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# ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL POLICY

January 2023

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**Heathrow**  
Express

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## Introduction and Commitment to Providing Assistance

Heathrow Express (HEX) is an airport rail link which operates between Heathrow Airport and London Paddington Train Station. We are an Open Access Train Operator which means we are non-franchised and non-subsidised, and we have been running since 1998.

The train service is managed by Heathrow Express Operating Company (HEOC), a wholly owned subsidiary of Heathrow Airport Holdings. Our train service is delivered by Great Western Railway (GWR) and the stations we serve are managed by Network Rail and Heathrow Rail.

We aim to offer a premium train service that is safe and reliable.

At Heathrow Express, we continually strive to improve our facilities and ensure the accessibility of our services to all our passengers, particularly our older or disabled and mobility impaired passengers, or those who simply need a little extra assistance. For us, accessibility is a top priority.

We are committed to:

- Assisting and enabling everyone to be able to use our service confidently by considering the wide range of different needs of all our passengers
- Continuously improving the quality and promotion of assistance available

We are committed to delivering the continuous improvement of the passenger experience through:

- Providing a fully inclusive service
- Utilising our unique relationship with Heathrow Airport to offer a seamless and fully accessible service to and from the aeroplane
- Partnering with disabled charities and other organisations to make sure that our staff understand the specific needs of our passengers
- Providing disability awareness training to our staff, in partnership with disabled charities and other organisations

Additionally, we continue to:

- Work closely with our strategic partners to support the continued development and delivery of our Accessible Travel Policy. This includes Network Rail, Great Western Railway, Heathrow Rail, Heathrow Airport, and the airport's special assistance service providers

We regularly review our arrangements for our mobility impaired and disabled passengers through participation in stakeholder groups such as:

- The Office of Rail and Road (ORR), London Travel Watch, the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and the Rail Ombudsman
- Specific individual interest groups such as the Heathrow Access Advisory Group (HAAG)

This Accessible Travel Policy document provides our passengers with details of the services and facilities we offer and outlines our commitments and standards our passengers can reasonably expect. It also documents what happens if services are disrupted.

This Policy accompanies our Accessible Travel Leaflet, which is available at all stations we serve and, on our website, [www.heathrowexpress.com](http://www.heathrowexpress.com). If you would like a paper copy of our Policy or Leaflet, you can contact our Customer Relations team or speak to any Heathrow Express staff member at all of the stations we serve. Our Accessible Travel Leaflet is also available in formats such as Braille, large print, and audio.

## Journey Information

The Heathrow Express serves three stations:

- London Paddington
- Heathrow Airport - Terminal 5
- Heathrow Airport - Terminals 2&3 (known as Heathrow Central)

Our trains depart every 15-minutes.

### From Paddington station:

Monday to Sunday between **05:10am** and **23:25pm**.

### From Heathrow Airport - Terminal 5 station:

Monday to Sunday between **05:12am** and **23:53pm**.

### From Heathrow Central station:

Monday to Sunday between **05:17am** and **23:59pm**.

Please note: Train running times are subject to changes in the event of planned engineering works. Information can be found at <https://www.heathrowexpress.com> or <https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>

At Paddington Station we use **platforms 6 and 7**, although on occasion other platforms might be used.

The journey time between Paddington and Heathrow Central is usually 15 minutes and the journey time to Heathrow Airport - Terminal 5 is 21 minutes. We do not operate to Heathrow Airport - Terminal 4 but Elizabeth Line services operate to this terminal and a connecting train can be boarded from Heathrow Central station.

The connection to Terminal 4 is a step-free transfer and staff are available at Terminal 4 to assist during station opening hours.

Our staff are available to assist you at all the stations we serve between **05:00am and midnight**. This includes trained staff on board all our services, within Heathrow Airport terminals and stations and at Paddington station. Our station partners are also available in all locations.

## Booking and Providing Assistance

During our running hours we have trained staff onboard all our trains, within Heathrow Airport terminals, stations and at Paddington station. They will be more than happy to assist you throughout your journey with us and can provide help with the following:

- Assistance with journey planning
- Assistance with boarding and alighting our trains
- Deployment of boarding ramps at Heathrow stations if you use a wheelchair or mobility scooter
- Help and support with arranging transfers between trains and other types of onward transportation within the stations we serve
- Assistance with ticket enquiries and advice on station facilities

Our staff are unable to assist with passenger personal care needs or with the lifting of luggage or items which weigh over 23kg.

We operate an always accessible 'Turn Up and Go' service at all our stations. This is part of our commitment to providing appropriate arrangements and assistance to disabled passengers using our service and means that passengers travelling with us do not need to pre-book assistance unless you wish to.

If you would prefer to pre-book your assistance, this can be done as part of the National Passenger Assist service.

- Simply call for free on **0800 197 1329**
- or Text Relay **18001 0800 197 1329**

Our assistance team are available between 06:00am and 23:00pm or you can use our online form to book your assistance outside of these hours – [Passenger Assist | Great Western Railway \(railhelp.co.uk\)](#)

## Turn Up and Go

Our 'Turn up and Go' service means you can come to any of the stations we serve without having booked assistance in advance and still expect a seamless travel experience with us. Our staff are trained to identify passengers who might need extra assistance or support for their journey and to provide this.

Our staff are located nearby the ticket machines in all the stations we operate into, as well as within all Heathrow Airport terminals. Our station partner staff are located on every platform and nearby the ticket gates at all stations. Our staff wear Heathrow Express uniform, lanyards, and name badges to help you identify them when you need assistance.

Passenger help points are located throughout all the stations we serve, including on the platforms at Heathrow and Paddington stations. Help points are linked to the station control centres and staff will be able to assist you with information, assistance, and in the event of an emergency.

Our trains depart every 15 minutes so you can simply arrive at our platform 15 minutes before you wish to depart, and we will ensure you are able to catch the train that you wish. Arriving in good time ensures that we have time to assist you and anyone else who may require our help.

## Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist is the national assistance booking system used by national train operating companies to help older and disabled passengers use the rail network. All the train operators work together to provide assistance in planning your rail journey, selling you tickets and getting you onto and from the train, including when you have to change during the journey.

Heathrow Express is pleased to participate in the Passenger Assist scheme.

Assistance can be arranged to:

- help you plan and book your journey
- talk to other operators about your particular needs, and ensure assistance is available to help you to and from, and on and off your trains
- meet you and help you navigate around the station
- assist you to your next train or onward travel option
- assist with your luggage (weight permitting)
- arrange alternative transport, for example a taxi, to an appropriate station if any of the stations you wish to use are inaccessible to you
- arrange transfers to your follow-on transportation system. For example, to a nearby bus stop, taxi rank or the London Underground
- arrange alternative transport during times of disruption if there is no suitable alternative train service

To request assistance, you can call the National Rail Enquiries assistance team on:

- **0800 022 3720** or text **60083 (Freephone)**
- For textphone/minicom **0845 60 50 600**

Or you can call our team on:

- Call **0800 197 1329**
- Text Relay **18001 0800 197 1329**

Our assistance team are available between 06:00am and 23:00pm or you can use our online form to book your assistance outside of these hours – [Passenger Assist | Great Western Railway \(railhelp.co.uk\)](#)

To find out more information about this service you can visit the National Rail Enquiries Assisted Travel pages: [Accessible Train Travel and Facilities | National Rail](#)

The minimum notice period for booking assistance through Passenger Assist is 2 hours on the same day you are looking to travel.

Where assistance has been booked in advance, our staff will assist you off the train and onto the platform as quickly as possible when you reach your destination, but always within five minutes of arrival.

### **Heathrow Airport Train Stations**

All Heathrow Airport stations offer step free access when moving between the platforms and the trains. On our new fleet of trains, this will be achieved with the aid of a ramp when required, with staff being trained to assist with this.

Completely step free accessibility is offered when moving between the station platforms and all terminal areas. This is in line with the Category A requirements of the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) station accessibility classification system. This includes a step-free interchange by way of lifts when moving between the train station and the London Underground Piccadilly Line station at Terminal 5.

Should you require any help whilst in any area of Heathrow Airport, you can approach any staff member or information desk. We have meeting and help points throughout the airport where passengers can talk directly to our dedicated team and receive assistance whether they have pre-booked or not.

Heathrow also offers a wheelchair accessible special assistance bus service between all terminals and the Central Bus Station should you prefer to transfer by bus between terminals. This service operates between 06:00am and 23:00pm daily. More information can be found on the Heathrow website – [Parking and transport | Heathrow](#)

### **Assistance at Heathrow Airport**

Heathrow Express is a train operator serving Heathrow Airport. You can book your assistance through the Airport in advance with your airline. This includes assistance to or from the Heathrow Express train as well as help through the airport or onto or from the aircraft. More information can be found on the Heathrow website - [Request assistance | Heathrow](#)

This can be done at the time of flight booking or up to 48 hours prior to travelling. These bookings are then managed by the airport's assistance providers.

For pre-bookings, assistance will be provided within 15 minutes of your arrival into Heathrow stations.

If you do not require assistance through the airport but do require additional assistance with getting onto the train at the terminal stations, simply arrive at our platform 15 minutes before you wish to depart, and our station colleagues will ensure you are able to depart at your desired time. Arriving in good time ensures that we have time to assist you and anyone else who may require our help.

We are committed to delivering the ORR handover protocol requirements to ensure that you are looked after during your journey. Each of our stations has a dedicated phone number for assistance and a person responsible for receiving the calls. All our staff carry mobile phones and will call ahead and ensure that the assistance team at Paddington are aware of your arrival time into the station.

### **Paddington Station**

Paddington Station offers completely step free accessibility when moving between our trains and surrounding areas. This is in line with the Category A requirements of the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) station accessibility classification system. There are platforms in which a ramp to board or disembark is necessary but on our regular platforms a ramp is available if you would prefer. Just ask any staff member who would be happy to arrange for you.

When interchanging to the London Underground at Paddington, step free access by way of a lift is available to the Circle Line, and Hammersmith and City Line east-bound platform only. A lift is also available to the ticketing hall for the District and Bakerloo Lines. Further assistance can also be sought from London Underground staff.

## Assistance at Paddington Station

If you are travelling through Paddington Station, assistance is provided by the station operator, which is Network Rail. Whether you are connecting through Paddington from another train service or starting your journey here, assistance can be booked in many ways:

- Simply call for free on **0800 0223720** or text **60083 (Freephone)**
- For textphone/minicom **0845 60 50 600**
- Call Network Rail assistance reception on **0207 922 6793**
- Speak to any staff member at the station or on board your connecting train service
- You can also use any one of the yellow or white help phones within the station and car park areas
- The assistance reception desk can be found on platform 1 near the shops if you prefer to request assistance there

Assistance at Paddington is available from the passenger assistance team between **07:00am and 22:00pm Monday to Friday** and **08:00am and 20:00pm Saturday and Sunday**. The Network Rail meeting point is located in the station reception area by platform 1 and is open 7 days a week from **07:00am to 23:00pm**.

Outside of these hours passengers requiring assistance can call the Shift Station Manager. The meeting point for Passenger Assist out of hours will be in platform 1 outside the passenger assist / station reception and the taxi rank area. Full details can be found on the Network Rail website – [London Paddington - Facilities, Shops and Parking Information \(networkrail.co.uk\)](https://www.networkrail.co.uk)

If you will require assistance to transit through Paddington station, you should allow an extra 30-minutes for your journey if you do not have assistance pre-booked.

If you have not pre-booked but just require assistance with getting onto our train at Paddington, simply arrive at our platform 15 minutes before you wish to depart, and we will ensure you are able to catch the train that you wish. Arriving in good time ensures that we have time to assist you and anyone else who may require our help.

We are committed to delivering the ORR handover protocol requirements to ensure that you are looked after during your journey. Each of our stations has a dedicated phone number for assistance and a person responsible for receiving the calls. All our staff carry mobile phones and will call ahead and ensure that the Heathrow assistance team are aware of your arrival time into the station.

