



CHILTERN RAILWAYS COMPANY LTD

Accessible Travel Policy

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A: Our Commitment to Providing Assistance

Welcome to the Chiltern Railways Accessible Travel Policy. We are committed to making rail travel inclusive and accessible for all, ensuring you have the support and information needed for a smooth journey. The purpose of this document is to help you plan your journey when travelling with us, be aware of the services we offer, and understand how we plan to meet your expectations—giving you the confidence to travel with us. You will find information on a variety of topics, including getting assistance and the facilities that we have.

This policy document has been designed alongside our customer leaflet titled “Making Rail Accessible”. This Accessible Travel Policy is available on our website and our “Making Rail Accessible” customer leaflet can be found at all of our staffed stations as well as on our [website](#). We will also soon be adding a QR code to our “welcome to...” posters at unstaffed stations to link to the information. As a licensed train operator, we are required to provide these resources. This document explains our policies and our approach to providing assistance for customers with restricted mobility, a variety of disabilities and those requiring other assistance, for example:

- Those with visual or auditory impairments
- Those with learning disabilities
- Those whose mobility is impaired as a result of arthritis or other temporary or long-term conditions
- Those with non-visible disabilities which may not be immediately apparent to others
- Older people
- Those accompanying disabled children in pushchairs or wheelchairs
- Disabled customers requiring assistance with luggage

A1 Booking and Providing Assistance to Passengers

A1.1 Booking Assistance

You can pre-book assistance for travel on our trains and those of other train operating companies up to **2 hours before your journey**. We also offer a **Turn Up and Go** service, meaning that if you have not pre-booked, you can still request assistance at the station or on board.

Passenger assistance is available **24 hours a day, 7 days a week (except Christmas Day)** and can be arranged in the following ways:

- **Call Chiltern Railways** (charged at your local rate) on **03456 005165** (select option 3, then option 3 again).
- **Call National Rail Passenger Assist** on freephone **0800 0223720** (except Christmas Day).

Our staff provide assistance both at stations and on board our trains, ensuring that all passengers receive the support they need for a smooth and accessible journey. Please note: for travel on Boxing Day, you can book assistance up to 22:00 on 24 December. Please note that we run a reduced timetable on Boxing Day and do not serve all of our stations, so please check our website for more details on these services.

Relay Assist: If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired, dial **0870 240 9598** or visit www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/travel-assistance (for people with hearing impairments). If you are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can now use SignLive to connect to us via an interpreter.

- Online: You can request assistance online by visiting www.booking.passengerassistance.com
- App: You can request assistance by using the Passenger Assistance by Transreport app, available on Android and IOS platforms.

When you book your assistance, the following steps will be taken:

- Check the station accessibility information, which is also available to view on the National Rail Enquiries station web pages
- Offer advice on connecting modes of transport e.g., bus and tube.
- Discuss your individual requirements at the time of booking.
- Provide you with a Passenger Assist reference number and booking confirmation via email (or post on request, if there is adequate time to send this to you) which you will need to take with you when travelling so that staff on stations and trains can identify your booking.

While arranging assistance, we also offer you the option to buy your train tickets and, for other operators, make seat reservations. Tickets can be posted to you (please leave at least five working days for delivery) or you can collect them from self-service ticket machines at most of our stations. You can check which stations have this on our website: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations.

A1.2 The Passenger Assist tool

If you are planning your travel in advance, you can book your assistance using a tool called Passenger Assist. This is a system used across the rail industry which allows customers to book assistance at stations and reserve seats and wheelchair spaces on trains where reservations are available. However, Chiltern Railways do not operate a seat reservation option, so priority seats and wheelchair spaces can not be reserved on any of our services.

Staff will ensure that the priority seating or wheelchair spaces are used appropriately and made available to those who need them. We do operate a first come, first served system, so should there not be available seating on the service you wish to use (for example, someone has boarded at an earlier station), staff at the station will help you to make alternative plans to get you to your destination. These plans may include the following, but this list is not exhaustive and decisions will be made depending on your journey and personal requirements:

- Taking the next train
- Using another operator from the same station
- Using alternative accessible transport such as a taxi

We are working closely with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and technology providers to ensure that Chiltern Railways staff have the technology and training to roll out the Passenger Assistance Staff Mobile App.

A1.3 Assistance at stations

Chiltern Railways manage 37 stations and the facilities and staffing at these stations vary considerably, including 14 stations which have no station-based staff.

In line with the national guidance from the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), we are committed to delivering the Handover Protocol. This means that each of our staffed stations have a dedicated telephone number for Passenger Assistance notifications. During staffed hours, there will be at least one member of staff accountable for assistance and making sure the information is transferred on and received.

Each station managed by us has a clearly designated Meeting Point for use by passengers who have booked assistance to meet staff. The signage will also provide details on how a passenger can contact a member of staff should they not have booked assistance in advance of their journey. The location of these meeting points can be found on the Station Information pages on the National Rail website www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/default.aspx or via the Chiltern Railways website www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations.

We ask that you arrive **at least 20 minutes** before your departure time to allow staff to provide your assistance and call ahead for you.

When travelling between staffed stations, our station colleagues receive pre-booked assistance booking details in the early hours of the day of travel. Our staff will call your destination or interchange station before you board the train to ensure that there are staff available to assist you. Should there be any reason that prevents that station from answering the phone (such as an emergency situation or providing first aid), it is not recommended that you begin travel to that destination station and an alternative will be discussed with you. This may involve waiting until the phone is answered or travelling to an alternative station.

Once you have boarded the train, our staff will call back and confirm to your next station where you are situated on the train, your arrival time and the type of assistance you require.

When a train terminates at one of our stations, customers with assistance will be helped to leave the train as soon as possible and we aim to do this within five minutes of the train's arrival (depending on the number of customers requiring assistance).

A1.3.1 Assistance at staffed stations

We provide assistance at all staffed stations during their operating hours, whether pre-booked through Passenger Assist, our helpline, or other available channels. Passengers who have not pre-booked can also request assistance through our **Turn Up and Go** service. Details of station staffing hours and available assistance can be found on the individual station pages of the National Rail Enquiries website www.nationalrail.co.uk.

A1.3.2 Assistance at unstaffed stations

At stations north of Banbury, we have train managers on board our trains and they will provide your assistance if you are going to a station which has no staff or staff for limited hours.

At unstaffed stations south of Banbury, our trains stopping at these stations don't have train managers, so we will arrange for alternative accessible transport to take you (and a companion, if applicable) to either the nearest accessible station or your destination, depending on your journey.

When booking your assistance for a journey to or from a station which will not have staff there, we will review your requirements. If our team believes there is any risk of you not being provided with sufficient assistance at a particular station or stage of your journey, they will discuss alternatives with you to get you to your destination.

A1.4 Unbooked Assistance (Turn Up and Go)

We understand that booking assistance prior to travel is not always possible. We will provide you with assistance if you turn up at the station without having pre-booked. There could be a wait as staff may have other safety critical duties to carry out, such as security checks around the station or assisting other customers. However, we aim to provide you with the assistance you need with a minimal delay to your journey. In any case, we ask that you arrive at least 20 minutes before the service you plan to take departs.

If the station you are travelling from is unstaffed, you can obtain assistance by:

- Pushing the help button located on the platform
- Calling our assistance travel number (24 hours) which can be found on “Welcome To...” posters at the station.
- Waiting on the platform and approaching the Train Manager (for trains north of Banbury)

You can find out all the information you need about our stations on our website www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations or the National Rail Enquiries website.

