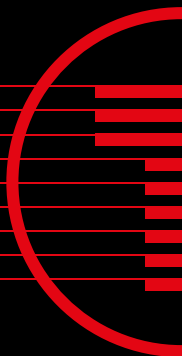




TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU  
TRANSPORT FOR WALES

# Making rail accessible

Guide to policies and practices



# 01. OUR STRATEGY



Transport for Wales Rail Services took over operation of services on the Wales and Borders network in October 2018. This document explains our policies and plans which enable and aim to improve the arrangements set out in *Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled People* (a copy of which is available at our staffed stations, from Customer Relations or via our website).

We recognise that disabled people experience environmental, attitudinal and organizational barriers to accessing rail travel. We are committed to tackling these barriers and creating an inclusive service and welcoming service for all over the course of our 15 year contract.

Within the first 3 months we will set up an Accessibility Panel to enable collaboration with relevant stakeholders and passengers. We will invite members to comment on planned enhancements, to consult on our accessibility initiatives and to take part in trials, workshops, and training.

This commitment to the continuous improvement of services and facilities for older and disabled people will be realised by:

- a review of our station accessibility and information by 1 April 2019
- investment in stations and rolling stock which will afford greater levels of accessibility
- transforming customer experience through training our staff and taking advantage of opportunities offered by technology e.g. Data Insights Lab
- placing stakeholders and passengers at the heart of our planning process through investment in Community Rail Partnerships and 'Adopt a Station'.

This document sets out how we plan to achieve this and also explain our approach to meeting the requirements of the DfT's current 'Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations: A Code of Practice' (the 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).



## 02. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS



Providing services to older and disabled people is an integral part of our planning processes and of delivering rail services.

Our Board has set this Disabled People's Protection Policy. The Customer Experience and Transformation Director has executive responsibility for ensuring it is implemented in all our business activities and for cascading our commitments and initiatives to senior managers and station managers.

This policy is provided to our projects, property and procurement teams alongside the Code of Practice to ensure its implementation and to emphasise its importance. Our Customer Experience and Transformation Director is responsible for ensuring compliance when stations are built or undergo refurbishment, while our Operations Director is responsible for ensuring PRM-TSI is applied to the refurbishment of our trains.

Our disability training programme, supported by local stakeholders, will ensure frontline staff and managers understand their responsibilities in line with this policy.

Our Head of Customer Experience has overall day-to-day responsibility for our accessibility initiatives. In 2018-19 we will recruit an Accessibility Manager and an Accessibility Analyst to support and strengthen our ambitious plans for accessibility and inclusion – a selection of which is provided in Section 4.



## 03. MONITORING AND EVALUATION



We have implemented a range of measures to ensure that we monitor and evaluate our performance in meeting the commitments in our DPPP, including our continuous improvement.

Our Accessibility Panel will be our 'critical friend'. It will be designed such that members feel empowered and comfortable providing comments on our services, facilities and the plans and processes within the business. Their ideas will be integral to how we move from evaluation to improving experience.

Our training programme (Section 6) will include an evaluation mechanism to allow us to measure its impact and identify any areas for further improvement, either through developing aspects of the course or specific additional interventions.

We encourage feedback from passengers in our *Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled People*. Our Customers Relations team lead on investigating complaints or reports of breakdowns in assistance or accessibility. Trends are identified and appropriate action taken. Any learning points are fed back to staff or managers for analysis.

Securing sufficient data about Assisted Travel usage levels and failures is a challenge. It is, however, a crucial part of evidencing resource requirements, customer experience and accessibility levels. The introduction of a Assisted Travel app (section 4.2) will automate data collection and allow us to proactively lead on robust evaluation, taking the pressure off passengers to raise concerns.

We will partner with Disability Wales and task the Accessibility Panel to measure how many disabled or vulnerable people are accessing our services during accessibility enhancements, reviewing this every six months.

In the first year of its work, our Accessibility Panel will be asked to explore a priority seat scheme (e.g. indicating need via a card and/or badge) and how this would best work for passengers.

We produce periodic reports to the Welsh Government based on Assisted Travel data, including booked and fulfilled Assisted Travel, and provide this to the Executive to identify any necessary interventions.

Our Head of Customer Experience acts upon any risks or concerns about failures to meet the standards of our DPPP by working with relevant senior management colleagues to identify the need for further clarification, briefings or training needs.

Our DPPP is reviewed annually.



## 04. ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS



We will comply with the PRM-TSI and the Code of Practice when installing or refurbishing rolling stock and facilities at stations. If for any reason we are unable to meet these standards we will apply for derogations or dispensation only after every effort has been made to ensure compliance.

### 4.1. Our trains

All of our trains will be PRM-TSI compliant by 2020. In addition to this accessibility will be improved by:

- **Level access between platform and train by 2022 on all South Wales Metro stations. This will transform disabled and older passengers' levels of independence and inclusion, increase safety and improve confidence in rail travel**
- **An innovative door lighting system on Metro Vehicles will indicate when the door is safe to use and when it is opening or closing**
- **Doors will be a different colour to the interior on all new trains to make them clearer to identify.**

Before the manufacture of any new rolling stock, we will ensure that mock up vehicles are tested and reviewed by the Accessibility Panel, and their feedback taken into account in the eventual design.

### 4.2. Our stations

We will proactively apply for funding for access improvements at our stations through schemes such as the Government's 'Access for All' initiative. We will consult with our Accessibility Panel to identify and prioritise any such applications.

