



# ORR: RESEARCH INTO PASSENGER AWARENESS OF ASSISTED TRAVEL SERVICES

REPORT

APRIL 2017

## ABOUT COMRES

ComRes provides specialist research and insight into reputation, public policy and communications. It is a founding member of the British Polling Council, and ComRes staff are members of the UK Market Research Society, committing it to the highest standards of research practice.

ComRes won the 2014 Market Research Society Award for Public Policy / Social Research for its innovative research into online communications.

The consultancy also conducts regular public research for organisations including The Independent, ITV News, the BBC, and other media outlets, as well as a wide range of public sector and corporate clients. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

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# BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research is for the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) to better understand:

- Disabled people’s awareness of the assistance available to them on the rail network;
- The barriers to awareness that exist;
- Factors that deter disabled people from using the rail network; and
- Potential remedies for overcoming barriers to awareness and concerns that prevent rail use.

## METHODOLOGY

These objectives were pursued using the following processes:



### Phase 1 – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

The first stage of the research was quantitative, which itself was split into two sections – one online and one by telephone. This ensured high-quality data that covered a wide range of disabilities, including those who are hard to reach, such as the visually impaired.

800 disabled respondents were surveyed online and 200 via telephone. Fieldwork was conducted between 25<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Soft quotas were set to ensure a good spread of disabled adults and carers by age, gender, impairment type and region.

### Phase 2 – QUALITATIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The second phase built on the quantitative findings, and provides more detail on attitudes and preferences among disabled adults and carers. Qualitative in-depth interviews of c. 30 minutes were conducted over the phone at ComRes’s offices in Westminster by the ComRes infrastructure team working on the project. Fieldwork was conducted between 13<sup>th</sup> December and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2016. ComRes set soft quotas to ensure the research was representative of those people in the population with different types of impairment, ensuring a wide variety of views were taken on board. ComRes also achieved a good spread of interviews by other factors, including:

- Frequency of travel by train, and
- Knowledge of existing assistance services (Passenger Assist or Turn up and Go).

The qualitative interviews allowed the ComRes team to go beyond what is achievable with quantitative research. Specifically, they provide a detailed understanding of the reasons why passengers, or prospective passengers, with an impairment (and carers or travel companions of disabled passengers) do not use public transport, or do not use it more regularly, what barriers or deterrents there are for these passengers, and how these can be overcome.

## REPORTING CONVENTIONS

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

All respondents taking part in this survey were **screened** to ensure the questions asked were relevant to them. Only respondents who select; “I currently have a disability, impairment or condition which means I would require assistance when travelling by public transport” or “I care for or help someone who needs support with their travel or travel arrangements when travelling by public transport” were eligible to take part in the survey. The screening used means that this survey covers all those who would require assistance or assist someone who would require assistance, whether they use public transport or not. However, the nature of the screening questions means there is a possibility that respondents may be more likely than the national average to use public transport.

For brevity throughout the report, ‘disabled passengers’, ‘people/passengers with an impairment’, and ‘carers’ refers to all who need assistance/assist others on public transport. The carers and travel companions surveyed were asked to answer questions thinking about the people they help or care for. Likewise, unless specified otherwise, references to ‘adults’, ‘respondents’ or ‘those surveyed’ refers to all respondents taking part (both disabled adults and carers). In addition, any references to ‘rail’ refer to ‘national rail’ services only, rather than the Metro, Tube or Tram.

### LABELLING OF QUOTATIONS

Quotations from phase 2 of the research are labelled according to the profile of the respondent taking part in the interview by profile and knowledge of schemes. E.g. *disabled adult, unaware of schemes* or; *Carer, aware of Passenger Assist*.

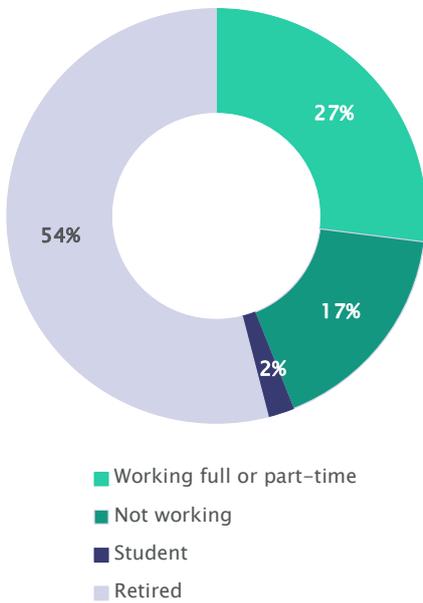
### SUBGROUP ANALYSIS, NETS AND ROUNDING

Differences between sub-groups are only reported where they are statistically significant at the 95% level. Any reference to figures with a low base size of less than 100 are asterisked for clarity (\*), and should be treated as indicative of this group only. All figures in this report have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Throughout this report, we make use of nets to aggregate certain sets of figures – our conventions for doing so are outlined below:

- Where it refers to “x% say this is good”, this is a NET measure of those who answer “very good” or “fairly good” [the same logic applies to “poor”].
- Where it refers to “x% likely to”, this is a NET measure of those who answer “very likely” or “fairly likely” [the same logic applies to “unlikely”].
- Where it refers to “x% have heard of and know at least something” or “NET: Know something”, this is a NET measure of those who answer “Heard of and know a lot” or “Heard of and know a little”.
  - “Those aware/Awareness of/those who have heard of” also adds those who say they have “Heard of but know nothing” to the NET.
  - “NET: Know nothing” is a NET measure of those who have no knowledge and answer “Never heard of” or “Heard of but know nothing”.

# DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

## Employment status

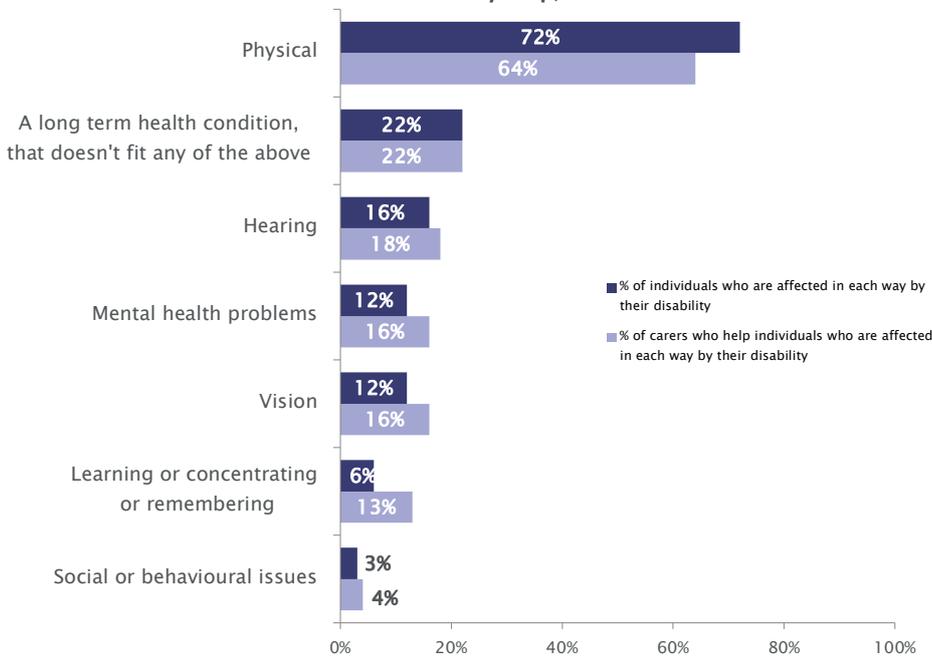


Age group	%
16 – 34	10%
35 – 49	15%
50 – 64	22%
65 – 74	30%
75 or older	23%

Region	%
Scotland	8%
North East	6%
North West	14%
Yorkshire and Humberside	9%
West Midlands	11%
East Midlands	6%
Wales	5%
East of England	7%
London	9%
South East	14%
South West	9%

D13. What is your employment status? Base: all respondents (n=1,000)  
 D9/10. Age Base: all respondents (n=1000)  
 D1. In which of the following regions do you live? Base: all respondents (n=1,000)

## % of carers and individuals sorted by disability type (for themselves/those who they help)



## % of carers who say they assist:



D4. Who are you a carer or helper for? If you help more than one person, think of the main person you help. Base: all those who do not have a long term illness (n=241)  
 D7. Which of the following best describes how your impairment or illness affects you? Base: all respondents who have a long term illness (n=759)  
 D8. Which of the following best describes how the person who you help with their travel, is affected by their impairment or illness? Base: all respondents who do not have a long term illness (n=241)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## RAIL USAGE

Rail is amongst the most popular forms of public transport amongst respondents; half (49%) of respondents say they have used it in the last 6 months<sup>1</sup>. Frequency of use varies however, although not through lack of will – if there were no (actual or perceived) barriers to use, ideal frequency of use is significantly higher than current usage.

## ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Overall, while at least half of those surveyed have heard of the existence of the current assistance services available to them (51%), awareness of what specific types of support they can access or how staff/stations are equipped to help is lower. A number of passengers are aware they can request assistance in advance of travelling, or that they can request help moving around the station/trains. However, more could be done to promote this more widely, to ensure that all those who may be interested in such services are made aware of them. In particular, **ORR may wish to consider directing industry to do more to communicate this more clearly to those people eligible for assistance who live outside London who are over 35.**

## PASSENGER ASSIST

Awareness of Passenger Assist is low, with more than half of all respondents saying they have never heard of it (54%). Only around a quarter say they know at least something about it (27%).

Of those who know something about Passenger Assist, around half have used it before (52%). Despite the low levels of awareness and usage, among those who have used it, satisfaction with Passenger Assist is extremely high. **Nine in ten users of Passenger Assist rate it as good (91%), with more than half saying their experience was very good (57%). Overall, a majority of all respondents surveyed (including those who have not heard of Passenger Assist before) say that they would likely use Passenger Assist in the future (65%).**

Assistance provided via the scheme mainly centres on access. Users are most likely to say they have received assistance getting on/off the train (76%), or getting to their platform or seat (53%). Positive experiences are mainly due to helpful staff, while the very few negative ones cited are due to things going wrong, for example a delay on the trains or lack of assistance on the day.

The qualitative interviews build on these findings, with those unaware of assistance provision saying they would use Passenger Assist if more information was provided to them. This includes details on how to book assistance, the types of assistance on offer, and how assistance is provided on the day itself. **ORR can therefore be confident in the knowledge that there is an appetite for using Passenger Assist amongst non-users, and also those who have used the scheme before. However, this demand needs to be met with increased information and communications.**

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that this level of incidence of rail travel amongst disabled adults in the survey is higher than the national average. This is potentially an effect of the screening questions used at the start of the survey, to focus on those who say they would require assistance (or provide assistance to someone) when travelling by public transport due to their disability, impairment or condition.

## TURN UP AND GO

**Awareness of the ability to arrive at a station and ask for assistance without booking ahead (or ‘Turn up and Go’) is lower than Passenger Assist, with four in five saying they have never heard of it (81% – 27 points higher than for Passenger Assist). Only 11% say they know at least something about it.**

Of those who know something about the ‘Turn up and Go’ service, around half (a similar proportion as Passenger Assist) say they have used it before (49%). While the base size is low and should therefore be treated with caution, **the vast majority of users rate their experience of Turn up and Go as ‘good’ (89%\*).** However, when asked to all respondents, **potential uptake of Turn up and Go is less than Passenger Assist (52% v 65% say they would be likely to use it in future).** The qualitative findings show that while some respondents understood that assistance could be provided to them when they ask for it at the station or on the train, very few were aware that a ‘Turn up and Go’ service was something that has to be offered, where reasonably practicable, by train companies. Even among those who have used it, they were not aware this was a requirement, and instead asked for help ad-hoc at the station.

Turn up and Go is praised for being flexible, with a number of adults (carers and travel companions in particular) in the qualitative interviews saying that having the option to request assistance at any time would be useful to them, particularly those with conditions that can change depending on external circumstances (for example going to the doctors unscheduled, or having a physical condition affected by the weather). Despite this, a large number also say that they are apprehensive about it, as there may not be support available in certain situations, or they do not wish to publicise their condition by asking for help. As such, communications on Turn up and Go specifically need to balance the need for greater access and discretion when requesting assistance.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

**Among those aware of either Passenger Assist or the option to Turn Up and Go, these respondents are most likely to have heard of them via word-of-mouth (including via a member of staff or a family/friend/carer).** This suggests that information shared on these services may be more anecdotal than from official sources. Indeed, those aware are less likely to have heard of the schemes via leaflets, online publications or the train company website.

**Despite this, among those who have heard of either scheme, a majority rate the information received as good** (75% for Passenger Assist and 69% for Turn up and Go). A majority of respondents rate each form of information received on either scheme as good, particularly information received via a leaflet or booklet.

Going forward, disabled adults and carers would find **information about what exact assistance and support is available most useful, followed by information on what assistance needs to be booked and how to do this.** The qualitative findings provide further detail on this, with respondents noting that customer reviews and testimonials, as well as providing further reassurance on using the schemes, would be helpful. A common theme throughout the qualitative research was taking advantage of those who have used these services previously, and using them as a voice in communicating the advantages of each, to encourage others to use them.

Linked to the lower prevalence of these sources currently, respondents say they would most like to receive information from official sources, for example a leaflet or information booklet (56%), or the train company or Network Rail website (51%). **The qualitative findings also show that there is an opportunity for the rail industry to use the wider disability community** – like GPs surgeries, charities, housing associations and local authorities – to increase awareness and share this valued information more widely, and thereby supplement the information provided by more traditional rail industry partners.