If you want to travel from one of our unstaffed stations, it is worth noting that this can take time to arrange because staff will have to travel to you (and services tend to be less frequent to unstaffed stations), or we may need to arrange alternative transport options for your journey. We do not recommend this system is used if your journey is time sensitive. Alternatively, there is information on our “Welcome To...” station posters regarding the nearest staffed station should you wish to travel from there instead.

A1.5 Alternative Accessible Transport

Some of our stations may not be fully accessible. You can find detailed accessibility information for each station at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations. Limitations may arise due to:

- Physical constraints that make a station inaccessible.
- Train accessibility limitations.
- Service disruptions that temporarily affect accessibility for disabled passengers

We will make sure that if you want to travel to and from stations which are inaccessible, you will be able to do so at no extra cost. Our aim will be to ensure that you will be able to make as much of your journey by rail as possible. However, for those parts of the journey where rail travel is not possible, we will arrange alternative transport that is accessible to you, such as a taxi, to the nearest or most convenient accessible station.

In doing so, we will consider your assistance requirements, the relative journey times involved, the accessibility of the rolling stock and stations that may be used and the planned staffing levels on board the train and at the station, including the potential for the flexible deployment of staff. Wherever possible, we will offer you an option that most resembles the service provided to passengers not requiring assistance.

We will always discuss your individual requirements at the time of booking, or you can speak to our Customer Service Team on **03456 005 165 option 3, then option 4**. Or you can use a station Help Point, except on Christmas Day & Boxing Day (if no services are operating).

A1.6 Staffing on Trains and Assistance

Some of our services are run as a Driver Only Operation (DOO), so there are no on-board staff (train managers), to assist you with journey planning. Driver Only Operation services operate between:

- Aylesbury Vale Parkway and London Marylebone
- Banbury and London Marylebone
- Oxford and London Marylebone
- Local / short haul services between London Marylebone and West Ruislip / Gerrards Cross and High Wycombe

Our team will take into account the staffing levels on the train and at the station, together with the level of accessibility at the station in relation to the type of assistance you will need. This is to ensure that a staff member is available, and you will be assisted to your destination. Where this cannot be achieved, for example due to staff absences or disruption, our team will discuss alternative arrangements with you. This may include a change to the destination station, alternative accessible transport or possibly a combination of both.

The services that operate north of Banbury have a Train Manager on board who will be able to assist you with boarding and alighting at stations where there are no staff available. If you are alighting at a station that is staffed, in line with the Handover Protocol, they will call ahead and arrange for you to be met on arrival.

As of 1st April 2025 we will also be introducing new Travel Safe Officers (TSOs). These Travel Safe Officers will play a crucial role in enhancing passenger safety at Chiltern Railways. By patrolling stations and trains, they will provide a visible presence that deters anti-social behaviour and offers reassurance to passengers. They have extended training and an understanding of locations, processes and procedures so will utilise these to provide customers with solutions to real-time issues.

Their role encompasses duties from enforcement through to safeguarding, providing help with directions as well as assistance boarding and alighting trains. Their presence is a reassurance to passengers either on stations or aboard services. They will gather feedback and listen to passengers' concerns, relaying important information back to Chiltern Railways. One of their main objectives is to create a safe and pleasant environment for all.

Please note that we cannot accompany you throughout your journey or provide personal care, such as help with eating, taking medication or using the toilet. If you need this sort of help you should travel with a companion.

A1.7 Seats on Trains

Priority seating (which is located near the doors and features extra legroom and moveable armrests) is available on all our carriages. These seats are shown by stickers next to the seats.

Wheelchair spaces are also available and our station teams or on-board staff will assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces are prioritised for wheelchair users. If all wheelchair spaces are occupied by other customers in wheelchairs, we will arrange for you to travel on the next available service.

To help you easily locate accessible carriages, look for the yellow strip above the door, this indicates that the carriage contains wheelchair spaces. This will also be where the accessible toilet is located.

We are aware that wheelchair spaces may sometimes be misused by non-disabled passengers or for storing luggage. Our staff are encouraged to actively monitor and challenge inappropriate use of these spaces, ensuring that wheelchair users are always given priority.

If you are traveling with companions or family members, we will do our best to seat them close to your allocated space. We especially aim to ensure that family groups, particularly those requiring adult supervision, remain close.

Please note that Chiltern Railways do not provide seat reservations on any of our routes and this will be made clear to you at the time of booking assistance and/or buying your ticket.

A1.8 Journeys with connections

If your journey involves changes or connections with other operators' services, our team will provide a single point of contact for booking and arranging assistance. We will ensure that your booking allows sufficient time to make your connections. We will ensure that staff will be available to help you in the event of any changes to your journey, such as platform alterations, which can happen at short notice. Should changes happen at a part-staffed or unstaffed station, there will be public announcements, and the information screens will be updated accordingly.

If your journey involves a connection with Transport for London (TfL) at London Marylebone station, we will take you to their station entrance and hand directly over to a member of TfL staff who will assist you with your journey.

A1.9 Ramps

Ramps are available at our stations and on some of our trains. Further information about facilities on our trains can be found at: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information.

The ramps can be used to help you even if you have not booked assistance, however they must be used by a member of staff. If you have booked assistance to or from an unstaffed station using a ramp, we will ensure that a member of staff, with a ramp, is available to assist you. This will be discussed with you at the time of booking. If you have not booked assistance, please advise a member of station staff or staff on the train, that the ramp will be required for your journey.

A1.10 Mobility Assistance Buggies

At London Marylebone station we have mobility assistance buggies and our station staff will be happy to take you to or from your train using the buggy. You are welcome to book this assistance in advance, but it is not a requirement. Speak to a member of staff at our Customer Information Point near the booking office to arrange use of the buggy to get to your train.

A1.11 Assistance with Onward Travel – Buses and Taxi's

Wherever possible, our station staff will help you connect with other services operating from our stations such as buses and taxis if this is within the boundaries of our stations.

With regards to taxis, whilst individual operators are licensed by the local authority, we ask the taxi operators to apply for permits to operate from our stations, as this allows us to ensure that they can provide wheelchair accessible vehicles and that their drivers are trained in disability awareness by making it a requirement of the permit. However, we cannot guarantee that accessible taxis will always be available and so you may have to wait whilst we find a suitable vehicle.

Our staff are able to contact the nearest company with accessible taxis. The telephone number of our Customer Service team, who can contact local firms with accessible taxis, will be displayed on our Welcome To ... posters at all of our stations.

For further information on local bus and tram connections, please contact Traveline on **0871 200 22 33** or go to www.traveline.info

A1.12 Assistance with Luggage

We provide free assistance with luggage within the boundary of the station for older and disabled customers who have booked assistance. You may take up to three items of luggage with you on our trains in line with the [National Rail Conditions of Travel](#) luggage policy. This states that you may bring up to two large items and one small item free of charge, provided they comply with the following guidance:

- Small items of luggage should not exceed 25 x 45 x 70 cm.
- Large items of luggage should not exceed 30 x 70 x 90 cm.

If you are requesting luggage assistance, please bear in mind that our staff must be able to lift your luggage safely, so please give thought to the weight of the items of luggage you bring with you. We do not employ staff specifically to carry luggage, so the colleague assisting you will also help with your luggage.

