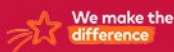




CrossCountry Accessible Travel Policy 2024

*Our
Values*



crosscountry 

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Our commitments to you

We commit to helping people to use the railways and reflecting the wide range of different needs of the communities we serve.

Our team is making improvements to our services, using community engagement and expertise to deliver a better service for you.

This allows you to travel safe in the knowledge that accessible services are available at each stage of your journey.

Our commitment to helping customers travel in confidence includes the following:

- assistance at our stations, on our trains or when making connections
- alternative accessible transport when our trains or the stations we serve are inaccessible
- clear, consistent, and up-to-date customer information
- a range of discounts to reduce the cost of travel for disabled people and companions
- improving our accessible services and taking expert advice from the disabled community
- accessibility panels which hold us to account and give advice on improvements

This document is our 'Accessible Travel Policy'. It sets out our policies and approach to providing assistance for disabled customers and people who may need extra help on their journey. This includes customers with less-visible disabilities such as:

- mental health conditions, e.g., anxiety, depression, OCD, schizophrenia, personality disorders.
- autism; sensory processing difficulties.
- cognitive impairment, e.g., dementia, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities.
- 'less-visible' physical conditions, e.g., chronic pain, respiratory and heart conditions, diabetes, cancer.
- hearing loss.
- low or restricted vision.

Our leaflet, 'Making Rail Accessible' provides a practical guide. It explains what we do to assist older and disabled customers and what they can expect on our trains. It is available at all staffed stations we serve. It is also available on our website: crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel.

In this document, we will give you the information you need to help you understand what to expect when you're travelling with us. We will explain how to find details of the facilities and assistance available. We will also give you the information you will need to help you better plan your journey.



1 Booking and providing assistance

1.1 Passenger Assist

If you arrange your travel in advance, you can use our booking system called 'Passenger Assist'. This is an industry wide system used to book assistance at stations. You can also use it to reserve seats or wheelchair spaces on trains subject to availability.

You can also use the 'Passenger Assist' app to book assistance from your smart device. This will hold all information regarding your booked assistances. It will also give you live updates on your journey. Our team has the 'Passenger Assist' staff mobile app and can access information about passengers who are on board and the assistance they may need. This allows us to better provide assistance and give a more accessible service for our customers.

Through working with station operators, we will provide assistance at all stations while our trains serve that station. You can find these times on the individual station pages of the National Rail Enquiries website: nationalrail.co.uk

At stations where our services call, we have agreements with the station operator. This may be another Train Operating Company or Network Rail. These agreements mean that they need to arrange accessibility assistance at all their stations. You can find how they do this in the station operator's own 'Accessible Travel Policy'. We regularly review the effectiveness of these arrangements with the station operators. You can find a list of stations we serve and accessibility information on our website at:

crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/stations.

If the station you plan to use is unstaffed when you plan to arrive, our team will be able to help you with alternative travel arrangements. Where you need this help, it needs to be pre-arranged through Passenger Assist.

When stations are not staffed, our on-board teams are available for customers who need extra help. This includes help getting on and off the train.

Even if you haven't booked assistance in advance, we will do our best to provide assistance at any station we serve. Most of the stations we serve are staffed and all our trains have Train Managers or Senior Conductors on board.

At staffed stations served by us, the station operator's staff will provide assistance. If you can't find them when you arrive at the station, you can contact them at the signed meeting point or via an electronic Help Point. If the station is unstaffed our on-board colleagues will assist you from the platform onto the train.

If a station you wish to travel from or to is inaccessible to you, we will provide alternative transport to the nearest or most convenient station. This will be at no extra cost to you. Please contact our Passenger Assist team, who will discuss your options.

We work with station operators to agree processes for booking and providing assistance. This means that if your journey involves changing trains, you can book assistance through a single point of contact. We can book assistance for your whole rail journey, even if part of the journey is with other train operators. When you book assistance, our team will check the station accessibility information. This is also available to view on the National Rail Enquiries station website. They will consider your individual needs and ensure there is sufficient



time to make any connections in your journey. We can provide station information by post on request. We can also provide information in alternative formats such as large print.

You can buy tickets for your journey when you book assistance through our customer relations team. You can also reserve seats and wheelchair spaces where this is possible. You can collect your tickets from the ticket machines at many of the stations we serve. You can also ask for us to send your tickets by post (please allow five working days for delivery). You can also buy tickets online and on smart phone devices through the CrossCountry app. You can also buy tickets on board our trains.

To book assistance, please contact our Passenger Assist team. You can book assistance with us 24 hours a day (except 25th and 26th December). Our contact centre operates between 08:00 and 22:00 and outside of these times our third-party supplier will process your assistance booking. We are unable to make any bookings on 25th and 26th December, however our third party supplier will reopen for bookings at 00:01 on 27th December to allow bookings to be made for morning services.

You can contact us to book assistance using the following methods:

Phone: 0800 030 9224 (Freephone, including from mobiles)

Text Relay: 0800 030 9230

Email: assistance@crosscountrytrains.co.uk

Passenger Assist Mobile App: <https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/customer-service/travel-assistance>

Passenger Assist Web App: <https://passengerassistance.com/>

British Sign Language Video Relay Service:

<https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/customer-service/british-sign-language>.

We will provide booking confirmation by email or by post if requested. We aim to answer your call within 20 seconds. We aim to respond to email and online requests within 4 working hours. We track our performance against these targets on a regular basis.

1.2 Recommended notice period for booking assistance

The notice period for Passenger Assistance bookings is two hours. This means that you can book assistance up to the cut off of two hours until your train is due to leave. We do understand that booking assistance in advance is not always possible. We believe that disabled people have the same right to turn up and go as non-disabled people. So we will always help you, where reasonably practicable.

1.3 Assistance at stations

CrossCountry call at more than 110 stations across Great Britain, and the facilities at these stations vary considerably. Whilst most of these stations are staffed, they may have staff presence for only part of the day and some smaller stations have no station-based staff at all.



If our Passenger Assist team believes there is any risk of you not being provided with sufficient assistance at a particular station, or the station not being sufficiently accessible, they will discuss options with you and provide an alternative journey plan, assistance, or transport for you and your companions, according to your needs and the station operators Accessible Travel Policy, to get you to your destination. This will be at no extra cost to you or your travel companions.

