

Experiences of Passenger Assist

Research report 2020-2021

Office of Rail and Road

June 2021

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1. Executive summary

Background

Passenger Assist is a free service offered by rail companies providing passengers with disabilities, or anyone else who may require help, with assistance to enable them to make their journey. Rail companies' participation in Passenger Assist is mandated through their regulatory requirement to have an Accessible Travel Policy (ATP)¹ approved by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). The intent of Passenger Assist is to make rail travel accessible to everyone.

Passenger Assist is open to anyone who needs assistance; this could be due to a disability or long-term health condition, a temporary health issue or old age, and no proof is required to demonstrate eligibility to use the service. Assistance can take various forms – from being assisted into the station and help getting on and off the train, to help with luggage and while moving around stations. The responsibility for the assistance at each station is with the designated operator of each station, known as the Station Facility Operator (SFO).

In 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 2CV (previously Breaking Blue) undertook research on behalf of ORR to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist was meeting users' needs and expectations overall and how well individual operators were performing in terms of meeting their Passenger Assist obligations. ORR commissioned a third wave of this research to cover the period 2020-21.

However, due to COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns across the UK, it was necessary to pause the planned start of the 2020-21 wave of the research. Government guidance regarding travel was updated and research was able to restart in November 2020 with interviews conducted retrospectively back to July/August 2020 (rail period 5). Across the network passenger numbers were considerably lower due to COVID-19, therefore as many interviews as possible were conducted in each rail period replacing the previous approach of setting maximum target numbers for each operator.

Methodology

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG), who manage the Passenger Assist booking system, provided 2CV with assistance records on a monthly basis during the survey period. All files were de-duplicated to ensure each participant only appeared once in the file. When the new sample was received passengers who had previously been contacted were removed.

To maximise participation the research consists of a combined approach of online and telephone interviews. In total, for the 2020-21 fieldwork period 2CV achieved 1,549 interviews: 822 by telephone; 727 online.

¹ <https://orr.gov.uk/rail/licensing/licensing-the-railway/accessible-travel-policy>

Significance testing was conducted at a level of +/- 95 per cent and where there are differences between sub-groups with a large enough sample size and/or difference in results to be significant, these have been reported.

Who we spoke to?

We spoke to passengers requiring assistance themselves (83 per cent) and companions travelling with someone requiring assistance (17 per cent).

Most people who use Passenger Assist are aged 65 or older (51 per cent), and a similar proportion are retired (55 per cent). However there has been a significant decrease the proportion of people using the service aged 75+ (down from 43 per cent in 2019-20 to 29 per cent in 2020-21). The majority of people who use Passenger Assist are female (65 per cent), although this proportion has reduced compared to previous years (70-73 per cent).

The most common type of disability that people who receive assistance have is physical disability (62 per cent). A smaller proportion have a visual impairment (20 per cent), a long-term illness (19 per cent), hearing impairment (14 per cent) or mental health condition (13 per cent). Just under one in ten do not have any disability or long-term health condition (9 per cent).

Importance of Passenger Assist

Almost seven in ten passengers (68 per cent) stated they could not have completed their journey without Passenger Assist. Three in ten (29 per cent) could have completed their journey, but it would have been more difficult for them without Passenger Assist.

Passengers booking assistance getting to the wheelchair area or provision of a ramp were most likely to agree they could not have completed the journey without Passenger Assist (85 per cent and 81 per cent respectively).

There is evidence that with the decline in leisure travel during 2020 both the reasons for travelling and the importance of Passenger Assist became even more critical for the remaining passengers using the service. This is likely to have been accentuated by the greater proportion of passengers travelling alone rather than with a companion.

What assistance are passengers booking?

The most common type of assistance booked is help boarding the train (74 per cent), and this has risen significantly from 69 per cent last year. The second most common type of assistance booked is alighting the train (66 per cent, again a significant rise from 59 per cent in 2019-20). Significant increases are also seen for the provision of a ramp and guidance if you are visually impaired.

Passengers continue to book multiple assists per journey, with 35 per cent booking more than five types of assistance. The average number of assists booked per journey leg this year is 4.07, similar to the 2019-20 average of 3.98 assists per journey leg. It is important to note that the results for assistance requested are self-reported and therefore may not be a true representation of what was booked by the passenger.