# 1. RAIL USAGE



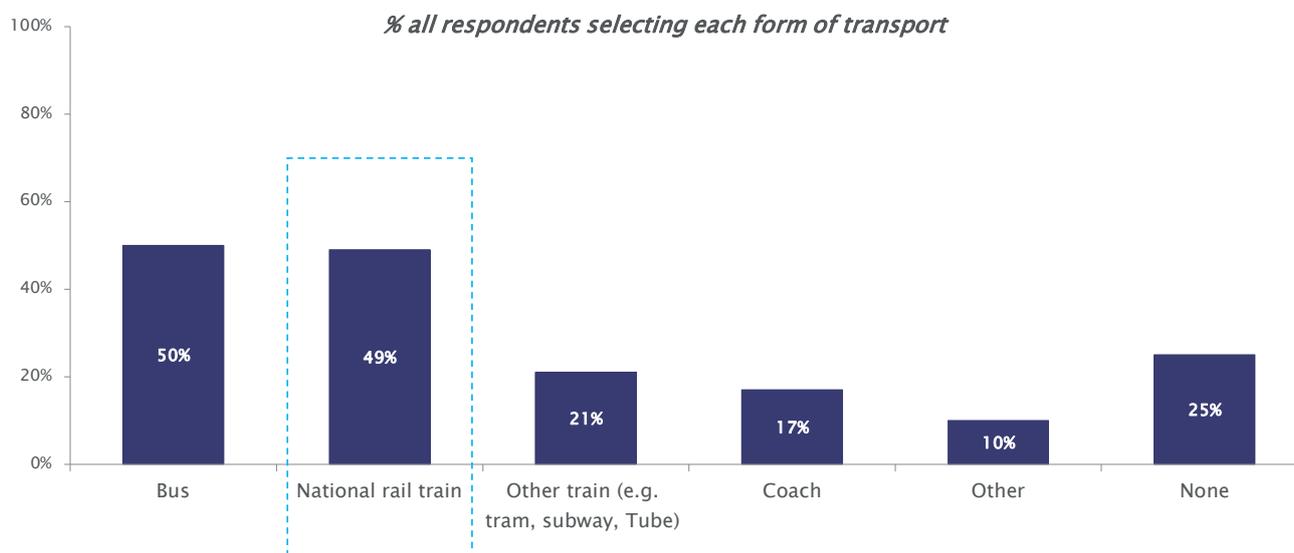
## 1.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

*Rail is amongst the most popular forms of public transport amongst respondents; half (49%) of respondents say they have used it in the last 6 months. Frequency of use varies however, although not through lack of will – if there were no (actual or perceived) barriers to use, ideal frequency of use is significantly higher than current usage<sup>2</sup>.*

## 1.2. TYPES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT USED IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS

Rail is one of the most likely forms of transport to be used by disabled passengers and their carers (while assisting), with **49% of these groups saying that they have used this form of public transport in the last six months**, broadly in line with the 50% who say they have used buses in the last six months. ComRes employed a screener question for this research, only surveying respondents who selected that they ‘currently have a disability, impairment or condition which means I would require assistance when travelling by public transport’, or a carer/helper who assists with someone else’s travel arrangements. Given this focus on public transport and assistance, this potentially explains the higher than average level of response among this group for having used national rail trains in the last six months.

### Types of public transport used in the past 6 months



Q1. Which of the following types of public transport have you used/have you helped use in the last 6 months? Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

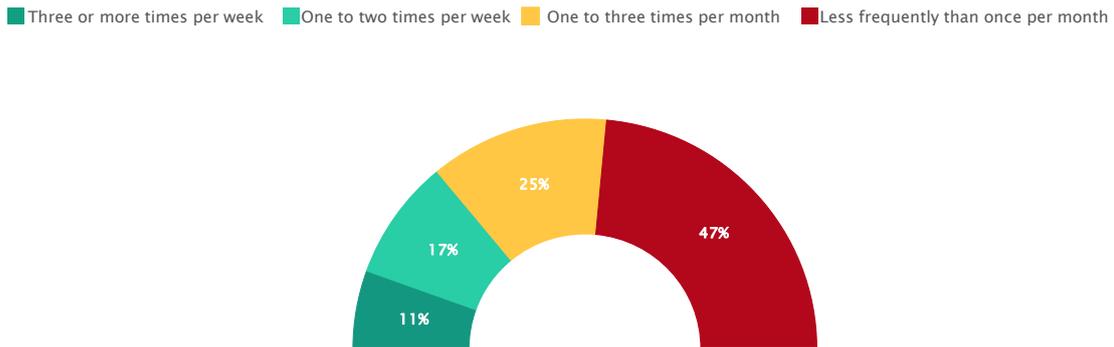
Carers and helpers are more likely than disabled passengers to have used rail in the past 6 months, with 54% of carers saying that they have, compared to 47% of disabled passengers. Consistent across both groups is the trend for younger people to be more likely than their older counterparts to have used any form of public transport in the past 6 months. For example, 79% of disabled passengers and carers aged 16–34\* have used rail in the past 6 months, compared to just 35% of those aged 75+.

<sup>2</sup> Please see footnote 2.

### 1.3. FREQUENCY OF RAIL USE AMONGST DISABLED PASSENGERS AND CARERS

Both disabled passengers and carers are most likely to say that they use rail more than once a month, with one in two people (52%) saying this. The picture is split however; almost one in two rail users (47%) say that they use rail less frequently than once a month, demonstrating that there is no clear majority amongst disabled passengers and carers. For ORR this means that any communications intended for this audience should reflect the fact that frequency of use is somewhat variable.

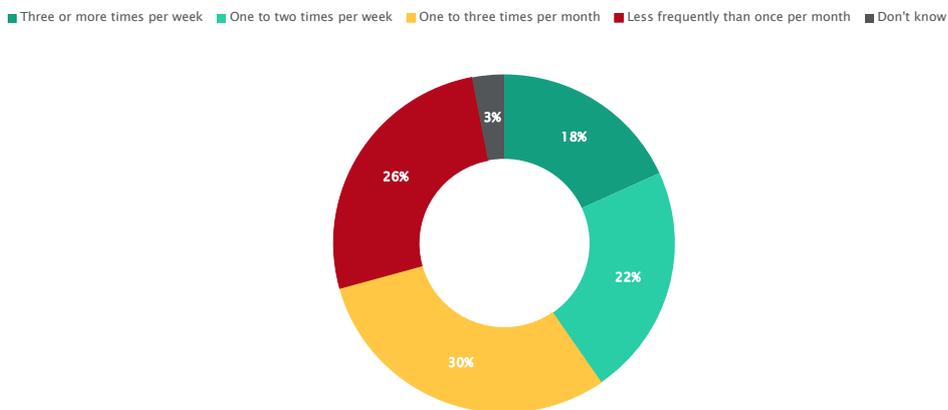
**Frequency with which disabled passengers and carers travel by train**



Q2. How frequently do you travel/ help the person you care for travel by train?  
By train, we mean national rail trains only. Please note this does not include trams, subway trains, the Tube, etc. Base: All respondents who use rail (n=488).

When asked how often they would use rail if there were no obstacles or barriers, the results change; only one in four (26%) disabled passengers and carers say they would use the railways less frequently than once a month. This 21 percentage point difference from current rail usage suggests that there is an appetite amongst this audience for using rail more than they currently do, but that there are (actual or perceived) barriers which stop this from happening.

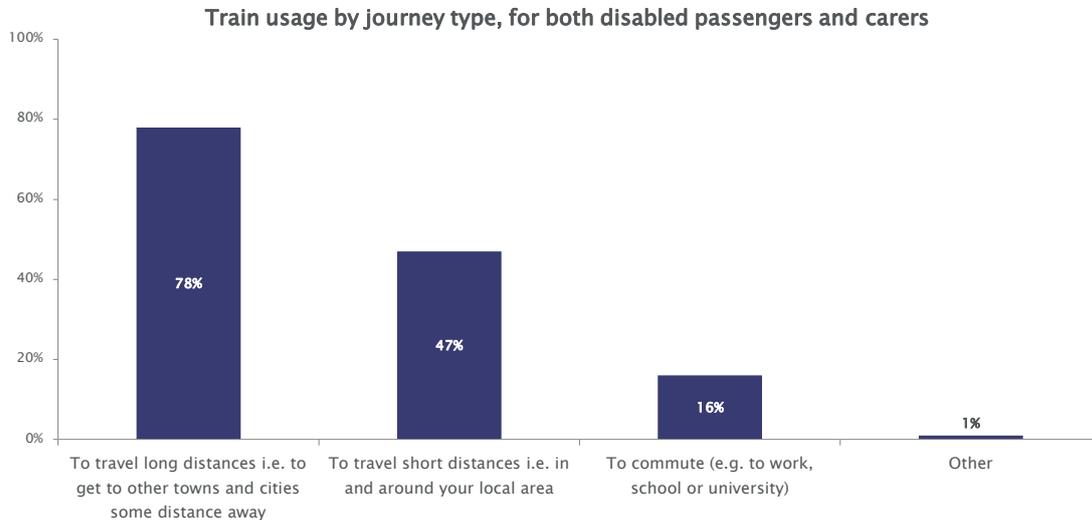
**Frequency of rail use for helpers/carers and disabled passengers, if there were no obstacles to use**



Q3. How frequently would you travel by train ('with the person you help') if there were no obstacles or inconvenience to you doing so? Base: All respondents who use rail (n=488).

## 1.4. REASON FOR USE

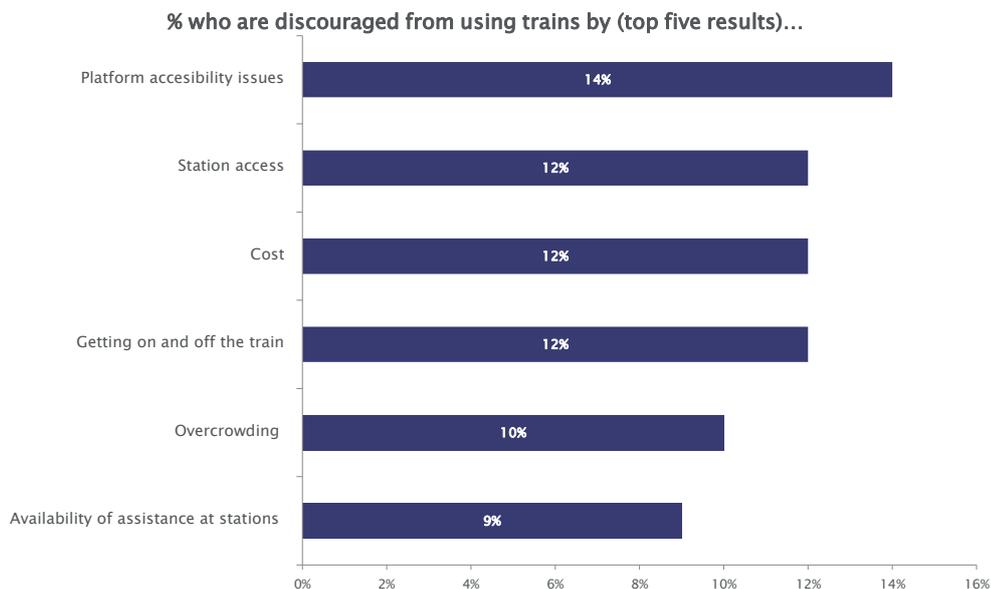
The majority of respondents say that they use rail to travel long distances, with disabled respondents and carers similarly likely to do so (77% and 81% respectively). Type of impairment has an impact on travel choices – those who have visual or hearing impairments are significantly more likely to use rail to commute than those without. For example, 31% of those with a visual impairment say they use rail for commuting, compared to 15% of those with a physical disability.



Q4. What kind of journeys do you make by train (when helping the person you care for with their travel)? Base: All respondents who use rail (n=488).

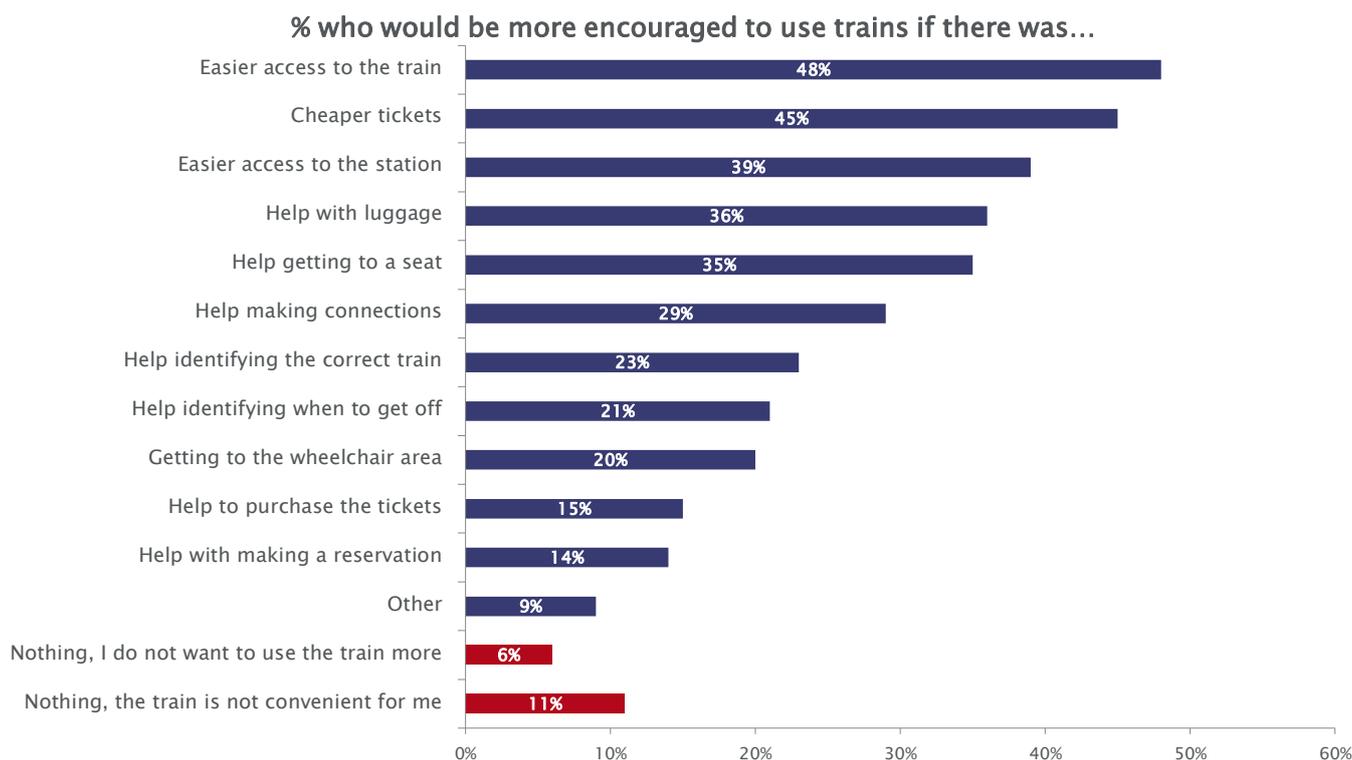
## 1.5. BARRIERS TO USE

Easy access (or lack thereof) has emerged as a theme in terms of what acts as a barrier to disabled passengers and carers, with an open question identifying access issues as the top barrier for respondents – 14% of passengers mentioned access to the platform itself as a barrier to using the train more frequently and 12% listed access to the station. This is reflected in the fact that one in two disabled passengers and carers (48%) say that easier access to the train is one of the most important factors that would encourage them to use rail more frequently, closely followed by cheaper rail fares (45%).