We will ringfence £250,000 annually for the Minor Works budget to fund accessibility improvements. Crucially, we will empower station facilities managers, station adopters and the Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) to fund projects in a way that maximises the welfare of passengers. Adopting a welfare business case model, instead of a financial case model, allow schemes to be selected according to the welfare uplift they offer and targets spending where it will have most impact.

Our team of customer ambassadors assist the CRPs and station managers to deliver a welfare business case. We align welfare cases with analysis of needs, the Accessibility Panel and stakeholder feedback before review and selection.



We want to transform the experience of our disabled and older passengers. For example, within the next 5 years we are committed to providing level access between the platform and trains across Cardiff and the Valley lines as part of our South Wales Metro scheme.

As part of our plans to enhance the experience of passengers, within the first 2 years we will launch a trial of an Assisted Travel app using Bluetooth beacons. After testing by staff and stakeholders, and taking on the feedback, we hope to then roll-out the use of this technology to 51 stations by footfall. The use of this technology should increase flexibility for passengers, improve reliability in service delivery and provide an overall improved service for disabled and older passengers who use Assisted Travel.

Significant upgrade works are planned for Cardiff Central, Chester, Shotton, Llanelli, Wrexham General, Abergavenny, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Carmarthen, Chepstow, Machynlleth and Merthyr Tydfil. Following the access audit of our stations, we will confirm the detail of our plans in Year 1.

## 05. WORKING WITH OTHERS



We plan to partner with Disability Wales as we share their vision for inclusive rail services. Specifically, this will focus on launching the Accessibility Panel, devising our disability training and taking part in tests and innovative trials.

We plan to work with the local health care sector to organise dedicated 'accessibility trips' during quieter off-peak times, to build disabled and older people's confidence travelling by rail, thereby increasing activity and reducing social isolation.

We will invite accessibility groups to join our Stakeholder Advisory Board to ensure that inclusion is mainstreamed in wider business activities. We consult with a range of stakeholders who represent disabled and older passengers, and other groups that experience access barriers, whether or not they are members of our Accessibility Panel as part of our stakeholder team.

We attend Rail Delivery Group's quarterly accessibility group for train operators. The group shares best practice across the industry to identify and solve challenges.

More widely we work with the Welsh Government, Transport Focus, the Office of Rail and Road, Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Group and the Rail Delivery Group.



## 06. FIRST YEAR OF THE CONTRACT



During our first year, we will review the existing training programme in place which delivers training to new starters and regular refresher training to staff on an biennial basis as required. This will cover the following training:

- **All staff will receive relevant disability awareness training, including senior and key managers, to ensure that they are made aware of their responsibilities to older and disabled passengers.**
- **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 scooters and induction loops.**
- **Any staff who 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 training will be provided to ORR when the DPPP is reviewed.

### Developing our Training

We may develop that programme or decide to implement a brand new programme. We will invite Disability Wales to support us with this process and advise us on delivery and frequency. Whilst this review takes place, we will continue to deliver the ongoing training module to new starters as well as refresher training where required.

Any disability equality training programme will cover:

- **Common barriers experienced by older and disabled people and how we can mitigate or remove them, including how to best provide assistance**
- **The disproportionate impact that disruption has on older and disabled people and measures to ease this**
- **Recognising the wide range of invisible impairments and how to support passengers**
- **Our commitments in the DPPP and obligations under the Equality Act 2010.**

The programme will include our Directors (from a strategic perspective) and our frontline staff who directly support disabled and older customers.

We will invite the Accessibility Panel to review any proposed training programme and explore how they might add value to its delivery.



## 07. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



Staff are trained in their responsibilities on the health and safety of our passengers, including evacuation procedures at stations and on board trains.

Our conductors are responsible for evacuating trains. At a station, ramps will be used to assist wheelchair users and mobility impaired passengers onto the platforms. If a train is not at a station, our policy is not to evacuate a train unless there is immediate danger to life. In such a case, wheelchair users and mobility impaired passengers would be assisted from the train by staff with the support of emergency services.

## 08. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY



We understand that for information and our communications to be truly accessible, it needs to be available in a range of formats and in a variety of places. We work with our partners to share information about our services as widely as possible e.g. through printed media/advertisement, local newspapers, local TV and radio, poster campaigns, our website and on social media.

We proactively reach out to community groups to promote *Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled People*. Hard copies are available at our staffed stations and we approach hubs such as libraries and tourist information centres to make these available in the community.

### 8.1. Telephone

Our Customer Relations team has a English-speaking and Welsh-speaking line. Next Generation Text allows us to communicate with passengers who use this service.

### 8.2. Websites

We promote Assisted Travel, our DPPP and other initiatives on our website which will meet the W3C WCAG AA accessibility standards.



### 8.3. Signage

We work with local authorities to make sure that our directions to stations are clearly signposted. We will address any deficiencies with them through our station travel plan process to review and improve travel by walking and cycling.

When we change or replace signage we will refer to RSSB's good practice guide.

## 09. CAR PARKING



We monitor the use of designated blue badge parking bays at our car parks, particularly when provision is not compliant with the Code of Practice. The contracted manager of these car parks performs regular occupancy counts of these bays and general spaces. This allows to assess supply and demand and, if necessary, to provide extra blue badge parking bays if space allows.

Our 'pay and display' car parks are regularly patrolled. Cars parked in Blue Badge bays that do not display a badge will receive a penalty.



