the independent statutory watchdog for transport users in and around London.

**London TravelWatch**  
169 Union Street  
London SE1 0LL  
[www.londontravelwatch.org.uk](http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk)

The information within this booklet is available to download from [www.arrivarailondon.co.uk/go/travel/accessibility](http://www.arrivarailondon.co.uk/go/travel/accessibility)

Information correct as at November 2016