Q6. When you are deciding whether to use the train or not, what, if anything, discourages you from using the train? Base: All respondents (n=1,000).

These findings are reflected in the findings from the question charted below, namely that **nearly half (48%) say that easier access to the train would encourage them to use the train more often and two in five people (39%) say the same of easier access to the station.**



Q6. What, if anything, would encourage you to use the train more (when helping the person you care for with their travel)? Base: All respondents (n=1,000).

*“I’m comfortable with travel, but it’s accessibility for me is the biggest issue. Now, I have a small, only a 4mph scooter, which ... has to come with me. Again, there is an issue there, because I don’t know whether a train can or can’t, does or doesn’t have room for that to go on.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

Disabled passengers and carers are broadly aligned in their perception of what would encourage them to use the railways more often. Where differences emerge, they are clearly marked by whether respondents have a disability or not. **For example, disabled passengers are considerably more likely to say that health discourages train use than carers (10% v 5%), when asked unprompted.**

There are also a few significant differences which could perhaps indicate a path to a **tailored communication strategy** with one group rather than the other. For example, carers are significantly more likely to say that getting to the wheelchair area would encourage them to use the train more (29% as opposed to 18% of disabled passengers). However, for ORR, **communicating ease of access (both to the train and to the station) is the message that will achieve the most cut-through** in encouraging disabled passengers and carers to use rail more often.

*“Anything like that, you think of all the disabled people who would use the railways if they could drive and park. That’s the hardest part, is finding a parking bay.” Carer, aware of Passenger Assist*

A key theme to emerge from the qualitative stage of the research regarded the subjective experience of rail travel, with many respondents citing anxiety as a barrier to further rail travel and something that coloured their experience of national rail use.

*“Often when I’m on a packed train I get panicky and I just turn and face the wall, put my earphones in and turn it right up, and pretend I’m somewhere else, which isn’t always good because sometimes I miss my stop.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

This is reflected across several different interviews conducted by ComRes, where rush hour and busy trains were not only prohibitive to disabled passengers and carers on grounds of cost, but also with regards to the business of the train. This entailed often not getting a seat which makes for an unpleasant journey. While respondents generally acknowledge that overcrowding cannot be controlled by train staff, they note that this could be addressed by staff being more responsive or understanding of the needs of disabled passengers, particularly when they are on busy train services.

*“There should be clearer staff training in understanding disabilities.” Disabled adult, aware of ‘turn up and go’*

## 2. ASSISTANCE SCHEMES



## 2.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Overall, while at least half of those surveyed have heard of the existence of the current assistance services available to them (51%), awareness of what specific types of support they can access or how staff/stations are equipped to help is lower. A number of passengers are aware they can request assistance in advance or that they can request help moving around the station/trains. However, more could be done to promote this more widely, to ensure that all those who may be interested in such services are made aware of them. ORR may wish to consider directing industry to do more to communicate this more clearly to those people eligible for assistance who live outside London who are over 35.

## 2.2. AWARENESS

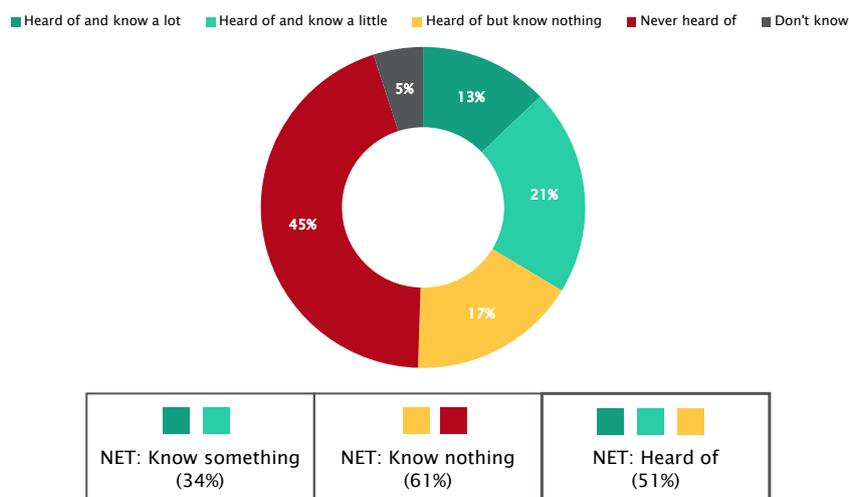
Awareness of assistance is relatively low. As indicated in red on the chart below, just under half (45%) of those surveyed say that they have never heard of the current assistance services which exist to help those with disabilities or impairments in using the train.

Despite the fact that half of respondents have heard of them, only a third (34%) say that they know something about them (as indicated in the key below the chart).

- Only 13% have heard of and know a lot about assistance provision for disabled passengers, as opposed to around 2 in 5 having heard of them but knowing little (21%) to nothing (17%) about the schemes themselves.

*“Now, I feel like a prisoner. I have two daughters who don’t live in Leeds, [where I live] I have one that does. I have one that lives in Shropshire, the other in Essex. Now, for me to get to them, I would have to use a train or a bus. I can’t travel on the bus, because it makes me sick, always has. So, for me it’s the train, and up until I spoke with your colleague, I was not aware that there was help available, or possible help available for people like myself, who can’t really walk any distance whatsoever.”* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

Awareness of schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments use the train



Q7. Are you aware of any schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train? Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

Levels of awareness around assistance schemes vary by demographic group, showing that there are geographical, disability-specific, and age-related differences in how informed passengers tend to be about disabled passengers' assistance schemes in general.

1. Disabled passengers and carers in London are significantly better informed about these provisions:

- As opposed to an average of 34% of passengers across Britain, 57% in London have heard of and know something about assistance schemes.

2. Those with (or caring for people with) visual and/or hearing impairments are also statistically significantly more likely than others to have a higher awareness of such schemes.

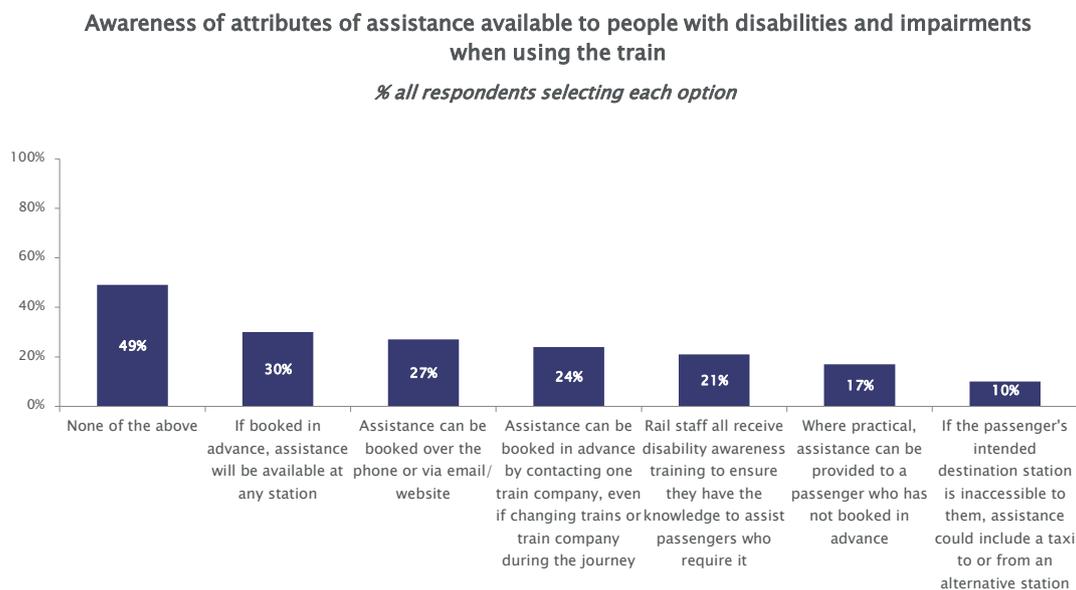
- Of all respondents, 51% have heard of assistance schemes and 34% know something about them. For those with a visual and/or hearing impairment, awareness is higher: 65% of those with hearing impairments are aware of assistance schemes and 48% know something about them. For those with visual impairments this stands at 60% and 50% respectively.

3. Young people (those under 34) are also significantly more likely to be aware of such schemes.

- Nearly twice as many respondents under the age of 34 (25%) have heard of and know a lot about assistance schemes, as opposed to the 13% average of all respondents surveyed.

## 2.3. ATTRIBUTES OF ASSISTANCE

Awareness of the ways in which passengers can request/use assistance offered by providers is similarly low, with half of respondents (49%) knowing nothing of various provisions for disabled passengers, as indicated in the graph below.



Q9. There are a number of different types of assistance available to people with disabilities and impairments when using the train. Before today, did you know... Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

The kinds of assistance passengers are most aware of tend to concern booking or requesting assistance from providers or staff: around a third of respondents are aware of advance booking (30%), and around a quarter are aware that telephone/online booking can be provided (27%). A quarter say that they know contacting one train company for support is sufficient even when switching providers through the journey (24%).

Awareness of other kinds of help offered is low – with 21% knowing about disability awareness training, ad hoc assistance (17%), or taxi services between stations (10%).

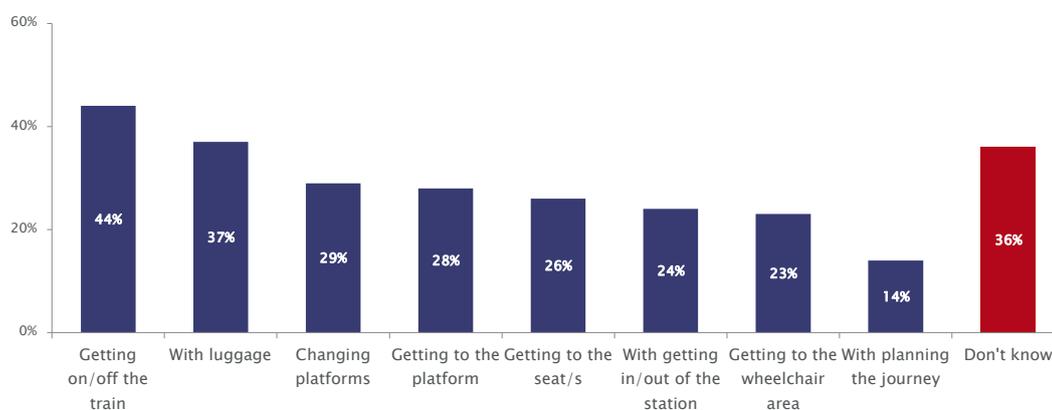
In line with general awareness of assistance schemes, respondents living in London and those with visual impairments are more likely to be aware of each of the different types of assistance available to them.

## 2.4. TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

Overall awareness is low, with less than half of respondents (44%) saying that they are aware of each of the types of assistance tested and over a third (36%) saying that they don't know of any.

Awareness of types of assistance people with disabilities and impairments can receive with their train journeys

*% all respondents selecting each option*



Q10. Before today, which of the following types of assistance with train journeys, if any, were you aware people with disabilities and impairments could receive? Base: All respondents (n=1,000).

**Awareness of assistance provided is highest with boarding or disembarking the train:** 44% of passengers know they can request help getting on/off the train. Passengers are also relatively well-informed about getting help with luggage, with 37% knowing they can request help with this. However, **disabled passengers (38%) are significantly more likely than carers surveyed (31%) to know about provisions for assistance with luggage.**

**At least 23% of disabled passengers/carers are aware that they can receive assistance with accessing each of the various spaces in and around the train station:** accessing seats, trains, platforms, wheelchair areas and stations (along with their luggage). However, only 14% know they can request help planning their journey.

Overall, while at least half of passengers have heard of the existence of assistance, awareness of what services they can access or how staff/stations are equipped to help is lower. A number of passengers are aware they can request assistance in advance or that they can request help moving around the station/trains, but transport providers' staff training or alternate transport provision could be communicated to more disabled passengers and their carers. **In particular ORR may wish to consider directing the industry to take steps to communicate this information more clearly to those people eligible for assistance who live outside London who are over 35.**

# 3. PASSENGER ASSIST



### 3.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

*Awareness of Passenger Assist is low, with more than half of all respondents saying they have never heard of it (54%). Only around a quarter say they know at least something about it (27%).*

*Of those who know something about Passenger Assist, around half have used it before (52%). Despite the low levels of awareness and usage, among those who have used it, satisfaction with Passenger Assist is extremely high. **Nine in ten users of Passenger Assist rate it as good (91%), with more than half saying their experience was very good (57%). Overall, a majority of all respondents surveyed (including those who have not heard of Passenger Assist before) say that they would likely use Passenger Assist in the future (65%).***

*Assistance provided via the scheme mainly centres on access. Users are most likely to say they have received assistance getting on/off the train (76%), or getting to their platform or seat (53%). Positive experiences are mainly due to helpful staff, while the very few negative ones cited are due to things going wrong, for example a delay on the trains or lack of assistance on the day.*

*The qualitative interviews build on these findings, with those unaware of assistance provision saying they would use Passenger Assist if more information was provided to them. This includes details on how to book assistance, the types of assistance on offer, and how assistance is provided on the day itself. ORR can therefore be confident in the knowledge that there is an appetite for using Passenger Assist amongst non-users, and also those who have used the scheme before. However, this demand needs to be met with increased information and communications.*

### 3.2. AWARENESS AND USE OF PASSENGER ASSIST

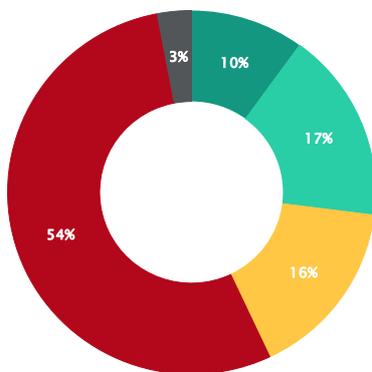
#### AWARENESS OF PASSENGER ASSIST

When asked if they had heard of Passenger Assist before, a majority of disabled passengers and carers say they know nothing about it (70%). Indeed, more than half of those surveyed say they have never heard of it (54%).