If you have booked assistance, please go to the signed meeting point when you arrive at the station. This is usually the ticket office. . If the ticket office is closed, the Meeting Point is usually located on the platform. We recommend you arrive at the station 20 minutes before your train departs. If you have not booked assistance, when you arrive at a station please speak with a member of staff. At an unstaffed station please proceed to the platform and attract the attention of our on-board colleagues when the train arrives. Our on-board colleagues are trained to look for customers who may need assistance when arriving at a station.

When you have boarded a train, the station staff will speak with our on-board colleagues and, where appropriate, your destination station staff to ensure you are provided with assistance to get off the train.

When a train arrives at its destination, the station staff will ensure that customers who have booked through Passenger Assist are helped off the train as soon as possible and within five minutes of the train's arrival into the station. If there are no station staff on duty, our on-board colleagues will assist you off the train.

1.4 Boarding Ramps

Portable ramps are available at all staffed stations served by CrossCountry and on board all our trains for anyone that needs help to get on and off trains. The ramps are specifically designed to fit the train you are travelling on, so that customers with reduced mobility can safely move onto and off the trains. Ramps are available for all customers who require assistance. If you have not booked assistance, please advise a member of station staff where available, or our on-board colleagues who will arrange for the ramp to be put in place. Additional ramps have been placed in Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Bristol Temple Meads, Cheltenham Spa, Coventry, Edinburgh Waverley, Gloucester, Leeds, Newcastle, Reading, Southampton, Stansted Airport, Stockport, & York stations. This will help our team provide assistance to you more quickly and efficiently.

1.5 Changes and disruption to services

When a journey changes, or we experience 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, our Train Managers and Senior Conductors will pass through the train



to check if customers require further support and provide assistance as required. Our colleagues are trained to pay particular regard to the requirements of customers with disabilities and those whose mobility is impaired. If you require help or advice, please make yourself known to our on-board colleagues. In times of severe disruption our on-board staff, in liaison with our Control team, will ensure that each station is provided with your updated travel plan.

We ensure that staff at the stations our trains call at are given up to date information and guidance on how best to assist CrossCountry customers during service disruption. Our CrossCountry mobile app and website show live train times. Help Points are available at many unstaffed stations providing a link to the station operator's Customer Information team who, by working closely with CrossCountry's control team, are also able to assist you in continuing your journey. Our team members using the 'Passenger Assist Staff App' will also be able to view customer requirements during disruption and can amend and provide accessible services and assistance where appropriate.

During planned track or station improvement works, we provide clear information at the stations we serve to advise customers of replacement transport options, by signage including posters and announcements. The same information is also published on our website at [Disruption | CrossCountry \(crosscountrytrains.co.uk\)](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk).

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. If the revised platform is not accessible to you, station staff will provide alternative accessible transport for your onward journey, including where necessary road transport.

1.6 Assistance with onward travel – buses, taxis and trams

If your journey involves onward travel by another means of transport, where practical, station staff will help you to the relevant bus stop, pick up point, taxi rank or tram stop within the station boundary. They are also able to provide information about local transport, including bus services and taxi companies. Our on board colleagues can provide assistance to get on or off the train, however they are not able to provide assistance around the station.

When our Passenger Assist team arranges an accessible taxi as part of an assistance booking we will source a suitable accessible vehicle, where reasonably practicable. Information about the availability of accessible taxis which serve the stations where we call is available from the accessible travel pages of the station operator's website or [National Rail Enquiries](#)

If you wish to pre-book an accessible taxi yourself, you can follow a link from the accessible travel pages on our website by selecting the station you wish to find information about. We also encourage station operators to include these details on station information posters. We will require of our station operator partners that in future, taxi companies contracted to use taxi ranks at the stations where CrossCountry trains call must supply an accessible taxi wherever reasonably practicable.



For further information on local bus and tram connections, contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit traveline.info

1.7 Assistance with luggage

We recognise that luggage can be difficult to manage in the station environment for many disabled and older people. If you need help with your luggage, please tell us when you book assistance with our Passenger Assist team so we can ensure that station staff, where available, are ready to help. Assistance can be given in taking customers and their luggage from station entrances to the train (and vice versa) and when transferring between trains; wherever reasonably practicable.

Our on-board colleagues and station staff must be able to lift luggage items safely, so please bear in mind the limits set out in the National Rail Conditions of Travel, which state that you may bring a maximum of three items of luggage per person.

1.8 Seats on trains and assistance on board

CrossCountry offers seat and wheelchair space reservations on all our trains. If you are booking assistance for a through journey involving connecting services provided by other train operators, our Passenger Assist team will make it clear to you at the time of booking whether reservations can be made for each leg of your journey, as reservations are not available on some train operators services. Where it is not possible to book assistance and reservations across the entirety of your journey, we commit to providing an accessible solution for you.

If you have not booked a seat or wheelchair space on our service, our Train Manager or Senior Conductor will make every effort to help older and disabled passengers find a vacant seat or wheelchair space on board. If this isn't possible we will work with you to find a solution.

Priority seating, which can be reserved via Passenger Assist, has extra legroom, and is situated near the doors. Priority seating is available on all our trains and are clearly labelled. Other passengers are requested to give up the seat if required by a passenger with accessibility requirements. On board colleagues can be asked to help in the event of problems accessing these seats.

Our colleagues are also trained to recognise the Sunflower lanyard so they can proactively offer assistance to Sunflower lanyard wearers, including finding them a Priority seat.

Wheelchair spaces are available on all our trains, and our on-board colleagues assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces are kept clear and wheelchair users are given priority for this space. Signage adjacent to designated wheelchair spaces makes it clear wheelchair users must be given priority by law.

We provide two designated wheelchair spaces on each of our trains. On our long-distance services operated by our Voyager, there is one in First Class and one in Standard. On our Turbostar trains which link Birmingham New Street with Cardiff Central, Cambridge, Leicester, Nottingham, and Stansted Airport, both wheelchair spaces are in Standard accommodation in the same coach. If you are reserving a wheelchair space in advance, we will always aim to reserve the



adjacent seats for a travelling companion or family members, but this may not always be possible.

If you have not reserved a wheelchair space in advance, our on board colleagues will make every effort to find seating for a companion or family members as near as possible to the wheelchair space. Please note that any un-booked wheelchair spaces are available on a strictly first come, first served basis.

Please be advised we are unable to accompany you throughout your entire journey or provide personal care, such as help with eating and drinking, taking medication or using the toilet.