As we run a service which departs every 15 minutes, we can always accommodate you on the next service and you should not need to wait any longer than this. However, should there be major service disruption, we will provide alternative accessible transport. More information can be found within the Alternative Accessible Transport section of this document.

## Ramps

Our new trains which came into service in December 2020, are slightly narrower than the previous ones which means there is a small increase in the gap between the train and platform. However, the stepping distance at all stations will remain within the specified 'level access' target criteria. At Paddington, there are some platforms in which a ramp to board or disembark is necessary but on all of our regular platforms a ramp is available if you would prefer. If you have any concerns boarding or alighting at any station platform, please ask one of our staff. Staff are available both on the train and on the platforms during train operating hours, so you do not need to pre book this assistance.

## Connecting Travel

We are happy to support you in making your connection to another train service or other modes of onward transport. At the Heathrow Airport stations, our staff are able to assist you within the station boundary. If you would like assistance to or from other services which stop at the station such as taxis or to or from the airport terminals, please contact the Heathrow airport assistance team.

At Paddington station, our team are able to provide assistance on the platforms only. If you would like assistance to or from other connecting services or within the station itself, this can be arranged through the information provided in our earlier section 'Assistance at Paddington station.'

Our staff can provide you with information on local transport options including train, taxi bus and coach service. Information on train stations with accessible taxi services can be found on the Train Taxi website –

## Station Facilities and Services

The National Rail Enquiries website provides more information about the accessibility of facilities and services – [Accessible Train Travel and Facilities | National Rail](#)

In addition, information for all stations can be located on the National rail Enquiries website – [National Rail Enquiries](#)

Information for all the stations we serve can be found on this website. This includes details on facilities of note such as lifts, toilets, and meeting points at the stations. Each station page has links, photographs, and station diagrams.

Station information on this website is updated whenever there is a change to accessibility and access, such as:

- Physical constraints which would prevent disabled passengers from using a station
- Significant temporary work which would affect accessibility
- Any temporary changes to accessibility, such as lifts or toilets out of order
- Facilities on board trains changing, such as customer service information screens

The website is updated within 24 hours of the change so you can be sure of the most up to date information. We work closely with our station partners to ensure that they communicate changes promptly and accurately so that you can be sure of receiving the most up to date information.

## Help with your Luggage

Passengers who require support will also receive reasonable assistance with any luggage you have with you. We do request that consideration is given to the quantity or weight of any luggage that you will need help with, as our staff are not able to lift anything that weighs more than 23kg.

More information on luggage can be found within the National Rail Conditions of Travel policy: [National Rail Conditions of Travel.pdf](#)

or within our Conditions of Carriage: [Heathrow Express | Conditions of Carriage](#)

On board, you can leave your luggage in the ample luggage racks near the doors and relax for your journey in one of our comfortable, spacious seats. There are dedicated wheelchair areas within every train, identified by a sticker at the entrance doors in the relevant carriage. Our station staff will help you identify the best place to wait before the train arrives, making your onboarding process simpler.

When you arrive at Paddington station, if you do need additional support with your luggage when navigating through the station, you can seek assistance via the station reception, any help phone within the station or speak to any staff member at the station or on board. Help points are located in the middle of each platform and assistance can be sought from here also.

When you are travelling through Heathrow Airport, if you do need additional support with your luggage, a Porter service can be requested on the day. More information can be found on the website – [Porters | Heathrow](#)  
Heathrow porters are not available within the Heathrow train stations.

If assistance with getting your luggage onto and from the train is needed and where it is safe to do so, our staff on board the trains will be able to help you with this and help you to stow your luggage on board.

## Seats on Trains

Priority seating is available in all of our train carriages, and these are clearly signed and located near the doors in each carriage. Each carriage has at least six priority seats available which have additional space to enable you to be comfortable when seated.

Dedicated wheelchair spaces are located within specially adapted carriages on our trains.



These carriages are identifiable from the outside by door stickers. Platform displays at Heathrow stations also advise where these carriages will stop along the platforms to aid you on the best place to wait. Our trains can comfortably accommodate four passengers in wheelchairs.

We are unable to accept reservations on our services. This includes reservations for priority seating and wheelchair spaces.

If you have been unable to locate our priority seating or you find them all taken, our on-board staff will be happy to assist you with alternative seating or relocate other passengers from the priority seats if they are able to be seated comfortably elsewhere.

Our on-board staff will always ensure that wheelchair spaces are available for our passengers who need them. On occasions where all our wheelchair spaces are being utilised by other wheelchair users, we will accommodate you on the next service. Where wheelchair spaces are being utilised by passengers who do not require them, our on-board staff will relocate passengers or stowed luggage from the area to ensure you are able to travel comfortably.

### **Assistance Dogs**

Guide dogs and assistance dogs are welcome at all the stations we operate from and on board our trains. Prior notice to travel with a guide dog or assistance dog is not required. There are some additional guidelines and restrictions on travelling with other assistance animals and information can be found within our conditions of carriage: [Heathrow Express | Conditions of Carriage](#)

### **Information Provision**

We know that it is important for you to have confidence and trust in the information we provide, so we will ensure that:

- All information displayed on our website or any information about us on third-party websites (such as National Rail Enquiries) is up to date
- Where they are available, Heathrow Express staff will provide you with the most up to date accessibility information

We will also ensure that accessibility advice displayed on websites such as National Rail Enquiries for the stations we serve is kept updated with the relevant information. We work closely with our station partners to ensure they communicate changes promptly and accurately so you can be sure of receiving the most up to date information.

### **Accessible Travel Policy Documentation Including Alternative Formats**

Our Accessible Travel Policy document and our Accessible Travel Leaflet are available on our website [www.heathrowexpress.com](http://www.heathrowexpress.com). Copies of the leaflet are also available at all the stations that we serve and are located at the either the main information desk at Paddington station or at the sales counters located within the Heathrow Airport terminals. These desks are staffed during train operating times.

