



**CHILTERN RAILWAYS COMPANY LTD**

**Accessible Travel Policy**

**01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024**

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## A: Our Commitment to Providing Assistance for You

Welcome to Chiltern Railways Accessible Travel Policy.

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](#). As all licensed train operators are required to do, this document explains our policies and our approach to providing assistance for customers with restricted mobility, a variety of disabilities and those requiring assistance, for example:

- Those with visual or auditory impairments or 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.

The purpose of this document is to help you plan your journey when travelling with us, understand what services we offer and how we plan to meet your expectations when travelling with us. You will find information on a variety of areas including getting assistance from us and facilities that we have.

### A1: Booking and Providing Assistance to Passengers

#### Our Passenger Assist Team

You can book assistance on our services and those of other train operating companies by contacting our team, who are available 24 hours a day (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day).

Our Assist Team can be contacted via the following channels:

- Call: Chiltern Railways (charged at your local rate) **03456 005165** (selecting option 3 then option 3 again) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day).
- Call: You can request assistance 24-hours a day by contacting National Rail Passenger Assist on freephone **0800 0223720**.
- 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](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/travel-assistance) (for people with hearing impairments).
- Online: You can request assistance online by visiting [www.booking.passengerassistance.com](http://www.booking.passengerassistance.com)
- App: You can request assistance by using the Passenger Assistance by Transport app, available on android and IOS platforms.

## Passenger Assist System

If you can arrange your travel in advance, we participate in an assistance booking system called Passenger Assist. This is a rail industry-wide system used to book assistance at stations for passengers during their journey and to reserve seats and wheelchair spaces on trains where reservations are available. However, we do not operate a seat reservation option, so wheelchair spaces are non-reservable 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 assist 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 accessible alternative transport.

We will provide assistance, when booked through Passenger Assist, at any staffed station during the hours that trains are scheduled to serve that station. Details of these times are included on the individual station pages of the National Rail Enquiries website: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk). At unstaffed stations south of Banbury, because these stations are served by trains without train managers, we will arrange for alternative accessible transport to convey you (and companion, if applicable) to either the nearest accessible station or your destination depending on your journey. At stations north of Banbury, your assistance will be provided by the Train Manager already on board the service.

We will ensure that if your journey involves a change or connection onto other operators' services, assistance can be booked through our Assist Team as one point of contact. The team will:

- check the station accessibility information, which will also be available to view on the National Rail Enquiries station web pages, as well as advice on connecting modes of transport e.g., bus and tube.
- discuss your individual requirements at the time of booking.
- provide 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 facility to buy tickets and, for other operators, make seat reservations. Tickets can be posted (please leave five working days for delivery) or collected from self-service machines at most of our stations. You can view a list of stations with this facility on our website: [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations).

When a train terminates at one of our stations our pre-booked Passenger Assist service will help you to leave the train as soon as possible and in any event within five minutes of the train's arrival time.

## Booking Notice Periods

To make sure that our staff can give you the best service and notify you if there is anything that will affect your journey, you can pre-book assistance up to two hours before you travel by calling **03456 005 165** (select option 3 then option 3 again).

An exception to this would be for the services that run on Boxing Day, 26 December, because our Assist Team and the National Rail Enquiries team are both closed on Christmas Day, 25 December. We may run a reduced timetable on Boxing Day and do not serve all our stations, however you are able to book assistance up to 22:00 on 24 December or check our website for more details on these services.

We will work closely with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) and technology providers to ensure that staff have the technology and the training to allow this change to be successful.

## Handover Protocol For Passenger Assistance at Stations

We manage 37 stations, and the facilities and staffing at these stations vary considerably across the network, 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 the information being transferred on and received.

When travelling between staffed stations, our station colleagues receive your assistance information 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 travel to that station and an alternative will be discussed with you. This may involve waiting until the phone is answered or travelling to an alternative station.

We recommend that you arrive at least **20 minutes** before your departure time to allow staff to provide your assistance and call ahead for you. 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. Where there is a train manager on board the service and you are calling at a part staffed or unstaffed station, they will help you with alighting the train.

### Booked Assistance

When booking your assistance for a journey to or from a station which will not have staff there, we discuss your requirements at the time of booking. 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 an alternative journey plan, assistance, or transport to get you to your destination.

### 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 may be a wait as staff may have other safety critical duties to conduct, such as security checks around the station, however, we aim to provide you with the assistance you need with a minimal delay to your journey.

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 guard.

You can find out all the information you need to about our stations on our website 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 unmanned 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... posters at your station of the nearest staffed station should you wish to travel from there instead.