Experience of booking Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist can be booked by telephone, by email or via the web. The majority of the people we interviewed used the same booking route as usual despite the pandemic (79 per cent). Booking assistance takes on average 9 minutes 41 seconds an increase from 8 minutes and 46 seconds in 2019-20.

The number of passengers receiving a booking confirmation remains high at 88 per cent (89 per cent in 2019-20, 87 per cent in 2018-19 and 82 per cent in 2017-18). Those receiving a booking confirmation were much more likely to feel confident all of their requirements would be met (71 per cent) than those not receiving a booking confirmation (53 per cent).

Over half of passengers (53 per cent) received information regarding how to travel safely during the pandemic. The majority of these passengers received this information over the phone by a booking agent (42 per cent), with their booking confirmation (30 per cent) or on the website where they booked (26 per cent). The vast majority of those receiving safe travel information felt it was useful (89 per cent). It was especially useful for those with visual impairments and hearing difficulties (91 per cent useful for both groups).

Satisfaction with all elements of the booking process remains high. Satisfaction with the booking process overall and the assistance arrangements are both 92 per cent, whilst satisfaction with the helpfulness of staff when booking assistance is marginally lower at 91 per cent.

Experience on the day of travel

Eight in ten passengers (81 per cent) were met by rail staff in what they consider is a reasonable timeframe. One in ten (nine per cent) are met by staff, but after some delay and eight per cent are not met by staff.

Most Passenger Assist users book multiple types of assistance for each leg of their journey and four in five (80 per cent) receive all of the assistance they book: this is a significant rise from 74 per cent in 2019-20.

Almost all passengers are still able to complete their journey leg as planned (93 per cent). Four per cent complete their journey leg but not as planned and just one per cent are unable to complete that leg of their journey at all.

Satisfaction with journey measured

The majority of passengers receiving assistance at stations were satisfied: 92 per cent, a significant rise from 2019-20 (88 per cent). It is important to note that satisfaction with the journey is not asked of everyone booking assistance, only those who are met by staff.

The majority of those who receive each individual type of assistance are satisfied with it. There has been a significant increase this year in passenger's satisfied with assistance boarding the train (up 3 points), guidance for the visually impaired (up 8 points), getting to a seat (up 5 points), getting to a wheelchair area (up 5 points), getting in and out of the station (up 5 points) and alighting the train (up 6 points).

Satisfaction with staff is generally very high. The highest scoring measure for staff is satisfaction with the helpfulness and attitude of staff providing assistance at the station with over nine in ten satisfied (94 per cent), up significantly and two points from last year. The second highest scoring measure is satisfaction with the knowledge and proficiency of staff in providing assistance, which has risen significantly, from 91 per cent in 2019-20 to 93 per cent in 2020-21.

Passengers with learning or concentration impairments are least satisfied with how well staff assisting them understand their particular needs (85 per cent) and also how knowledgeable and proficient staff are in how to assist them (88 per cent).

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist

For the specific journey assessed in the interview there has also been a significant increase this year in those very satisfied with the whole process from booking to travelling (up from 68 per cent to 72 per cent). Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist based on all past usage is at 84 per cent this year an increase from 2019-20 and 2018-19 (both at 82 per cent). Finally, the Net Promotor Score (NPS; likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist) has increased significantly, from 67 in 2019-20 to 73 in 2020-21.

2. Introduction

The independent safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways is the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). A condition of the operating licences that ORR grants to mainline train and station operators requires them to establish and comply with an Accessible Travel Policy (ATP, previously Disabled People's Protection Policy, DPPP). This ATP sets out in detail the arrangements that an operator will put in place to support disabled passengers. A key aspect of ORR's regulatory work is to ensure that Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and Network Rail fulfil the commitments made to passengers in their ATP.

A primary element of the ATP is the requirement for train and station operators to participate in Passenger Assist, which obligates them to assist, free of charge, passengers with disabilities, and anyone else who may require help, to enable them to make their journey. Passenger Assist therefore plays a crucial role in making rail travel accessible to all irrespective of their circumstances.

In 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 ORR commissioned 2CV (previously Breaking Blue) to investigate the extent to which Passenger Assist was meeting users' needs and expectations, and to explore how well individual operators were performing in terms of meeting their Passenger Assist obligations.

ORR commissioned a fourth wave of this research for 2020-21 to support its ongoing compliance monitoring in this area and build on the wider body of evidence about how well Passenger Assist is meeting user needs and expectations.

