

Making Rail Accessible

A guide to policies and practices

24 June **2018**



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Our Strategy

We'll maintain and improve current standards of accessibility of our services for people with disabilities, or whose mobility is impaired. We continually deliver a high standard of care to all our customers through our staff and our use of the Passenger Assist booking system. We will prioritise plans and policies that improve accessibility according to value for money in terms of customer service benefits to all customers.

Details of our plans for improving access and services are explained in Section 4 (page 6).

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Management Arrangements

This policy is compliant with the Passenger Operator's and Station Operator's Licences held by London North Eastern Railway Limited (LNER).

It has been approved by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and the Customer Experience Board of LNER. It will be formally reviewed every year by this Board and if there are significant changes the document will be submitted to ORR for approval.

Protecting and improving access to rail services for customers with disabilities is integral to our business strategy. Our Customer Experience Director is accountable for the delivery, development and promotion of accessibility and its inclusion across our business processes. This includes the development of business plans, the specification and delivery of projects and as part of our review of business performance.

Through training and briefings all managers and staff are made aware of their responsibilities to help disabled customers.

Our Access & Inclusion Manager will make sure our commitments to this policy are carried out through internal checks and regular review of feedback received from disabled customers. We'll consult with the ORR when we believe that these commitments are not being met.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

We aim to provide easy access and excellent customer service for all customers. We regularly review our arrangements and services. We will continue to introduce improvements as quickly as is reasonably practicable.

We recognise even small changes, such as clear signs or the clarity and audibility of announcements, can make a significant improvement to the journey of all customers, especially those with disabilities.

We welcome customer comments and will take these into consideration in reviewing and implementing this policy. We'll consider customer feedback in developing spending plans where this suggests specific enhancements to improve accessibility of our stations or trains.

Where a customer has made a complaint about the service they have received we'll investigate with the responsible line manager and appropriate action will be taken where necessary. We will also consider appropriate compensation depending on the circumstances.

As well as taking direct feedback from customers, we also take note of research findings from surveys undertaken by third parties such as Transport Focus or the ORR.

We will provide a report to the ORR each year explaining our progress towards meeting the objectives within this policy. Any problems with any aspects of the policy will be raised with the ORR as they arise.

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Access Improvements

We'll adopt the services, standards and guidance in the Department for Transport's "Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations: A Code of Practice" (The Code), for all activities whether in our direct control and delivered by a third party, and take account of requirements within the Equality Act.

We will work with other rail industry partners where complementary activities such as station services are supplied under contract. This policy will be reviewed when updates to The Code are made by the Department for Transport (DfT).

If dispensation from The Code or European Legislation (PRM TSI) is needed for rolling stock refurbishment, or new, renewed or improved facilities and services on trains or at stations, this will be sought at an early stage in the design process, but only after every effort has been made to meet the standards in The Code and the PRM TSI.

We've made substantial improvements to accessibility at stations we manage. The facilities and arrangements currently provided for disabled customers are detailed in the publication "Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled Customers".

We have implemented a programme of minor works to deliver improvements in accessibility at all the stations we manage. This has covered areas such as improved access.

4.1 IMPROVEMENTS DELIVERED IN THE YEAR

We will continue to deliver an ambitious programme of works, using our minor works fund, and includes the following enhancements.

In 2017/18 we installed:

- new accessible toilets at Leeds, Doncaster and Darlington
- weather-proof waiting facilities on both lower level platforms at Retford

By the end of March 2019, we aim to install:

- more accessible toilets and replace staircase handrails
- automatic doors at our managed stations that do not comply with British Standards

4.2 SCHEMES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

Where third parties contribute funds towards station improvements we'll make sure accessibility improvements form part of these schemes. For example, the customer information office we installed at Durham was part funded by the local authority.

4.3 FUTURE SCHEMES

We will continue to make access improvements to our stations, trains and facilities. We are formulating our plans and will use our six-monthly customer report and future revisions of this document to highlight these improvements.

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Working with Others

Many of our customers start or finish their journeys with other train operating companies, or at stations operated by other companies. We'll liaise with these operators to review interchange arrangements for all customers and improve them where we can.