## Staffing On Trains And Assistance

Some of our services do operate 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,
- Some services between Oxford and London Marylebone.

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. 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.

## Ramps

Ramps are available at our stations and on our trains. Further information about facilities on our train fleet can be found at: [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information](http://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 assisting you, that the ramp will be required during your journey.

## Mobility Assistance Buggies

At London Marylebone Station we have mobility assistance buggies, and our station staff will be happy to take you to 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 the transportation.

## 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.

## Changes In Arrangements

When things change, such as disruption to services, we will provide information about changes to train times, and alternative travel arrangements, in both aural and visual formats by Public Address announcements and Information Screens displayed at stations and on our trains.

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, provide assistance as required.

Our mobile app (available on the App Store and for Android phones) 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 providing a link to our Customer Information Team who are also be able to assist you in continuing your journey.

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

Occasionally a train's departure platform needs to be changed at short notice. Such a change will be shown on the customer information screens and will be announced aurally as soon as possible. When a change occurs, station staff where available will provide assistance and information to help you reach the revised departure platform, if it is accessible to you, as efficiently as possible.

## 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 within the boundaries of our stations.

With regards to taxis, whilst individual operators are licensed by the local authority, we ask the operators to apply for permits to operate from our stations, 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 such taxis will be available at all times.

We will equip our staff with the means to contact the nearest company with accessible taxis. The telephone number of our Customer Service Team, who can contact local firms that own 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](http://www.traveline.info)

## Station Facilities And Services

We are committed to ensuring that the information regarding our services is up to date and customers requiring assistance are aware of any limitations and/or temporary restrictions. Our Commercial and Customer Service Teams are responsible for updating the information provided on the National Rail Enquiries website, including the Station Journey Planner, regarding accessibility and details of the times assistance is available at our stations, including:

- Level of accessibility from station entrance to platforms
- Staffing hours and assistance availability
- Meeting points for assistance
- Ramps for train access
- Accessible waiting rooms, toilets and set down/pick-up points.

For full details please see our up-to-date stations facilities section on our website [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations) or the National Rail Enquiries website [www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations) for stations not served by us.



## Station Accessibility Improvements

We have been working with Network Rail and the Department for Transport to secure funding under the Access for All Scheme which will see the major accessible improvements for our customers as detailed below.

### Warwick Station.

Currently, there are no lifts available at Warwick station and we have secured funding through the Access for All scheme to install lifts so that all platforms will be accessible. The work on this is due to start in February 2023 and scheduled to be complete by February 2024.

### Beaconsfield Station.

Under the same Access for All scheme, we have also secured funding to have lifts installed at Beaconsfield station so that all platforms will be accessible. The work at Beaconsfield is due to start in summer 2023 and will take approximately 12 months for the project to be completed and the lifts being operational.

## Alterations To Facilities

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.

We will provide, wherever possible, reasonable replacement facilities for you that are accessible when the level of accessibility of facilities at a station is less than that normally provided (e.g., as a result of the breakdown, alteration, or removal of facilities).

## 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 on our trains with you in line with the [National Rail Conditions of Travel](#) luggage policy. Our staff must be able to lift the item(s) safely. This states that you may bring with you 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, the colleague assisting you will also assist with your luggage.

## Seats On Trains

We do not provide seat reservations on any of our routes which will be made clear to you at the time of booking assistance and/or ticket purchases. Priority seating (which has extra legroom and moveable armrests and situated near the doors) is available on all of our trains.

Wheelchair spaces are available on our trains, and our on-board Train Managers will assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces give wheelchair users priority. Some of our services operate as a driver-only service, in this instance the station staff will assist you in locating an appropriate seat.

If you are with companions and/or family members, we will do our best to seat them close to your seat. In particular, we will aim to ensure that family groups, especially those requiring adult supervision, are located in close proximity.

## 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 or travel on a seat on the train, this is for the comfort of all customers.

## A2: 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 will involve a change of train or transfer to another mode of transport.

### A2.1: Our Accessible Travel Policy Leaflet For Customers – ‘Making Rail Accessible’.

To accompany this Accessible Travel Policy document, we have produced a shorter and more concise leaflet to help in planning your assisted journey, entitled ‘Making Rail Accessible’; both documents are available in alternative formats. Our leaflet is also available from our ticket offices and leaflet racks at all staffed stations called at by our services, and available online as a PDF (Portable Document Format) on our website at [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information](http://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 will be happy to provide Large Print versions of this leaflet on request within seven working days (without charge) via our website or Customer Service Team. 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.