However, due to COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns across the UK, it was necessary to pause the planned start of the 2020-21 wave of the research. Government guidance regarding travel was updated and research was able to restart in November 2020 with interviews conducted retrospectively, therefore results for 2020-21 within this report cover assists received from 26th July 2020 to 31st March 2021 only.

3. Background and objectives

Passenger Assist allows passengers who need assistance to book it in advance of their journey. Bookings can be made by email or online, although the majority of bookings are made by telephone using a Freephone number. The recently introduced Passenger Assist “app” was launched in May 2021 after the completion of this wave of research and so is out of scope for the relevant reporting period.

At some stations, there is also a ‘Turn up and Go’ service whereby passengers can arrive at the station and request assistance that has not been booked in advance². This type of unbooked assisted travel is outside the scope of this research.

Passenger Assist is available to anyone who needs assistance; for example, due to a disability or long-term health condition, temporary health issue or old age, and no proof is required to demonstrate someone’s eligibility to use the service. The service can take various forms – from being assisted into the station and help getting on and off the train, to help with luggage and moving around stations. The responsibility for the assistance at each station is with the designated operator of that station, the Station Facility Operator (SFO). However, the provision of assistance in the station can be subcontracted, for example, from Network Rail to a TOC, or this responsibility can be shared between TOCs. Nevertheless, the SFO, from a regulatory perspective, remains responsible for the station and is accountable for any assistance provided within it.

Consistent with this, for the purposes of this research ORR decided that the assistance provided at each station would be allocated to the relevant SFO, regardless of which company the staff providing the assistance worked for. Since it may not be apparent to the passenger who the SFO is for a station, the assignment of results to SFOs is based on the Passenger Assist booking records, rather than by the passengers’ recall of who they booked or travelled with.

The overall aim of this research is to explore passenger experiences of Passenger Assist across all aspects of the service, and to seek feedback on any potential areas for improvement. The specific research objectives are as follows:

- Profile assisted travel service users, including their demographic characteristics, impairment type, the journey purpose, frequency of use of the train and the assisted travel service.
- Evaluate a recent journey, from booking assistance through to the actual journey and experience on the day.
- Measure overall satisfaction when travelling by train using Passenger Assist and reasons for any dissatisfaction; and
- Understand the impact of COVID-19 – how this has affected frequency of use, how it will impact use going forward as well as concerns regarding travelling by train and using Passenger Assist.

In 2017-18 ORR and 2CV (previously Breaking Blue), with input from Network Rail and a number of TOCs (especially those TOCs with experience of using surveys to measure Passenger Assist satisfaction on their

² Rail operators are also required to provide assistance to passengers even if this has not been arranged in advance, where this is reasonably practicable. This type of unbooked assistance is commonly known as ‘Turn up and go’.

own services and stations), developed a quantitative questionnaire addressing the above objectives. In 2018-19 minor changes were made to the questionnaire (notably measuring assistance boarding and alighting the train as separate categories). In 2019-20 no changes were made to the questionnaire, ensuring it remained comparable to 2018-19 and in the main to the original wave.

When the research re-started for 2020-21 the questionnaire was amended to capture the effect of COVID-19 on passengers and their journeys. However, no changes were made to the questions measuring satisfaction with Passenger Assist, so the coverage is comparable to the previous waves.

What?	How?	Which questions?
Screening and introduction	Concise, precise questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether booked for self or other • Frequency of using Passenger Assist pre COVID-19 • Impact of COVID-19 on assistance and journeys • Frequency of using Passenger Assist post COVID-19 • Confirmation recall journey
Experience booking assisted travel	Combination of closed questions and open end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of assistance booked • Impact of COVID-19 on booking mode used • Confirmation of booking and any COVID safe travel information received • Usefulness of information and confidence in booking • Satisfaction with booking process
Journey experience	Combination of closed questions and open end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey purpose, whether travelling alone, if a repeat journey • Whether met by a member of staff • Assistance received and satisfaction • Whether experienced disruption and impact on journey • Satisfaction with staff
Satisfaction with service	Combination of closed questions and open end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist • Likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist • Confidence using and overall experience using Passenger Assist during COVID-19 pandemic
Classification data	Concise, precise questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics – gender, age, employment status and disability type

4. Methodology

When booking assistance, a record is created in the Passenger Assist database for each assist rather than for each journey, journey leg or each passenger. For example, a passenger travelling from London Euston to Birmingham New Street who requested help with luggage, and assistance boarding and alighting the train would have a record created for each assistance type requested at each station (so there would be four records created for the outbound journey – two at London Euston and two at Birmingham New Street – and a further four for any return journey – two at Birmingham New Street and two at London Euston).

