

ORR Accessible Travel Policy review form

Stakeholder	DPTAC
Train Operator	London Southend Airport Station
Review start date	30/10/2019
Review end date	14/11/2019

ATP: Passenger Leaflet

Question	Comments
<p>Tone: Does the leaflet have an appropriate tone? Is it friendly and welcoming in tone or is there too much reliance on legal or technical language and jargon?</p>	<p>Overall DPTAC feel the leaflet does have an appropriate tone. It is relatively easy to read, and generally inspires confidence.</p> <p>DPTAC suggest the layout of the leaflet could be improved, making it more visually engaging</p> <p>DPTAC doesn't feel that the leaflet is overly reliant on technical language / jargon.</p>
<p>Motivational impact: Does the leaflet provide positive encouragement for disabled people to travel by train as a result of reading the leaflet?</p>	<p>DPTAC feels that the leaflet would inspire confidence that their support and assistance needs would be met, although there is scope for improvement particularly in terms of positively encouraging and motivating disabled people to travel. Some positive visual imagery to balance with the text would be useful. And we recognise that for obvious reasons the emphasis is on the interchange with the airport for passengers arriving or departing, but some clarity about assistance connecting to local bus services, taxis or other forms of transport would be useful.</p>

<p>Ease of use: Does the content of the leaflet provide clarity both in terms of the language used and explanatory text? Does the leaflet have a logical and easy to follow structure?</p>	<p>DPTAC were happy with the logical flow of the leaflet and felt it was easy to follow, both when reading in its entirety, and when 'dipping into' it. Some instances of language were fairly advanced or overly complex, and so DPTAC would recommend reviewing language for those with lower reading and comprehension ability. In this context, it may be useful to ask the Plain English Campaign to review the leaflet.</p>
<p>Good practice: Please highlight areas which are particularly strong and/or innovative.</p>	<p>Integration with London Southend Airport staff.</p>
<p>Other specific points: Please raise any other points that you think are relevant including any areas of inaccuracy and/or omissions.</p>	<p>DPTAC were concerned that at the bottom of the first page of the leaflet, there is reference to luggage being held in a person's lap. Presumably this is a reference to wheelchair users. Apart from this being specific to one type of disability, DPTAC are also concerned that putting luggage on a wheelchair user's lap may not be either appropriate or safe. We feel this requirement should be removed. There is also reference to size of luggage, and number of pieces of luggage. Whilst DPTAC understand why these restrictions might be in place, they do not feel disabled passengers should be restricted in these terms, when non-disabled passengers are not. DPTAC encourage London Southend to reconsider this paragraph, both in the leaflet and in the policy document.</p> <p>On the third page of the leaflet the section on Disabled Persons Railcard seems to have got lost within a section on Wheelchair users. DPTAC would suggest some re-ordering, or re-heading, of this section to ensure prominence of Disabled Persons Railcard information.</p> <p>At the bottom of page 3 in the leaflet (and in the policy document), there is a section starting with the sentence 'Our commitment to you includes the following'. DPTAC were confused by this section and suggest a re-wording.</p>

	<p>A paragraph acknowledging non-visible disabilities, and what this might mean, would be supportive.</p> <p>On a general level, there doesn't seem to be enough detail provided to help a person with a non-visible disability understand how to identify themselves to staff. This would include, for example, people with a non-visible physical disability, autism (without a communication problem), mental health difficulties, vision and sight impairment, and so on.</p> <p>Similarly, DPTAC were pleased that station staff would be on hand to support disabled passengers during an emergency situation, or platform change etc, but question how they will recognise all passengers with disabilities. Many disabilities are obvious, but many are 'non-visible'. DPTAC note that London Southend Airport have a voluntary 'blue band' method of allowing those with a non-visible disability to discretely identify themselves, and so it may be worth acknowledging that rail station staff can recognise those also. Other stations / train operators use the Sunflower Lanyard scheme, or an assistance card.</p> <p>DPTAC note that the website information is missing from the leaflet.</p>
<p>Overall comments on the leaflet.</p>	<p>Overall an informative and reassuring leaflet, which would benefit from some simple amendments, and being made visually more appealing, encouraging and motivating.</p>

ATP: Policy Document

Question	Comments
<p>Tone: Does the policy document have an appropriate tone, bearing in mind that it is a more formal and comprehensive description of the train operator's policy with regard to accessibility.</p> <p>[NB. The document should still avoid excessive use of legal or technical language, and jargon.]</p>	<p>The Policy document is well structured and generally does not use legal or technical jargon. It has an appropriate positive tone and directly addresses disabled people in places.</p>
<p>Motivational impact: Does the content of the policy document provide positive encouragement for disabled people to travel by rail?</p> <p>[NB. The policy document is inherently less focussed on motivational content, but should nevertheless be written in a way that encourages use of the train operator's services.]</p>	<p>Whilst reassuring to disabled passengers, the policy does not actively encourage and motivate passengers to travel. An additional motivating paragraph / section would be helpful. Both the policy document and leaflet would be served well by such a paragraph / section to be included at or near the beginning.</p>