## A2.2: Stations And Train Accessibility Information

We will ensure that accessibility information relating to our stations and trains is readily available to you and kept up to date. In order to achieve this, we will maintain this information in an online format, attached to the online version of this policy document, [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information) which can be easily 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 using their smart devices.

### Station Accessibility Information

For information on whether the following accessible services and facilities are available at our stations please see our website [www.chilternrailways.co.uk](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk) covering:

- Disabled Parking
- Ticket office opening hours
- Induction Loops
- Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs)
- Help Points
- Catering Facilities
- Accessible toilets
- National Key toilets
- Accessible waiting facilities
- Meeting Points for Assistance
- Staffed Customer Information Points
- Staffing Hours/Assistance Availability
- Ramp for Train Access
- Level of Platform Accessibility
- Wheelchair Availability
- Tactile Paving
- Customer Information Systems

### Train Accessibility Information

On our website at [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information) we provide an overview of each type of rolling stock used on our services, including information on the general accessibility of each type and details of the routes on which different types of rolling stock are normally scheduled to run. We provide information on whether and to what extent the following is provided on each rolling stock type:

- 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 and operate as a driver only service. Staff at the station helping you with your assistance will be able to inform you as to whether there will be an on-board member of staff, however, most of these services are between London Marylebone and Aylesbury Vale Parkway, Oxford, or Banbury. Should you require this information in advance of your journey, please speak to our Customer Services Team on **03456 005165**.

## A2.3: 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.

### A2.3.1: Train Departures And Arrivals Information

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

#### 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 – often at short notice. The platform number will be announced aurally 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.

Our stations have Help Points that are linked to our Customer Information Team who can connect you to our Control Centre, to ensure that service information and assistance is always available, especially during times of disruption.

#### Trains – Aural And Visual Information

We are committed to providing important aural and visual travel information in a variety of means so that it can be accessed as easily as possible. Our on-board staff are trained to give announcements and will do so on all services that do not have pre-recorded announcements and at times where there may be delays or changes to the journey, for example.

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, which relates to achieving consistent levels of accessibility across the European Union's rail system.

We recognise that good announcements are essential to you. Most of our trains have automated announcements informing passengers of the final destination, calling pattern and next stop but in the event of this system failing, our staff are trained to speak slowly and distinctly in a clear, concise, and confident manner.

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. Whenever possible, two minutes before arriving at each station, an announcement will be made. 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 providing reassurance and the reason (if known) will be given. We encourage on board staff to walk through trains to make sure that you have all the information you need.

By Summer 2023, we aim to have Video Relay Service available for our d/Deaf customers whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). This service will enable 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. Updates on availability and launch will be available on our website – [www.chilternrailways.co.uk](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk)

## Rail Replacement Services

If rail replacement is part your journey, our Assist Team will explain all of the available options to you, such as the rail replacement options, alternative rail routes or travelling on a different day. This will help to identify the best journey plan, including on longer journeys if toilet access should be considered, whether an alternative type of vehicle is required that is suitable to your needs and additional considerations such as assistance animals.

Details of rail replacement services can be found on our website, [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/tickets-and-times/changes](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/tickets-and-times/changes) and 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. See Section A4 for further details.

Where there are late changes or disruption to the services you have booked assistance, our Customer Relations Team will use the contact details you provided at the time of booking to contact you to inform you of the changes (this may be by telephone or email). Where contact is unable to be made the staff at your origin or interchange station will discuss the situation and help to make alternative plans (if required) for your forward journey. In addition to this, there will be journey information on our website, mobile app, and social media streams.

### A2.3.2: Connections And Wayfinding

We collaborate with local authorities to ensure that stations are clearly and consistently signposted. For example, we ensure that all stations have visible 'totem pole' signs and work with local councils to help improve local transport connections and wayfinding in the areas which surround 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 all local authorities and stakeholders 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 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.

Where your journey involves a connection with another operator, such as 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.



## A2.4: Ticket Offices, Information Points, Help Points And Our Customer Service Team

You can obtain information about the services provided by us and other train companies at our ticket offices or, at London Marylebone Station, the clearly signed Customer Information Point (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) as well as the facility to arrange Passenger Assist.

Information regarding accessibility onto 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 obtained. 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 Twitter @chilternrailway or visit our website [www.chilternrailways.co.uk](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk).

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

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

Tel: 03457 48 49 50

Website: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

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

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 Nation Rail website [www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations/default.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/default.aspx) or via the Chiltern railways website [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations).

## A2.5: Our Website

We continue to commit to working 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.