*“Well the first thing is, it would be nice if it [Passenger Assist] was publicised better, such that I would actually be aware that it exists!...Since the rail companies in any case already advertise anyway...I do know that once I understand that something is available and how I can use it without being embarrassed, I would be more inclined to do so.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

Awareness of ‘Passenger Assist’

■ Heard of and know a lot ■ Heard of and know a little ■ Heard of but know nothing ■ Never heard of ■ Don't know



<p>NET: Know something (27%)</p>	<p>NET: Know nothing (70%)</p>	<p>NET: Heard of (43%)</p>
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Q11. The main scheme to assist travellers on trains with a disability or impairment is called ‘Passenger Assist’. ‘Passenger Assist’ is a free service provided by train companies for anyone who requires assistance. Staff can help with planning journeys, booking tickets and making reservations; they can also assist passengers at stations and on board trains. ‘Passenger Assist’ must be booked in advance. Had you heard of ‘Passenger Assist’ before? Base: All respondents (n=1,000).

While the majority say they are unaware of the main assistance booking scheme currently available to assist travellers on trains with a disability or impairment, **more than a quarter say they know at least something about it** (27% say they have heard of Passenger Assist and know a lot or a little about it).

*“Yes, it [Passenger Assist] is an 0800 number...I’d already booked my ticket, so they just took the details and when I arrived at Cardiff station, a chap met me and got me in the lift to my platform and took my case and saw me onto the train.”* **Disabled adult, heard of and used Passenger Assist**

## AWARENESS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Awareness levels vary by demographic and are not consistent:

- **Younger adults are generally more likely to say they have at least heard of Passenger Assist compared to their older counterparts.** While a majority of those aged 16–34 (63%\*) and 35–49 (51%) say they have heard of it, less than two in five of those in any age group 50+ say the same (38% of 50–64 year olds, 37% of 65–74 year olds and 39% of those aged 75+).
- **This level of knowledge is broadly mirrored by employment status, frequency of travel and region** – particularly as the results show that younger adults are more likely to be working full or part-time:
  - A majority of those working full/part-time say they have heard of Passenger Assist (54%), compared to around a third of those who are not working (34%) or are retired (38%).
  - Similarly, disabled adults/carers who use the train at least once a week are far more likely to be aware of Passenger Assist than adults who use it less regularly (75% v 46% who use trains less than a few times a month).
  - Respondents living in London are the most likely to say they have heard of Passenger Assist (62%\*) – this is the only region where a majority have prior awareness of the scheme.

Given the varying levels of knowledge of Passenger Assist, **ComRes recommends that ORR encourages the rail industry to target communications towards specific groups with lower levels of awareness.** In particular, this applies to older adults aged 50+, and those currently not working. This may help create a universal ‘base level’ of awareness of the scheme.

**Awareness also differs by impairment type.** While the base size for some groups is low and therefore only indicative, disabled adults and carers of those with visual or hearing impairments are far more likely to have **at least some knowledge of Passenger Assist** than other impairment groups. While awareness levels are generally low among all disability types, they are particularly low among those in other categories:

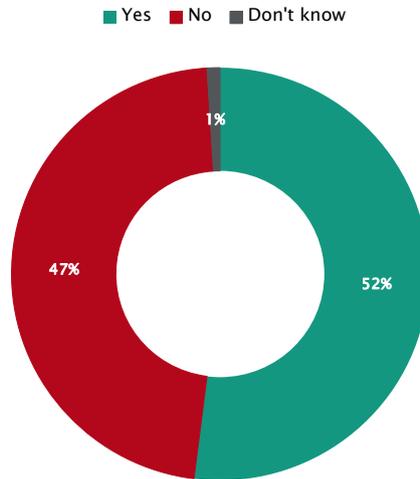
	Visual	Hearing	Social or behavioural	Physical	Learning condition	Mental health condition	Other long-term condition
<b>% saying they know at least something about Passenger Assist</b>	49%	36%	30%*	24%	24%*	23%	21%

*All adults with/carers assisting someone with each impairment: Visual n=129, Hearing n=167, Physical n=699, Learning n=76, Mental health condition n=127, Social n=33, Other long-term condition n=220. Figures marked with an asterisk (\*) are those with a low base size of less than 100 and should be treated as indicative.*

## USAGE OF PASSENGER ASSIST

Of the 270 respondents who have heard of Passenger Assist and know at least a little about it, **just over half say they have used the scheme (52%)**. Disabled adults themselves (as opposed to carers) are more likely to say they have used Passenger Assist (58% v 34%\*). **47% say they have never used Passenger Assist, despite being having some knowledge of the scheme existing**. This is shown in the following chart:

Use of 'Passenger Assist' among those who have heard of it



Q12. Have you ever used 'Passenger Assist' before (when helping the person you care for with rail travel)? Base: All who use rail and who have heard of 'Passenger Assist' (n=270); disabled passengers (n=205); carers/helpers (n=65)\* **caution base size**

Of those who say they have heard of Passenger Assist but have not used it, this is likely due to not having enough detail on the scheme, with respondents unsure of the process of booking or using the service. This is explored in more detail later in this chapter.

Positively for ORR, among respondents who say they know at least something about Passenger Assist, two thirds have used it previously (68%). This finding suggests that uptake is generally high among those who have been provided with information on the scheme. As such, a potential focus for ORR and the rail industry should be increasing general levels of awareness of Passenger Assist among the disabled population more widely, with usage of the service potentially increasing as a direct result.

### AWARENESS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

As evidenced above, while awareness of Passenger Assist is highest among younger adults and those working, this does not translate into usage of the scheme. Prior usage levels among those who say they have knowledge of Passenger Assist are broadly consistent by age, employment status and frequency of travel. Indeed, those **who are retired are slightly more likely to say they have used Passenger Assist previously (58% v 46% who are employed)**.

While the base size is low, among specific impairment types usage of Passenger Assist varies. In particular, more than half of all respondents with a visual, hearing or physical impairment who have knowledge of Passenger Assist say they have used it previously.

	Visual	Physical	Hearing	Learning condition	Social or behavioural	Other long-term condition	Mental health condition
<b>% saying Yes they have used Passenger Assist previously</b>	64%*	55%	54%*	45%*	40%*	33%*	27%*

All adults with/carers assisting someone with each impairment who know at least something about Passenger Assist: Visual n=69, Hearing n=59, Physical n=172, Learning n=20, Mental health condition n=33, Social n=10, Other long-term condition n=45. Figures marked with an asterisk (\*) are those with a low base size of less than 100 and should be treated as indicative.

### 3.3. THE PASSENGER ASSIST EXPERIENCE

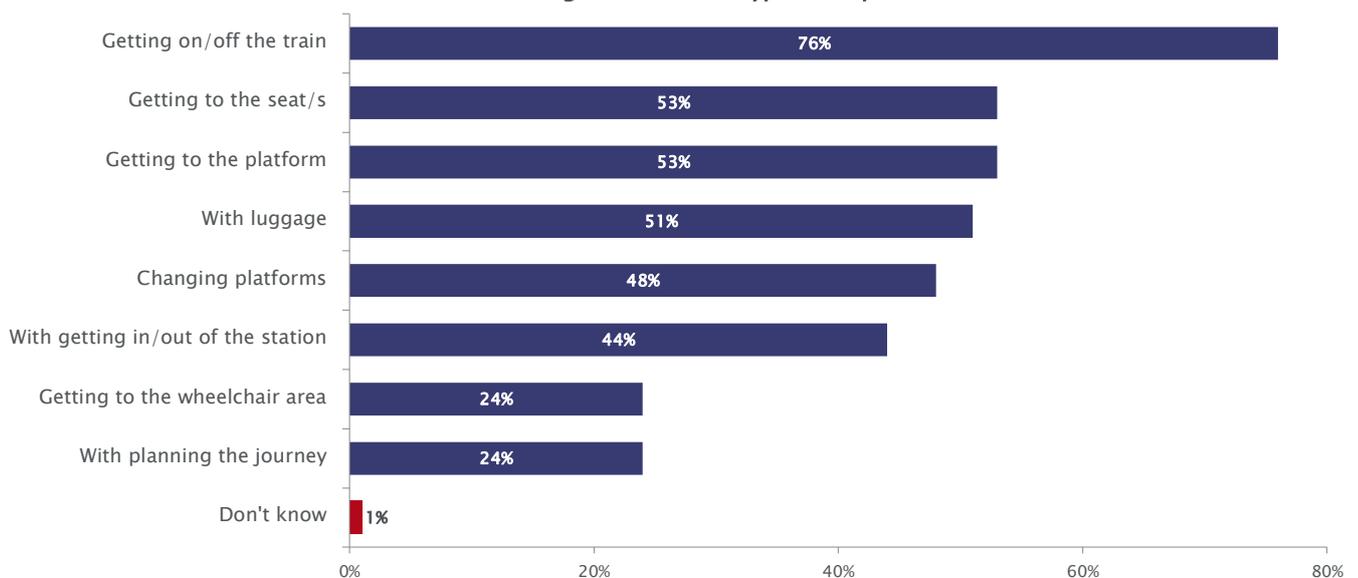
#### PASSENGER ASSIST SERVICES USED

Among respondents who have used Passenger Assist previously, **they are most likely to have used the scheme to receive assistance ‘accessing’ the train or platform itself.** In particular, around three quarters say they received assistance getting on/off the train (76%), and more than half say they received help getting to the platform or their seat (both 53%). More than two in five (44%) say they used it for receiving help getting in or out of the station.

Of the list of options provided, **respondents are least likely to say they used Passenger Assist to get information planning ahead** – for example, only a quarter say they used it to receive help planning their journey (24%). **These results therefore show that current use of Passenger Assist primarily centres on assistance with ‘access’** – moving in and out of the stations, platforms or trains.

#### Assistance received from ‘Passenger Assist’

*% having received each type of help*

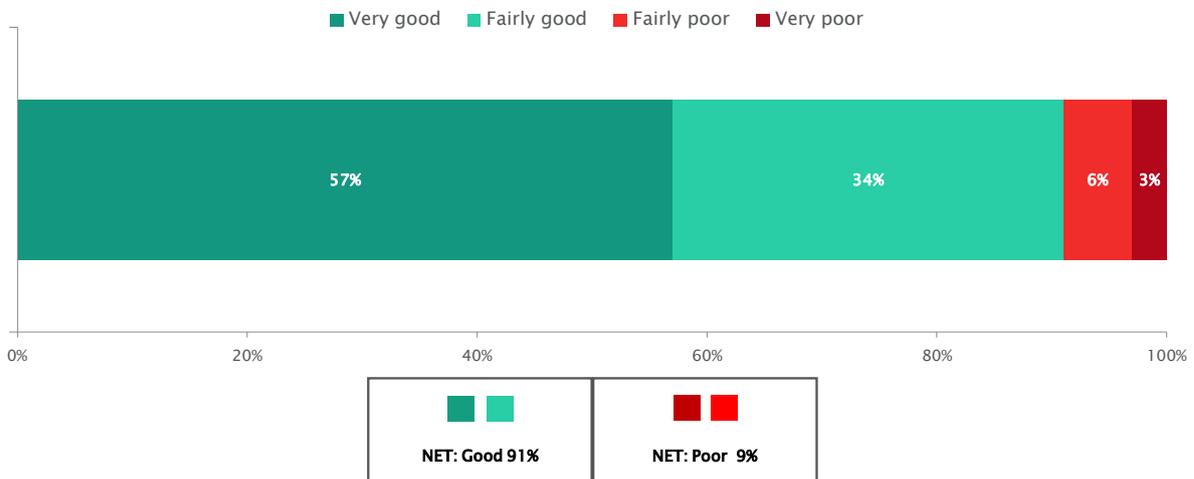


Q13. What assistance have you/the person you help received from 'Passenger Assist'?. Base: All who have used 'Passenger Assist' (n=140)

## RATING THE PASSENGER ASSIST EXPERIENCE

The experience of using Passenger Assist is a positive one for passengers. Of those who have used Passenger Assist, nine in ten rate it as ‘good’ (91%), with almost three in five (57%) rating it as very good. Only 9% say they would rate their experience as ‘poor’. Positive experiences are universal, with a large majority of adults in each sub-group rating their experience as ‘good’.

### How would you rate your experience of using ‘Passenger Assist’?



Q14. Overall how would you rate your experience of using ‘Passenger Assist’? Base: all who have used ‘Passenger Assist’ (n=140)

**Positive experiences are most commonly due to helpful staff.** When asked an open-ended question about their experience, respondents are most likely to say the helpful staff was key to this (22%). A slightly lower proportion say polite and friendly staff helped them have a good experience (13%).

This is further evidenced in the qualitative research, **with respondents who have used Passenger Assist previously focusing mainly on the staff who helped them.** As a result, ComRes recommends that ORR communicates to train companies and Network Rail the importance of having polite and friendly staff responsible for assisting disabled passengers and carers. Almost all respondents note that this is very important when using the assistance service, so this should be a primary focus for ORR.

*“It [the service] was smashing. He was very, very pleasant, very helpful – he didn’t seem at all surly. I would certainly use it again.”* **Disabled adult, heard of and used Passenger Assist**

*“The guy that helped me at Cardiff station was charming and in London, the people were very nice as well. It needs to be someone that’s empathetic and not looking at you as a nuisance.”* **Disabled adult, heard of and used Passenger Assist**

*“My deaf, autistic son used it to travel from Leeds to see his brother in Norfolk, by himself. The Rail Staff made certain he got onto each train, and to his booked seat, they helped him change trains and when he hadn’t arrived at the station at the right time quickly assured us that as there had been a delay and he had missed a connection that he ‘would be at Wymondham station in about 10 minutes’ and they were right. They were brilliant for him, Thanks to all the people who helped him.”* **Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Passenger Assist**

Conversely, among the very few respondents who say they would rate Passenger Assist as ‘poor’, this may be due to them having a bad experience which they remember. While only 3 respondents say this, ORR should be aware that increasing the awareness and scope of Passenger Assist does also bring risks – with more passengers using the scheme, this may also lead to more negative experiences and complaints, thereby turning people off of using it. Any campaign to increase the awareness of Passenger Assist should therefore also consider the impact this may have on staff at different train operating companies, who are currently seen as being helpful.