1.9 Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome on all CrossCountry trains, free of charge, and can travel in any part of the train. Our on-board colleagues will be happy to ensure that you are in the most appropriate seating on board the train, usually the Priority seats, to make the journey comfortable for both you and your dog. In addition to this, CrossCountry now offer assistance dog reservation cards, which can be placed on the adjacent seat to which you are traveling. These cards are of booklet size, have been created in colours which are more accessible to people with visual impairments, and include braille translations of the messages on the card, which reads 'Assistance dog under the seat – Please do not sit here. If you require further assistance, please speak to one of our on-board colleagues'.

These cards can be obtained directly through CrossCountry, via contacting through our social media channels, or through contacting our customer relations passenger assistance team:

Customer relations phone number: 0800 030 9224

Customer relations textphone: 0800 030 9230

Customer relations email address:

customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk



2 Information provision

2.1 Our 'Accessible Travel Policy' leaflet for customers – 'Making Rail Accessible'

To complement this 'Accessible Travel Policy' document, our customer leaflet, 'Making Rail Accessible' provides a shorter, practical guide, explaining what we do to assist customers who travel with us and the standards of service they can reasonably expect.

It is available on our website in PDF and Word formats:

[crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel) which is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features (for example, Adobe Reader).

Alternative formats such as audio and large print versions of both this leaflet and our 'Accessible Travel Policy' are available on request free of charge, by contacting our Passenger Assist team by telephone, Text Relay and on our website. We aim to provide this to you within seven working days.

We will arrange for our 'Making Rail Accessible' to be made available at key locations across our network, such as libraries, GP surgeries, job centres, citizens advice bureaus and post offices. These locations are identified through our relationships with our seventeen affiliated Community Rail Partnerships and locally based train operators.

For customers who use our services from or to stations in Wales we will be happy to provide our 'Accessible Travel Policy' and the 'Making Rail Accessible' documents in the Welsh language. This is available on request to our Passenger Assist booking team.

We also encourage station operators to display poster notices at a height accessible to wheelchair users, at each station we serve. These advise customers on how to view the 'Making Rail Accessible' and 'Accessible Travel Policy' documents for each train operator serving the station, including CrossCountry.

2.2 Stations and train accessibility information

We will ensure that accessibility information relating to our trains and the stations we serve is readily available to you and is kept up to date.

In order to achieve this, we will provide links to this information, available at: <https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/customer-service/travel-assistance> which is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features (for example, Adobe Reader) and can be easily accessed via personal mobile devices

For stations information, please visit the stations information section on our website: <https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/stations-destinations/stations>.

2.3 Station accessibility information

For information on whether the following accessible services and facilities are available at any station where CrossCountry trains call, please see our website



crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/stations, select a station name and a link will take you to all the accessibility information you need to know about that station.:

- Level of platform accessibility and how access is provided (e.g. lifts, ramps or steps)
- Disabled Parking
- Accessible Set Down and Pick-Up Points
- Ticket office opening hours
- Meeting Points for assistance
- Staffing hours and Assistance availability
- Accessible Ticket machines
- Customer Information systems
- Help Points (either staffed or audio contact with the station operators Customer Service Centre)
- Accessible toilets (including radar key toilets)
- Induction Loops
- Tactile paving
- Station Wheelchair availability
- Accessible waterproof waiting facilities
- Catering facilities
- Secure Station Accreditation

Alternatively, you can go to the National Rail Enquiries/stations website:

https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/default.aspx

CrossCountry undertakes joint contract audits with our station operator partners to review the provision of services and facilities. Review of the facilities and services provided for customers with disabilities is an important feature of these audits.

Considerable improvements have been made at several stations our trains call at and we will continue to actively work with Station Operators in the planning of improvements to accessibility and upgraded facilities.

2.4 Train accessibility information

An overview of each type of train used on CrossCountry services is available on our website, crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel/trains, including information on the general accessibility of each type and details of the routes on which different types of train are scheduled to run.

All CrossCountry trains offer:

- At least two wheelchair spaces
- At least one Accessible toilet
- A boarding ramp
- Designated priority seating
- Aural information
- Visual information
- A Train Manager or Senior Conductor to provide assistance during the journey on every train.



- Colleagues who have undergone training (and refresher training) in disability and accessibility.
- Colleagues who are trained in using Passenger Assist, and who can provide relevant assistance where required.

Please be aware that First Class tickets will not be able to be used by wheelchair users for journeys operated by our Turbostar trains on routes between Birmingham New Street and Cambridge, Cardiff Central, Leicester, Nottingham, and Stansted Airport. This is because both wheelchair spaces are in standard class on Turbostar Trains.

Customer Information Pledges

In partnership with Network Rail and the Rail Delivery Group, we have agreed a set of pledges which outline what good looks like, and what customers can expect before, during and after their journey with us. More information can be found about the pledges on our website: crosscountrytrains.co.uk/about-us/customer-information-pledges.

2.5 Passenger journey information

We understand it is important for you to trust and have confidence in the information we give. Some customers may travel by rail infrequently, and therefore may not know where or how to access important information, particularly during delays or during times of disruption. This section explains how we communicate accurate, clear and consistent information to you at every stage of the journey – whether at home, online, on the move, at the station or on the train. We aim to provide information in formats which are inclusive to people across the disability and neurodiverse spectrum.

2.6 Stations – aural and visual information

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

At larger stations, a train's departure platform will sometimes need to be changed at short notice. The platform number will flash on the information screen to indicate that it has changed and this will be announced aurally as soon as practicable.

When a change occurs at staffed stations, where possible, the station staff will provide assistance and information to help you reach the revised departure platform, if accessible to you, as efficiently as possible.

In the unlikely event the platform is not accessible to you, the station staff will discuss options with you and arrange alternative transport, for example a taxi to the nearest station accessible to you, so that you can continue your journey.

At many of the stations CrossCountry serves, accessible Help Points are in place that enable customers to speak with a member of the station operator's Customer Information team who will provide any information, on behalf of CrossCountry, you require for your journey.



2.7 Trains – aural and visual information

We are committed to providing important aural and visual travel information on board the train in a format which is easy to understand.

All our trains are fitted with public address systems, and our Train Managers and Senior Conductors are trained to make clear and concise announcements giving train information, including details of the next station.