However, to allow attribution of the results to a specific SFO, in this survey passengers are asked about assistance given at a particular station rather than across the entire journey (or indeed instead of their experience of the entire service over a period of time).

In order to ensure that the sample is representative of the rail industry as a whole, in previous waves interview targets were set for each SFO based on the proportion of total booked assists they received. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, across the network passenger numbers were considerably lower, therefore as many interviews as possible were conducted each rail period replacing the previous approach of setting maximum target numbers for each company.

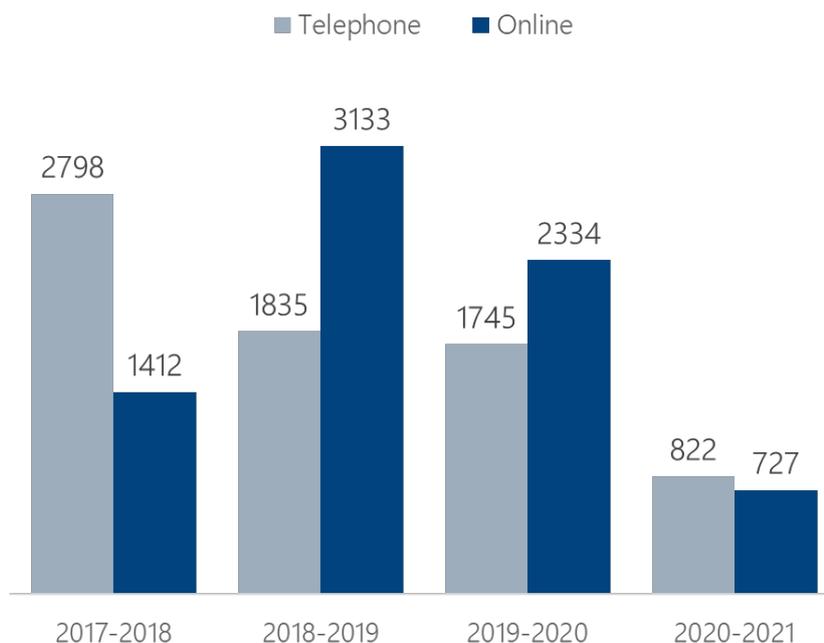
Fieldwork was conducted between 11th November 2020 and 30th April 2021³. The Rail Delivery Group (RDG), who manage the Passenger Assist system, provided sample from their database on a monthly basis during this period.

The sample files contained a record for each assist booking rather than each passenger, which meant they needed to be de-duplicated. All elements were randomly selected for each participant to avoid sample bias: the leg of the journey; the station (start, finish, or interchange); and the type of assist. In addition, for each sample file, passengers who had been contacted previously were removed from the new sample.

A combined approach of online and telephone interviews was used to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the manner they felt most comfortable with. The initial approach for all records containing an email address was by email. The telephone sample was drawn from those not supplying an email address at the time of the booking, those not completing the survey online, and those who indicated a preference to be interviewed by telephone.

The balance between telephone and online interviews changed during 2020-21 with more completing by telephone than online, compared to 2018-19 and 2019-20 where more interviews were conducted online. We do not believe this has had a significant effect on the trends shown in the results.

³The research includes those using Passenger Assist between 26th July 2020 to 31st March 2021.



This report details the findings overall and any differences between relevant sub-groups (such as age, disability type, and how the booking was made). Certain sub-groups are only reported for questions that are directly relevant to them.

Significance testing was conducted at a level of +/- 95 per cent and where there are differences between sub-groups with a large enough sample size and/or difference in results to be significant, these have been reported. We have generally avoided reporting differences between sub-groups which are not statistically significant, however in a small number of cases we have done so (mainly where they are consistent with other data points which are statistically significant). If there is no mention of the sub-groups then this is because there are no meaningful differences to be reported.

