

Making rail accessible

Guide to policies and practices

October 2016



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1. Our strategy

Greater Anglia is part of Abellio Transport Holdings which operates ScotRail and Merseyrail train services, bus services in London, along with transport operations in Germany, Netherlands and the Czech Republic. All our companies operate within the same management framework known as the Abellio Way, which sets out how we deliver our operations to customers and stakeholders. We have established a service quality process to measure our standards of service to all customers and have two (east & west) Customer Panels, meeting six times each year, to represent their interests for our services on the West Anglia and Great Eastern mainlines (see greateranglia.co.uk/panels). We will also establish a Stakeholder Equality Group, made up of disabled user groups and accessibility organisations, to ensure the views of disabled passengers are fully represented and understood. We are committed to working with the Department for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, Transport Focus, London TravelWatch, Transport for London, Local Authorities, industry partners and other stakeholders to deliver further improvements to accessibility and facilities for our customers.

We have developed this document as part of our Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) to set out the procedures and policies that Greater Anglia has in place to help older and disabled customers, and other customers requiring assistance. It reflects the guidance set out in the DfT document, 'How to write your Disabled People's Protection Policy: A guide for Train and Station Operators' (2009). Consequently this policy document should be read in conjunction with our customer document 'Making rail accessible: Helping older and disabled passengers'.

The document also sets out our approach to meeting the requirements of the DfT's current 'Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations: A Code of Practice', the Equality Act (2010), the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 (RVAR), and the Technical Specification on Interoperability: Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM-TSI).

We recognise the broad range of our customers who require assistance, and we are committed to making the best practicable provision to meet their requirements and continue to improve the services and facilities for older and disabled customers. This approach not only applies to persons using wheelchairs but also:

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

We recognise that all customers will benefit from changes to make the railway more accessible and our aim is to make continuous improvements to the accessibility of our services and stations for all of our customers.

We will operate, publicise and support the Passenger Assist system and the supporting station facilities information held on the National Rail Enquiries website.

At each of our stations we provide details on how to obtain a copy of our 'Making rail accessible: helping older and disabled passengers' booklet and those of other operators serving the station. A copy of each part of our DPPP can also be obtained, free of charge, on request to our Contact Centre or found on our website. Both are also available in printed copy, large print and audio formats. We will send the copy in the format requested within 7 days of the request.

2. Management arrangements

The management arrangements detailed below are designed to ensure that positive approaches to meeting the needs of disabled customers are an integral part of our business activities.

Our DPPP is approved by our Board of Directors and endorsed and supported by the Managing Director and Executive Management team.

The Customer Service Director has executive responsibility for our DPPP and will ensure that it is integrated into business plans and incorporated at the planning stage of all major projects. The Customer Service Director will also ensure that the requirements of disabled people are represented and that briefings are cascaded throughout the business as appropriate. Our management teams have responsibility for the implementation and delivery of the day to day elements of customer service, including this policy.

All of our directors, managers and staff, including new entrants, who deal with passengers, receive appropriate disability awareness briefing and/or training in correctly assisting passengers. This includes all staff and managers that design or manage the upgrade and modification of our facilities and services.

From October 2016, we will introduce a new role in the organisation, our Integration and Accessibility Manager who will:

- Lead engagement on accessibility issues.
- Manage our Stakeholder Equality Group (which include local authorities relevant to the franchise and representatives from disability and accessibility organisations).
- Identify and agree spending priorities.
- Manage integrated transport products and services.
- Lead our Integrated Transport Group.
- Develop door-to-door products and services.
- Facilitate improvements in accessibility measures.

In our recruitment and selection process we seek to identify staff committed to the principles of customer service. We provide them with the understanding, knowledge and the appropriate skills to enable individual members of staff, whatever their duties, to meet and exceed customers' expectations.

3. Monitoring and evaluation

We fully support the view that the monitoring and evaluation of performance in delivering services and facilities to all customers, including passengers with reduced mobility, and acting upon the results, are crucial in ensuring that the standards of service are being met, as well as delivering on the commitment to continuous improvement. We monitor the impact of improvements we deliver to accessibility.

As a result, Greater Anglia has introduced a robust Customer Experience Performance Model (CEPM) encompassing Trains, Stations and People standards which has been specifically designed to measure standards of service on our Trains, at our Stations, and of our front line staff. This will include the specific requirements set out in our DPPP and included in the 'Making rail accessible: helping older and disabled customers' document.

Our approach to monitoring and evaluation is to measure services and facilities on a regular basis throughout the year to provide accurate information regarding the quality of the current services and facilities, and to identify gaps for improvement in future years. For example, we are introducing a customer satisfaction survey measurement tool whereby we will call 5% of users of our pre-booked assistance service to ensure that our service meets their expectations. This feedback will be used to set targets and monitor performance, and we will share data with our stakeholders. From 2017 we will employ an external organisation to complete mystery shops to assess our compliance with accessibility. Annual reviews are completed across the franchise and these will be combined with the wider information available to develop key actions to improve overall performance.