We've consulted with the Disabled People's Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), Transport Focus and London TravelWatch, and will continue to consult with them and the ORR when proposing changes to this policy.

It is a living document, which will be reviewed and updated as necessary. It will be submitted to the ORR annually from the date of approval and no changes will be made without the agreement of the ORR.

We also liaise with disabled organisations from across our route such as Newcastle Disability Forum, DIAL Peterborough and the National Rail Accessibility Forum. Suggestions for improvement are reviewed by our Customer Experience Board or our Property team for feedback solely concerning the built environment.

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Staff Training

Disability awareness is a part of our staff customer service training programmes and concerns the assistance we can provide for any disabled person rather than focusing on the impairment.

The best practice training materials produced by a range of national disability training organisations under instruction from RDG are extensively used to form the basis of the training we provide.

Other staff, including our management team, are also briefed to improve disability awareness. We also provide training in using accessibility equipment such as ramps and wheelchairs and in the skills for our staff to better assist customers who may have difficulty communicating. Details of our staff training, including the numbers of people trained, will be provided to the ORR annually or as otherwise requested.

All staff in our Assisted Travel Team completed an e-learning training package produced by RDG concerning the Passenger Assist service. This was in addition to the more general training given to all those handling calls in our Assisted Travel Team such as in customer service and the importance of clear communication with customers who may experience difficulties in hearing, speaking or understanding our agents.

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Emergency Procedures

We recognise disabled customers may need extra assistance at times of train or station evacuation. We have written procedures for our station and on-board staff to follow in such circumstances to help with assisting disabled customers. We staff numbers permit we will stay with disabled customers until they are evacuated.

Procedures vary from station to station, by type of train, the nature of the emergency and by location of incident. Our teams will assist in the most appropriate way for the safety of all customers, including those with a disability. As a general principle, we will not evacuate customers with a significant mobility impairment unless in a life-threatening situation and have staff available to wait with customers until evacuation.

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Communications Strategy

We make our Disabled People's Protection Policy available through our website and display the customer facing part of the policy (Making Rail Accessible: helping older and disabled passengers) at staffed stations where our trains call. We will also circulate the policy to the disability groups we meet from time to time.

8.1 TELEPHONE

We'll provide clear and consistent aural and visual information of train departures and other relevant messages through our customer information screens and public-address systems available at all our stations, particularly in the event of delays or disruption.

8.2 WEBSITES

Our website takes into consideration the needs of disabled people with a variety of impairments. We have worked with RNIB to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to improve the accessibility of the website and were consequently accredited to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 as a result.

We promote the availability of the assistance service to our disabled customers through this website.

8.3 SIGNAGE

We work with local authorities to make sure that directions to our stations are clearly signposted and we'll address any deficiencies with the relevant local authority.

Where signage improvements are planned within our stations, we will take account of the good practice guide published by the RSSB into Wayfinding at Stations.

Car Parking

At our stations, the level of legitimate usage of 'blue badge' holder car parking spaces is monitored regularly, as well as the level of usage by motorists who do not hold these badges.

Where misuse of blue badge spaces is discovered, a suitable notice will be placed on the vehicle advising of the relevant byelaw being contravened.

We will review requirements and, if legitimate demand regularly exceeds the available 'blue badge' spaces, we will provide extra spaces if we can. Any new disabled parking spaces or spaces that are re-lined will be compliant with the dimensions specified in the Code of Practice.

Contact us

Please let us know what you think about any aspect of our service, including information about facilities which are not working.

You can get in touch through any member of our station or onboard teams, through our website, by phone, email, post or textphone.

VIA OUR WEBSITE

[LNER.co.uk/customer-service/contact-us](https://lner.co.uk/customer-service/contact-us)

TELEPHONE

0345 7225 333 (available during normal office hours)

EMAIL

customers@londonnortheasternrailway.com

BY POST

LNER

Freepost RTUH-TUGH-GCL2
Cramlington
NE23 1WG

TEXTPHONE

18001 03457 225 225
(available during normal office hours)

Normally our Customer Services team will respond to customers in writing, and if requested to do so will reply in alternative formats such as large print, by telephone, or in audio format.

Weekday Service



LNER.co.uk

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