A1.13 Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome on all of our trains, free of charge, and can travel in any part of the train. Assistance dogs must not be allowed to sit on the train seats; this is for the comfort of all customers.

A2 Delays, Disruption to Facilities & Services and Emergencies

Disruption to facilities and services can have a significant impact on both your accessibility needs and your level of confidence in travelling on the railway. Where disruption does occur, we will do everything we can to ensure that, wherever possible, you are able to continue your journey and are not left stranded at a station or on board.

Should you find our services and facilities are not as described, contact a member of staff on the station or alternatively you can contact us using the following options:

- Using the Help Points at each station.
- Twitter - @chilternrailway
- Facebook – using Send Message button.
- WhatsApp on **0203 856 2007** or
- Contact our Customer Relations Team on **03456 005 165**

A2.1 Informing you of changes

When things change before you get to the station, such as disruption to services, we will get in touch with you to provide information about changes to train times and alternative travel arrangements. We will request a contact number from you when you book assistance, which will help us to contact you in case of planned disruption that may have been advertised after you made your booking but results in a change to your journey pattern. Our Customer Relations team will discuss your individual needs and preferences and make appropriate alternative arrangements. This will include a discussion on the vehicles used for rail replacement services and how accessible they are to you and whether an alternative vehicle needs to be arranged to accommodate, for example, a mobility device.

We will also use the following channels to provide updates on changes to services:

- Chiltern Railways Mobile App – via a “banner”
- Chiltern Railways website – www.chilternrailways.co.uk – via a “banner” and also the live Service Updates button
- Social media channels – Twitter and Facebook
- National Rail Enquiries website – www.nationalrailenquiries.co.uk

Should the facilities on which you rely for your journey become temporarily unavailable on a train or at a station, we will update the system within 24 hours of notification of a problem and provide an estimated time for when the facility will be functioning again. If we have your contact details, we will try to contact you by telephone or email, this includes:

- Where stations have a physical constraint preventing use by some customers.
- Where significant temporary work affects station accessibility.
- Where changes to stations make them temporarily inaccessible (e.g. lifts or station toilets out of order).
- Where changes to train facilities materially affect disabled customers – e.g. the temporary use of inaccessible trains; and
- Emergency engineering work.

Our commitment to provide this information includes instances when stations or trains become inaccessible in the short or longer term. This information will be available to our station staff and to you through our website, ticket offices, Customer Service Team and station Help Points. As part of our ongoing review process, we will update the information on our website to ensure the details are current.

When the level of accessibility of facilities at a station is less than that normally provided, for example as a result of lifts breaking down or toilets being closed for refurbishment, we are committed to making every reasonable effort to provide replacement arrangements or facilities, wherever possible. This may involve making alternative transport arrangements for you to or from the nearest fully accessible station in the event of station lifts being out of order. We will ensure that the station information pages are kept up to date and signage at stations or on trains will be used where applicable.

Where reasonably practicable, for significant changes and disruption during a journey, train managers or drivers will pass through the train to check if customers require further support and, where possible, they will provide assistance as required.

Our Chiltern Railways mobile app (available for free download on the App Store for Apple or Android devices) and the Chiltern Railways website show live train times as well as passenger information during times of disruption. Help points are available at all stations and will connect you to someone who can assist you in continuing your journey.

During planned engineering works, we provide clear information at stations to advise passengers of replacement transport options, including posters and announcements.

A2.2 Disruption during your journey

If the disruption begins whilst you are at one of our stations, we will provide the information in both aural and visual formats using Public Address system announcements and information screens at stations and on trains. The staff at your starting or interchange station will discuss the situation with you and help you to make alternative plans (if required) for your journey.

Our staff are trained to anticipate your needs and they will communicate news of any service disruption and provision of alternative transport to you via the Customer Information Systems or, where possible, in person. They will then check to see if you have understood the announcements or if you are likely to have difficulties in light of the announcements (for example, changing platforms). Taking their other duties (such as train dispatch) into consideration they will then do all that is reasonably possible to assist you. The provision of Help Points at all of our stations, provide a link to our Customer Information Team (except 25 December) who will also be able to assist you in continuing your journey.

Once local managers have been told that disruption is occurring, they will endeavour to deploy staff to stations affected by disruption. Along with our employees already at the scene, they will be able to assist you with other needs, for example with luggage or with guidance.

Sometimes a train's departure platform must be changed, often at short notice. Such a change will be shown on the customer information screens and will be announced over the PA system as soon as possible. When a change occurs, our staff will provide assistance and information to help you reach the revised departure platform, if accessible, as efficiently as possible. Should the revised platform be inaccessible to you, our staff will make alternative arrangements for you to be able to continue with your journey. This may include an accessible taxi to an alternative or your destination station or helping you to board the next service from an accessible platform.

Our on-board Train Managers and station staff will help to rearrange onward assistance for you during times of disruption. When a train has to end its journey earlier than planned because of either disruption or a technical fault, where possible this will be at a staffed station with facilities available to passengers onboard. Where this may be a driver-only service, the driver will walk through the train to gain information on how many passengers there are and whether any need assistance boarding or alighting. Your needs will be discussed with the driver at this point and arrangements to continue your journey will be made via our Control Centre staff.

When disruption causes the cancellation or alteration of train services, we will provide you with accessible substitute transport. This will be done without additional charge. Our rail replacement team has contractual arrangements with bus and taxi operators across our network, including securing, wherever possible, the provision of accessible vehicles; this team is located at our control centre and deals with both planned and unplanned disruption. When train services are replaced with rail replacement vehicles, we will do everything possible to secure accessible vehicles from local operators. When this is not possible, which could be due to demand on the dates we require the transport and/or notice period for booking, we will book a taxi that is accessible to you. Our frontline employees, supported by our rail replacement team, have the authority to do all that is reasonably practicable to arrange suitable substitute services for you in such circumstances.

A2.3 Emergency Procedures

Our staff will supervise any action that needs to be taken in the event of an emergency either at a station or on a train. Our staff will identify the safest route and method for evacuating the location they are

responsible for. They will also identify alternative routes and contingency arrangements if predetermined routes are not available.

Should an incident occur, our staff will use their disability awareness skills and judgement to anticipate your needs and communicate any instructions. In accordance with the nature of the incident, our staff are trained to take your needs into account.

Each of our stations has a Station Evacuation Plan detailing evacuation routes for all customers, stating whether the route is suitable for those with disabilities. If you have a disability and you are in an area where no accessible evacuation route exists, a place of safety will have been pre-identified for you (accompanied by a member of staff) to await rescue by a member of the emergency services. All local station emergency plans are shared with the local emergency services.

To minimise the risk of causing injury to you in an evacuation, we will only evacuate wheelchair users during an emergency if the situation is life threatening. Based on the type of incident and the risks involved, we will move you to a safer part of the train or station until arrangements can be made to move the train to the nearest station. We will endeavour to make sure that you are accompanied at all times. If it becomes absolutely necessary to evacuate a train between stations, we will work closely with the Emergency Services to attend and provide expert assistance with the evacuation.

A2.4 Rail Replacement Services

If part of your pre-booked journey requires using a rail replacement service, we will explain all of the available options to you, including the rail replacement service, alternative rail routes or travelling on a different day. This will help to identify the best journey plan for you, including considering toilet access for longer journeys, whether an alternative type of vehicle is required that is suitable for your needs and additional considerations for example if you are travelling with an assistance animal.

