

Chiltern Railways Accessibility Panel

Role Description

What is the Accessibility Panel?

The Accessibility Panel is made up of up to eight Deaf and disabled people who travel on Chiltern Railways services.

Membership is voluntary however we do need a commitment to the Terms of Reference. We will reward that commitment with a recognition payment of £100 for each meeting you attend (either virtually or in person).

The panel will help to shape the policies and practices within the business by offering scrutiny, advice and recommendations on projects presented at panel meetings (4 meetings per year). These projects could range from a train or station refurbishment, a change to customer information systems, major timetable changes, a staff training appraisal and review of TOC Accessible Travel Policies.

Outside of the meetings a Chiltern Railways representative may contact you from time to time to ask for advice from the view-point of your lived experience of disability. For example, this could be seeking an opinion on colour contrasts of train upholstery, testing a web page with your assisted technology or asking you to share news and information with your networks (we would never expect you to do anything you're not comfortable with).

As travel is expected to remain uncertain for some time we will not prescribe any travel during 2021 for the purpose of panel business however, if a panel member uses our services for work or leisure we would ask they provide a 'mystery shop' service and feedback on the experience they've had as a customer. A list of questions would be issued for this purpose.

The Panel represents Deaf and disabled customers with a wide range of access barriers, including

- The design of our physical environments
- The way we communicate
- The way we organise services

In addition to customers, the following people sit on the panel:

- Helen Child, HSSE Manager Customer Services and Emergency Planning.
- Other Chiltern Railways staff or stakeholders such as Transport Focus will be invited from time to time.

What skills are needed?

Everyone on the panel must have personal experience of disability and access barriers (or advocate for someone who has.)

Members do not need qualifications or work history, but may have one or more of these:

- Experience of performing access audits on buildings
- Understanding access barriers faced by a wide range of people
- An understanding of the Equality Act 2010
- Connections to different groups and ability to represent the views of a wide range of people and share information with them eg links with Access Groups or charities
- An understanding of how experiences of disability may differ when combined with experiences of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion etc.

We are also very interested to hear from people who do not use our trains or stations for access reasons at the moment. Understanding and tackling those access barriers will help us welcome more Deaf, disabled and older people on our trains.

What qualities are needed?

All members must:

- Have a passion for accessible public transport
- Recognise and respect conflicting needs between different groups
- Be able to work collaboratively and find solutions
- Consider accessibility and inclusion widely, not just disability eg parents with small children, unemployed people and customers whose first language isn't English etc

What is the commitment?

The group meet four times a year, this is likely to be online for the duration of 2021 due to COVID restrictions.

There may be occasional site visits offered to look at station refurbishment plans or the designs for new trains.

In between meetings we may email members to ask their opinions on new ideas or plans.

Are travel expenses refunded?

If we ask you to travel then we will provide a free pass for you and any support assistant as required.

How do I apply to be a member?

We are currently recruiting members. To apply, please complete the **Expression of Interest** form and return it to

Accessibility@chilternrailways.co.uk or by post to: Accessibility Panel, FREEPOST Chiltern Railways

by the end of the day on **Friday 26th February 2021**. If this is not accessible to you please let us know via that email address or by calling our Customer Service team on 03456 005 165 (Mon to Fri 08:30 – 17:30)

A shortlist of candidates will be selected and contacted by **Friday 12th March** to set up an informal online or telephone meeting to discuss the role and answer any questions. This will take place week commencing 15th March at a time convenient to you. Final selection will be made by **Monday 22nd March** and all candidates (successful or otherwise) contacted by Monday 22nd March via their preferred method of communication. The final panel members will be chosen to meet the skills and qualities we need, but also as a group provide a range of expertise.

Please note a 'virtual' introduction session will be held on **Friday 26th March 2021, 11.00 – 12.00** to introduce all panel members and issue terms of reference.