Where Heathrow Express information is displayed or provided via leaflet racks or posters within the stations we serve, they are placed so that they can be accessed by both wheelchair users and standing passengers.

Our Accessible Travel Leaflet and policy documents are available in other formats such as Braille, large print or audio and we will send one to you free of charge within seven days of the request being made to our Customer Relations team.

We are committed to ensuring that the latest information is always available to you by working in collaboration with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), London Travel Watch, the Rail Ombudsman, and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and will ensure our Accessible Travel Policy and Leaflet are updated on at least an annual basis.

## Station and Rolling Stock Accessibility Information

We are committed to ensuring that our stations and rolling stock accessibility information is kept up to date and readily available in an online format for you. We work closely with our station and railway partners to ensure that we continually provide the most up to date information to you. We will also ensure that accessibility advice displayed on websites such as National Rail Enquiries is kept up to date with the same information.

### Stations

Accessibility information for the stations we serve can be found on our website –

[Disabled Access | Heathrow Express Train Accessibility](#)

In addition, information for all stations can be located on the National Rail Enquiries website –

[National Rail Enquiries](#)

Information for the stations we serve can be found at both locations. This includes information on facilities of note such as lifts, toilets, and meeting points at the stations. Each station page also has links, photographs, and station diagrams.

### Trains

All our new trains are compliant with the National Technical Specification Notices for Interoperability and contain the following features:

- Air conditioning
- Audio and visual passenger information systems
- Power sockets and tables
- Accessible toilets
- Digital CCTV systems
- Free access to Wi-Fi

Details on all our rolling stock (trains) and accessibility can be found on our website –

[Disabled Access | Heathrow Express Train Accessibility](#)

## Passenger Journey Information (online, at stations and on trains)

### Train Departures and Arrivals

We are committed to ensuring the information provided to you both at the stations we serve and on board our trains is clear, consistent, and accurate.

### Stations – Aural and Visual Information

All the stations we serve are equipped with Customer Information Systems fitted on platforms and concourses. Heathrow stations are also equipped with an automated public address system which announces train arrivals and stopping patterns. Station staff also make announcements to inform of delays to services and provide public safety information.

Paddington station is equipped with a public address system where Network Rail can make announcements to inform of delays to services and provide public safety information.

Live train running information is available on the Heathrow Express app and via our website – [www.heathrowexpress.com](http://www.heathrowexpress.com)

Our communications team is on hand between **07:00am and 23:00pm Monday to Sunday** to ensure our Twitter profile is also kept up to date with train running information. Our app and the Twitter app are available to download from the App Store for iOS or Play Store for Android.

You can also ring the Customer Relations team between **09:00am and 17:30pm Monday to Sunday** for live train running information.

## Trains – Aural and Visual Information

Our trains are equipped with Customer Information Systems and an automated public address system which announces train stopping, safety and security information. Drivers will make announcements to inform of delays to services and provide public safety information.

Our train announcements inform passengers of the next station and are timed to allow sufficient opportunity for passengers who require assistance to get ready to alight the train when it arrives.

We display branded content on our television screens that delivers passenger information on our safety features, the journey, Heathrow Airport and Paddington station onward journey information and shopping services. Subtitles are displayed and audio is played for some content.

## Connections and Wayfinding

Our station partners work closely with local authorities to ensure that:

- Stations are clearly and consistently signposted from local roads
- They engage with the maintenance of Station Travel Plans which include signage and interchange.

We work with our Station Operators to ensure that developments at stations refer to the good practice guide published by the RSSB: Wayfinding at stations: A good practice guide (T321 Good Practice Guide), when considering how and where at stations to locate signage and provide information.

Our publicity meets industry best practice design standards which are designed to meet the needs of disabled customers. We seek to make disabled people aware of our services by methods including advertising and through information at stations. Our Customer Relations team are available between **09:00am and 17:30pm Monday to Sunday**, and National Rail Enquiries is available to assist outside of these times.

When you travel around any of the stations, please follow our special blue signage. Our staff are available to provide you with information, directions, and assistance.

If you are travelling with us and you do find a problem, please do let us know so we can fix it. You can contact us by:

- via Twitter or Facebook at **@heathrowexpress**
- You can phone our team on **+44 (0) 345 600 1515**

Our Customer Relations team are available **Monday to Sunday** between **09:00am and 17:30pm** and will endeavour to answer your call within 30 seconds. Our phone number is a local rate service. Our friendly team will be happy to help with complaints, refunds, compensation claims and general enquiries.

## Delays and Disruption

Where we know of planned disruption to our services that will affect your journey and you have booked assistance in advance, we will do all we can to contact you. Where we have your contact details and permission to contact you, we will notify you by text message or email with replacement travel information or to make alternative arrangements with you. Any alternative arrangements would always take into account your personal needs and circumstances.

We also update the Heathrow Express website and app with the latest service information and ensure that planned disruption information is advertised on our homepage at [www.heathrowexpress.com](http://www.heathrowexpress.com) at the earliest opportunity.

When disruption occurs with no advanced warning, our station partners will update all customer information systems at the stations we serve in line with our Passenger Information During Disruption (PIDD) procedure which can be found on our website – [Heathrow Express | Conditions of Carriage](#)

Our station partners will also make announcements via the public address system where possible to inform passengers of the delays, and our staff will be on hand to provide information on alternative transport options to allow you to make the most suitable decision for your journey.

Should you require information, support, or assistance during service disruption you can speak to any of our staff or station partners. If they are not available, our Heathrow Express app, website and Twitter feed are also updated with delay and disruption information, or you can also press any customer help point where you will be connected to the station control rooms and they will be able to provide further information.

## Information Points, Help Points and Contact Centres

In all the stations we serve, help points are widely available and these are directly linked to our control centres. On the help points you will find a button which, once pressed, illuminates and shortly after pressing you will be connected to the control centre.

Station control centres are manned 24 hours a day. They are also able to help with any passenger queries from train times to wayfinding and directions. At Heathrow stations these help points are also linked to a CCTV system so that both audio and visual contact may be made, and your specific needs met.