Within the report, figures that have significantly increased this year are shown in green or using a green arrow in the charts and tables, and figures that have significantly decreased are shown in red or using a red arrow. Note that due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

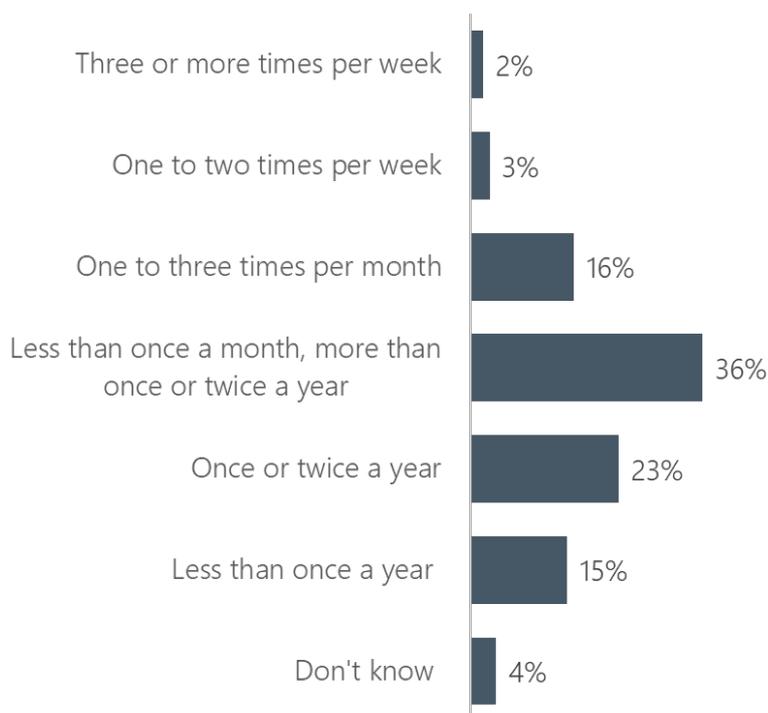
5. Who we spoke to?

A total of 1,549 passengers were interviewed. Over four in five (83 per cent) of people we spoke to are passengers using Passenger Assist themselves, and just under one in five (17 per cent) are companions who accompanied someone using Passenger Assist.

SFO	Achieved
Network Rail	432
Avanti West Coast	179
Great Western Railway	137
LNER	109
Northern	86
South Western Railway	84
Transport for Wales	76
Southeastern	72
East Midlands Trains	71
ScotRail	66
Greater Anglia	65
Chiltern Railways	27
West Midlands Trains	24
TransPennine Express	21
<i>Great Northern</i>	8
<i>Southern</i>	71
<i>Thameslink</i>	16
Net: Govia Thameslink	95
Other small SFOs	5
TOTAL	1,549