*“On a couple of occasions, we haven’t been met and things have gone wrong...had to chase staff up.”*

**Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Passenger Assist**

*“It was excellent at the departing station but nobody was there to help me off the train or off the station, with a bridge to cross and luggage, I found it hard.”*

**Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Passenger Assist**

Overall, these responses suggest that staff and passengers who have used the service are assets to ORR’s potential communications programme; **communications on Passenger Assist could cite the positive experience passengers have had with helpful staff at stations.**

### 3.4. POTENTIAL FUTURE USE OF PASSENGER ASSIST

#### LIKELIHOOD OF USING PASSENGER ASSIST AGAIN

When asked to all respondents taking part in the survey, **around two thirds say they would be likely to use Passenger Assist in the future (65%),** with three in ten saying they would be very likely to use the scheme (31%). However, a quarter overall say they would be unlikely to use Passenger Assist going forward (25%).

Likelihood to use Passenger Assist varies, depending on if the respondent has used the scheme before:

*% responses when asked if they would be likely to use Passenger Assist in future*

	TOTAL (All respondents) – n=1,000	All respondents who have used Passenger Assist – n=140	All respondents who have <u>not</u> used Passenger Assist – n=860
NET: Likely	65%	96%	60%
NET: Unlikely	25%	1%	28%
NET: Don’t know	10%	2%	12%

**Respondents who have used Passenger Assist previously are far more likely than those who have not to say they would use the scheme again (36 percentage points more likely).** This is a very positive finding when thinking about future communications on Passenger Assist, **as the findings clearly show that those who have used the scheme are happy with the service provided, and would be inclined to use it again.**

As identified earlier in the report, ComRes recommends that ORR uses positive stories and experiences of passengers who have used the scheme, in order to create a level of ‘buy-in’ among other passengers who may be sceptical about using it for the first time.

Overall, respondents with an ‘other long-term condition’ (55%) are less likely to say they would use Passenger Assist in future, compared to the other impairment types listed. For example, two thirds of respondents with a physical impairment say they would be likely to use the scheme in the future (66%), along with a higher proportion of those with a hearing or visual impairment (69% and 79% respectively).

#### LIKELIHOOD OF USING PASSENGER ASSIST BY DEMOGRAPHIC

*Among those who have used Passenger Assist previously:*

**A large majority of disabled adults and carers who have used Passenger Assist previously say they would be very likely to use it again (76%).** In comparison, only 1% (2 people of the 140 surveyed) say they would be unlikely to use it again.

While the base size is low and therefore should be treated with caution, at least four in five adults in all of the subgroups tested say they would be likely to use Passenger Assist again (including age, employment status, gender and frequency of travel). Indeed, 100%\* of respondents with a visual, hearing, learning, mental or social/behavioural impairment say they would likely use the scheme again. A slightly lower proportion of adults with a physical (97%\*) or other long-term condition (87%\*) say the same.

*Among those who have not used Passenger Assist previously:*

Carers and disabled adults who have not used Passenger Assist before are slightly more sceptical in their use of the scheme, with three in five saying they would be likely to use Passenger Assist (60%), and almost three in ten saying the opposite (28%).

Adults who are working (and are therefore more likely to use the train at least once a week) are far more likely to say they would be likely to use Passenger Assist than those who are retired or not working (76% v 54% respectively). These results are still positive, and show that among those more inclined to travel by train regularly, intended use of Passenger Assist is greater. Potential usage does not vary significantly by impairment type; with a majority of adults in each impairment group tested saying they would be likely to use Passenger Assist for the first time in the future.

## REASONS FOR NOT USING PASSENGER ASSIST IN THE FUTURE

When asked openly, among those who have at least some knowledge of Passenger Assist but have not used it yet, the main reasons for this centre around a lack of knowledge of the scheme, or being unaware of how to use it (18% and 14% say this respectively). More than one in ten say they would be able to manage on their own, or would feel embarrassed to use it (13% each). Very few respondents openly cite a lack of availability (3%) or reliability (2%) as potential barriers to using Passenger Assist.

## QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

When asked what makes a good service on Passenger Assist, respondents in the qualitative interviews broke this down into key themes explored below:

- Reliability and coordination of the service; and,
- Good customer service.

### *Reliability*

Respondents note that having a service that is co-ordinated from 'platform-to-platform' will result in a good service when using the scheme. This relates to making it clear and ensuring that there will be staff available to assist at each relevant station, even if trains are delayed or cancelled.

*"I'd be worried if I'd booked Passenger Assist and there were problems with trains, because if you end up in a station that you're not anticipating, I don't know whether they would get in touch with the train, or how would that work?" Disabled adult, heard of and used Passenger Assist*

### *Customer service*

Respondents mainly say that they do not wish to be treated or feel like they are a burden when using the service. They note that good customer service from station or train staff is central to this, and would make for a good experience. As found throughout the quantitative survey, customer service is a priority for making a good service and journey.

*"[Passenger Assist] It should be led by what the actual person needs or requires rather than what is perceived that they need or require, because obviously perceptions can be wrong sometimes." Carer, unaware of available assistance*

*"You need people who are going to be like; 'Hi, how are you? How is your day?' Be chatty, be nice, and make sure you get from A to B as safely as possible, and you enjoy the experience and you don't feel judged." Disabled adult, aware of Passenger Assist*

Overall, these findings provide practical insight for ORR on how to potentially communicate the scheme going forward. For example, specific information on the services included as part of Passenger Assist would help prospective users understand the scheme and how it will benefit them. This can include the process of booking assistance in advance, the types of assistance on offer, and the people available to help users at the station. This is explored further in section 5 'Methods and types of information to communicate'.

*"I personally wouldn't be able to carry luggage and walk with a walking aid at the same time, especially if I had more than one piece of luggage. I'd definitely use that [Passenger Assist] service if I was going to be in that situation."* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

*"I think if I can have all the information I need from it, so who to contact and so forth, I think I would be very likely to use it."* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

*"Now I know that it's an actual thing, and not just me being a pain in the backside, yes. If they're making an offer, then yes [I would use Passenger Assist]."* **Carer, used Passenger Assist**

# 4. TURN UP AND GO



## 4.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

*Awareness of the ability to arrive at a station and ask for assistance without booking ahead (or being able to 'Turn up and Go') is lower than Passenger Assist, with four in five saying they have never heard of it (81% – 27 percentage points higher than Passenger Assist). Only 11% say they know at least something about it.*

*Of those who know something about the 'Turn up and Go' service, around half (a similar proportion as Passenger Assist) say they have used it before (49%). While the base size is low and should therefore be treated with caution, the vast majority of users rate their experience of 'Turn up and Go' as 'good' (89%\*). However, when asked to all respondents, potential uptake of 'Turn up and Go' is less than Passenger Assist (52% v 65% say they would be likely to use it in future).*

*The qualitative findings show that while some respondents understood that assistance could be provided to them when they ask for it at the station or on the train, very few were aware that a 'Turn up and Go' service was offered by all train companies (where reasonably practicable). Even among those who have used it, they were not aware this was a requirement, and instead asked for help ad-hoc at the station.*

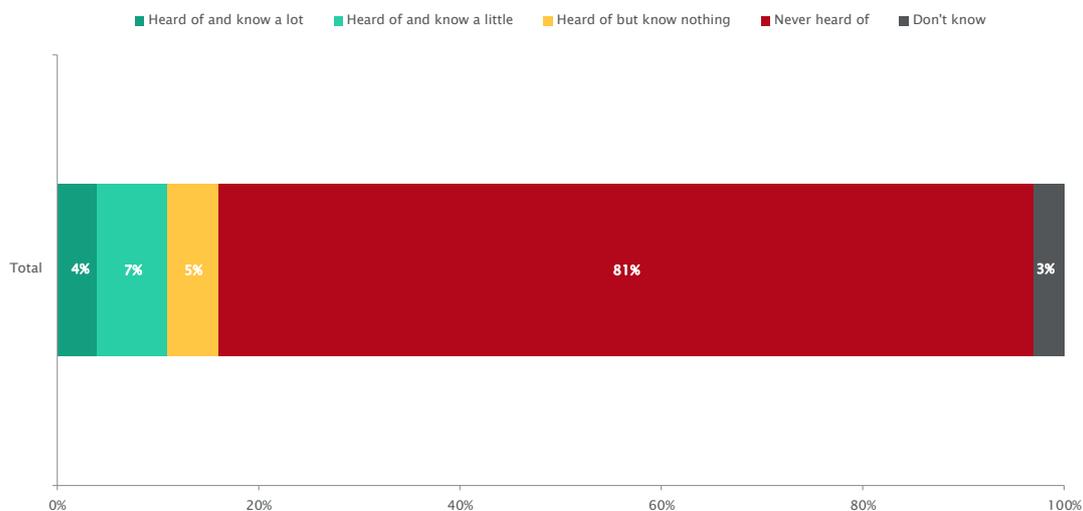
*'Turn up and Go' is praised for being flexible, with a number of adults (carers and travel companions in particular) in the qualitative interviews saying that having the option to arrange assistance at any time would be useful to them, particularly those with conditions that can change depending on external circumstances (for example going to the doctors unscheduled, or having a physical condition affected by the weather). Despite this, a large number also say that they are apprehensive towards it, as there may not be support available in certain situations, or they do not wish to publicise their condition by asking for help. As such, communications on Turn up and Go specifically need to balance the need for greater access and discretion when requesting assistance.*

## 4.2. AWARENESS AND USE OF TURN UP AND GO

### AWARENESS OF TURN UP AND GO

Awareness of being able to 'Turn up and Go' is lower compared to the Passenger Assist service. 86% of respondents say they know nothing about it (compared to 70% who say the same of Passenger Assist). Indeed, four in five say they have never even heard of Turn up and Go (81%).

While around a quarter of respondents say they know at least something about Passenger Assist (27%), only 11% say the same of Turn up and Go, with 4% saying they know a lot about it.



Q19. Travellers on trains can also arrive at a station and receive assistance without booking it in advance. This is referred to as 'Turn Up and Go'. Had you heard of Turn Up and Go before? Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

The qualitative findings help to provide further detail on knowledge levels of Turn up and Go. Among those who had heard of it, when asked, many respondents were unable to provide any details on the process of using it. This suggests that disabled passengers are unaware of the option to 'Turn up and Go', despite some having used it previously.

*"[Despite using Passenger Assist] I didn't know it [Turn up and Go] was an actual thing. I just stuck my head out of the door of the train, caught a guard's eye and went 'Can I have a hand mate?'...He was like 'Hold on', and got the bat phone out and assembled 'the Avengers', and I think twenty people were all helping us."* Carer, used Passenger Assist

## AWARENESS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Levels of awareness of Turn up and Go vary by demographic:

- **Younger adults are far more likely to say they have at least heard of Turn up and Go compared to their older counterparts.** Indeed, those aged 16–34 (44%) and 35–49 (23%) are at least twice as likely to say they have heard of it compared to those aged 50+, with an average 11% saying they have heard of it.
- Similarly, **as with Passenger Assist, levels of knowledge vary by employment status, frequency of rail travel, and region:**
  - Three in ten (30%) of those working say they have heard of Turn up and Go, compared with around one in ten respondents not working (11%) or retired (9%).
  - Mirroring this, **more than half of respondents (53%) who use a train at least once a week say they have heard of Turn up and Go**, compared with only 17% who use trains a few times a month.
  - **Respondents in London are around twice as likely to say they have heard of Turn up and Go** compared to adults across Great Britain overall (34%\* v 16%). This may be due to the ATOC (Association of Train Operating Companies, but now known as the Rail Delivery Group) 'Turn up and Go' trial in and around London in 2016, which may have increased awareness among those in the Capital.
- **Adults with some knowledge of Passenger Assist (those who say they know at least something about it) are far more likely to say they have heard of Turn up and Go compared to those who know nothing about Passenger Assist** (44% v 6%). This suggests a base level of knowledge among an informed group of disabled passengers aware of both assistance services available, compared to the wider majority not having knowledge of either at all.

As with Passenger Assist, while some of the results by sub-group are below 100 and are therefore indicative, **ORR can build a simple generic profile of those currently most likely to have knowledge of Turn up and Go.** These adults are younger adults, who use the trains to commute at least once a week, and primarily live in London.

**Given the varying levels of knowledge of both Turn up and Go and Passenger Assist, ComRes recommends that ORR targets communications towards older groups not living in cities, who may not see the rail service as a viable option, due to their perception that there may not be support available to them.** It is also possible that Turn up and Go is less likely to be promoted by train companies, as the scheme operates on a more flexible and ad-hoc basis, and this could explain the lower levels of awareness in general.

Awareness varies by impairment type, although these differences are less stark than for Passenger Assist. Indeed, **the findings show that among all impairment groups awareness of the scheme is low:**

	Visual	Hearing	Social or behavioural	Learning condition	Mental health condition	Physical mobility	Other long-term condition
<b>% saying they know at least something about TUAG</b>	29%	21%	18%*	17%*	13%	9%	8%

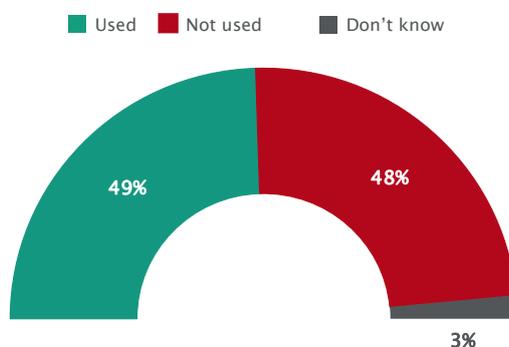
*All adults with/carers assisting someone with each impairment: Visual n=129, Hearing n=167, Physical n=699, Learning n=76, Mental health condition n=127, Social n=33, Other long-term condition n=220. Figures marked with an asterisk (\*) are those with a low base size of less than 100 and should be treated as indicative.*

The findings above show that levels of knowledge are generally low, but are particularly low among adults (and carers of adults) with a physical impairment. Of the 699 adults with a physical impairment taking part in the survey, 88% say they know nothing about Turn up and Go – more than any other impairment type listed. Given the flexible nature of Turn up and Go, the rail industry has an opportunity to inform adults with a physical impairment in particular on the benefits of the scheme to them, and how they can use it going forward.

### USAGE OF TURN UP AND GO

Of the 117 respondents who have heard of Turn up and Go and know at least a little about it, **around half say they have used it at least once before (49%), similar to the proportion who say the same of Passenger Assist (52%).**

Use of Turn up and Go, among those who have heard of it



Q20. Have you ever used 'Turn Up and Go' before (when helping the person you care for with rail travel)? Base: All who have heard of Turn up and Go (n=117); Disabled passengers (n=89); Helpers/carers (n=28).