A clearly signposted information point is located on the main concourse adjacent to platforms 6 & 7 at Paddington station. A travel information office is also located at the top of platform 1 and both are manned during station opening hours.

All stations we serve are always staffed **during operational hours**. Staff will be happy to provide a range of services, including up to date information on disruption. Leaflet racks are placed so that both wheelchair users and standing passengers can use them.

Meeting points within Paddington and Heathrow are the gatelines which can be found at the entrance to each station we operate into. Staff are located at every gateline should you require any help. Should you need to speak to anyone to raise an issue or concern, our Customer Relations team are available between **09:00am and 17:30pm Monday to Sunday on +44 (0) 345 600 1515**

We are unable to provide a text relay option at this time but will be introducing this service in 2023.

## Our Website

We commit to making our content as accessible as possible for all users and we follow the principles of the industry recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and are fully compliant with this standard. We regularly review and update our platforms to ensure continued compliance. This includes ensuring that our digital services, websites, and apps are accessible to all passengers including users with impairments to:

- Vision – including people who are blind, partially sighted or colour blind
- Hearing – including people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Mobility – for people who find it difficult to use a mouse or keyboard
- Thinking and understanding – including people who have dyslexia, autism or learning difficulties

Our assisted travel information can be found on our website - [Disabled Access | Heathrow Express Train Accessibility](#)

Here you will also find information on the following assisted travel topics:

- The National Passenger Assist service, including how to book assistance and purchase a ticket to travel and details of national discounts available to disabled passengers
- On-board and station facility information, including accessibility information, staff availability and contact centre information
- Information relating to any disruptions in accessibility at our stations or on our trains, and delays or disruptions to facilities and services as relevant
- Information on travelling on our trains with a wheelchair or mobility aid, including restrictions on what can be accepted for carriage
- Details of how you contact us to provide feedback on our service or to raise a complaint. This includes details of our redress policy for when your assistance may not have been delivered as booked

If you are blind or partially sighted, you can use screen reading equipment to view our website via the most popular internet browsers.

## Ticketing and Fares

If you are unable to buy a ticket before your journey because our facilities are inaccessible or unavailable, you may purchase without penalty during your journey or at your destination station and continue to benefit from any ticket price reduction to which you are entitled.

All our full priced tickets can be purchased online, and relevant discounts can be applied using Railcards or a promotional code. You can also purchase rail tickets for onward travel with other train companies beyond our service via our ticket machines at all stations we serve.

We understand that your disability might not be visible so if you have questions or concerns or would like assistance with purchasing tickets on the day, please contact any staff member within the stations or on board our trains. If you are purchasing in advance and require assistance, our Customer Relations team is on hand to advise.

### **Railcards**

Disabled Persons Railcard discounts are available on tickets purchased from our sales staff at Heathrow, from our ticket machines and from staff on-board our trains. If you hold a Disabled Persons Railcard, please remember to bring it with you to show when purchasing your ticket in person and when travelling with us.

More information on the Disabled Persons Railcard and our tickets and fares can be found on the Disabled Persons Railcard website – [Disabled Persons Railcard | Official Retailer | National Rail \(disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk\)](https://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk) or from staff at and of the stations we serve, or you can contact our Customer Relations team who would be happy to help.

For travel on Heathrow Express, we offer the following fare discounts to Disabled Persons Railcard holders:

Ticket Type	Discount
First Class / Standard Anytime Single or Return ticket	34% off
First Class / Standard Anytime Day Single ticket	34% off
First Class / Standard Anytime Day Return ticket	50% off

An adult companion travelling with you is also entitled to the same discount. Please note that a full-price Off-Peak or Advance ticket may cost less than a reduced-rate Anytime ticket.

If you are registered as blind or visually impaired and you are travelling with another person, the concessionary discounts apply for both you and your companion. You would not qualify for the discount if you are travelling on your own.

To buy the discounted ticket and to travel, you must show a document confirming your disability. This must be either a CVI/ BP1/BD8 certificate, or documentation from a recognised institution - for example: Social Services, your Local Authority or Blind Veterans UK.

If you are a wheelchair user who cannot leave your wheelchair during the journey, but you do not have a Railcard, you can also obtain the same reduction whether you are travelling with someone or on your own. An adult companion travelling with you is also entitled to the same discount.

If you are over 60, you qualify for a Senior Railcard. A Senior Railcard entitles you to save 1/3 on rail fares for a year. More information can be found on the Senior Railcard website – [Senior Railcard | Official Retailer | National Rail \(senior-railcard.co.uk\)](https://www.senior-railcard.co.uk)

### **Ticket Machines and Gates**

Heathrow Express staff are located nearby the ticket machines in all the stations we operate in. All staff are trained to be able to assist with all rail travel related queries and can provide information and help with airport and airline related queries as well.

Our ticket machines can issue tickets for passengers holding a Disabled Persons Rail Card and for your companion. More information can be found within the Rail Cards and Ticketing & Fares sections of this document. All our ticket machines are positioned so that both wheelchair users and standing passengers can use them.

Automatic ticket gates are in place at all stations we serve with all of them being wide access gates. When the gates are operational there will always be a member of staff on hand to help you use them. The ticket gates will be locked open on the rare occasion of a member of staff not being available.

### **Alternative Accessible Transport**

All the stations we serve have step free access and there is level access between the platform and our trains. We will ensure that where you require assistance you are able to make as much of your journey by rail as possible. If our service is disrupted, there are alternative transport links between London Paddington and Heathrow Airport. If these were not suitable for your personal needs and circumstances; individual alternative arrangements would be made for you.

If the alternative options are not suitable for you, then we will make sure you are able to continue your journey by providing an accessible taxi at no extra cost to you.

All the stations we operate to are served by London black taxis which are all wheelchair accessible.

More information on accessible travel can be found on the Transport for London website – [Taxis & minicabs - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](https://tfl.gov.uk)

We also work with local taxi companies and when arranging your travel options select providers who are able to offer an accessible travel experience.