<p>Ease of use: Does the content provide clarity both in terms of language used and explanatory text? Does the document have a logical and easy to follow structure? Is the information provided sufficiently comprehensive and, where necessary, sufficiently detailed?</p>	<p>DPTAC feel that the Policy document is fairly easy to read. However, it would be useful to consider asking the Plain English Campaign to review the draft to ensure that it is accessible to people with a low reading age/cognition.</p> <p>It would be useful to add clear headings for each section and sub-section - for example in A.1.2 l)</p> <p>There are a number of sections where the grammar needs to be reviewed. There are a number of sections where it would be beneficial to further proof read the text but we acknowledge that this is still in draft form.</p>
<p>Good practice: Please highlight areas which are particularly strong and/or innovative.</p>	<p>Integration with London Southend Airport staff.</p>
<p>Other specific points: Please raise any other points that you think are relevant including any areas of inaccuracy and/or omissions.</p>	<p>On the first page, under section A, there is a sentence which talks about particular attention being given to anyone with reduced mobility. Although DPTAC understand why this is present, it does perhaps lead to disabled readers thinking that their disability hasn't been sufficiently thought about. DPTAC wonder if this could usefully be re-worded to ensure inclusivity. There is then a list of type of impairments that passengers may have. This comes across as a definitive list, and DPTAC suggests this aspect is considered. The list needs to read as being open-ended. DPTAC suggests that reference is made to 'non-visible disabilities, in addition to some of those listed. DPTAC's suggestion for the conditions that might be encompassed by 'non-visible disabilities' are:</p>

- mental health conditions, eg anxiety, depression, OCD, schizophrenia, personality disorders
- Autism and Asperger Syndrome
- sensory processing difficulties
- cognitive impairment, eg dementia, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities
- 'non-visible' physical health conditions, eg chronic pain, respiratory and heart conditions, diabetes, cancer
- hearing loss
- low or restricted vision

We suggest that the policy avoids using the term 'mental health issues', rather referring to 'mental health difficulties' or 'mental health conditions'.

On page 2 of the policy document, there is a list of assistance available at the station. DPTAC wondered if there was a 'quiet' room or area available for those who may feel overwhelmed or anxious.

Also on page 2 there is an obvious emphasis on 'pre-arranged assistance' using Passenger Assist, and in that context para f) injects a negative tone which may cause anxiety about the journey. The commitment to assist is expressed positively but DPTAC wonders if there are any additional tools, eg an App, phone number, email, text or another means by which passengers who have not 'pre-arranged' assistance can nonetheless notify London Southend shortly before they arrive to avoid the assistance taking 'a little longer to arrange'.

The reference in d) to assistance off the train 'within a maximum of 5 minute' may be confusing and concerning for those who worry about the train departing for its onward journey within this period.

For the sake of consistency and clarity it would be useful to have headings for paras l), m) and n).

DPTAC notes that references to the London Southend website need to be entered.

On page 4 the reference to 'step free access' in 'At Our Station' could be clearer, eg step free access from train to street, with other pick up points such as taxi ranks, bus stops and to the airport?

Again in this section DPTAC raises the question: if the station is staffed 24 hours a day and the accessible toilet is open 24 hours a day, why are there time limitations for the general toilets which many disabled people will rely on?

There is a reference to the lack of 'heated waiting areas' but are there unheated waiting areas? And are there any enclosed waiting areas? And a reference to accessible seating would be useful.

On page 5 it would be helpful to know if the reference to the availability of 'accessible taxis' also includes WAVs, e.g., if the airport and station operators are able to influence the local taxi operators to provide these, and the licensing authority to publish a list of WAVs in accordance with the Equality Act s165 and s167.

On page 7 of the policy document, there is a sentence starting 'with you at no extra cost...'. It wasn't clear why this was here? Or what it referred to?

On page 8 of the document, under A6, DPTAC were concerned that assistance was only available to those with reduced mobility. We suggest this section is reviewed to ensure support for all disabilities is provided as appropriate.

The comments made about emergency arrangements in the leaflet section also apply here.

On page 8 there is a paragraph that starts 'Our Station Staff are trained...'. DPTAC suggest as well as mention of English not being first language, and impaired hearing, mention is made that some people may have communication difficulties relating to autism, some may have speech and language difficulties, some may have low cognition etc.

	<p>Also on page 8 there is helpful reference to the number of blue badge parking spaces but it would be helpful to show how this is split between the short and long stay car parks, e.g., if almost all are in the short term then that may not be helpful.</p> <p>Page 11 refers to a number of consumer and disability bodies as ‘industry bodies’ which may be misleading.</p> <p>There are a number of references to ‘disability awareness or disability equality training’ which are two different things. We suggest the reference should be to ‘awareness and equality’. DPTAC also suggests that while the reference to this training being to ‘ensure’ staff ‘fulfil their responsibilities to disabled passengers’, may we suggest a more positive approach would be to ensure that disabled people are provided with the assistance and quality of service they are entitled to expect.</p> <p>DPTAC note that at the top of Page 12 there is a sentence that mentions review and updating, that needs to be actioned.</p>
<p>Overall comments on the document.</p>	<p>Please see DPTAC comments on the Passenger leaflet, most of which also apply to the Policy document.</p> <p>A good reassuring document for passengers with disabilities.</p> <p>DPTAC suggest some thought is given to how the policy document can be updated to read more inclusively for all disabilities, in particular non-visible disabilities. DPTAC feel that it would be useful to consider how a non-visible disability might be described, and how people with non-visible disabilities can be ‘identified/recognised’, and support provided to facilitate their use of rail.</p>