Details of rail replacement services can be found on our website www.chilternrailways.co.uk/tickets-and-times/changes by choosing your date(s) of travel. The information will also include whether the rail replacement is a coach, bus or smaller vehicle and whether it is accessible.

Chiltern Railways works with its replacement transport providers and has explicit requirements in tenders for contracts with vehicle suppliers to ensure the use of accessible vehicles that are compliant with PSVAR and alternative accessible vehicles for use where, for whatever reason, substitute transport is provided to replace rail. These contracts are reviewed annually to consider any changes in the availability of accessible vehicles. We are also now working on requirements for PSVAIR.

At least 12 weeks before all major planned engineering works, we will assess the requirement for accessible vehicles that are compliant with PSVAR and alternative accessible vehicles for use as substitute transport; and where necessary, procure the use of such vehicles.

During all major planned engineering works, we will ensure waiting times for alternative accessible transport (such as a taxi) are similar to those for rail replacement vehicles.

In cases of short term, unplanned delays, disruptions and emergencies, we will ensure that the rail replacement services and taxis provided are as accessible as possible. We will also make reasonable endeavours to ensure drivers of rail replacement bus services and taxis have received training to provide assistance to passengers through the contract agreements we have in place with suppliers.

A3 Passenger Information and Promotion of Assisted Travel

It is our aim to provide you with information that is accessible, accurate, relevant, consistent, up-to-date and easy to understand. We want to provide you with assurance and confidence at every stage of your journey, including when planning your journey prior to your departure. This is particularly true if your journey involves a change of train or transfer to another mode of transport.

A3.1 Our Accessible Travel Policy Leaflet

To accompany this Accessible Travel Policy document, we have produced a shorter and more concise document to help in planning your assisted journey, entitled 'Making Rail Accessible'; both documents are available in alternative formats. It is available online as a PDF (Portable Document Format) on our website at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information and it is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features (e.g., Adobe Reader).

We are creating a more compact and convenient leaflet, which will be available in print at all staffed stations and accessible via links at unstaffed stations.

We will be happy to provide Large Print versions of this leaflet on request (without charge) via our website or Customer Service team and these will be available within seven working days. Through our stakeholder managers, we will also work with local prominent areas where public services are provided to have this displayed to improve awareness of the accessibility of our service and our policies to the wider community. We will also ensure that we provide information setting out how to obtain the leaflet and the policy document on our "Welcome To..." posters at each of our managed stations.

A3.2 Station And Train Accessibility Information

We are committed to ensuring that the information regarding our services is up to date and that customers requiring assistance are aware of any limitations and/or temporary restrictions. We will ensure information regarding accessibility and station facilities is kept up to date on the National Rail Enquiries website, including the Station Journey Planner.

In order to achieve this, we will maintain this information in an online format, attached to the online version of this policy document which can be found at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information. This can easily be accessed via personal mobile devices, as well as in accessible formats. We will also provide the same information to the National Rail Enquiries website to ensure consistency of information. Our station and train staff will also be able to provide you with the same up-to-date information on request.

We actively use social media to promote our Passenger Assistance services and raise awareness about accessibility support available to passengers. Through our official social media channels, we share information on how to book assistance, highlight success stories, and provide real-time updates on accessibility improvements. We also engage with passengers by responding to queries, sharing accessibility tips, and collaborating with advocacy groups to improve inclusivity in rail travel. Our goal is to ensure that all passengers, including those with disabilities, are well-informed and confident in using our services.

A3.2.1 Station Accessibility Information

Please visit the Station Facilities section on our website at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations for information on the following services at our stations:

- Disabled parking and set down / pick up points
- Ticket office opening hours
- Induction Loops
- Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs)
- Help Points
- Food and drink outlets
- Accessible toilets
- National Key toilets
- Accessible waiting rooms
- Location of meeting points for assistance
- Staffed Customer Information Points
- Staffing hours/assistance availability
- Availability of ramps for train access
- Level of platform accessibility
- Wheelchair availability
- Tactile paving
- Customer Information Systems

For stations not served by Chiltern Railways, information can also be found on National Rail Enquiries website www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations.

A3.2.2 Train Accessibility Information

On our website at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information we provide an overview of each type of train used on our network, including information on the general accessibility features and details of the routes on which different trains are normally scheduled to run. We provide information on the provision of the following features on each type of train:

- Wheelchair space
- Scooter/mobility aid acceptance
- Accessible toilet
- Standard toilet
- Boarding ramp
- Priority seating
- Aural information
- Visual information
- On-train staff to provide assistance

Not all of our services have a second member of staff on board as some operate as a driver only service. Staff at the station helping you with your assistance will be able to let you know whether there will be an on-board member of staff such as a Train Manager or roaming Travel Safe Officer, however most of the driver only services are those between London Marylebone and Aylesbury Vale Parkway, Oxford or Banbury as well as our local / short haul services from London Marylebone. Should you require this information in advance of your journey, please speak to our Customer Services team on **03456 005165**.

A3.2.3 Event Day Accessibility Planning

For major events, we implement a dedicated accessibility plan to ensure smooth and inclusive travel for all passengers. This includes increasing staff availability at key stations, providing additional assistance for passengers requiring support, and coordinating with event organizers to facilitate seamless journeys. We also use our social media platforms and station announcements to communicate essential accessibility information, such as step-free access points, alternative travel options, and assistance booking reminders. Our event day planning ensures that passengers with accessibility needs can enjoy hassle-free travel to and from event locations.

A3.3 Passenger Journey Information

We are aware that you may travel by rail infrequently and that you may not know where or how to access important information, particularly during times of service disruption. This section explains how we will communicate accurate, clear and consistent information to you, especially if you have mental, cognitive or sensory impairments, at every stage of the passenger journey - whether at home, online, on the move, at the station or on the train.

We commit to providing, wherever possible, clear and consistent aural and visual information: both at the platform and on board. On-board our trains, we will make an announcement as the train approaches a station, giving you enough notice to prepare to get off.

We provide this sticker with numbers on help points, but currently we don't provide anything near the help point for information,

A3.3.1 Stations – Aural and Visual Information

Many of our stations have a combination of customer information screens and automated public announcements providing accurate, clear and consistent aural and visual information.

Sometimes a train's departure platform must be changed – and this can be at short notice. The platform number will be announced over the PA system as soon as possible. When a change occurs, our staff will provide assistance and information to help you reach the revised departure platform, if accessible, as efficiently as possible. If the revised platform can not be accessed, then an alternative transport option will be found.

A3.3.2 Help Points: When and How to Use Them

Help Points are located at all Chiltern Railways stations and provide access to help and information. They can be used to:

- Request live service updates
- Get assistance if you require help boarding or alighting
- Report accessibility issues or station faults

How to Use a Help Point:

1. Press the **assistance button** for non-emergency support (e.g., requesting a ramp or checking train times).
2. Press the **emergency button** only in case of urgent safety concerns.
3. Follow the operator's instructions and stay near the Help Point if assistance is being arranged or tell the operator where you would be

4. For more information on where on the platform the help points are refer to national rail enquires website.

Response times: Staffed vs. unstaffed stations.

- If your station is unstaffed and you need assistance, we recommend using the Help Point at least **20 minutes before your train departs** to allow time for arrangements to be made.

Alternative contact options if a Help Point is not functioning.

Please call our Customer Relations team on **03456 005165** (open from 06:00 to 22:00).