We will also provide alternative accessible transport such as a taxi under the following circumstances:

- you have been unable to travel from any of the stations we serve because the station is inaccessible to you due to a physical constraint which would prevent you from entering the station (such as a station only being accessible by stairs, with no passenger access ramp or lift available)
- you have been unable to travel from any of the stations we serve because our trains are not accessible to you due to a physical constraint which would prevent you from boarding (such as a platform gap and no ramp available)
- the alternative transport during planned service disruption is inaccessible or where during unplanned disruption we are unable to offer a suitable alternative travel option

Should you need us to arrange this for you, please speak to any Heathrow Express staff member who will ensure that we provide you with the assistance you need. Alternatively, you can discuss your individual needs with our Passenger Assist team when booking your assistance in advance.

### **Scooters and Mobility Aids**

Passengers who use manual and powered wheelchairs or mobility scooters are welcome to bring them onto the trains. There are some guidelines that we would like to advise you of to enable you to travel safely.

When on the platforms, please observe the following guidance:

- Lower the speed of your scooter to walking pace
- Make sure you stay behind the yellow line and clear of platform edges until the train has come to a complete stop and is ready for boarding
- Unload any bags from your wheelchair or scooter as this could cause it to tip when going up/down ramps
- Even if the platforms are level, there can still be a gap between the train and the platform edge. Be aware of the gap and seek assistance from a member of staff on the platform if you are concerned and need assistance
- For your own safety and the safety of other passengers, please follow any instructions given by Heathrow Express or partner staff

In the event of service disruption, we will arrange alternative transport for you and your wheelchair or mobility scooter whilst considering your personal needs.

As per our commitment to assist with luggage, our staff will be happy to assist you with wheelchair or mobility scooter stowage if it is safe to do so. If you or someone travelling with you is not able to manoeuvre or lift the wheelchair or mobility scooter yourself then it is advisable to book assistance at Paddington or Heathrow to avoid a delay to your journey.

If our staff are unable to manoeuvre or lift your wheelchair or mobility scooter, then we will request the support of the station's passenger assistance team. This may delay your journey, but we will be happy to accommodate you on the next available service.

### **Wheelchairs**

We can accommodate manual and powered wheelchairs in wheelchair spaces on our trains which meet the following technical criteria:

- Width does not exceed 700mm or 27.5 inches
- Length does not exceed 1200mm or 47 inches
- Height does not exceed 1375mm or 54 inches, including seated occupant
- Fully laden weight does not exceed 300kg or 441 lbs. for the wheelchair and the passenger (including any luggage)

### **Mobility Scooters**

We can accommodate mobility scooters on our trains. If you are able to do so, we do ask you to collapse your scooter on the platform prior to boarding the train and to store the scooter in the luggage racks where possible so that the scooter can be safely secured for the journey. You can then enjoy your journey in one of our train seats. Priority seating is available.

If you are not able to transfer from your mobility scooter and need to remain in it for your journey, then our staff will be happy to assist with this to ensure your journey is comfortable. We do ask that you ensure the brake is deployed and the scooter is powered off for the journey.

We can accommodate mobility scooters in wheelchair spaces on our trains and which meet the following technical criteria:

- Width does not exceed 700mm or 27.5 inches
- Length does not exceed 1200mm or 47 inches
- Height does not exceed 1375mm or 54 inches, including seated occupant
- Turning circle does not exceed 1500mm or 59 inches
- Fully laden weight does not exceed 300kg or 441 lbs for the scooter and the occupant (including any luggage)

For safety reasons and due to weight limitations on our trains we are unable to accommodate scooters on our trains which fall outside these technical requirements.

### **Delays, Disruption and Emergencies**

We know how important it is that you have the most up to date information to enable you to enjoy a stress-free journey so we shall ensure that our station partners keep information screens updated in the event of delays and disruption. We shall also keep our Twitter page updated so you can make an informed travel choice.

During planned engineering works we will ensure that our website is updated in advance and inform you of alternative travel options. Where it is agreed that we will provide an alternative transport option to you, this will be by taxi, using one of our trusted suppliers or an accessible alternative.

Where we know of planned disruption to our services that will affect your journey and you have booked assistance in advance, we will do all we can to contact you. Where we have your contact details and permission to contact you, we will notify you by text message or email with replacement travel information or to make alternative arrangements with you. Any alternative arrangements would always take into account your personal needs and circumstances.

Our staff at stations and on-board trains will communicate any information on delays or service disruption to you that will affect your journey. Where our trains are moved to alternative platforms at short notice, display screens will be updated, and announcements will be made to inform you. Our platform staff at Paddington and our station partners at Heathrow will guide and assist you in getting to the new platform so that you can take the service you want to.

In the unlikely event of the station or on-train aural/visual information systems being unavailable, our staff will be available in prominent locations on the platforms and within the stations so that they can identify any passenger who may need additional assistance and provide the required support and information.

## **Emergencies**

Every staffed station on our route has a local emergency plan which details the actions that station staff must take in the event of an emergency. These plans include detailed evacuation arrangements and consider the needs of disabled passengers.

The assistance provided to disabled passengers varies between locations based upon a risk assessment but includes the need to identify those who may need assistance, provision of wheelchairs and ramps and identification of and direction to safe areas if normal evacuation routes are not accessible.

Our onboard staff have all been trained in the correct emergency and evacuation procedures. Our policy is not to evacuate wheelchair passengers or other passengers with significantly reduced mobility without the support of the emergency services unless the situation is life-threatening. Our onboard staff will assist with passing information from the train to the emergency services of vulnerable people on board who need assistance.

Our emergency plans and training make specific reference to the care of people who may need additional assistance. We have the necessary emergency equipment on all our trains to evacuate customers, including a specially designed emergency chair should a wheelchair user need assistance evacuating in the tunnel section of our route. Safe areas are provided at all escape stairs in tunnels and at stations.

