

London Underground

Making rail accessible: guide to policies and practices



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Management arrangements and responsibility	6
3. Monitoring and evaluation	7
4. Access improvements	8
5. Working with others	9
6. Staff training	10
7. Emergency procedures	11
8. Communications strategy	12
9. Signage	13
10. Car parking	14



1. Introduction

This document sets out the policies and practices that London Underground operates in relation to older and disabled customers using the National Rail services at the following stations, which we operate on behalf of the train operating companies (TOCs):

Station	Train Operating Company
Amersham	Chiltern
Blackhorse Road	London Overground
Chalfont & Latimer	Chiltern
Chorleywood	Chiltern
Farringdon	Govia Thameslink Railway
Greenford	First Great Western
Gunnelsbury	London Overground
Harlesden	London Overground
Harrow & Wealdstone	London Overground, London North Western & GTR Southern
Harrow on the Hill	Chiltern
Highbury & Islington	London Overground and Great Northern
Kensal Green	London Overground
Kenton	London Overground
Kentish Town	Govia Thameslink Railway
Kew Gardens	London Overground
Moorgate	Great Northern
North Wembley	London Overground
Old Street	Great Northern
Queen's Park	London Overground
Rickmansworth	Chiltern
Seven Sisters	London Overground
South Kenton	London Overground
South Ruislip	Chiltern
Stonebridge Park	London Overground
Stratford	TfL Rail, Abellio Greater Anglia & London Overground
Walthamstow Central	London Overground
Wembley Central	London Overground, London Midland & GTR Southern
West Brompton	London Overground & GTR Southern
West Ham	c2c Rail
West Ruislip	Chiltern

This document relates only to the TOCs and stations listed above.

For information about the policies and practices we have in place relating to customers using London Underground (LU) services, please see www.tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility.



Operator strategy

London Underground takes its obligations to improve accessibility seriously. We recognise that our customers may have different requirements when they travel with us and we are committed to making their journey as easy as possible. We have made considerable improvements over the past couple of decades to decrease and remove the communicational and attitudinal barriers that disabled customers face, and to improve physical access to the system.

These improvements have included (see below for more information):

- Better staff training
- More accessible stations and trains
- More extensive and meaningful engagement with disabled customers

Transport for London publishes a number of documents which summarise the action being taken to deliver high quality, accessible transport on the TfL network, including our Single Equality Scheme and our Action on Equality publication. These can be accessed at:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/equality-and-inclusion-publications>

In addition, the TfL Business Plan sets out all expenditure and priorities over the life of the plan. This can be viewed at:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/business-plan>

This Business Plan sets out TfL's plans for the five years from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

London Underground recognises the 'social model of disability', which says that:

- Disability is a social phenomenon
- It is created by society's response to a person's impairments or learning difficulties
- Discrimination against disabled people is just as oppressive as discrimination on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation



Our aim is to make it easier for all of our customers to access and use the network. Our document “Making rail accessible: helping older and disabled passengers” contains further information on how we plan to do this.



2. Management arrangements and responsibility

London Underground is committed to making our customers journeys as simple as possible and our Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) contains information on how we plan to do this.

The Chief Customer Officer London Underground is responsible for our ATP 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

Our Chief Customer Officer London Underground, through the Customer Experience Lead, ensures that both these documents are reviewed every 12 months.

The Chief Customer Officer London Underground can be contacted at:

Palestra

197 Blackfriars Road
7th Floor (Green Zone)
London, SE1 8NJ

The day to day responsibility for the Accessible Travel Policy is held by the Customer Experience Lead, who is responsible for ensuring that policies, practices and procedures support the needs of disabled customers throughout the business by working with other accountable managers. The Customer Experience Lead can be contacted at the same address. Managers and staff are made aware of their responsibilities to disabled passengers through briefings.

Staff training is used where appropriate. Equality Impact Assessments are used to ensure that changes and the impacts on disabled customers are systematically considered and implemented appropriately.



3. Monitoring and evaluation

A wide variety of data is captured at corporate level with regards to asset availability and performance, for example the availability of lifts, performance of trains, availability of ticket machines and automatic ticketing gates. This is reviewed at Senior Management Level on a weekly basis by the Managing Director of London Underground and their senior managers, through the Visibility Board Process.

As part of this process, any issues are openly discussed with actions assigned to key staff for resolution.

In addition, the Customer Service Centre manager monitors feedback from disabled customers to identify, analyse and remedy any ongoing issues. We will record how many assists we have provided at the 30 stations and will track customer feedback against that.

LU also advocates the use of a wide range of research in order to guide future projects. LU proactively answers queries and complaints received through the Customer Service Centre. We aim to reply as quickly as possible.

LU uses Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that new projects and changes to practices, policies and procedures consider the needs of disabled customers.



4. Access improvements

London Underground is committed to improving access to our network.

Any new trains brought onto the network will be compliant with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) 2010. Where it is not possible to achieve compliance, we will work with the Office of Road and Rail (ORR) and the Department of Transport (DfT) to identify the best possible solution.