A3.3.3 Trains – Aural and Visual Information

We recognise that good announcements are essential to you whilst travelling on our trains. Most of our trains have automated announcements informing passengers of the final destination, calling pattern and next stop. In the event of services that do not have pre-recorded announcements, times where there are delays or changes to your journey or if this system fails, our staff are trained to make the announcements speaking slowly and distinctly in a clear, concise and confident manner and will do this where possible.

When possible, on-board staff will make their first announcement five minutes before the train departs and repeat it one to two minutes before departure as well as two minutes before arriving at each station along the route. Any unscheduled station stops will be announced to reassure you and, when a train has been delayed for two minutes or more, a brief announcement will be made and the reason for the delay (if known) will be given. When there are Train Managers on board, we encourage them to walk through trains to make sure that you have all the information you need.

Some of our services are operated as Driver Only services, so should you have any special requirements whilst on board, please speak with a member of staff at your station before boarding. If your disability means that you are unable to hear the on-board announcements, please advise a member of staff so that alternative arrangements can be made if required.

Our trains are equipped with public address systems to provide aural announcements and a customer information system that uses visual displays. Where these systems are installed, we will strive to ensure that they comply with the standards set out in the “Technical Specification for Interoperability, Persons with Reduced Mobility, (‘PRM-TSI’) 2014” document, which relates to achieving consistent levels of accessibility across the European Union’s rail system.

A3.4 Connections and Wayfinding

We work with local authorities to ensure that our stations are clearly and consistently signposted. For example, we ensure that all stations have visible ‘totem pole’ signs outside and we work with local councils to help improve local transport connections and wayfinding in the areas surrounding our stations.

Our staff will provide you with information on how to make connections with other modes of transport both prior to your journey and when travelling on our trains and through our stations. We also provide onward connection information and local maps on posters at all of our stations. When planning our services, we consult with the local authorities and stakeholders for the areas our services run to, through or near. This is so we make sure the needs of local communities inform any decisions we make concerning service provision. We provide most bus operators and if appropriate, Transport for London (TfL), with advance notice of our plans for train services so that they can accommodate these in any decisions they make concerning connecting services.

A3.5 Video Relay Service

We have now launched our Video Relay Service to support our deaf and hard of hearing customers whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). This has been launched in partnership with SignLive and allows the customer to have a video call with a BSL translator who will interpret the conversation with our team. There is no charge for customers to use the BSL interpreter service. More information on this service can be found here <https://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information>

A3.6 Where to get more information

You can obtain information about the services provided by Chiltern Railways and other train companies at our ticket offices or, at London Marylebone station, at the clearly signed Passenger Assistance desk (usually open at the same time as the ticket office). At our booking offices and Customer Information Point we will provide details of fares, timetables, connections and confirmation of bookings made by Passenger Assist (including bookings by other train operators). You can also arrange your Passenger Assist booking.

Information regarding accessibility on other forms of transport from the station may also be available from our staff, or they will be able to advise you where this information can be found. We will ensure that up-to-date information regarding the services we provide is available to other train companies and station operators. This includes information regarding delays, diversions or other events that may affect your journey. For up-to-date train running information on the day of travel, please follow us on X (formerly Twitter) @chilternrailway, visit our website www.chilternrailways.co.uk or go to JourneyCheck <https://www.journeycheck.com/chilternrailways/>.

Leaflets regarding our services and those of other train operators who serve the same station, are also available and placed at varying heights to be accessible to you. We also provide information on posters at the stations which give you details about local services and transport available from that station. In addition, at every station you can also use the Help Points to speak to an operator to gain information and assistance (see section A3.2.2).

Information regarding all national train services is also available by contacting National Rail Enquiries:

Tel: 03457 48 49 50

Website: www.nationalrail.co.uk

Textphone/minicom: 0345 60 50 600 (for people with hearing impairments)

A3.7 Our Website

We continue to work towards achieving the industry-recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which define how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities. We confirm that our website works with screen readers, magnifiers, voice-over software and in-browser accessibility functions, all of which is explained via a link on the homepage. Our built-in Accessibility and Translation tool can be activated via the homepage.

To help you find the information you need, we provide a link on our homepage to our Assisted Travel page, which explains the Passenger Assist service in a clear and concise manner, using plain English and avoiding the use of industry jargon. It provides the necessary contact information and details for you to book assistance and purchase a ticket to travel (including details of any national discounts available to

disabled passengers or persons with reduced mobility). By clicking on the links within this page, you can obtain information for on-board facilities and station information, including accessibility information, staff availability, Customer Service team opening hours and accessible parking spaces.

Within these links, there is information on restrictions on the use of wheelchairs, power chairs and scooters. In addition, we include details on any temporary reductions in access to our stations. There is a link to enable you to access the Passenger Leaflet and details of how to obtain it in accessible formats.

We also explain how you can provide feedback or make a complaint and we include information on the availability of redress for when assistance has not been delivered as booked. Where further information is located elsewhere, we provide a connecting hyperlink on the Assisted Travel page.

A4 Ticketing and Fares

We are committed to selling tickets accurately and impartially and to providing you with accurate information and advice on your journey and ticket options, irrespective of which train operating company provides the service. Our ticket office staff and Assist Team are also familiar with the accessibility of our various types of trains and they are trained to ensure that the tickets you purchase allow you to travel on the correct type of train for your needs.

If you are unable to buy a ticket before you board one of our trains, you can buy one without penalty on the train or at the destination station. You will still be able to use your Disabled Persons Railcard or receive the relevant discounts.

We participate in a number of schemes offering discounted fares and these are detailed in the sections below.

A4.1 If You Are Visually Impaired

If you are a visually impaired adult travelling with a companion and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets apply for both of you:

- First/Standard Anytime Single or Return – 34% off
- First/Standard Anytime Day Single – 34% off
- First/Standard Anytime Day Return – 50% off

The standard discount for a visually impaired child is 75% and the accompanying adult would get a discount as above.

You can also buy a season ticket that allows a companion to travel with you for free.

Note: No concession applies if you are travelling alone and you do not hold a railcard.

You can buy these tickets at staffed stations; just remember to carry a document confirming your visual impairment when buying your ticket and when travelling. This must be from a recognised institution such as Social Services, your local authority, the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) or Blind Veterans UK (formerly St Dunstan's). Please note that because these only apply to Anytime tickets, there may be cheaper alternatives.

A4.2 If You Remain in Your Wheelchair for a Rail Journey

If you travel in your own wheelchair, these concessionary fares apply if you are travelling alone or to yourself plus one adult travelling with you:

- First/Standard Anytime Single or Return – 34% off
- First/Standard Anytime Day Single – 34% off
- First/Standard Anytime Day Return – 50% off

The standard discount for a child in a wheelchair is 75% and the accompanying adult would get a discount as above.

A4.3 Disabled Persons Railcard

A Disabled Persons Railcard gives you and an adult companion one-third off most Standard and First-Class fares throughout the UK.

There are two types of Disabled Persons Railcard available: one year and three years. Both entitle you to discounts of up to a third on most rail tickets. Full details on how to buy a railcard can be found on:

Website: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk
 Email: www.disability@raildeliverygroup.com
 Call: 0345 605 0525
 Minicom/Textphone: 0345 601 0132 (for people with hearing impairments)

A4.4 Senior Railcard

If you are 60 or over, you can buy a Senior Railcard. This gives you up to a third off most rail fares throughout the rail network in the UK. They are valid for either one year or three years.