## **Station Facilities**

### **Station Entrances**

We work closely with our partners at Network Rail and Heathrow Rail to ensure that accessibility to stations is maintained and to ensure they will not permanently close any station entrances without first consulting with the Department for Transport (DfT) then consulting with London Travel Watch and other local access groups only after receiving approval by the DfT.

From time to time, it may be necessary for them to temporarily restrict access to stations, for example due to improvement work. If this happens, we will ensure the needs of our older and disabled passengers are considered and we will provide adequate information and a suitable alternative where necessary.

Staff working at stations and on board our trains will be made aware of any changes to station accessibility and are empowered to make the best decision in the interest of the passenger. This may include arranging alternative accessible transport where this is most appropriate to meet your specific needs.

Our Operational Managers will also ensure this information is passed to our Drivers and Communications team for them to update customer information systems and online and social media communications methods. When our advertised services or facilities are not available or are not accessible for any reason, we will make every effort to provide alternative facilities or to inform you via our communications methods.



## Disabled Car Parking

We work closely with our partners at Network Rail and Heathrow Airport to ensure that they ensure a suitable number of designated bays for passengers with disabilities.

The use of these bays is monitored to ensure that they are not being misused by passengers without disabled parking badges and limiting the use for our passengers who need them.

## Lost Property

Lost property facilities are available at all the stations we serve.

At Heathrow Airport, lost property is managed by our partners and is located within Heathrow Central train station. Full details can be found on the Heathrow website – [Lost property | Heathrow](#)

At Paddington station, the lost property is managed by Network Rail and is located within the left luggage office on Platform 12. Full details can be found on the Network Rail website – [London Paddington - Facilities, Shops and Parking Information \(networkrail.co.uk\)](#)

## Redress and Compensation

If you were travelling on or due to travel on our Heathrow Express service and your booked assistance failed, then you will be compensated. This will be 100% of your single ticket or 50% of a return ticket. We will investigate your case and explain why the assistance was not provided and what steps we are taking to ensure the failure does not reoccur.

If your service fails whilst you are travelling with another train company then you can contact them directly to enquire about your eligibility for compensation, or we would be happy to do this on your behalf. You should be aware that different train companies offer different compensation schemes and what may be available for you when travelling with Heathrow Express may not be available whilst travelling with another train company.

If you would like us to handle your compensation for a failed service either on the Heathrow Express or another operator, please contact our Customer Relations team.

## Customer Query and Feedback Form

The quickest way to contact us is our Customer Query and Feedback Form on our website [Contact Us | Heathrow Express](#) where we are obliged to respond to your query within 20 working days.

When completing the form, choose 'complaint' in the query drop down.

### By Phone

You can contact our Customer Relations Department on **+44 (0) 345 600 1515**.

Our Customer Relations team are available **Monday to Sunday 09:00am to 17:30pm** and will endeavour to answer your call within 30 seconds. Our phone number is a local rate service. (Costs from international networks may vary).

Our friendly team will be happy to help with complaints, refunds, compensation claims and general enquiries.

The 'contact us' page on our website provides information on our complaint handling process and other ways you can reach out to us. [Contact Us | Heathrow Express](#)

### By Post

Please include an email address and contact phone number in your letter to enable us to contact you about your query.

Heathrow  
PO Box 887  
3 Manor Court  
Exeter  
EX1 9YT  
United Kingdom

If you are not happy with the way we have managed your complaint, you can contact the Rail Ombudsman who are an independent body who can mediate to find mutual solutions and resolve complaints. They can be contacted by the following methods:

Telephone: **0330 094 0362 (Monday to Friday 09:00am-17:00pm)**.

Email: [info@railombudsman.org](mailto:info@railombudsman.org)

Website: [info@railombudsman.org](http://info@railombudsman.org)

## Strategy and Management

### Strategy

We are committed to delivering a step change in the customer experience through:

- providing an inclusive approach to the railway
- providing disability awareness training through partnerships with organisations
- utilising our unique relationship with Heathrow Airport to offer a seamless 'Plane to Paddington' fully accessible service
- partnering with charities to make it easier for staff to understand customers' specific needs
- ensuring staff undertake disability awareness training programmes in partnership with disabled charities

We are looking at ways we can continuously improve our accessibility arrangements for passengers.

We are proud to have joined the Sunflower Scheme which recognises passengers with all disabilities and to be able to support people to be able to travel confidently.

We ensure our staff are trained in disability awareness and accessibility. For the introduction of our new fleet in December 2020 we delivered a comprehensive training package to all frontline staff to enable them to deploy ramps to assist passengers in wheelchairs and mobility aids to use our trains. This training now forms part of the training package for all new frontline staff into the company.

In order to enable our passengers to have a worry-free travel experience with us, we are pleased to have joined the National Passenger Assist scheme. We are also committed to introducing a text relay service to offer more communication options to our passengers.

We will regularly review our accessibility arrangements with a variety of stakeholder groups including:

- The Office of Rail and Road (ORR), London Travel Watch, the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), The Rail Ombudsman and Transport Focus
- Specific individual interest groups such as the Heathrow Access Advisory Group (HAAG)

We have a unique relationship with Heathrow Airport and Heathrow Rail and continuously collaborate in regard to passenger assistance, so you can be confident that when you speak to any staff member at Heathrow stations, you will receive the same knowledge, information, and service you expect from Heathrow Express.

We recognise that different people have different needs when it comes to receiving and understanding information. We therefore take the varied needs of different passengers into account when considering how our information is communicated.

Our Leadership team is responsible for consulting with disabled customers on priorities for improvements, promoting disability awareness and co-ordinating investment in accessibility schemes and ensuring the National Rail Database of station facilities is updated with any changes in facilities and services.

We are continually working with our partners at Heathrow Airport, Heathrow Rail, Network Rail and Great Western Railway with the Equality Act in mind and to ensure we all align with the Standards set out by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 'Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations' (Code of Practice).

We also work within the parameters of the Standards from the National technical specification notices for interoperability (NTSNs). Whilst we exhaust every possible avenue to achieve these, should we not meet these standards on our trains, we will consult with the DfT at the earliest stage in the design process so that suitable alternatives can be considered, and dispensation sought from the Code of Practice.