To help you find the information you need, we also provide a homepage link 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 provisions 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 any restrictions on the use of wheelchairs, power chairs and scooters. In addition, we will include any details on 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 provide guidance on 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 other information is located elsewhere, we provide a connecting hyperlink on the Assisted Travel page.



## A3: Ticketing and Fares

We are committed to sell tickets accurately and impartially and to provide 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 rolling stock, and they are trained to ensure that the tickets you purchase will be appropriate to travel on the correct type of train.

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, these are detailed below.

### If You Are Visually Impaired

If you are a visually impaired person 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

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

To obtain these discounts, please 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).

If you are visually impaired, you can buy a season ticket that allows a companion to travel with you for free. You can buy these tickets at staffed stations, just remember to carry a document confirming your visual impairment when buying your ticket and travelling. This needs to 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).

### If You Remain in Your Wheelchair For a Rail Journey

If you need to stay in your own wheelchair during your journey the above concessionary fares also apply if you are travelling alone or to any one adult travelling with you.

### 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. It also lets you purchase discounted tickets on the train you are travelling on.

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 get a railcard can be found on:

Website:	<a href="http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk">www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:www.disability@raildeliverygroup.com">www.disability@raildeliverygroup.com</a>
Call:	0345 605 0525
Minicom/Textphone:	0345 601 0132 (for people with hearing impairments)

### 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 one year or three years (you can choose which one to buy).

You can buy it online, on the phone or at any staffed station with 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](http://www.senior-railcard.co.uk)  
Email: [www.railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk](mailto:www.railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk)  
Call: 0345 300 0250

There may be other Railcards that may be suitable for you. Please visit [railcard.co.uk](http://railcard.co.uk) for further information.

### **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 have the facility to 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.

### **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 opened position. Where applicable, we will also unlock the manual side gate leaving it in the open position.

### **Purchase Of Advance Tickets**

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

### **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 also 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.

## **A4: Alternative Accessible Transport**

Some of our stations may not be fully accessible to you. Further details of the accessibility of our stations is available at [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations). This may be due to:

- the station being inaccessible (i.e., due to a physical constraint)
- the rolling stock is inaccessible.
- where there is disruption to services at short notice that, for whatever reason, makes services inaccessible to 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). We will also arrange suitable transport if disruption to our services results in trains/stations inaccessible to you.

## Alternative Accessible Transport During Disruption

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.

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.

## A5: Scooters and Mobility Aids

### Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs can be carried, in the designated spaces, on most of our trains so long as they fit within the following dimensions:

Width 700mm

Length 1200mm

Weight (including passenger) 300kg.

If your wheelchair exceeds the above dimensions, we will unfortunately be unable 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](http://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 make the transfer.

### 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 recently changed your scooter, please check the dimensions to ensure it is okay to use on our trains.

**Powered Scooter criteria is 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 fall within the following size dimensions and are a

- **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 fall within the following size dimensions and are a

- **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.

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.

## **A6: Delays, Disruption to Facilities And Services, And Emergencies**

Disruption to facilities and services can have a significant impact on both your accessibility 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.

At times when our facilities or services are disrupted, we will give you notice through the following channels:

- Chiltern Railways Mobile App
- Chiltern Railways website – [www.chilternrailways.co.uk](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk)
- Social media channels – Twitter and Facebook
- National Rail Enquiries website – [www.nationalrailenquiries.co.uk](http://www.nationalrailenquiries.co.uk)

When you begin to search on our mobile app or website for a journey there will be a “banner” with headline information which will expand when you click on this. If the disruption means your original arrangements are no longer valid, we will do our best to contact you and re-book any required assistance through Passenger Assist. 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.

Our on-board Train Managers and station staff are issued with smart devices, this gives them the means 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.

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.

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 aurally 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.

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.

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.

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.

Should you find our services and facilities 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**

## 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 into account your needs.



Each of our stations has a Station Evacuation Plan detailing evacuation route for all customers, stating whether the route is suitable 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.

## 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 – Sunday 07:00 – 23:00

020 7262 0344

Birmingham New Street Station (Excess Baggage Co)

Inside the entrance off Hill Street

Monday – 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](http://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 the 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**.

We locate these 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. Our Arriva Accessibility and Inclusivity Forum will review performance in this area on a quarterly basis.

#### **A7.4: Replacement Facilities**

We will provide, wherever possible, reasonable replacement facilities for you that are accessible when the level of accessibility of facilities at a station is less than that normally provided (e.g., as a result of the breakdown, alteration, or removal of facilities).