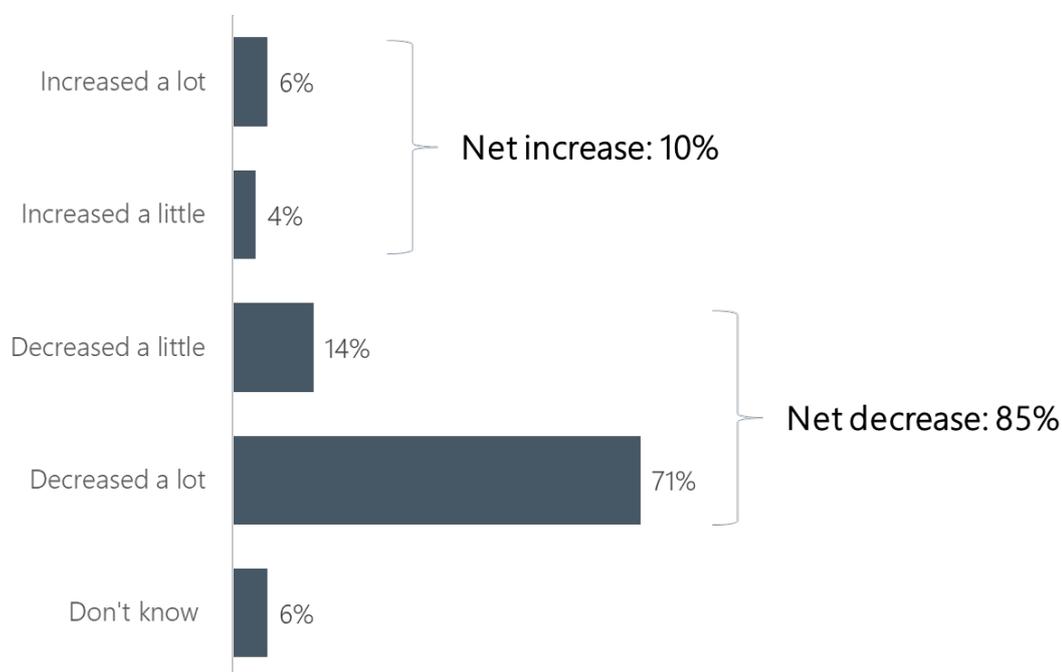
Frequency of using Passenger Assist

Pre-COVID-19 the majority of passengers used Passenger Assist relatively infrequently (as in previous years). Approximately one in five users (21 per cent) used Passenger Assist at least monthly and approximately a third (36 per cent) used Passenger Assist less often than once a month, but more often than twice a year.



A3. How often did you / your companion typically use Passenger Assist before the COVID-19 pandemic? (before 23rd March 2020) Base: All respondents (20-21: 1549)

Just under six in ten (59 per cent) reported that COVID-19 had an impact on their frequency of travel. Seven in ten who said they had been impacted (71 per cent) reported frequency of travel decreasing a lot.

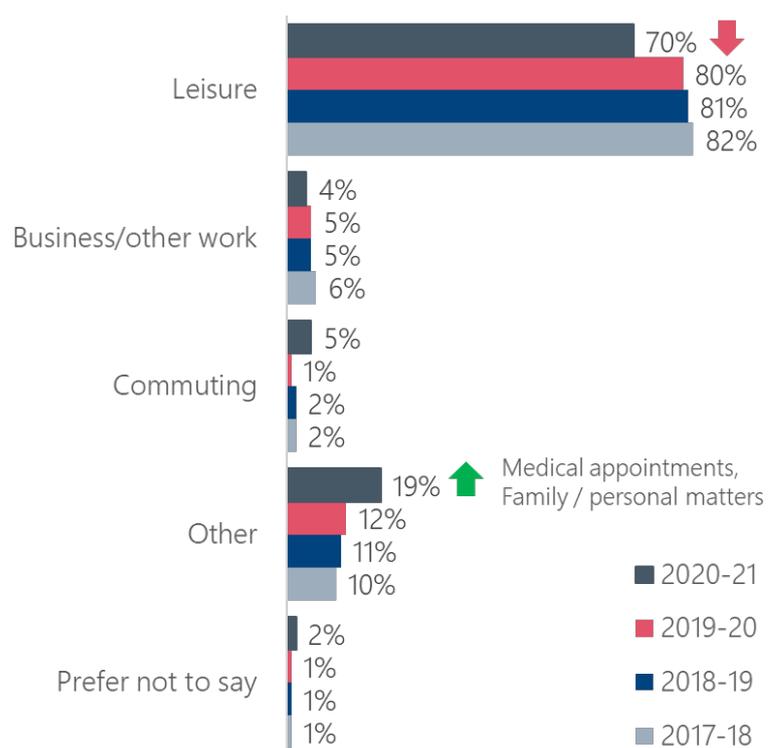


A3c. In what way has your use of Passenger Assist changed? Base: Travel impacted by COVID (2020-21 910)

"I no longer need to travel as much. My work and volunteer commitment involved face to face dealings with clients which is no longer possible. I often travel with my wife for vacations which have also been impacted."
65-74, visual impairment

"I'm travelling less in general, and I'm anxious about being in a confined space where people may not be wearing masks as it is possible that contracting COVID may make one of my long-term health conditions worse."
16-24, physical disability and mental health conditions