Given the low base size among those who have knowledge of Turn up and Go, detailed inferences cannot be made. However, the findings suggest that younger adults are more likely to have used the scheme than their older counterparts (22 of the 34 16–34 year olds surveyed v only 8 of the 23 surveyed aged 65+).

In addition, among those who say they know at least something about Turn up and Go, more than three in five say they have used it previously (63%\*). A similar number of those who say the same of their knowledge of Passenger Assist have also used Turn up and Go before (56%\*).

As with Passenger Assist, responses from the qualitative interviews reveal that very few disabled adults and carers are aware of Turn up and Go in detail. Even among those who have used the scheme before, there is a lack of knowledge on the features of Turn Up and Go:

*“It didn’t occur to me that I could just go up to the ticket office and say, ‘Have you got someone that could help please?’” Disabled adult, used Passenger Assist*

## 4.3. THE TURN UP AND GO EXPERIENCE

### TURN UP AND GO SERVICES USED

While the base size is low given the small number of adults who have used Turn up and Go previously, among those who have, **they are most likely to have used the service to access their train service or the station.** In particular, almost half of respondents say they used the service to get to their seat (47%\*) or to get in/out of the station (46%\*).

**Whereas a majority of adults who had used Passenger Assist before received help getting on or off the train, or getting to the platform, a far lower proportion say the same for Turn up and Go:**

- 32%\* say they received assistance getting on/off the train – 44 points lower than for Passenger Assist. Indeed, respondents are least likely to select this of the options provided, and;
- 37%\* say they received assistance getting to the platform – 16 points lower than for Passenger Assist.

### RATING THE TURN UP AND GO EXPERIENCE

**As with Passenger Assist, the experience of using Turn up and Go is a positive one for passengers.** Of those who have used Turn up and Go (57 respondents), nine in ten rate it as ‘good’ (89%\*), with almost half rating it as very good (47%\*). Only 11%\* would rate their experience as ‘poor’.

**Positive experiences are mainly due to respondents finding the Turn up and Go process easy to use.**

When asked an open-ended question about their experience, of those who would rate their experience as ‘good’, this was mainly due to them not having any problems when using the service and found it to be reliable (16 of the 51 surveyed). Several respondents also say they found the staff to be helpful and friendly when using the service, adding to their positive experience.

Very few respondents say their experience of using Turn up and Go was poor (only 6 say this). Of those, this is mainly due to a bad personal experience, including waiting a long time or there being a lack of staff present to assist.

*“Sometimes the service is excellent and sometimes there is a long wait. Some staff are more obliging, helpful or friendly than others.”* Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Turn up and Go

*“When I last used the Turn up and Go service, I had to wait far too long.”* Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Turn up and Go

These results broadly align with the experiences of those using Passenger Assist – with users of each service pointing out that excellent customer service and a smooth process contributed to a good experience.

## 4.4. POTENTIAL FUTURE USE OF TURN UP AND GO

### LIKELIHOOD OF USING TURN UP AND GO AGAIN

When asked to **all respondents** taking part in the survey, half say they would be likely to use Turn up and Go in the future (52%), with around one in five saying they would be **very likely** to use it (19%). Around a third say they would be unlikely to use Turn up and Go (34%), despite being provided with more information on the scheme. **In comparison with Passenger Assist (65%), respondents overall are 13 points less likely to say they would use Turn up and Go in future.**

As with Passenger Assist, those who have used Turn up and Go previously tend to be more likely to say they would use the scheme in future:

*% responses when asked if they would be likely to use Passenger Assist again in future*

	TOTAL (All respondents) – n=1,000	All respondents who have used TUAG – n=57	All respondents who have <b>not</b> used TUAG – n=943
NET: Likely	52%	96%*	49%
NET: Unlikely	34%	4%*	36%
NET: Don't know	14%	–	15%

**Respondents who have used Turn up and Go previously are almost twice as likely to say they would use the scheme again – similar to the differences observed with Passenger Assist.** Prior use of either scheme entrenches positive sentiment towards them, increasing the likelihood of passengers using it again.

### LIKELIHOOD OF USING TURN UP AND GO BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Overall, **helpers and carers of disabled individuals are more likely than disabled adults themselves to say they would use Turn up and Go in the future (60% v 49%).** Instead, disabled adults are more likely to say they don't know if they would use it going forward (16% v 9% carers).

While the base size is low and therefore indicative, respondents who currently use the train for commuting purposes are most likely to say they would use Turn up and Go in the future (81%\*). A lower proportion of those who make long (66%) and short (68%) distance journeys say the same.

Younger adults are most likely to express interest in using Turn up and Go in the future – around two thirds of 16–34 and 35–49 year olds say they would be likely to use it going forward (67% and 64% respectively), far higher than the average across Great Britain (52%).

Despite the differences by age and journey type, a majority of adults from each of the disability impairment groups say they would be likely to use Turn up and Go in the future, with the exception of those with a long-term condition not listed (44%).

### REASONS FOR NOT USING TURN UP AND GO IN THE FUTURE

While the base size is low, when asked an open-ended question on Turn up and Go, among those who have knowledge of the service but have not used it, the main reasons for this are due to a lack of knowledge on the scheme or how to actually access it (20%\* and 13%\* respectively), or preferring to have the certainty of booking assistance in advance (16%\*).

The qualitative interviews do also suggest that the 'ad-hoc' nature of Turn up and Go contributes to passengers being apprehensive over accessing the scheme. In particular, some note they would be unsure of accessing the scheme if support was not available, or their train gets delayed. In particular, adults with a social or learning impairment note that this may cause them anxiety, should support not

be present, and they would rather book this in advance to ensure and be certain that assistance was available. Some also feel that they may be at risk of being stranded at the platform without assistance if they were to rely on this scheme.

*[When asked if they would use Turn up and Go] – “No, because I couldn’t take the risk of arriving there to discover that they’ve only got one person who does the job, and that one person is already dealing with another customer and I have to wait. As I said to you [my condition] means I cannot stand in one position for longer than about ten seconds, so no, absolutely not...Without an absolute guarantee that I am going to be greeted, no.”* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

*“When I used it, I got told off for not booking in advance and had to wait an hour before someone was available to get me to a seat”* **Verbatim comment from quantitative research, used Turn up and Go**

As with Passenger Assist, the qualitative findings indicate that there is a lack of detailed information on Turn up and Go. However, (unlike Passenger Assist), while respondents are generally aware that assistance can be provided to disabled passengers in some way, very few are aware that this can be formally requested ad-hoc.

Turn up and Go is praised for being flexible. Carers and some respondents with conditions that vary depending on external circumstances (for example some respondents with a mental health condition or physical condition that may be affected by the weather) say that Turn up and Go would be their preferred scheme of choice due to its flexibility.

*“One journey I might not need help, another journey I may need help, if that makes sense. So that [Turn up and Go] would probably look the better [option] for me, personally compared to Passenger Assist.”* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

*“[I would use Turn up and Go] More than Passenger Assist, personally, only because sometimes making sure that he [my son] will leave the house is sometimes an issue, because sometimes he gets stressed about leaving.”* **Carer, unaware of available assistance**

Others add that they would not wish to use Turn up and Go due to the risk of potentially ‘making a scene’ or to be ‘[an] inconvenience to others’, when asking for assistance. Instead people would rather ask for assistance separately in advance, than doing so in the station.

*“With my son for example, I sometimes don’t like talking about his needs in front of him, because he is high-functioning, he doesn’t like to be different...there may be something they don’t want to be made public or whatever.”* **Carer, unaware of available assistance**

# 5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION



## 5.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

*Among those aware of either Passenger Assist or the option to ‘Turn Up and Go’, these respondents are most likely to have heard of either service via word-of-mouth (including via a member of staff or a family/friend/carer). This suggests that information shared on these services may be more anecdotal than from official sources. Indeed, those aware are less likely to have heard of the schemes via leaflets, online publications or the train company website.*

*Despite this, among those who have heard of either scheme, a majority rate the information received as good (75% for Passenger Assist and 69% for ‘Turn up and Go’). A majority of respondents rate each form of information received on either scheme as good, particularly information received via a leaflet or booklet.*

*Going forward, disabled adults and carers would find information on what exact assistance is provided useful, followed by information on what assistance needs to be booked and how to do this. The qualitative findings provide further detail on this, with respondents noting that customer reviews and testimonials, as well as providing further reassurance on using the schemes, would be helpful. A common theme throughout the qualitative research was taking advantage of those who have used these services previously, and using them as a voice in communicating the advantages of each, to encourage others to use them.*

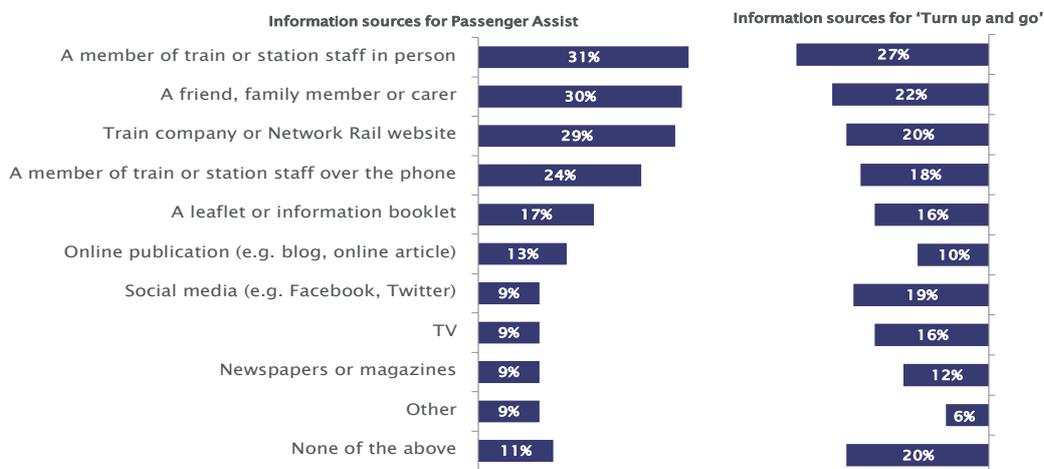
*Linked to the lower prevalence of these sources currently, respondents say they would most like to receive information from official sources, for example a leaflet or information booklet (56%), or the train company or Network Rail website (51%). The qualitative findings also show that there is an opportunity for the rail industry to use the wider disability community – like GPs surgeries, charities, housing associations and local authorities – to increase awareness and share this valued information more widely, and supplement the information provided by more traditional rail industry partners.*

## 5.2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON PASSENGER ASSIST AND TURN UP AND GO

### CURRENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Among those who have heard of Passenger Assist or Turn up and Go, respondents are most likely to say they heard about the respective scheme in person from staff or those they know, rather than receiving information via a leaflet or website specifically.

From where did you get your information on Passenger Assist/Turn up and Go?



Q28. From where have you got information on each of the following? Base: All respondents who have heard of 'Passenger Assist' (n=425) – disabled passengers (n=325), helpers/carers (n=100). All respondents who have heard of 'Turn up and go' (n=161) – disabled passengers (n=121), helpers/carers (n=40).

Respondents are most likely to say they heard about either scheme from a member of train or station staff in person (31% among those who have heard of Passenger Assist, and 27% among those who have heard of Turn up and Go). This is followed closely by hearing about it from a friend, family member or carer (30% PA and 22% TUAG). A significant minority have also heard about either scheme via a member of train or station staff by telephone (24% for PA and 18% for TUAG).

Given that these two forms of communication are the most commonly cited, this may help to explain why detailed levels of awareness of either scheme are low. It is possible that among those aware, they have been informed briefly of the scheme in passing, or have some initial knowledge based on conversations with others, but limited knowledge in detail.

Of the other sources of information listed, respondents say they have heard of either scheme via the train company or Network Rail’s website (29% for Passenger Assist and 20% for Turn up and Go). A lower proportion say a leaflet or information booklet (17% for PA and 16% for TUAG).

### CURRENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Passengers with visual disabilities or impairments\* are significantly more likely (50%) than the average of all those surveyed (31%) to receive information from a member of staff in person.

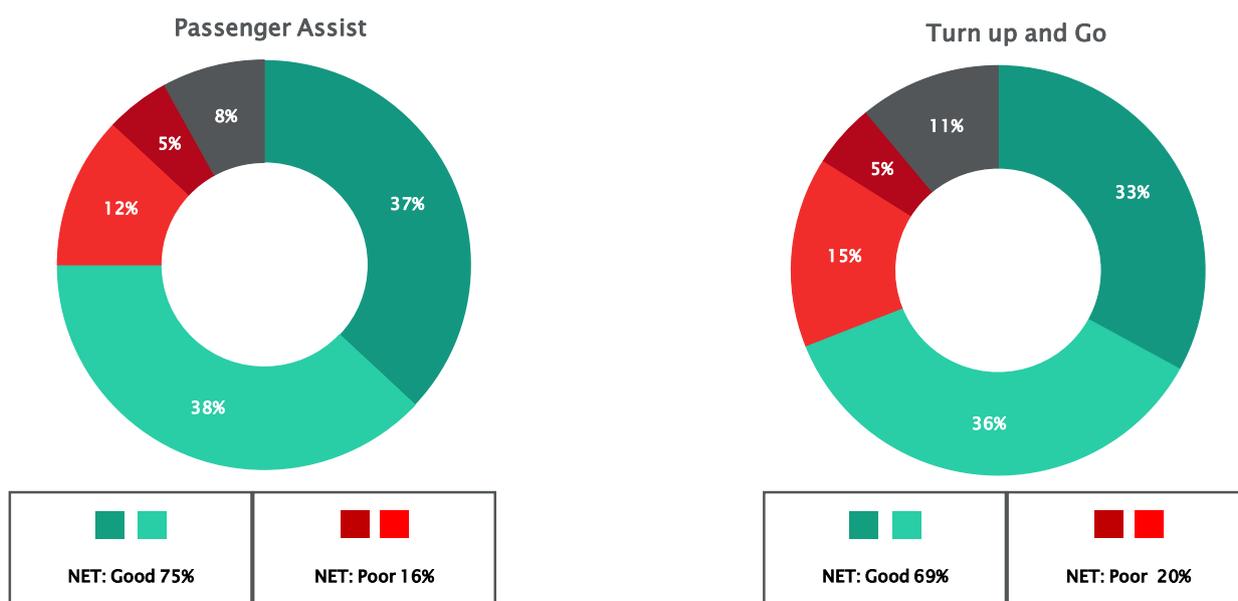
Those who have heard of Turn Up and Go are more likely to have heard about it online than those who have heard of Passenger Assist – either on the Train company/Network Rail website (39% for Turn Up and Go vs. 29% for Passenger Assist), or via a blog or an online article (26% for Turn Up and Go vs. 13% for Passenger Assist).