### **Management Arrangements**

The provision of services to disabled people is an integral part of our planning process, which we monitor and manage to make sure we're always offering the very highest level of service. The accountability for delivering on the promises within our Accessible Travel Policy is with our Business Lead, supported by the Customer Experience Lead and the Senior Leadership Team.

The Customer Experience Lead drives the commitments within the Policy and ensures actions are implemented. The work of the Customer Experience Lead includes consulting with disabled people, community groups, and charities to understand where services and facilities do not meet the needs of disabled people, and then to work with the internal teams to prioritise workstreams.

They will liaise with the relevant directorates and managers across the Heathrow Express organisation to work on the specific tasks that compliance with our Accessible Travel Policy requires. We also have escalation and information sharing processes in place from our frontline to board level, through monthly management, safety, and regulatory meetings to ensure continued compliance and reviews of best practice.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We have a culture of continuous improvement and will therefore measure the quality of service provided. We will monitor and report to the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on the metrics required by our Operator's License. These metrics will also be reviewed internally by the Senior Leadership Team monthly in addition to regular internal audits to make sure we are resolving problems and identifying ways to improve.

The tools that we will routinely use to measure the quality of service given to disabled passengers include:

#### **Monthly**

- Monitoring of compliments and complaints through all media channels about assistance
- Monitoring of compliments and complaints through all media channels about facilities
- Monitoring of compliments and complaints through review sites such as Trustpilot and TripAdvisor

#### **Bi-Annually**

- National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) results relating to accessibility

#### **Quarterly**

- Internal survey of passengers relating to accessibility across all modes of transport serving Heathrow Airport

#### **Periodically (in line with railway period reporting)**

- Topical surveys on changes or proposed changes affecting accessibility
- Working closely with Heathrow Airport, Network Rail and GWR to understand how our customers and staff can benefit from any wider initiatives
- Providing post travel surveys for those who have booked assistance to give feedback on their experience

## Access Improvements

We are committed to continually working with our partners at Heathrow Airport, Heathrow Rail, Network Rail and Great Western Railway to consistently meet NSTNs. Wherever possible we will adopt a best-practice approach to access for our disabled and mobility impaired passengers.

The Heathrow Accessibility Advisory Group (HAAG) works closely with Heathrow Airport and Heathrow Express and offers a reassuring guidance to assist us in understanding the needs of disabled passengers when travelling. The HAAG team meet with Heathrow Express on a quarterly basis, and the group comprises of committed advocates with a wide range of experience within aviation and disability. The objective of the HAAG is to provide independent advice and constructive challenges, as well as to bring a consumer perspective to Heathrow's decision-making and planning processes.

As part of the introduction process for our new fleet of trains we worked with Heathrow Accessibility Advisory Group (HAAG) with the focus being specifically for disabled and mobility restricted passengers travelling on trains which require a ramp for a wheelchair user to board.

This has included practical sessions where wheelchair users have assisted with the testing of ramps and our service delivery and provided valuable feedback to ensure we get it right and can support our passengers as needed.

## Working with Disabled Passengers, Local Communities and Local Authorities

We have many key partners that we will be working with to raise awareness of and improve the accessibility of our services and look to developing new initiatives. For example:

- **Network Rail**  
For the collaboration on station investment programmes
- **London Travel watch and the Rail Ombudsman**  
For collaborative approach to policy and complaints handling
- **Heathrow Airport**  
For the long-term rail strategy  
PRM and assistance strategy  
The Heathrow Accessibility Advisory Group (HAAG)
- **Transport for London**  
For regional transport policies
- **Disabled charities and action groups**  
To ensure best working practice

We remain in regular contact with key stakeholders through regular meetings and industry networking events, including:

- Local authorities
- Disability groups
- Community groups
- Rail User groups

To assist us in developing our offering, we engage with disability interest groups such as Sunflower Lanyard and BlueAssist, along with other local disability charities. We also regularly attend the Heathrow Access Advisory Group (HAAG) in order to understand the specific needs of disabled and older airport passengers.

At a national level, we liaise with other bodies such as Age UK, Scope and the RNIB via our trade body the Rail Delivery Group (RDG).

We are committed to documenting the activities and outputs of our work with disabled passenger stakeholder forums and local community groups and will share these findings with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) by way of a report, published annually.

## Staff Training

The training content and materials we use to train our frontline and contact centre colleagues, agency and management teams is developed in consultation with disabled people. We have regular advisory group meetings where we hear from disabled people about their lived experience of using the railway and this allows us to continually review and update the content used in our induction and refresher training programmes. This training was rolled out to all new and existing staff by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. This included agency staff who undertake work on behalf of Heathrow Express. All new staff to the business or our agency partners will also complete this training.

As a minimum, our training covers:

- Understanding disabled people and their everyday challenges
- Equality legislation
- Defining disability, including the various definitions of disability and appropriate terminology to help them identify disabled people and be able to use appropriate language
- Recognising passengers who need assistance
- Railway regulatory framework, including regulations that are relevant within the railway industry and how this may impact on job roles
- The Passenger Assist process, how it works for disabled passengers and how staff play an important part in delivering the service
- Staff will receive training on respect and dignity and why it is important to treat disabled people with patience, optimism, and a willingness to find a way to communicate
- Providing safe assistance, staff are made aware that it is their duty to ensure that both staff and passengers always remain safe

We also include several simulated and practical activities in our training including:

- Methods of leading people with visual impairments
- Assisting wheelchair users onto and off the train and into station lifts
- The deployment of ramps
- Use of induction loops

Members of staff in customer facing roles and those who use the telephone to speak with customers are provided with specific training in communicating clearly with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing, or understanding.

This helps staff understand the importance of:

- clarity of speech
- intonation
- emphasis
- timeliness
- language

Currently our refresher training is provided every two years.

At the time of submitting our Accessible Travel Policy for review we ensured that all statistics, legislation, and language used in our disability training course are up to date.