Our on-board colleagues are also trained to recognise and provide assistance for visually impaired, D/deaf or hearing-impaired people when providing information. If your journey is disrupted, the Train Manager or Senior Conductor where possible will walk through the train to provide information and support customers. Announcements will provide enough time for you to prepare to alight the train, particularly if you require assistance.

Our Train Managers and Senior Conductors have a smart device and can look up and pass on disruption information as well as details of connecting services, facilities at stations and train running.

2.8 British Sign Language (BSL) Onboard provision.

All our colleagues have access to the Sign-it app on their smart devices, which allows them to communicate with D/deaf people and users of BSL through a video bank of useful phrases. This allows for a more inclusive experience for users of BSL as well as improving safety due to the capability of using this feature for safety announcements.

2.9 Connections and wayfinding

If there's not a direct CrossCountry train for your journey, you can get to many places by making just one change. Where a change of train is necessary, we will ensure that this change can be made as easily as possible by suggesting alternative connecting stations.

We have identified alternative interchange locations to Birmingham New Street, as this can be a difficult place to change between trains. These include Cheltenham Spa, Derby, Leamington Spa and Wolverhampton. These stations can often be easier and more convenient places to change trains. Our Passenger Assist team will be pleased to give you advice on connections. We work closely with station operators and local authorities to ensure that stations are clearly and consistently signposted from local roads. We also support station operators and local authorities in the creation of Station Travel Plans for some stations, which include signage and interchange for other methods of transport.

Our Passenger Assist booking team and station staff will provide you with information on how to make connections with other methods of transport, both prior to your journey and when travelling through the stations our trains serve. There is also a useful information poster displayed at all National Rail stations, which provides onward connection information and local maps.



When planning our train timetables, we consult with all local authorities and Community Rail Partnerships in the locality served by CrossCountry, so we make sure the needs of local communities inform any decision we make concerning train service provision, particularly in relation to connections with local services provided by other train operators. CrossCountry have an Accessibility Panel which engages nationally and locally with disabled customers across all the regions we operate into understand these challenges better and to provide better services integrated with local areas. CrossCountry also engages with the Rail Accessibility & Inclusion Forum for the North to get expert views and problem solving for rail specific accessibility issues

2.10 Ticket offices, information points, Help Points and our Passenger Assist team

You can obtain information about the services provided by CrossCountry and all other train companies at station ticket offices. In addition, larger stations such as Birmingham New Street, Leeds and Manchester Piccadilly also have dedicated information points located on the station concourse, with clear signage to their location within the station. The information points have variable height counters with information screens positioned which are more accessible and inclusive. At staffed stations, service information is available in person at ticket offices, which are clearly signed within the station environment and from station staff. In addition, accessible help points are available, which will put you in contact with a member of the station operator's customer information team who will provide any information you require for your journey, on behalf of CrossCountry. Where assistance is delivered by station staff, a clearly marked meeting point is provided, to help customers who have booked assistance to locate and meet station staff.

At unstaffed stations, accessible Help Points are usually in place that enable customers to speak with a member of the station operator's Customer Information team who will provide any information you require for your journey on behalf of CrossCountry. In addition, we encourage station operators to ensure that information is displayed at a height that can easily be read by a wheelchair user.

We are committed to ensuring our call-centre colleagues, and stations teams employed by other operators who give information on our behalf, have up-to-date information available to them on:

- The facilities, services and accessibility of all the stations at which CrossCountry trains call. For consistency, this will be through access to National Rail Enquiries station pages
- Timetables for all CrossCountry services
- Information on fares and ticketing
- Information relating to connections with other operators' train services
- Information regarding accessibility onto other forms of transport
- Delays, disruption, diversions and emergencies which affect the advertised timetable
- Confirmation of any arrangements that have been made through Passenger Assist, including bookings by other operators, which will also be available on the Passenger Assist Staff App.



2.11 Our website

We committed to working towards achieving the industry- recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG) AAA Standard, which define how to make web pages and content more accessible for people with disabilities. We have also implemented BSL translations across key pages on our website, so that BSL users can access high quality translations of our web content. 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: crosscountrytrains.co.uk/WCAG.

To help you find the information you need, we also provide a homepage link to our Assisted Travel page, crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel which explains the Passenger Assist service in a clear and concise manner, using plain English and avoiding the use of rail 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). It also sets out information of on board facilities and station information, including accessibility information, staff availability, our Passenger Assist Centre opening times and disabled parking spaces.

It also provides links to pages which detail information on any temporary reductions in accessibility and any delays or disruptions to facilities and train services where relevant. As CrossCountry does not manage any of the stations we serve, we are reliant on station operators following agreed rail industry procedures which ensure any temporary reductions in accessibility at stations are notified to rail customers and other rail industry staff through the National Rail Enquiries website and their own website pages. We will publish any information relating to temporary reductions in accessibility on our train services and any delays and disruptions to facilities and train services through our CrossCountry app and on our website crosscountrytrains.co.uk.

Our website informs you of any restrictions on the use of mobility aids including wheelchairs and mobility scooters, together with details about priority seating and rail industry recognised assistance card schemes, such as the Sunflower lanyard.

In addition, there is a link to help you access the 'Making Rail Accessible' 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 in the event something has gone wrong for an assistance booking. We also now have British Sign Language translation available on our website.

We now have Autism Friendly Route Guides for key routes across our network available on our website, these provide information on likely sensory changes on the route and what to expect from our trains. These guides can be found on our accessibility web page here: [Travelling with Impaired Mobility | CrossCountry \(crosscountrytrains.co.uk\)](https://crosscountrytrains.co.uk)



**Our
Values**



crosscountry 

3 Ticketing and fares

You can buy your rail ticket through our CrossCountry app or via our website at [crosscountrytrains.co.uk](https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk). If you are unable to buy a ticket before your journey, because our facilities are inaccessible or unavailable, you can do so without penalty during the journey or at the destination station and enjoy any reduction to which you are entitled, such as using a Disabled Persons Railcard. See below for details about eligibility for discounted tickets if you don't hold a railcard.

We understand that disabilities are not always visible and if you are concerned about purchasing tickets, please contact staff on stations or on trains or our Passenger Assist booking team for advice.

Station ticket office staff and our Passenger Assist booking team are also familiar with the accessibility of our various types of trains, and they are trained to ensure that the tickets you buy will be appropriate to travel on the correct type of train and in the correct type of seating accommodation.

Along with all other train operators, we participate in several schemes offering discounted fares, which are detailed below.