You can buy one online, over the phone or at any staffed station by using your passport or UK driving licence as proof of age. At stations you can also use your birth certificate.

Website: www.senior-railcard.co.uk
 Email: www.railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk
 Call: 0345 300 0250

A4.5 Other railcards

There may be other railcards which are suitable for you. Please visit www.railcard.co.uk for further information.

A5 Buying, collecting and using tickets

A5.1 Self Service Ticket machines

Many of our stations have accessible self-service ticket vending machines. The machines are compliant with the Department for Transport/Transport Scotland joint code of practice (Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations, March 2015, section N2. Ticket sales points – ticket vending machines) and

can issue tickets at the reduced rate to holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard and to the holder's companion.

You can also easily collect tickets bought in advance (over the telephone or online) from our ticket vending machines.

A5.2 Ticket Gates

Some of our stations have ticket gates which are staffed. When there are no staff available to operate the ticket gates at stations, we will lock the gates in the open position. Where applicable, we will also unlock the manual side gate leaving it in the open position.

A5.3 Purchase of Advance Tickets

Where advance tickets are available for purchase (via any of the available channels including online, at the ticket office or over the phone), you are advised to check that the required facilities (e.g. accessibility of the train or availability of wheelchair space in First Class) are available before purchasing tickets.

A5.4 Booking Assistance When Purchasing Tickets

When buying tickets with a Disabled Persons Railcard, our staff are trained to ask you if you require assistance with any aspect of your journey. Our team can arrange assistance and tickets as one transaction. Our website ticket booking section will also remind you about the Passenger Assist service during the purchase process using a check-box option.

A6 Wheelchairs, Scooters and Mobility Aids

A6.1 Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs can be used in the designated spaces on our trains so long as they fit within the following dimensions:

Width 700mm

Length 1200mm

Weight (including passenger) 300kg.

If your wheelchair exceeds the dimensions above, we unfortunately will not be able to accommodate you on our services due to the physical restrictions of our trains.

At some stations we have wheelchairs available to those who find it difficult walking to the platform. More information on stations that provide this service can be found at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations. For safety reasons, our staff are unable to lift you from a wheelchair into a seat on the train, but they are able to assist you to make the transfer. At London Marylebone we also have mobility assistance buggies.

A6.2 Mobility Scooters

Some powered scooters are only meant for road use and cannot be used on trains, so if you have not travelled before or have recently changed your scooter, please check the dimensions to ensure it is okay to use on our trains.

Powered scooter criteria to be able to travel are as follows:

3-Wheeled scooters or those with a triangular footprint (2 wheels at the front close together and 2 wheels at the rear) that meet the following criteria:

- **Maximum length of 1200mm and width of 700mm**
- Maximum speed of 4mph
- Does not exceed 300kg when it is carrying its user
- Has a free-wheeling facility for use in case of power-failure
- Has sealed batteries
- Must negotiate gradients of eight degrees or more; or
- Can be folded down to a size that can be accommodated as hand luggage.

4-Wheeled scooters that meet the following criteria:

- **Maximum length of 1120 mm and width of 560mm**
- Maximum speed of 4mph
- Does not exceed 300kg when it is carrying its user
- Has a free-wheeling facility for use in case of power-failure
- Has sealed batteries
- Must negotiate gradients of eight degrees or more; or
- Can be folded down to a size that can be accommodated as hand luggage.

If your mobility scooter exceeds the above dimensions, we will unfortunately be unable to accommodate you on our services due to the physical restrictions of our trains.

Passengers are not required to transfer to a seat from a mobility scooter but are welcome to if the scooter can be folded down.

For safety reasons, our staff are unable to lift or physically manoeuvre you or your scooter. It is therefore your responsibility to ensure that you can control your scooter so that you can get onto and off the train safely. Although we can book assistance on other train companies' services, scooter policies may differ, including the requirements for scooter permits. We can advise you of these requirements or provide contact details for the relevant train company to ensure your scooter is permitted. This should be done prior to making your journey if you need to change onto another train company's services. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct permits where applicable and that your mobility scooter fits within the dimensions set out.

We have installed floor vinyls at many of our staffed stations which you can position your wheelchair or mobility scooter on to ensure it fits within the dimensions to meet the physical restrictions of our trains. A member of staff will assist you to do this, should you require this. Please note, the measurements on the floor vinyls are for Chiltern Railways trains only. If you are connecting onto another train operator's service, their size restrictions may differ. Our Passenger Assistance booking team will be able to assist you with this.

A6.3 E-scooters and E-bikes

In line with industry standards, including other Train Operating Companies and Network Rail, E-scooters and E-bikes are not recognised mobility aids and therefore cannot be used on our stations or trains.

A7 Station Facilities

A7.1 Left Luggage

We have no Left Luggage facilities at any of our stations, but they can be found at these nearby stations:

London Paddington Station (Excess Baggage Co)
Platform 12
Monday to Sunday 07:00 – 23:00
020 7262 0344

Birmingham New Street Station (Excess Baggage Co)
Inside the entrance off Hill Street
Monday to Sunday 07:00 – 23:00
020 7930 5444

A7.2 Disabled Parking

It is our policy that passengers should be able to travel to the station by private car and park with confidence. Information on our car parks can be found at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations.

Most stations have a tarmac or concrete surfaced car park, with designated parking spaces available for Blue Badge holders. All Blue Badge holders can park for free at our stations. On your first visit to a station car park, you **must** speak to ticket office staff, who will check your Blue Badge and register your vehicle on the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system. You must clearly display your Blue Badge on your vehicle dashboard every time you park.

If no staff are available at your nearest station, then please contact our Customer Relations team on **03456 005 165** to register your car for Blue Badge parking.

We locate the Blue Badge spaces in the most suitable place to ensure you will have easy access to our stations. Usually, these spaces are located as close to the main station entrance as possible. Spaces for Blue Badge holders are marked with the International Symbol for Access on the ground.

We monitor the number of designated Blue Badge bays in our station car parks every six months. A report with details of usage and occupancy is sent to the Department for Transport (DfT) and Office of Rail and Road (ORR) as required and the level of provision is adjusted accordingly. To maximise the availability of spaces for you, car park regulations are enforced and any non-Blue Badge holders occupying designated Blue Badge spaces are treated as being in violation of the parking byelaws and dealt with accordingly.

A7.3 Third Party Provided Facilities

We will ensure that any services and facilities provided by a third party are as accessible as possible; this requirement will be included in the relevant contracts and enforced by our property management team. Our station management will monitor the services and facilities provided by third parties on a day-to-day basis to ensure that they are not located where they will cause an obstruction. While it is recognised that third-party service providers have their own responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, we will make every effort to ensure that any services and facilities provided by others at our stations are accessible to you.

A7.4 Station Entrances

Our property management department and station management team will take the needs of our customers into account when considering a requirement to restrict or temporarily close access points at stations. We will comply with the agreed code of practice with regard to mandatory standards for unobstructed progress during building works. Planned works which impact on levels of accessibility will be reviewed by our Accessibility Group to ensure the best solutions are being adopted.

We are committed to ensuring that no station entrances or gates are permanently closed during the opening times of the station. When it is necessary to close off accessible entrances permanently (for example due to refurbishment or security) and this would make the station inaccessible, we will consult with the DfT, London TravelWatch, Transport Focus and local disability groups, as applicable, and any such changes to access will not be made until approved by the DfT. If the closure is of a semi-permanent nature, then alternative arrangements will be put in place for the duration of the works.