We are also working on our older trains to improve their levels of accessibility, and have recently completed a refurbishment to the Northern line fleet with work which has enabled us to provide dedicated wheelchair spaces, improved colour contrast, and visual door closing indicators.

London Underground is investing record levels in step-free access. By 2021/22, 30 more Underground stations will be step-free. This will bring the number of step free stations up to 40 per cent, from the current 26 per cent. Many planned major station upgrades and investment programmes, including Crossrail, the Northern Line Extension and Station Capacity Improvement programmes will also include provision of step-free access.

Other physical accessibility improvements have taken place across the network, including the installation of platform edge tactile paving at all but a few Tube stations, installation of Wide Aisle Gates at the majority of stations, and installation of permanent level access or manual boarding ramps at a large number of stations with step-free access or step-free interchange between lines.

All investment within TfL is carefully appraised and monitored to ensure value for money. As many of the improvements made are part of broader projects to improve customer experience, such as congestion relief schemes, the costs of the various components are not easily separated.



5. Working with others

TfL and London Underground work closely with a number of key partners to improve accessibility on the network. These include (but are not limited to) the Mayors Office, the London Boroughs, LondonTravelWatch, Network Rail and other TOCs.

Disabled customers are involved in the decision making process via Transport for London's Independent Disability Advisory Group (IDAG), Valuing People forum, sub-regional mobility forums and other project groups where appropriate. IDAG comprises six disabled customers with a wide variety of experience in transport. More information on IDAG can be found at content.tfl.gov.uk/idagbooklet.pdf.

The Valuing People forum is TfL's London-wide forum for people with learning difficulties, which meets three times a year to discuss travel and transport issues. Our sub-regional mobility forums were established to enhance discussions between TfL, the London boroughs and groups for older and disabled people across TfL's five sub-regions.

London Underground holds regular meetings and workshops with disability organisations and other stakeholders in order to ensure that we are providing our disabled customers as good a service as possible. London Underground also works closely with the Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee, attending the Rail Working Group.

Equality Impact Assessments and Access Statements are used while planning projects, to ensure that disabled customers' needs are considered appropriately.



6. Staff training

All operational staff and operational managers receive disability awareness training as part of their initial and ongoing refresher training. London Underground has rolled out Disability Equality Training for senior managers and staff.

London Underground has an online module for station staff about hidden disability, designed to highlight some of the issues customers with hidden disabilities may face and how staff can give them excellent customer service.

In addition to class based training, operational staff receive ‘on the job’ training for all aspects of their role, including the use of equipment such as manual boarding ramps which are extensively used by our disabled customers.

Training courses are available for all corporate staff as part of ongoing continuous development. London Underground Customer Service Centre staff have dedicated training to ensure operatives communicate clearly with people who many have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding.

The Lead Customer Experience Manager monitors the need for specialist training around accessibility and disability.



7. Emergency procedures

London Underground has robust evacuation plans for each station and for trains, produced in conjunction with major stakeholders including the LFEPA (London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority). All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of an evacuation, and receive refresher training annually.

Staff have been trained to assist customers in wheelchairs with evacuation, even if this is from a station with no step free access. If this is the case staff will evacuate the customer via the escalator.

Other 'live exercises' are carried out from time to time to ensure our policies function in practice.



8. Communications strategy

TfL ensures that disabled people receive the information they need about our range of services in a number of ways, including:

- Engagement work with disabled people's / older people's organisations, at national, pan-London and local levels
- Information sent out to customers subscribing to the TfL Accessibility database and / or the @tflaccess Twitterfeed
- Distribution of some publications, including the Step-free Tube Guide and new Accessible Travel leaflets.

TfL is committed to providing accessible online services. All TfL online content will uphold, as a minimum standard, level 'AA' of the WAI's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 1.0). Non-W3C formats (Flash, PDF etc.) or multimedia will only be used where they are the most appropriate format for the content in question. Where non-compliant content is provided reasonable effort will be taken to make accessible and equivalent alternatives available.



9. Signage

Signage standards used on the London Underground network are often referenced as industry best practice for signing transport environments. The TfL signage policy was reviewed in 2007 by Centre for Accessible Environments and Transport Design Consultancy. Improvements were introduced following this review to make signage more accessible.

As part of its continuous improvement processes, London Underground is reviewing its accessibility signage to ensure it is intuitive and easy to understand. Various trials will be rolled out on the Jubilee line including reworked diagrams and accessible lift signage.



10. Car parking

We have over 350 Blue Badge¹ car parking bays across the LU network, and specifically at the stations below for which the Accessible Travel Policy applies:

- Blackhorse Road
- Harrow & Wealdstone

NCP manages the car parks on our behalf and patrol all bays. They check that a Blue Badge displayed is associated with the vehicle registration number. If vehicles park in Blue Badge bays without a valid Blue Badge they will be issued with a penalty notice.

¹ Signage explains that only Blue Badge holders are allowed to park in the bays, and also noting that if all Blue Badge bays are full and a Blue Badge holder needs to park they will then have to paid for a valid ticket.