3.1 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:

- Anytime Single or Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day return – 50% discount

No concession applies if you are travelling alone and you do not hold a railcard. To obtain these discounts a document confirming your disability, issued by a recognised institution (for example Government Department, Local Authority, Guide Dog Ownership certification or RNIB) is required. Discounted tickets without a railcard must be purchased at a Ticket Office. Season tickets – you can be issued with one adult season ticket to cover two persons: the two travelling for the price of one. A different companion may travel with you.

3.2 If you remain in your wheelchair for a rail journey

If you remain in your wheelchair throughout the journey and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets will apply:

- Anytime Single/Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Return – 50% discount

The same discount will apply for one person travelling with you.



3.3 Disabled Persons Railcard

The Disabled Persons Railcard is a type of discount card for tickets that allows those living with disabilities to save up to 1/3 on rail travel. If you're travelling with another adult, they will also receive 1/3 off their rail fare.

There are no time restrictions on the Disabled Persons Railcard, so you can use it to get a discount on tickets at any time of the day. Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a railcard can be found at:

Website: disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

Email: disability@raildeliverygroup.com

Call: 0345 605 0525

Textphone: 0345 601 0132

Disabled Persons Railcard discounts are available on tickets sold by our on-board colleagues, ticket machines, ticket offices, website, and mobile app. When purchasing a ticket on our website, there are prominent messages in place to advise customers that assistance is available for their journey. We continue to ensure that our contact centre and ticket office staff offer our assistance service to customers who mention they have a Disabled Persons Railcard.

3.4 Senior Railcard

Available to anyone aged 60 or over, a Senior Railcard provides the opportunity to save up to 1/3 on rail travel in the UK. Senior Railcards can be purchased online, over the phone or at any station ticket office with your passport or UK driving license as proof of age.

Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a get a railcard can be found at:

Website: senior-railcard.co.uk

Email: railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk

Call: 0345 300 0250

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

3.5 Ticket machines

Most of the stations served by CrossCountry have ticket machines, many of which have been designed to in compliance with the Department for Transport Joint code of practice (Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations, March 2015, section N2. Ticket sales points) and have the ability to issue tickets at the reduced rate to holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard and their companion. We are committed to always gaining the opinions of our customers on the accessibility standards of our ticket machines and welcome feedback on this through our survey and feedback channels.



3.6 Ticket gates

Automatic ticket gates are in place at many of the stations CrossCountry serves and the station operator is required to always provide at least one wide aisle gate. When the gates are operational there will always be a member of staff on hand to help you use them. Station operators will ensure that these gates remain open when the station is unstaffed, or when ticket gate staff are not in attendance.

3.7 Purchase of advance tickets

Where advance tickets are available for purchase, we advise that you check that the required facilities (for example, accessibility of the train type and wheelchair space availability in First Class) are available for the journey you are making before purchasing tickets. This may particularly apply for through journeys involving more than one train operator.

3.8 Alternative accessible transport

If a station you wish to travel from is inaccessible to you, we will provide alternative transport, at no extra charge, to the nearest or most convenient station to enable you to continue your journey. For example, if there is only access via steps to some or all platforms, we will arrange alternative accessible road transport (such as a taxi) for you to the nearest suitable alternative station that is accessible to you. Please contact our Passenger Assist team, who will discuss your needs in order to arrange appropriate assistance. We recognise that circumstances will vary for individual passengers, and we will take into account your needs when discussing alternative transport options. Similarly, if you are unsure whether the station you intend to use is accessible to you, please contact our Passenger Assist team.

Wherever possible, we aim to ensure you can travel by rail for as much of your journey as is practicable.

When we cannot run rail services due to engineering work or a replacement timetable, we aim to use accessible rail replacement buses or coaches in line with Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR). If a vehicle does not meet your needs, we will provide alternative transport options for you and your companions, which station staff will discuss with you. When we cannot run rail services due to short notice disruption to advertised train services, for whatever reason, we will use the same approach as outlined above



4 Mobility scooters and Wheelchairs

4.1 Wheelchairs

All CrossCountry trains can accommodate customers using a wheelchair, in the clearly designated spaces on board, providing they fit within the following dimensions:

Width: 700mm

Length: (including footplates) 1,200mm

Height: (including the user) 1,350mm

Weight: (including the user) 300kg

If your wheelchair exceeds the above dimensions, please contact our Passenger Assist team free of charge on 0800 030 9224, Text Relay 0800 030 9230, who will be able to offer advice.

4.2 Mobility Scooters

We know how important mobility scooters are for some of our customers. So, we're more than happy to accommodate certain types of mobility scooters on our trains.

We can accept mobility scooters on board our trains if they have a small triangular footprint and do not exceed the maximum dimensions for a wheelchair, as stated above.

We advise that you seek the advice of our Passenger Assist team free of charge on 0800 030 9224, or on Text Relay Phone on 0800 030 9230 if your scooter is within the above dimensions before attempting to bring it on board our trains. Larger powered scooters cannot be conveyed on CrossCountry trains due to their weight, dimensions and lack of manoeuvrability. They may also pose a safety risk to other customers and our colleagues.

Customers with scooters which can be folded down into lightweight manageable components may take their scooter onto the train as luggage. Customers or a travelling companion will need to be able to carry the folded scooter on or off the train. It should be stowed in the luggage rack or dedicated luggage compartment in Coach D of our Voyager trains.

We do not currently accept eScooters on our trains. Please note that charging motorised wheelchairs or mobility scooters is not allowed on our services due to the voltage of our plug sockets on board.

Other train operators and transport companies may have different requirements. If you need to travel with another train operator or transport company to complete your journey, please make sure you or your booking agent checks their arrangements for travelling with mobility scooters on all stages of your journey.



5 Delays, disruption to facilities and services, and emergencies

We understand that disruption to facilities and train services can have a significant impact on the accessibility of rail services, as well impacting the confidence of disabled people and other passengers with accessibility considerations in travelling on the railway. Where disruption occurs, CrossCountry is committed to doing everything possible to ensure that customers can continue their journey wherever possible.

During disruption, we will provide information about changes to train times and alternative travel arrangements through the Public Address and Customer Information Screens on trains and at the stations we serve. The Transreport Passenger Assist app for both customers and colleagues will also act as another sources on information regarding your journey. Our app and website will include live departure times and passengers can use Help Points at stations, where they are provided, to find further information.