A8 Redress and Compensation

A8.1 What to Do If Our Assistance Fails

When assistance has been booked but has not been provided due to a failure of the assistance service, we will provide you with appropriate redress. In these instances, the form and value may be determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account the circumstances of each case and our team will be happy to assist and support you with your claim.

Our claims process is as follows:

1. Complaint received via phone, email or post.
2. Complaint recorded on our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
3. Complaint forwarded to relevant team/manager to investigate.
4. Feedback given to Customer Relations team.
5. Full explanation and apology together with details of any redress applicable will be given to customer via phone, email or letter and details recorded on the CRM system.
6. Any applicable redress will be sent to customer with our final response.
7. Complaint will be closed on CRM system.

If you travelled with multiple train companies, we will coordinate a response to your complaint and provide you with a full explanation in response, including why it happened and what mitigating actions we intend to take as a result.

We will also always comply with the Consumer Rights Act 2015. In line with the National Rail Conditions of Travel, we will consider all additional compensation claims for any losses or extra costs caused by a service failure, for example, the cost of a new plane ticket if you miss a flight. This will not affect your legal rights to make claims under the Consumer Act 2015, although you must not seek to recover the same money twice - for example both under our claims process and the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

B Strategy and Management

In this section we set out how we:

- Embed the provision of services to disabled people within our business and our project planning
- Work to improve access to the railway for disabled people and those with reduced mobility
- Ensure our staff have the resources, skills and confidence to deliver assistance to passengers
- Measure the success of our Accessible Travel Policies

B1 Our commitments

We believe that you have the right to safe, comfortable, punctual and seamless journeys. We will work to broaden accessibility and equality on our route throughout the period of our National Rail Contract as we are committed to the continuous improvement of services and facilities for disabled people. We believe that when you travel with us you should expect high standards of service throughout your journey.

As such, we will:

- as a priority, continue to provide you with a safe, clean, punctual and reliable train service.
- make it easier for you to buy tickets with the introduction of more facilities.
- treat you fairly when things go wrong.
- keep you informed about services, any planned changes and during disruption.
- let you know our performance and quality targets in advance and report each period on how we are doing on our website <https://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/punctuality-performance>
- listen to you and engage with you.

To understand what is needed to drive improvements, we work alongside our industry colleagues such as Office of Road and Rail (ORR), Network Rail, local authorities, Department for Transport (DfT), Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), Transport Focus, Community Rail Partnerships, Rail Ombudsman and other stakeholder organisations.

Our Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) fulfils the licence condition specified in our passenger licence. In establishing and embedding the ATP into the culture of our business, we are able to demonstrate compliance with our duties under the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act 2010.

We will ensure that new facilities are designed to meet the standards of the PRM-TSI, as will all projects which replace and/or renew existing facilities.

Whilst we will exhaust every possible avenue, if we are unable to meet these standards on stations, we will consult 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.

We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that we meet and maintain the standards set out in our Accessible Travel Policy. If we believe that we are not meeting the commitments within our Accessible Travel Policy, we will consult with the ORR. We will submit our Accessible Travel Policy to the ORR for regular review from the date of approval.

B2 Improving Access and Services on our Route

We are committed to maintaining and further improving current standards of accessibility to our services for all our customers. We believe we can achieve this by continuously working and engaging with all groups representing disabled people and other stakeholders in order to anticipate customer needs. We will continue to review our policies annually and incorporate all the feedback we get from you, customer organisations and other stakeholders regarding the services we provide. This feedback will be vital in shaping our policies and making continuous improvements.

We will comply with PRM-TSI and the Code of Practice when installing or refurbishing trains and facilities at stations. We also commit to applying for derogations against the PRM-TSI and/or dispensations against the Code of Practice, when necessary, after every effort has been made to comply with the relevant requirements.

B2.1 Station accessibility improvements

In accordance with the DfT's Access for All programme and in partnership with the DfT, Network Rail, local authorities and businesses, we will work to secure funding for and develop an ongoing strategy to improve the accessibility of our network in accordance with the standards required by the Code of Practice. The current AfA projects are:

Warwick Station

Currently, there are no lifts available at Warwick station and so we have secured funding through the Access for All scheme to install lifts so that all platforms will be accessible. There have been some delays due to structural issues found when work began on the underpass, which meant further structural surveys had to be completed and revised plans drawn up. The lifts will now be in a different location than originally planned, but work is well underway and the lifts are expected to be completed by September 2025. We will also be fitting automated doors into the ticket office and from the ticket office to the platform to further improve the accessibility of the station.

Beaconsfield Station

Under the same Access for All scheme, we had also planned to have lifts installed at Beaconsfield station so that all platforms would be accessible. We are currently awaiting an update from Network Rail on this project on the back of a ministerial budget review.

Accessibility Audit data - as part of our commitments within the National Rail Contract with the DfT, we will audit each of our stations on their accessibility (for example, how and where there is information available, platform accessibility, car parking, ticket office facilities). This audit will in turn allow us to prioritise key projects that will be presented to and funded by the Department for Transport to improve the stations and the customer experience.

Meeting Point signage – we are working to improve the signage for our meeting points at stations to make it clearer how to find them and what to do once you get there.

Upgrades to station toilets – we are currently working on improvements to the toilet facilities at a number of our stations (Banbury, Leamington Spa, High Wycombe and Bicester North) and plan to extend this to more stations in the future. This will include refurbishing the accessible toilets at these stations.

B2.2 Trains

We work closely with DfT and ORR to ensure that our trains comply with PRM-TSI. Our Class 168 fleet is fully compliant and our Class 165s and Mark 3 fleets have achieved targeted compliance with minor agreed dispensations.

Our 168 trains are currently going through a refurbishment programme which will improve the onboard facilities. This has already begun and is due to complete in 2027. Our 165 trains are also about to begin a refresh programme.

B2.3 Other Accessibility Improvements

We have been working hard to improve our customer information provision by becoming more inclusive in how we communicate and ensuring our communication channels are accessible to all.

British Sign Language digital screens

Following a trial last year, we have retained our digital display screens which show departures in British Sign Language (BSL). They can be found at the following key stations:

- London Marylebone
- Banbury
- Leamington Spa
- Birmingham Moor Street

We are now looking at how we can incorporate BSL into more of our digital display screens.

Video Relay Service

We have now launched our Video Relay Service so that people who are deaf, hard of hearing and whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL) can contact our Customer Relations team and Passenger Assistance team in real time via a BSL interpreter. If you are a BSL user, you can use SignLive to connect to us via an Interpreter. Just log in to the SignLive app on iOS, Android, or a web browser and find us in the Community Directory. When you call, the Interpreter may confirm who you want to get in touch with. Please [click here for a YouTube video](#) that describes the SignLive service.

Passenger Assist staff app

Some of our stations are already using the desktop version of the Passenger Assist tool and we are looking at how we can roll this out further to station and on board staff using the app version.

Other initiatives include:

- **Sunflower Lanyards:** we will continue to support the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard scheme and our staff are trained in recognising that wearers may need extra assistance on their journey.
- **Wavelength Programme:** we take part in the Wavelength Programme, an ongoing survey owned by the RDG (Rail Delivery Group) for rail and non-rail users which includes questions for passengers who have had assistance at stations and on board.
- **Passenger Assistance Cards:** Passengers can print off templated cards asking for assistance such as “where are the toilets?”, “can you help me use the ticket machine?” or “when is the next train to xxx?”. These are available on our Accessible Travel page on the website.