#### **A7.5: Station Entrances**

Our property management department and station management will consider your needs when considering the need to restrict or temporarily close access points at stations, and we will comply with the agreed code of practice with regards to mandatory standards regarding unobstructed progress during building works. All planned works which impact on levels of accessibility will be reviewed by our Accessibility Inclusivity Forum, to ensure the best solutions are being adopted.

We are committed to ensuring that all station entrances or gates are not permanently closed during the opening times of the station. When it is necessary (for example due to refurbishment or security) to close off accessible entrances permanently, which 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 any required works.

### **A8: Redress And Compensation**

#### **Passenger Assist – 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:

- Complaint received via phone, email, or post.
- Complaint recorded on our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system,
- Complaint forwarded to relevant team/manager to investigate.
- Feedback given to Customer Relations team.
- 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.
- Any applicable redress will be sent to customer with our final response.
- Complaint will be closed on CRM system.

We would coordinate a response to your complaint if you travelled with multiple train companies, and we will 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
- will continue to improve access to the railways 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: Strategy and Management

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 how we are doing on our website <https://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/punctuality-performance>
- listen to you and engage with you.

We are committed to working alongside our industry colleagues such as ORR, Network Rail, local authorities, DfT, Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), Transport Focus, Community Rail Partnerships, Rail Ombudsman, and other stakeholder organisations, especially those representing all customers, to further improve the services, products, facilities, and information we provide. We believe that you have the right to safe, comfortable, punctual, and seamless journeys, and we will work to broaden accessibility and equality on our route throughout the period of our National Rail Contract.

Our Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) fulfils the licence condition specified in our passenger licence and 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, should we not be in a position 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.

### 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 passengers. 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 be improving access and services as follows:

- **New Passenger Assist app:** We will roll-out the national Passenger Assist app which will enable you to request Passenger Assist journeys in advance of your travel.

- **Sunflower Lanyards:** we will continue to support the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard scheme and our staff are trained in recognising that wearers may need that extra assistance on their journey.
- **Wavelength Programme:** we have agreed to 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.
- **New lifts installed at Warwick and Beaconsfield Stations:** as part of the Access For All funding stream, new lifts will be installed at both Warwick Station and Beaconsfield Station which will make the stations fully accessible with flat access to and between each platform.
- **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”

## B2: Management Arrangements

Protecting and improving your access to rail services is an integral part of our business strategy 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 that compliance with the Accessible Travel Policy necessitates. 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 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 Heads of Customer Experience North and South, working closely with local managers, are responsible for the day-to-day implementation and compliance with our Accessible Travel Policy. This will largely be achieved through communication with the relevant managers and their teams, alongside 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. Their success will be monitored via customer feedback, relevant passenger surveys and mystery shopping results and the return on investments in the case of ticket sales.

## B3: 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 in the Wavelength 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; and
- 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.

## **B4: Access Improvements**

We are committed to complying 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.

### **Trains**

We work closely with DfT and ORR to ensure that our existing fleet will 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.

### **Stations**

Access varies across all 37 stations we manage. This is due to a combination of station design and the level of staff employed at each station. 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. Details of the accessibility at each individual station can be found on our website [www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations](http://www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations) and on the National Rail website, [www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations).

We also aim to deliver the following improvement schemes at our stations within the next 12 -24 months as part of the DfT's Access for All programme and our own Minor Works programme. The planned schemes are:

- New lifts at Beaconsfield Station and Warwick Station.

In addition to this, as set out in our previous Accessible Travel Policy, from September 2022 we have now extended the hours of our customer service and security guards to ensure that assistance can be provided on the last trains at our staffed stations.

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.

## **B5: Working with Disabled Passengers, Local Communities, And Local Authorities.**

In preparing our accessibility and inclusion proposals and the development of our accessible policies, we consulted 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 will 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 also promote customer participation in our online community to help test ideas around improving accessibility and inclusivity.

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 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. We will also provide an annual report to ORR on the activity and outputs of our work with disabled passengers, local communities, and local authorities.

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.

## B6: Staff Training

As part of our corporate induction training for all new employees, 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 aims 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 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.

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.

## **Mandatory Training Outcomes**

By no later than 31 March 2024, all train drivers will have received the enhanced disability awareness training. All new staff, including senior and key managers, as part of their induction, also receive training in understanding the challenges facing disabled people, equality legislation, defining disability, recognising passengers who need assistance, the regulatory framework of the rail industry, and how the Passenger Assist service operates.

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 the driver of their vehicles have received appropriate training, as outlined in outcomes six, seven and nine in the ORR training guidance.

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.

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.

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.

-ENDS -