In addition, at larger staffed stations, where reasonably practicable, we encourage station operators to deploy staff to the station concourse and platform to assist and support customers with alternative transport arrangements and other needs such as luggage. In the event of service disruption, we aim to use rail replacement buses or coaches which are accessible and comply with PSVAR accessibility regulations. We work with regular suppliers for rail replacement transport so that we can request accessible vehicles are provided during periods of disruption. However, this is sometimes more challenging when sourcing vehicles at short notice, particularly as the availability of accessible vehicles can be limited in some geographical areas.

In the event of service disruption, when a rail replacement road vehicle does not meet your needs, we will provide alternative transport options, which station staff or our Arriva Road Transport Rail Replacement Co-ordinators will discuss with you, at no additional cost. We will make all reasonable endeavours to secure accessible rail replacement buses, coaches and taxis. If we are unable to secure accessible vehicles that are appropriate for the routes they would be used on, we will explain the reasons why. CrossCountry has established, comprehensive contractual arrangements with coach, bus and taxi companies across the network we serve to provide alternative transport arrangements, including a variety of accessible vehicle providers, and may venture outside of these agreements to secure suitable accessible vehicle transportation for you. Sometimes, particularly at larger stations, a train's departure platform will sometimes need to be changed at short notice. The platform number will flash on the information screen to indicate that this has changed and the same information will be announced aurally as soon as practicable.

When a change occurs at staffed stations, where possible, the station staff will provide assistance and information to help you reach the revised departure platform, if accessible to you, as efficiently as possible.

In the unlikely event the platform is not accessible to you, we will arrange alternative transport, for example, a taxi, to the nearest station accessible to you, so that you can continue your journey. The station staff will discuss available options with you wherever possible.

If you have booked through Passenger Assist and any disruption to the advertised train service means your original arrangements, including



connections are no longer valid, we will make contact with 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 disruption. These changes will also appear on bookings made through the Passenger Assist app on your smartphone, and in this case, you may also be contacted via email with further information and the facilities to rebook assistance for your journey. If we are unable to contact you for whatever reason, and disruption occurs during your journey, please ask the station staff or our on board colleagues for help.

If there is any change to the level of accessibility of facilities at a station, we will inform you as soon as we are aware. We expect the station operator to make every reasonable effort to provide replacement arrangements or facilities, wherever possible, as is outlined in our comprehensive stations' agreements with operators, which are reviewed regularly. This may involve making alternative transport arrangements for you to or from the nearest accessible station in the event of a station on your journey not being accessible to you. We carry out regular joint contract audits with station operators to ensure the provision of station facilities and services are being delivered to agreed service quality standards. We also have several station audits delivered by our Customer Service management team each month. This data helps us have objective discussions with our station operator partners about ways to improve service delivery at stations.

5.1 Emergency procedures at stations

Every staffed station served by CrossCountry has a local emergency plan which details the actions that station staff must take in an emergency. These plans include detailed evacuation arrangements and consider the needs of disabled and older customers, including those who use mobility scooters and wheelchairs. If you are a wheelchair user and you are in an area where no safe evacuation route exists, a place of safety will have been pre-identified for you to await rescue by the emergency services, you will always be accompanied by a member of staff.

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

Station staff are trained to identify and communicate with passengers with less-visible disabilities who may need extra assistance at times of disruption.

5.2 Emergency procedures on trains

Our policy is not to evacuate wheelchair passengers or other passengers with significantly reduced mobility without the support of the emergency services unless the situation is life-threatening. Depending on the type of incident and risks involved, we may move you to a safer part of the train until arrangements



can be made to move the train to the nearest station. If it becomes essential to evacuate a train between stations, we will work closely with the emergency services to provide assistance with the evacuation.

To aid our communication with BSL users, we have utilised the Sign-It app to communicate emergency phrases translated into BSL to ensure D/deaf customers fully understand any emergency situations that may occur on board, and what the necessarily safety procedures are.

6 Station facilities

6.1 Left luggage

Our Passenger Assist booking team can provide more information about left luggage facilities, which are available at some larger stations, including contact details.

6.2 Station facilities and services

Whilst CrossCountry does not operate any of the stations our trains serve, we are committed to working with station operators to ensure that the information regarding stations facilities and services is up to date and customers requiring assistance are aware of any limitations and temporary changes or restrictions. This includes:

- where the built environment might deem them inaccessible
- where significant temporary work affecting station accessibility is being carried out.
- where there are changes to stations that would make them temporarily inaccessible (for example when facilities such as lifts and toilets at stations are out of order).
- where facilities on trains that materially affect disabled passengers' journeys are unavailable, including the use of inaccessible rolling stock on routes where stock is normally accessible, as far as this is reasonably practicable.

Through our service quality contracts for station services, our Station Liaison Managers requires station operators to ensure the information provided on the National Rail Enquiries website, including the Station Journey Planner, regarding accessibility and details of the times assistance from staff is available at stations served by CrossCountry is updated, including:

- Level of accessibility from station entrance to platforms (e.g. lifts, ramps, steps)
- Staffing hours and assistance availability
- Location of Meeting Points for assistance
- Accessible waiting rooms and toilets
- Accessible car parking and set down/pick-up points

For full details, please see our up-to-date stations facilities section at crosscountrytrains.co.uk/stations where links take you direct to the accessible pages of the station operators' website for the station(s) you wish to use or visit the National Rail Enquiries website at nationalrail.co.uk/stations, for all stations on the National Rail network.

6.3 Blue badge accessible parking

Car parking facilities are available at many stations across our network. At most stations there is a charge for long stay parking, but most stations also have free short-stay car parking. Information about car parks at the stations we serve can

be found at crosscountrytrains.co.uk/stations where you can follow a link to the station operator's website.

All stations have designated parking spaces available for Blue Badge holders marked by the International Symbol for Access.

Station operators are responsible for the ongoing monitoring of the use of designated disabled parking bays in station car parks to ensure that motorists without 'blue badges' are not using the designated disabled parking bays.

CrossCountry will work with station operators to review the demand to ensure that sufficient disabled car parking spaces are available.

6.4 Alterations to facilities

When our advertised facilities and services are not available at a station we serve and or on board our trains, we will make every effort to provide alternative facilities.