### RATING THE INFORMATION RECEIVED

The vast majority of adults who have heard of either scheme rate the quality of information they have received on each as ‘good’ – 75% say this of the information they have received on Passenger Assist, and 69% say this of Turn up and Go. Indeed, at least a third (33% TUAG and 37% PA) say they would rate the quality of information they have received on either scheme as very good.

Ratings of the quality of information on each of the assistance services

Very good    Fairly good    Fairly poor    Very poor    Don't know



Q29. Thinking about everything you have seen or heard, how would you rate the quality of information that you have seen or heard about each of the following? Base: All respondents who have heard of 'Passenger Assist' (n=425). All respondents who have heard of 'Turn up and go' (n=161).

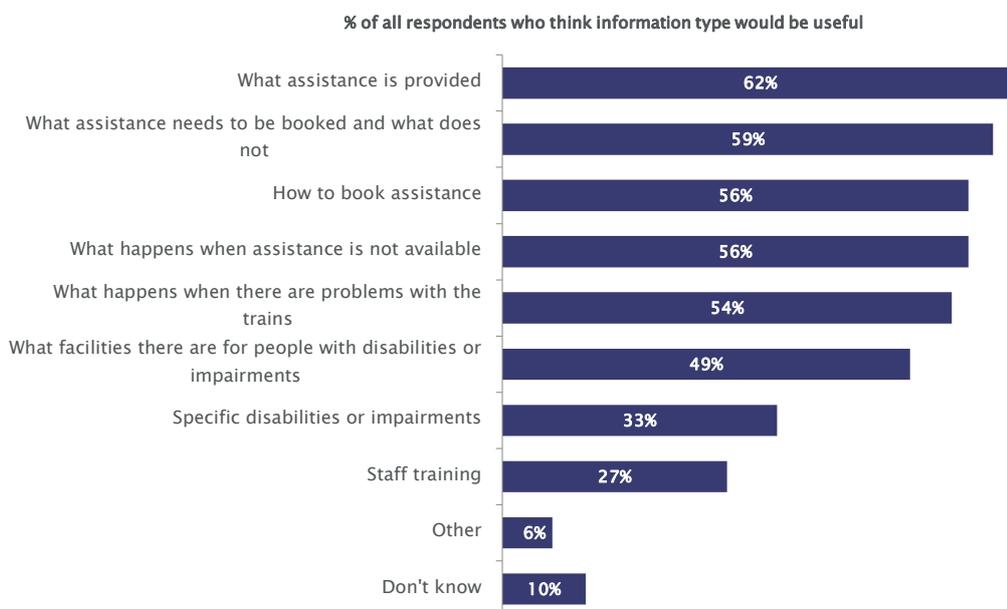
**Perceptions of the quality of information received on either scheme do not vary significantly by impairment type or source.** Indeed, for Passenger Assist (the scheme that more respondents are aware of), of those who have received each form of communication on this scheme, the vast majority rate this as being good:

- 89%\* of those who received information via a leaflet or information booklet would rate what they have received overall as good;
- 84% of those who received information via a train company or Network Rail’s website would rate what they have received overall as good; and
- 83% of those who received information provided by a member of train or station staff in person or via telephone would rate what they have received overall as good.

### 5.3. SHARING INFORMATION ON ASSISTANCE SERVICES IN FUTURE TYPES OF INFORMATION TO SHARE IN FUTURE

As identified earlier in the survey, respondents are most likely to find more detailed, additional information on assistance schemes available to disabled passengers most useful. Around three in five say they would find information on ‘what assistance is provided’ as part of the schemes useful (62%), and a similar proportion (59%) say information on ‘what assistance needs to be booked and what does not’ would be useful to them. These two options are most likely to be selected by respondents, closely followed by ‘how to book assistance’ (56%). However, a majority also seem to have concerns about things going wrong and would like communications about what to do should their journey not go to plan. 56% say that information on what happens when assistance is not available would be useful, and 54% say that information on what happens when there are problems with the trains would be useful. This shows that ORR’s communications need to reassure and inform prospective passengers on these schemes and what options passengers have in the event of things going wrong.

**Most useful types of information about schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train**



Q30. What types of information about schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train would you find useful? Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

While a majority say more information of some kind would be useful, they are far less likely to say that information should be tailored for people with specific disabilities or impairments (33%), or on staff training (27%).

## TYPES OF INFORMATION TO SHARE IN FUTURE BY DEMOGRAPHIC

Younger adults aged 16–34 are slightly less likely to say that each of the information types listed would be useful to them compared to their older counterparts. In particular, only two in five (41%\*) younger adults say that information on ‘what type of assistance is provided’ would be useful to them, compared to 62% of all adults overall.

There are also slightly differing priorities by impairment type, although these differences are less stark:

*Showing top three responses selected in order – by each impairment type*

Visual	Hearing	Physical mobility	Learning condition	Mental health condition	Social or behavioural	Other long-term condition
What assistance is provided (62%)	What assistance needs to be booked and what does not (59%)	What assistance is provided (66%)	What assistance is provided (62%*)	What assistance is provided (66%)	What assistance is provided (62%*)	What assistance is provided (59%)
What assistance needs to be booked and what does not (57%)	What assistance is provided (57%)	What assistance needs to be booked and what does not (63%)	How to book assistance / What happens when assistance is not available (61%*)	What assistance needs to be booked and what does not (61%)	What assistance needs to be booked and what does not / What happens when assistance is not available / What happens when there are problems with the trains (61%*)	What happens when there are problems with the trains (54%)
How to book assistance (56%)	What happens when assistance is not available (55%)	How to book assistance / What happens when assistance is not available (59%)	What assistance needs to be booked and what does not (59%*)	How to book assistance (58%)	How to book assistance (55%*)	How to book assistance (53%)

*All adults with/carers assisting someone with each impairment: Visual n=129, Hearing n=167, Physical n=699, Learning n=76, Mental health condition n=127, Social n=33, Other long-term condition n=220.*

Given the relative consistency among different impairment types on the forms of information they would find useful, assistance providers and the rail industry at large do not necessarily have to tailor all communications to particular groups. Given this consensus, the focus of sharing information should be on:

- More detailed information on the types of assistance available;

- The process of booking and receiving assistance; and
- What alternative measures or safeguards are in place in the event of something going wrong, or assistance not being available (e.g. if a train is delayed and a passenger misses their onward service).

## QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Respondents in the qualitative interviews were also asked what type of information they would like to receive on assistance schemes going forward. From this, three similar themes emerge, largely mirroring the quantitative findings:

- Specific information on the scheme;
- Reassurance on using the scheme; and
- Customer reviews and testimonials.

### *Specific information*

All respondents interviewed say they would like more specific information on the assistance schemes available, including details on how to book assistance, and what services are available. This reflects the 62% who say that information on what type of assistance is provided would be most useful to them. Indeed, some respondents are not aware the services are offered free of charge or available universally.

*“I would be looking at whether it’s free or whether I’ve got to pay for it...” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“You need to let people know that it’s not a pain [to use].” Carer, used Passenger Assist*

*“[Where it’s available] It’s the case of having some sort of website that you could put in your local station name, and it would give you a list of things that were available – whether it was available on the Turn up and Go or Passenger Assist system.” Carer, unaware of available assistance*

In addition, when probed on the different types of specific information that should be shared, respondents in the qualitative interviews cite additional factors:

### **The booking process – how this works practically, and who to contact**

This preference matches the quantitative research, including the majority (59%) who say that information on what assistance needs to be booked and what does not, as well as how to book assistance (56%). It is clear therefore that understanding how the schemes work and can be booked is most essential to communicate.

*“I need to have a phone number, and if possible, also an email address. I know this is presumably a cost...but doing a chat over the computer, not necessarily a voice chat, but typing.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“It would be nice maybe beforehand having arranged it, to be able to still check-up the day before and say, ‘Hello, you are going to meet me?’ It’s a bit of a concern as to whether they’re going to turn up, or perhaps forget.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“A phone service...so there’s someone at the end of the line who’s going to talk me through it...they’ll say; ‘This is how we do it, this is where you’ll need to get to, this is how you’ll get there...” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

<p>The ‘end-to-end’ support provided – how passengers can be supported from the start to the end of their journey</p>	<p><i>“Someone getting my luggage onto the train and next to me, or in a position where I can easily access it. Then it’s obviously being met at the other end with the same service.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance</i></p>
<p>What information the prospective passenger needs to provide during the booking process</p>	<p><i>“It’s [sometimes] almost a case of you’ve got to go quite far to actually prove that you’ve got a disability to get assistance” Carer, unaware of available assistance</i></p>

In the qualitative interviews, cost of travel was cited by a large number of respondents, with rail travel in general cited as being too expensive for disabled adults, even with the use of a railcard. Indeed, this is cited as a barrier to travelling on the train. ComRes recommends that ORR work with train operating companies to promote the fact that assistance schemes are provided for free of charge. Some respondents also add that this could generate good PR for train companies, as it would show that they are going the ‘extra mile’ for their passengers.

*“You [the train company] are providing a service, that service should be flexible for everyone. Virgin, West Midlands, Arriva and Southern Rail, they all need to come together and actually say; ‘We invest our profits into disability services, and we are committed to making a difference for everyone’... [it’s about making clear] that this is a service that really supports vulnerable passengers.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

#### **Reassurance on using the scheme**

Alongside requesting more information on how the assistance schemes work, a number of participants in the qualitative interviews also say they would like information on their reliability. This reflects the quantitative results, with at least half saying information on what happens when assistance is not available would be useful (56%). Having limited knowledge of the schemes available, some participants are reluctant to use some of the assistance, should anything go wrong. ORR therefore needs to ensure they reassure and inform potential passengers of the reliability of the schemes and end-to-end assistance provided.

*“I’d look at how reliable the service is and what guarantees they’re going to provide.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

#### **Customer reviews and testimonials**

Linked to receiving information in order to gain reassurance on how the schemes work, adults interviewed also say that testimonials from other disabled passengers on their experience using the schemes would help them. This would help provide further information on how the process works. In addition, experiences shared directly from other people in the same situation could help increase interest in and use of each scheme.

Train and station operators could potentially create or administer ‘Peer networks’ between disabled adults, potentially even by impairment type, with these groups sharing their experiences of using services and providing advice to disabled adults with similar impairments. In particular, they could use the majority of those who have had positive experiences as advocates for each scheme, to help raise the profile of each – ‘success stories’ should be shared.

*“Customer testimonials, so I know real people’s experiences of the service. [That] would probably make me more inclined to go with that particular service.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

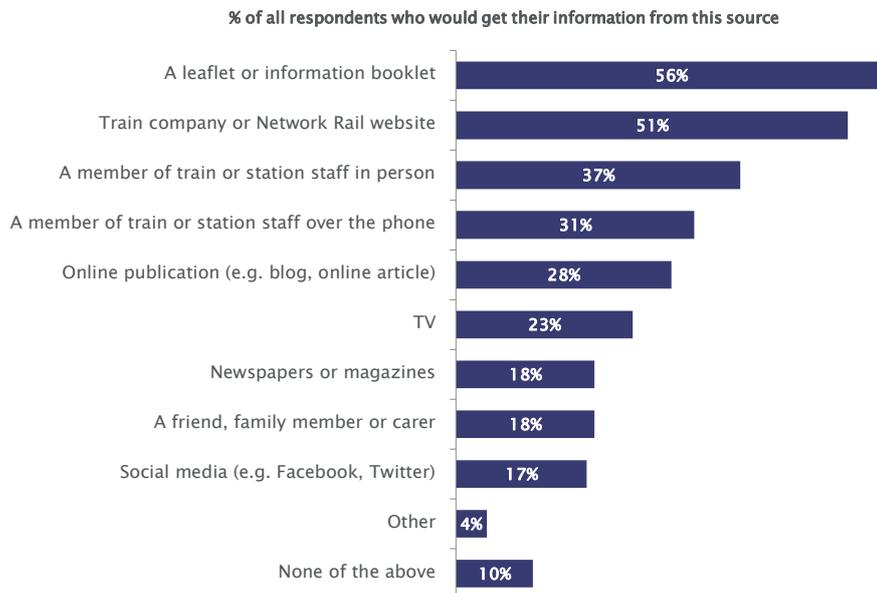
*“I’d be a great deal happier if I had examples from people. When you go online, you’ve got that section that you can go on when you want to buy something, that will tell you what other people thought about it, something like that would be nice.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

## METHODS OF COMMUNICATING INFORMATION IN FUTURE

When asked the medium through which they would like to receive information about assistance schemes available to passengers with a disability or impairment, official forms of communications are preferred.

Respondents are most likely to say they would prefer a leaflet or information booklet (56%), followed by the train company or Network Rail website (51%). Indeed, these are the only two options listed selected by a majority of respondents. This is followed by a member of train or station staff in person (37%) or by phone (31%). However, these results also show that the rail industry needs to use a variety of methods to reach disabled adults, given the diversity of the audience by demographic. For example, at least 17% select each option listed, meaning that coordinated and diverse approaches are required to the communications provided to disabled adults and carers.

### Preferred channels of information about schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train



Q31. From which of the following, if any, would you like to get information about schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train? Base: All respondents (n=1,000)

While receiving information from friends, family or carers is one of the most common ways in which respondents have heard about Passenger Assist and Turn up and Go, only one in five say this is how they would like to get information about these schemes in future (18%). Social media is least likely to be selected overall (17%).

**The top three preferred methods of sharing information are consistent across all impairment types, with official sources most preferred.** There are some slight differences by demographic, particularly by age.

Younger adults aged 16–34 (28%\*) and 35–49 (29%) are more likely to say they would like to get information from social media, compared to adults in Great Britain overall (17%). However, it should be noted that this is still less popular among these groups than most official channels of communications.

In addition, adults who travel less frequently on the train (less than once a month) are more likely to say they would like to get their information via a leaflet or information booklet (60%) or the train company or Network Rail’s website (60%), compared to those who use the trains at least once a week (43% and 45% respectively).

## QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

### *Official sources of information*

The qualitative findings further underline this appetite for receiving information via ‘official’ sources. Of the ten interviews conducted, nearly all respondents say they would like receive information about schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train from these sources. Leaflets and posters in the station or on trains were cited in particular:

*“Educating passengers – handing out leaflets, putting up posters around the station, or on the way into the station, or on the trains.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“There are loads of posters all over stations, but I’ve never seen one saying, ‘Ask for assistance here’ or ‘Come here to get some help’ or whatever.” Disabled adult, used Passenger Assist*

*“Why is it that hard to invest in a few posters that are pitched up everywhere that there is a 0800 number that you can call for disability support? It seems like support is a hidden service, something that is so covert that you need to smell it out and be really savvy to attain it.” Disabled adult, aware of Passenger Assist*

Other respondents note that train companies and station staff also have a responsibility in communicating these schemes to passengers, particularly for Turn up and Go services, where journeys may be more ad-hoc. Practical advice from the qualitative interviews includes:

- Using technology to contact people who can provide assistance:

*“You could have a button you go and press for help, and someone comes to you.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“Like when you go to a Drive-Through food place, like McDonalds. You arrive at a point, where you either press a button and a voice answers you, or as you drive up somebody notices you on the CCTV. You can speak to the speaker and say ‘I need help’, that could work.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

- A small number of respondents say that dressing staff in ‘blue shirts’ so passengers can clearly see they have a role in providing assistance, or designating staff in specific ‘blue zones’ may help. While ensuring that access is important and clear, a number of respondents in the qualitative interviews also emphasised that they would prefer some assistance to be discreet. They note that this is because they do not wish to feel like a burden, or to cause a scene and attract undue attention to their needs or impairment. As such, communications on both schemes should emphasise the balance between access and discretion, particularly on the issue of requesting help.

*“You could have a designated point within a station where you go for support...not an information desk which is busy, as there’s tourists coming for support...you go to a blue zone that has staff members there I can go and get support...I’ve seen it at Birmingham International Airport with Virgin staff.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“Put them in blue t-shirts, or give them a blue badge...change the customer services to make it a very obvious thing [the assistance schemes available]” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“[I do] not want to feel as though in some way I am causing an issue, or a problem to someone who is having to do the work.” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

*“Just, no big fuss [on me] really. Just be discreet – ‘Hello sir, can I take your bags for you?’” Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance*

While information points currently exist at many train stations, feedback from the qualitative interviews suggest that these could be publicised more clearly by train companies or station staff. In addition,

should train companies not be on board with support programmes to the same extent as charities (for example should there be staff cuts in customer services at the station), the use of technology may help mitigate the impact of staff cuts or a reduction in services. As an alternative, ComRes recommends that train companies allow users to have the option to contact a central hub or call centre to receive assistance.

**These findings provide a useful steer for ORR and the rail industry to use as the basis of a communications strategy.** As a priority, ComRes recommends that information shared on schemes available be communicated via official sources, particularly leaflets and train operating company/Network Rail websites.

### ***Information provided alongside existing schemes***

Feedback from the qualitative interviews also suggests that information on assistance schemes could be provided alongside existing, mainstream support services. A number of respondents note that information on assistance schemes could be provided as part of wider information packs on services regularly used by disabled adults, for example a 'blue parking badge' or with a disabled passengers railcard.

*"Well if you have a blue badge, there's no reason why when you apply for one, they couldn't put some information in with it, when it is sent to you."* **Disabled adult, used Passenger Assist**

*"I would probably put something with the railcards, because almost all disabled people travel with railcards. So when they get their railcard, on the back of it or something, having; 'Just before you travel, call this number – we can offer this, we can offer that.'" Carer, used Passenger Assist*

### ***The wider disability community***

Similar to the external channels outlined above, respondents also note that information can be shared via other sources, namely the 'wider disability community', as referred to by respondents.

Almost all respondents say that information could be shared using other sources not named in the quantitative research, including charities, GPs and Local Authorities. This may provide ORR and the rail industry with an opportunity to use organisations as partners in disseminating valuable information to disabled adults and carers. While some sources below are cited more than others, respondents note that it is not exclusively the role of these organisations in sharing information, and this 'burden' should be shared with the train company or a consumer organisation like Which?

Some of the most commonly cited channels are listed below:

- Charities: via newsletters that people subscribe to, at events, or in store (for example leaflets at an Age Concern);

*"I subscribe to emails from autism charities that often send out emails about different things...Making sure that those charities were aware of the services that are available, or methods for acquiring these, would be beneficial, because they will send it out to people on their mailing list."* **Carer, unaware of available assistance**

*"[Provide information on] A carer's website. You could post on forums advice, travel and routes available."* **Carer, unaware of available assistance**

*"I subscribe to various charities' [newsletters] and surely as part of a 'charitable approach', they could be utilised well in getting this information out there."* **Carer, used Passenger Assist**

- Housing authorities: via information packs when people move in, having information available in show rooms or via housing associations;

*"I live in sheltered accommodation; it is run by a housing association. All housing associations, I presume, have noticeboards...it would be nice if they actually made up a list [of schemes] and publicise it within the building...We also have a committee, and we could have someone come along and tell us*

*some of the information. If people are living in sheltered accommodation because it is difficult to get out, this is the only way you're going to get to us and give us the information.*” **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

- Governmental bodies – including the Department of Work and Pensions, Local authorities, and the Job Centre: via leaflets, trained staff or their websites;

*“I think [responsibility] falls with the DWP, Job Centre or something along those lines...I've never been encouraged to go out and try and find work, [based on] if we knew there was assistance on hand for things like that...I think the DWP should be encouraging people...I think the Government should be more progressing on issues like this.”* **Disabled adult, unaware of available assistance**

*“[When speaking about the ‘blue badge’] Information already comes from the Council, I can't see that they would be averse to giving you information on further services that you can get. It wouldn't cost them anything, they're putting a plastic thing in an envelope anyway, so they could always put a leaflet in; ‘by the way, did you know’, because I think possibly more people would use this.”* **Disabled adult, used Passenger Assist**

- GPs, Hospitals and Hospices: via leaflets in their offices, or informing doctors, carers and nurses that these schemes can be used so they can share these with patients;

*“[As a disabled person] You spend a lot of time in doctors' surgeries, sitting staring at the wall, so if things of that nature were put in...it would be more worthwhile to look at on the wall.”* **Disabled adult, used Passenger Assist**

*“My Macmillan nurse knew [of assistance schemes] because she knew somebody already, she didn't know because she was a Macmillan nurse...If Macmillan nurses and hospices, if they all had that information and they knew, they could pass it [leaflets] on, so you can go away and read it and say if it is for you. You've got the information there.”* **Disabled adult, aware of Passenger Assist**

ORR may also wish to use existing channels and word-of-mouth to spread awareness and information on assistance schemes via a ‘snowball effect’. The prevalence of information-sharing via word-of-mouth (as seen above) suggests that with the provision of information, staff or those involved with disabled charities could communicate information and advertise schemes. ORR could work with these groups and individuals to ensure that the information shared is accurate and detailed, to inform disabled passengers of the schemes fully. The findings throughout the survey indicate a desire for greater information on both schemes, and this method may help to increase awareness more generally.

Both channels of communication mentioned above (providing information alongside existing schemes and using the wider disability community as a voice) would be useful in reaching non-train users. This is particularly relevant as official sources may be focused on communications in the station or on the train, thereby missing a large proportion of the disabled community who very rarely use the train.

## SUMMARY OF SECTION

The qualitative responses show that there are some opportunities for the rail industry when communicating with disabled adults and carers on assistance schemes:

### *People want information*

Throughout the survey, it is clear that respondents have an appetite to receive more information on the schemes, and would like the schemes to be shared more widely via a variety of different communications channels.

The rail industry has the opportunity to use a variety of channels to increase awareness of the schemes, including 'official' sources of information like newsletters and leaflets. In addition, the qualitative responses also underline the importance of using external sources as channels of information on these schemes, including charities, hospitals and local authorities. This has been referred to as the 'wider disability community' throughout this report.

### *Those who use the scheme are pleased with it*

Of the minority who have used Passenger Assist and Turn up and Go, these experiences have been positive, and these adults say they are likely to use the schemes again. As such, ComRes recommends that the rail industry use testimonials and reviews from customers in promoting these schemes. Such evidence will encourage more disabled adults to use them, especially those who are apprehensive over using such schemes.

However, the rail industry needs to be aware that this brings risks as well. Current high levels of satisfaction may be linked to the fact that usage is currently low. Any increase in usage of either scheme will need to ensure that staff at train companies and at stations are aware of this potential increase, and the impact this may have in terms of assistance requests.

# 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



## 6.1. CONCLUSIONS

1. **There is a clear desire among the disabled adults surveyed to use the railways more.** While almost half (47%) say they currently use the railways less than once a month, only a quarter (26%) say they would use the railways this infrequently if there were no barriers to using them. Instead, they say they would use the railways far more frequently if there were no obstacles or inconvenience to them doing so.
2. **Key barriers** to disabled adults using the railways include difficulties accessing stations, trains and seats on trains, as well as the cost of rail travel, overcrowding and lack of comfort, and concerns about identifying the correct train. Accordingly, improvements to or assistance with these things is commonly-cited when it comes to the factors that would encourage disabled adults to use trains more often.
3. It is encouraging that the **current assistance offered through Passenger Assist and Turn Up and Go is well-aligned to overcoming the most commonly cited barriers** to disabled adults using the railways, with the exception of the cost of rail travel. This suggests that the format and type of assistance available is not in need of significant revision.
4. **Awareness of current assistance programmes is low.** Just half (51%) have heard of assistance schemes at all, while two in five (43%) have heard of Passenger Assist and just one in six (16%) have heard of the option to 'Turn Up and Go'. **Usage is also low**, with 14% of all disabled adults surveyed having used Passenger Assist, and just 5% having used Turn Up and Go.
5. However, once those surveyed are made aware of the services available, there are **high levels of interest in making use of Passenger Assist and Turn Up and Go in the future.** In addition, those who have made use of these services tend to be very positive about their experiences, suggesting that **the assistance currently available performs well at meeting the needs of those who use it.**
6. Disabled adults surveyed would like to receive information on assistance schemes through a **diverse range of channels**, so communications should use a variety of different engagement methods. There is demand for **information on a wide range of topics**, including the assistance available, how to book and what happens when things do not go as planned.

## 6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS FOR ORR AND THE RAIL INDUSTRY

### Maintaining a good service

The vast majority of those who have used assistance are positive about their experience, so the focus when it comes to service should be on maintaining current high standards. The following emerged as particularly important to this:

- **Polite / friendly staff.** Qualitative feedback was that the attitude of staff is crucial to a positive experience of assistance. Those requiring assistance would like staff to be friendly and empathetic. In particular, it is essential that those with disabilities are not made to feel that they are a burden or nuisance.

- **Reliable and guaranteed service.** It is very important that those requiring assistance have confidence in the assistance that is provided, and that they will definitely be able to access it. For many people, assistance not being available when they were relying on it would cause significant issues. Where people have had a bad experience with assistance, this is often as the result of events meaning that assistance was not available as planned.

## Raising awareness

Given high levels of satisfaction with the current service, our principal recommendation is that **the rail industry focuses on raising awareness of the assistance available, which should in turn drive increased usage of assistance services.** This includes reaching both existing passengers, and those who do not currently use the railways.

## Disseminating information

We recommend the following steps to disseminate information to those who require assistance:

- **Utilise a mix of channels to reach those requiring assistance.** Disabled adults surveyed would like to receive information on assistance services through a diverse range of channels, so communications should use a variety of different engagement methods. Those most commonly cited are:
  - Leaflets or information booklets;
  - Train company, Network Rail or rail other websites; and
  - Staff either in person or on the phone.

However, there is also some demand for content through other channels such as online and television. While the methods vary, there does not need to necessarily be a radical difference in tailoring communications to particular disability types – in general, respondents from nearly every sub-group say they would like more specific information on the assistance services overall.

- **Create a more joined-up approach.** A finding that emerged particularly strongly from the qualitative research is that ORR and train companies should work with the wider disability community to raise awareness of assistance. This will be especially important to **raising awareness among those who do not currently use the railways.** Specific suggestions included working with the following to communicate information about assistance schemes:
  - Disability charities;
  - GPs surgeries;
  - Local Authorities;
  - The DWP; and
  - Housing associations.

Respondents also suggested that this information could be included when people apply for a blue badge for parking, or a disabled persons railcard.

- **Target priority groups.** Awareness of assistance schemes is notably lower among those living outside of London, and older respondents. ORR and train companies may wish to specifically target communications to these groups.

## Information to disseminate

We recommend focusing on communicating the following information to those who require assistance:

- **What assistance is available.** Those surveyed say that the most useful information to receive is on what assistance is provided to those who require it. Given low levels of awareness, it will be important to communicate the core facts of the types of assistance that are available. Respondents would also like to know more about what assistance needs to be booked and what does not.
- **How to arrange assistance.** Those surveyed say that it would be useful to understand how to arrange assistance in advance. This is especially important given greater levels of interest in Passenger Assist as compared to Turn Up and Go.
- **What happens when things do not go as planned.** Given the importance respondents placed on the reliability of assistance, communicating this will be important in generating the confidence required to encourage people to make use of assistance.
- **That assistance is available for free.** As cost is cited as a common barrier to using the railway for those with disabilities, and many respondents in the qualitative phase were unaware that assistance was available for no cost, this will likely be a useful message to encourage uptake.
- **Case studies.** Given that the majority of those who make use of assistance schemes are very positive about their experience, it is likely that promoting case studies of these positive experiences will help to encourage those who are unsure about using assistance for the first time. A number of respondents in the qualitative phase mentioned that it would be helpful to hear real stories from those who have used assistance.

## Future considerations

Final considerations for the future include:

- **More concerns about Turn Up and Go than Passenger Assist.** Likelihood to use Turn Up and Go in the future is lower than for Passenger Assist. From the qualitative phase, this may be due to concerns about the guarantee of assistance being available, with respondents appreciating the added certainty that comes with pre-booking assistance.
  - This may be partly driven by the low incidence of assistance scheme usage, with respondents being cautious about making use of a service they have never tried before. If usage of assistance schemes increases, those with disabilities may become more accustomed to receiving assistance, and therefore more confident in turning up without having booked in advance.
- **Need to maintain standards as usage increases.** Current satisfaction with usage is very high, meaning ORR and the industry should focus principally on raising awareness. However, it is important to bear in mind that if usage of assistance schemes increases, greater pressure will be placed on staff as they become more frequently asked to provide assistance. In this situation, it will be essential that staff training and provision keeps pace with usage to prevent standards from slipping.

# FURTHER INFORMATION

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