4. Access improvements

In operating the franchise Greater Anglia is committed to complying with the PRM-TSI and the DfT's Code of Practice when installing or refurbishing rolling stock and facilities at stations. As such, we are committed to applying for derogations against the PRM-TSI and/or dispensations against the Code of Practice when necessary, but only after every effort has been made to comply with the relevant requirements.

We have made a number of improvements in the past year to improve the accessibility of rolling stock and stations:

Rolling stock

- Our entire fleet is now wheelchair accessible, with majority of our services having a dedicated wheelchair space. Additionally, every train in our Stansted Express fleet is wheelchair accessible, fitted with dedicated wheelchair spaces and fitted with a wheelchair accessible toilet. While our 360, 170, 156 and Intercity sets now all have wheelchair accessible toilets fitted.
- Class 317/6: a refresh for the 24 Class 317/6 trains used on the West Anglia routes between London and Hertford, Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Cambridge, including colour contrasted grab handles and luggage racks. In addition, the Class 317/6 now have a dedicated area for wheelchairs.
- Class 321: wheelchair spaces and accessible toilets are currently being installed to Class 321 trains used on commuter services from Essex and South Suffolk.
- Intercity: all our Mk3 carriages used on the Intercity services operating on the Great Eastern Main Line between Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, Chelmsford and London have benefitted from a major refresh. This project sees all carriages benefiting from power points, new carpets, new seat covers, better lighting, upgraded toilets and an interior and an exterior re-paint.

Stations

- Ely – New disabled toilet and waiting room on the island platform.
- Bury St Edmunds – New disabled toilet on the Ipswich-bound platform. Refurbished waiting room and toilets.
- Hockley, Rayleigh, Wickford, Billericay, Prittlewell, Shenfield, Witham, Stowmarket, Diss – Refurbished waiting rooms.
- Billericay – New Gateline and lift.
- Great Bentley – Footbridge refurbished.
- March – Footbridge refurbished.
- Roydon – New waiting room, ticket machine, help points and CCTV.
- Lea Bridge – New station opened 16 May 2016 (fully accessible, including lifts).
- Newmarket – New ticket machine.
- Bishops Stortford – New waiting rooms both platforms, new disabled toilet platform 2.
- Manningtree – Lifts. Due to be completed Autumn 2016.
- Chelmsford – Major station works. Due to be completed Autumn 2016.
- Cambridge – Temporary ticket office in place. Large new cycle point. Due to be completed Autumn 2016.
- Ipswich – Major station works. Due to be completed Autumn 2016.

- Norwich – Major station works. New waiting room already in place. Due to be completed Autumn 2016.
- ATOC funding – Has provided cycle storage and CCTV at 33 stations.

For each annual review we will review the progress of each programme/scheme undertaken to improve accessibility, plus the forthcoming plans for future developments and schemes.

We are also working to ensure that there is an accessible taxi service available at each of our stations, and will keep you updated on our progress via our website.

5. Working with others

During the franchise Greater Anglia will consult with a range of stakeholders and partners about accessibility issues to trains and stations, ensuring their feedback is included in our decision making. This will include consultation over the development of options for and prioritisation of access improvements.

As a result we would envisage working with the following groups and organisations:

- Department for Transport
- Office of Rail and Road
- Transport for London
- Network Rail
- Local authorities
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- MAG (Stansted Airport)
- Other station and transport operators
- Greater Anglia Customer Panels
- Transport Focus
- London TravelWatch
- Local Disabled user groups
- Specialist consultants and agencies including RNIB, Action on Hearing Loss and Age UK

We will work in partnership with other train operating companies and Network Rail to ensure that if customers require assistance they can make bookings for journeys across the national rail network.

6. Staff training

During the franchise Greater Anglia will review the existing training plans to assess any required changes to the ongoing plans. This will include reference to industry guidelines and potential future needs.

Greater Anglia has created a specific customer service training intervention which encompasses frontline managers and staff. This will be supplemented by specific training for new starters at all levels of the business and local refresher training for individuals as required.

Feedback on training interventions will be provided by assessments carried out by line managers in pre and post-briefing sessions, and supplemented by the CEPM mystery shopping programme focussing on People standards (staff presentation, attitudes and behaviours). Additionally, our Stakeholder Equality Group will review the content of the training annually.

As a result Greater Anglia is fully committed to ensuring the following:

- All staff will receive relevant disability awareness training or disability equality training (to include classroom based, staff briefings, e-learning), including senior and key managers, to ensure that they are made aware of their responsibilities to disabled passengers. The training also covers knowledge and awareness of invisible disabilities. This will focus on new staff joining the franchise.
- Frontline staff who may, at any time, need to assist passengers will receive appropriate training in the use of equipment provided to assist people with disabilities, such as ramps, wheelchairs and induction loops.
- Any staff that may, at any time, deal directly with passengers will receive appropriate training to help them communicate with people with different disabilities.
- Any staff who answer telephones will be trained in communicating clearly with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding.
- An overview of our relevant staff training, including the timetable and the numbers of staff that have received the training, will be provided to ORR annually when we submit our DPPP for review.