Should the facilities on which you rely for your journey become temporarily unavailable on a train or at a station, we will work with our industry partners to ensure information systems are updated 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 our Passenger Assist team will endeavour to contact you by email, telephone or text relay, this includes:

- Where stations you were due to use are deemed inaccessible due to their built environment
- 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 – where reasonably practicable to do so; 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 station staff that deliver customer service on our behalf and to you through our CrossCountry app and website, ticket offices, Customer Relations Centre, Passenger Assist 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. If a station is inaccessible to you, we will provide alternative transport to the nearest accessible station on your journey.

6.5 Station entrances

From time-to-time station operators may need to temporarily restrict access to stations, for example, due to improvement work. If this happens, we will work closely with station operators to ensure the needs of people with accessibility requirements, such as disabled people and older people, are considered, and will provide adequate information and a suitable alternative if necessary.



7 Redress: what to do if something goes wrong with assistance

Customers are at the heart of all that we do, and we work hard to ensure we deliver assistance in the right way for every journey. However, sometimes things go wrong, and we may not be able to provide the level of service that we promised.

When assistance has been booked through Passenger Assist but has not been provided as you expected, please contact our Passenger Assist team and we will investigate why this happened and what action we intend to take to ensure it does not reoccur.

We understand the inconvenience caused when assistance is not delivered, so we will also provide you with appropriate redress for your journey.

We aim to make the process of raising an issue as simple as possible, so we provide details of how to do so in our 'Making Rail Accessible' leaflet and on our website: crosscountrytrains.co.uk/accessibletravel

If your journey involved multiple train companies, including CrossCountry, we will co-ordinate a single response on behalf of all operators involved. If the assistance failed when you were travelling on another operator's train, we will transfer the complaint to that operator. We will always ask for your consent prior to doing this.

Our arrangements do not affect or limit any rights you have as a consumer under, for example, The Consumer Rights Act 2015, to a different level of compensation, including consequential loss, where CrossCountry is at fault.

If you believe that it does apply to your journey, please contact our Passenger Assist team free of charge on 0800 030 9224, Text Relay 0800 030 9230. We always consider each claim made to us on its individual merits.

If you would rather, you can contact our Customer Relations Centre, or email us at customer.relations@crosscountrytrains.co.uk Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your complaint. If you're unhappy with the final response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman:

Rail Ombudsman Phone: 0330 094 0362

Textphone: 0330 094 0363 Email: info@railombudsman.org

By Post: FREEPOST – RAIL OMBUDSMAN



8 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 accessibility requirements and reduced mobility
- Ensure our colleagues have the resources, skills and confidence to deliver assistance to customers
- Measure the success of our Accessible Travel Policies.

8.1 Strategy

CrossCountry strives to provide rail services which are truly accessible to all, so that customers can travel in confidence, safe in the knowledge that assistance and accessibility provisions are available at each stage of their journey, when needed.

We are committed to assisting and enabling people to use the railways confidently, considering the wide range of accessibility needs of disabled and older people, and continuously improving the quality and reliability of assistance available.

We work with our rail industry colleagues, franchising and regulatory authorities, 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 information, facilities and services we provide.

Our 'Accessible Travel Policy' fulfils our obligations under our Passenger and Station Operator Licences, the DfT's Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations: A Code of Practice 2015, the ORR 'Accessible Travel Policy Guidance 2022', and considers the provisions within the Equality Act 2010.

We will ensure that new facilities on our trains and, where we have influence, the stations we serve are designed to meet the standards of the Persons of Reduced Mobility Technical Specification for Interoperability (PRM-TSI) regulations.

8.2 Management arrangements

The provision of services to disabled people, older people, and anyone with accessibility requirements is an integral part of our business planning process, championed by our Head of Customer Experience and Customer Director. Establishing and maintaining our 'Accessible Travel Policy' is a condition of our Passengers' License. For compliance purposes the Managing Director is accountable for the license.

Our Accessibility and Inclusion Manager has responsibility for implementing our 'Accessible Travel Policy'. This includes consulting with disabled people, community groups, and charities to understand where services and facilities do not meet the needs of disabled people, and then work with the internal teams to



prioritise funding requests and tie in with other projects where possible. Our team will liaise with the relevant directorates and managers across the CrossCountry business to work on the specific tasks that compliance with the 'Accessible Travel Policy' necessitates.

In formulating business cases for investment in new services and facilities, the Customer Director will assess the likely return on investment of improvements for customers with accessibility requirements. Such business cases will therefore consider the likely revenue increase as a result of making our services and facilities more accessible to all customers. Their success will be monitored via customer feedback, relevant passenger survey results and the return on investments by increased ticket sales. We regard accessibility and inclusion as integral parts of our business, including associated revenue, and place a great emphasis on disabled people and people with accessibility requirements as highly valued customers.

8.3 Monitoring and evaluation

We have a culture of continuous improvement and will therefore measure the quality of service relating to assistance provided.

Many of our service quality metrics are reported to the Office for Rail & Road and published in our bi-annual CrossCountry Customer Report which we publish on our website.

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

- Monitoring complaints about assistance
- Monitoring complaints about facilities being inaccessible
- National Rail Passenger Survey results relating to accessibility
- Outputs from our externally inspected Service Quality Regime which tests our services and facilities
- Outputs from our joint contract audits with station operators which tests services and facilities provided to CrossCountry customers at stations
- Feedback from our regular, active participation in Stakeholder Equality Groups across our network
- Feedback from CrossCountry's annual Community Rail Conference to engage and receive feedback from stakeholders and customer groups.
- Using Passenger Assist booking data to track trends in assisted booking and monitor growth and usage.
- Commissioning and working closely with the CrossCountry Accessibility Panel to measure and sense-check policies, procedures, and improvements.
- Commissioning 'mystery shoppers' to evaluate our service and its integration with Passenger Assist.

Periodic progress reports will be provided to the Board of Directors, highlighting the action CrossCountry is taking on improving travel for disabled and older people, and our performance against the metrics we set out above. This includes a report of the number of assistance bookings made by the CrossCountry Passenger Assist team.



Internal weekly reports regarding customer complaints made about accessibility issues at stations are fed back to our Station Liaison Manager who takes appropriate follow-up action with our station operator partners.

We will regularly review this policy and a report on findings will be sent to the DfT and 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.