- **Travel Safe Officers:** this new role will also improve the levels of safety and support available at our stations and on our trains
- **Improving step free signage at Wembley station:** based on feedback from the Accessibility Group, we have updated the signage for our step free routes at this station

B3 Championing accessibility

Protecting and improving your access to rail services is an integral part of our business strategy at Chiltern Railways and is supported by the Board of Directors. Accountability for owning and developing our Accessible Travel Policy rests with our Commercial and Customer Strategy Director. Acting as a sponsor, this role will liaise with the relevant managers working on the specific tasks to ensure we deliver against the Accessible Travel Policy. Compliance will be a feature of management review processes.

Establishing and maintaining our Accessible Travel Policy is a condition of our National Rail Contract. For compliance purposes, the Commercial and Customer Strategy Director is accountable for both the Passengers' Charter and the Station Licence. The principal vehicle for achieving this will be via our Annual Business Plan, which will include a priority work-stream dedicated to improving the service we offer disabled customers.

The Head of Stations, working closely with local managers, is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and compliance with our Accessible Travel Policy. We also have an Accessibility Manager who will work with our frontline teams and also identify areas for improvement using customer satisfaction surveys, mystery shopping activities, post travel research and periodic reports.

The implementation of developments in train and station design will be achieved by close liaison with the respective project teams. We will work with the project teams to conduct accessibility impact assessments and provide guidance on the relevant standards which need to be achieved. The success of the changes will be monitored via customer feedback, relevant passenger surveys and mystery shopping results as well as the return on investment.

B4 Monitoring and Evaluation

To make sure that the provision of services to customers with disabilities is not overlooked and to monitor and evaluate our commitment within the Accessible Travel Policy, our mystery shopping activities and inclusion of questions in the Wavelength customer survey programme will complement the ORR's national survey of Passenger Assist users and help us better understand customer needs. Each year we will publicise our findings to users, together with the actions we will take in response.

Our key performance indicators are:

- Total number of customers who have booked assistance over the period
- Total number of complaints we received about issues relating to disabled travel over the period
- Total number of complaints received as a percentage of the booked journeys over the period
- Total number of employees who have received disability awareness training over the period

The progress the company makes on current issues related to disabled travel will be discussed in a report to the Board of Directors. The Customer Service team will review and investigate any complaints or feedback from our disabled customers and provide a detailed response. This will ensure that any failures in our commitments are identified and resolved as quickly as possible. The Contact Centre Manager will

provide monthly (or more frequently if required) reports on feedback from our disabled customers. These are reviewed by the area management teams to ensure all business areas can assess how well the policies are working in practice and make any necessary adjustments.

We will regularly review this policy and report on findings which will be sent to the ORR. This will include details of the achievements of objectives, new initiatives to improve our service to disabled customers and any difficulties we have encountered with the implementation of this policy.

B5 Working with user groups and stakeholders

In preparing our accessibility and inclusion proposals and developing our accessible policies, we consult with a cross-section of disability stakeholders, facilitated by our Accessibility & Integrated Transport Manager and our Stakeholder Engagement team with Community Rail Partnerships.

- As part of the Chiltern Railways Accessibility Group, we actively consult further with organisations, together with other important representative groups such as our own passengers, My Life My Choice, Blind Ambition and Bucks Mind to make sure that we stay informed of the needs of customers with disabilities, and that these needs are considered in all of our plans.
- We will consult with all local authorities and local colleges in areas that our services run to, through or nearby. This is so we make sure the needs of local communities inform any decisions we make concerning service provision.
- We will actively promote the availability of assisted travel, with a particular focus on the customer leaflet, 'Making Rail Accessible'. As well as ensuring that this leaflet is available at staffed stations and online, we will also advertise the leaflet on station posters and on train services and via social media.
- We will provide an annual report to ORR on the activity and outputs of our work with disabled passengers, local communities, and local authorities.

B6 Staff Training

We will provide regular briefings on the subject which are given to frontline managers and safety critical employees. All employees receive updates on the company's policies and procedures relating to disabled customers, diversity, and inclusion through their regular briefing sessions.

We harness the experience and expertise of people with a range of experience and disabilities in the development and delivery of our training materials. We constantly review the content of the training to ensure that all statistics, legislation and language used in training are up to date.

This approach to training will ensure all staff, and particularly staff who interact with customers, have the skills and knowledge to enable them to best meet the needs of customers and to do this in accordance with both the law and our commitment to further improve levels of accessibility.

We will continue to work with the ORR and provide a report setting out progress against delivery of these staff training commitments.

B6.1 New staff

As part of our corporate induction training for all new employees (including senior and key managers), a disability awareness course is included which has been created in partnership with specialist disability consultancies. It focuses on the knowledge, skills and tools that are necessary to enable our employees to assist our customers with disabilities in the best possible way. The course is delivered in the classroom and is interactive.

The course aim is to build delegates' knowledge and skills to enable them to best meet the needs of customers with disabilities and do this in accordance with both the law, the Equality Act 2010 and our commitment to further improve current standards of accessibility to our services for all our passengers.

The course's mandatory training outcomes are that by the end of the session delegates will be able to:

1. Understand people with disabilities and their everyday challenges: challenging misconceptions and understanding barriers to access and inclusion.
2. Equality Legislation: exploring and understanding the Equality Act 2010.
3. Defining disability: an introduction to the various definitions and demographics of disability and the appropriate terminology.
4. Recognising passengers who need assistance: exploring physical and non-visible conditions to enable staff to assess individual needs and provide appropriate assistance.
5. Railway Regulatory Framework: understanding regulations and policies that are relevant within the railway industry.
6. Passenger Assist: how it works for disabled passengers and the role of railway staff in delivering the service.
7. Communication: finding a way to communicate with disabled people with patience, respect, and dignity.
8. Accessibility in stations: the identification of accessible features at the stations where staff work as well as at the key destination stations on our network.
9. Providing safe assistance: duties and process to ensure that both staff and customers remain safe at all times.

B6.2 Frontline teams

In addition to the above, our staff who interact directly with customers will have received training that delivers outcomes relating to customer and staff communication, accessibility within and around stations and how to provide safe assistance. We ensure that all relevant staff receive the training appropriate to their roles with regards to:

- the use of equipment provided to assist older people and those with disabilities, such as ramps, station wheelchairs and induction loops
- communicating with people with different disabilities
- communicating clearly by phone with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding.

Our Customer Service team also receive specific briefings relating to their job role. For example, using a text-relay service and checking databases to ensure the best possible journey advice is given to customers with disabilities. Furthermore, anyone employed at a contact centre who provides information or advice directly to passengers on our behalf will receive an appropriate version of the training course covering, as a minimum, the Passenger Assist service and customer communication.

By 31 March 2025, all train drivers will have received the enhanced disability awareness training.

We ensure that any agency or temporary staff who interact with customers receive the enhanced disability awareness training. Similarly, wherever reasonably practicable, we require the operators of rail replacement bus and coach services and taxi firms to ensure that the drivers of their vehicles have received appropriate training, as outlined in outcomes six, seven and nine in the ORR training guidance.

All frontline staff receive refresher training within two years of the initial induction training, and as a minimum every two years thereafter, to ensure the mandatory training outcomes described above are maintained.