7. Emergency procedures

Assistance during emergencies

All our staff are trained in the procedures to be adopted in the event of an emergency on-board or at a station, including the evacuation of stations and trains. Our on-train staff and drivers are trained in emergency evacuation procedures. Our policy is not to evacuate passengers with mobility impairments or wheelchair users until appropriate support is available from the emergency services, unless they are in a life threatening situation.

Stations

If the platform from which a train departs is altered at short notice, our staff, where available, will help customers to reach the new platform, helping with luggage and providing guidance where required. We will give appropriate information via the facilities at each location (audio announcements, visual information displays, poster/notices).

A number of our stations are either not staffed or have limited staffing hours (see section 12 of 'Making rail accessible: Helping older and disabled passengers'). You will need to pre-book if you need assistance to access or leave the station at unstaffed stations, or at staffed stations outside of the published staffed hours. By using the booking system and giving us 24 hours' notice, we will arrange for a member of staff to be at the station when you need, or we can make alternative arrangements for you such as arranging a pre-booked taxi, or suggesting the use of a nearby accessible station as an alternative. We will discuss your individual needs with you when you book. If you arrive at an unstaffed station without booking assistance you will need to contact us by either using the help point or a phone. We will do our best to arrange assistance as quickly as possible, but this may take some time. Any unstaffed ticket barriers or gates will be left in the 'open' position for ease of access.

When disruption results in train service cancellations our staff will seek to inform customers in the same way as above and, if necessary, arrange alternative accessible replacement transport that meets their needs.

If a customer has booked assistance in advance that, because of service disruption, is no longer valid, our staff will seek to inform them in the same way as above, or contact them if they provided a mobile telephone number when booking, and, if necessary, arrange alternative accessible replacement transport that meets their need, or rebook their journey.

If a train service is subject to planned or unplanned engineering work an alternative bus service may be provided. If it is not possible to provide an accessible bus then a taxi suitable for the customer's needs will be provided at no extra cost to them. We will discuss what help is needed when customers call us to book their assistance.

Trains

We provide audio announcements on all trains, giving customers information about any delays, changes to stopping patterns, and connection information. Many trains also have visual information. All trains will have audio/visual information by 2020.

If a customer has pre-booked and travels on a different train to that on which they were originally booked due to service disruption, we will contact the terminating or interchange station to ensure that they are ready to assist the customer on arrival.

If a train terminates en route, then our driver or on-board staff will contact the station or operations control and advise them a customer requires assistance. Our staff are trained and briefed on the importance of providing timely and accurate information and any additional support to our disabled customers, during disruption. This includes taking account of the problems such disruption may have to them.

Pre-planned replacement bus services

Where our services cannot be operated and have to be replaced by bus services, we will endeavour to ensure that a PSVAR compliant accessible bus is used to provide the replacement service. Where this is not available, a suitable taxi will be provided at no extra charge to you for pre-booked journeys. We will discuss what help is needed when customers call us to book their assistance.

8. Communications strategy

Greater Anglia is committed to providing easy access to information for older and disabled customers, using a variety of formats, styles and equipment, to meet their individual needs. We will work alongside appropriate community and support groups, local authorities, charities and other organisations to publicise information about making the railway more accessible. We will be proactive in this approach and through the role of Integration and Accessibility Manager, will communicate directly with groups and issue our 'Making rail access: help for older and disabled passengers' document. This will be available at all of our staffed stations and can also be obtained, free of charge, on request from our Contact Centre or can be downloaded from our website. On request this policy can be made available in alternative formats such as audio, Braille and large print.

Greater Anglia is also committed to the following:

Telephone

- We will communicate using Next Generation Text (previously known as Typetalk) with customers who use textphone or minicom services. Please prefix your call to us with 18001 prior to dialling.
- Recorded information given by telephone is clear and will either provide an option to be connected to a human operator, or quote a phone number where a human operator can be contacted.

Websites

- We will work with partners in the development of our own website to make it as accessible as possible and commit to maintaining W3C standards during the franchise.

Signage

- We will work with local authorities, where required, to ensure that stations are clearly and consistently signposted. In addition when we change any signage we will refer to RSSB's good practice guide.

9. Car parking

We offer free car parking to disabled customers at all our car parks as shown in section 12 of 'Making rail accessible: helping older and disabled passengers'. You must ensure that a Blue Badge permit is displayed in the car windscreen. We will ensure that parking for those with a mobility impairment is in accessible locations as close to the station as practicable.

We use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the DfT Code of Practice requirements in relation to the number of Blue Badge parking bays where practicable. We regularly survey and record the provision and occupancy of designated spaces in our car parks where these are fewer than specified in the Code, providing the results to DfT at least every six months.

Enforcement at staffed stations is normally by either the car park managing agent or the local station staff. Illegally parked vehicles will be brought to the attention of the British Transport Police, who are able to take action under Byelaw 14 of the Railway Byelaws.

If a parking space for those with mobility impairment is unavailable for any reason, if the customer's car displays a Blue Badge permit they may park free of charge in any other public, non-restricted parking space in the car park.