8.4 Accessibility improvements

We will continue to improve access and services as follows:

- Continually reviewing our rolling stock in conjunction with disabled people's input.
- Continue to build upon our training offering, particularly regarding customers with less-visible disabilities. Our colleagues are already trained to recognise various industry-wide schemes relating to less-visible disabilities, such as the Sunflower lanyard
- Work on our messaging to ensure it is inclusive and representative.
- Work with other TOCs to deliver an industry-wide inclusive signage and announcement scheme.
- Work with the RDG and other TOCs in shaping the continued roadmap for development and implementation of the Transreport Passenger Assist app and system
- Work closely with the accessibility panel, Arriva Group, and wider industry initiatives to drive innovation across accessibility and inclusion.

We will continue to review our 'Accessible Travel Policy' annually and incorporate feedback we receive from you, customer organisations and other stakeholders regarding the services we provide. The feedback will be vital in shaping our policies and making continuous improvements.

8.5 Working with disabled customers, local communities and local authorities

In preparing our 'Accessible Travel Policy' we have consulted with our disability stakeholders. Key organisations that represent the interests of customers with disabilities have reviewed and approved our 'Accessible Travel Policy' including:

- The Office for Rail and Road
- The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- The Department for Transport

8.6 CrossCountry Accessibility Panel

CrossCountry have commissioned the Gloucester Community Rail Partnership (GCRP) to deliver an accessibility panel, to provide a forum of transparent engagement with people with a wide range of different disabilities. This forum is used to inform the development of our accessibility strategies and policies.

The panel itself is formed of a mix of disabled customers, disability and accessibility organisations, accessibility experts, CRPs, and the CrossCountry



A&I Team. The panel is formed of a national board, which reviews CrossCountry and network-wide accessibility policy, strategy, and provision, as well as a number of local and regional panels, which focus on localised issues around stations CrossCountry serves, routes, trains, accessible information, and locally integrated transport services.

The panel provides critical evaluation of CrossCountry's accessibility strategy and policy, from the point of view of a variety of disabled voices and accessibility experts, as well as being an open forum for suggestions to improve our accessibility offering.

8.7 Mystery shopping

CrossCountry are delivering a mystery shopper feedback exercise, utilising the forum of disabled customers and accessibility experts from the GCRP-run CrossCountry accessibility panel. Our mystery shoppers book and travel on our services and appraise their experiences against a formulated framework which will measure the effectiveness of passenger assistance, and how this relates to our services in the real world of travel, to provide further monitoring and insight for us, our industry, and the relevant regulatory bodies.

8.8 Key industry partners

There are several key industry partners that we work with to improve the accessibility of our services. For example:

- Network Rail and station operators – collaboration on station improvement and investment programmes
- Transport Focus – understanding research on customer priorities
- Combined Authorities and Passenger Transport Executives – involvement in the creation and delivery of regional transport policies

We are in regular contact with key stakeholders through our Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. This sets out how we engage with all our customers, potential customers and other stakeholders in the communities we serve to understand and respond to their experiences. These stakeholders include:

- Local authorities
- Disability groups
- Community groups
- Rail user groups and Community Rail Partnerships

We also aim to actively participate in other regional Stakeholder Equality Groups, where these are located on our network, and integrate our involvement with these with our own Accessibility Panel.

At a national level, we liaise with national organisations such as Age UK, Scope and RNIB via our trade body the Rail Delivery Group (RDG). We are also represented on the RDG Accessibility and Inclusion Group and any working parties set up by that group to investigate ways in which accessibility may be improved.



We will actively promote the availability of assisted travel, with a particular focus on the customer document, 'Making Rail Accessible', as well as associated communications around the roll out of Passenger Assist.

Our Values



9 Colleague training

We know that colleague training plays an important part of delivering a railway which is accessible for everyone. By giving CrossCountry colleagues the skills and understanding they need to consider accessibility in everything we do. All new starters receive disability awareness training as part of their corporate induction, while all existing colleagues, including senior managers and our leadership team, receive refresher training at least every two years. Our training materials have been created in partnership with a disability charity and have been reviewed and edited by the Accessibility and Inclusion team. We will continue to regularly review the contents of this training package in partnership with the CrossCountry Accessibility Panel.

Our training focuses on the knowledge, skills and tools that are necessary to enable our employees to provide assistance and accessible services to disabled people, older people, and customers with accessibility requirements in the best possible way. The creation and delivery of our training materials includes the lived experience of older and disabled people who use the railway, including people with less-visible disabilities.

The training focusses on the importance of providing assistance, the impact of how we provide our services and the decisions we make. It ensures that our customer-facing colleagues can recognise the particular assistance requirements of all of our customers.

9.1 Training outcomes

The Office for Rail and Road have set out in their guidance nine mandatory training outcomes, which our training achieves:

1. Understanding disabled people 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 of disability and the appropriate terminology.
4. Recognising passengers who need assistance: exploring physical and non-physical impairments to enable colleagues 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 colleagues work as well as at the key destination stations on the Northern network.
9. Providing safe assistance: duties and process to ensure that both colleagues and customers remain safe at all times.



The aim of the course is to build our colleagues knowledge and skills to enable them to best meet the needs of customers who are disabled, have accessibility requirements, and/or require our support; and to do this in accordance with both the law, The Equality Act 2010 and CrossCountry's commitment to further improve the accessibility of our services for all of our customers.

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

- The use of equipment provided to assist disabled people, older people, and people with accessibility requirements, such as ramps, and where appropriate, 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.

All customer facing teams receive specific training for communicating clearly with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding. This helps them understand the importance of:

- Clarity of speech
- Intonation
- Emphasis
- Timeliness
- Language.

In addition to this training, our customer relations teams are trained in using the BSL Video Relay System (VRS) to communicate with British Sign Language users over video phone through a translator.

This training is designed to raise awareness of potential communication issues and emphasises how ineffective communication can negatively impact disabled and older customers.

Where reasonably practicable, we will ensure that any agency or temporary staff that interact with customers receive an appropriate level of disability awareness training, which will focus on Passenger Assist, communication and providing safe assistance, as outlined in outcomes 6, 7 and 9 in the mandatory training guidance noted by the ORR.

Similarly, wherever reasonably practicable, we will 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 6, 7 and 9 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 CrossCountry training course covering, as a minimum, the Passenger Assist service and customer communication.

All our colleagues will continue receive refresher training within two years of the training they have received, and as a minimum every two years thereafter; to ensure the mandatory training outcomes described above are maintained.



We will harness the experience and expertise of people with a range of experience and disabilities in the development and delivery of our training materials.

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