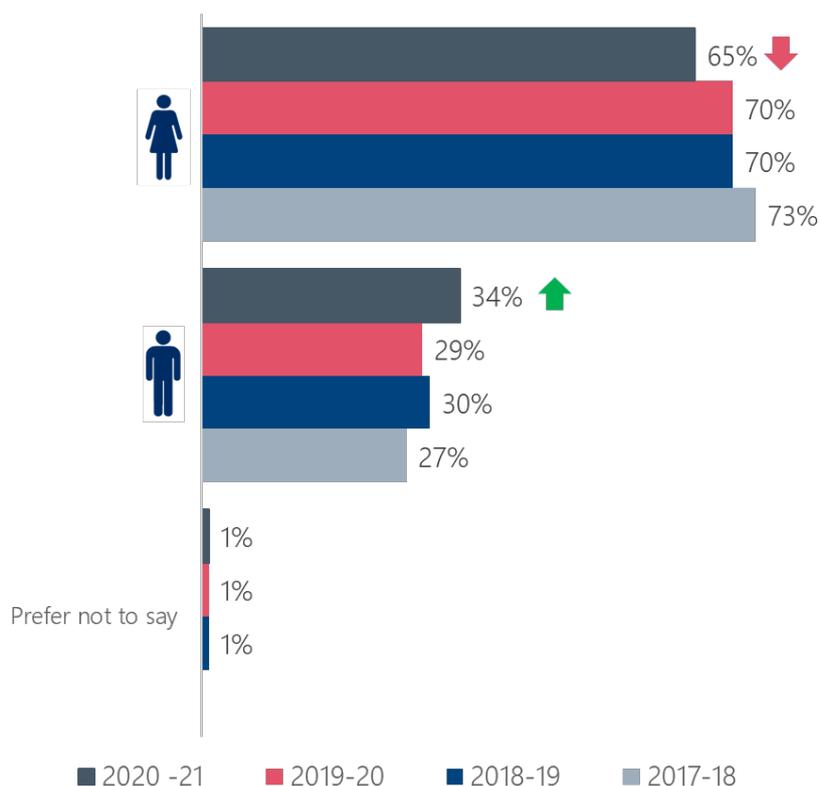
The most common reason passengers were travelling remains for leisure purposes (70 per cent); however, this has significantly decreased from 80 per cent last year. Passengers travelling for other reasons (19 per cent) has increased from 12 per cent last year. This change in journey purpose is most likely due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic where for significant spells only essential journeys could be made. This is shown in the increased proportion of 'other' journey types which include essential journeys such as medical appointments, family or personal matters.



D2. What was the main purpose of the journey? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968; 2019-20: 4,079; 2020-21: 1549)

Profile of users

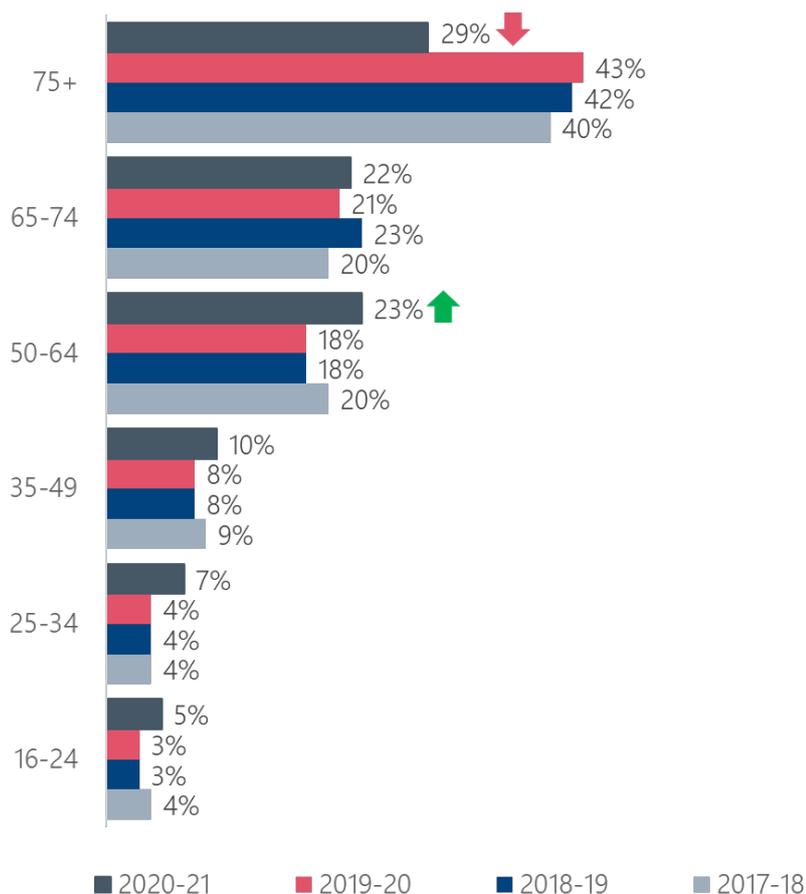
Women continue to make up the majority of passengers using Passenger Assist (65 per cent). However, the proportion of each gender using Passenger Assist has changed significantly since last year (the proportion of men increasing from 29 per cent in 2019-20 to 34 per cent in 2020-21).



F1. Are you... Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968; 2019-20: 4,073; 2020-21: 1549)

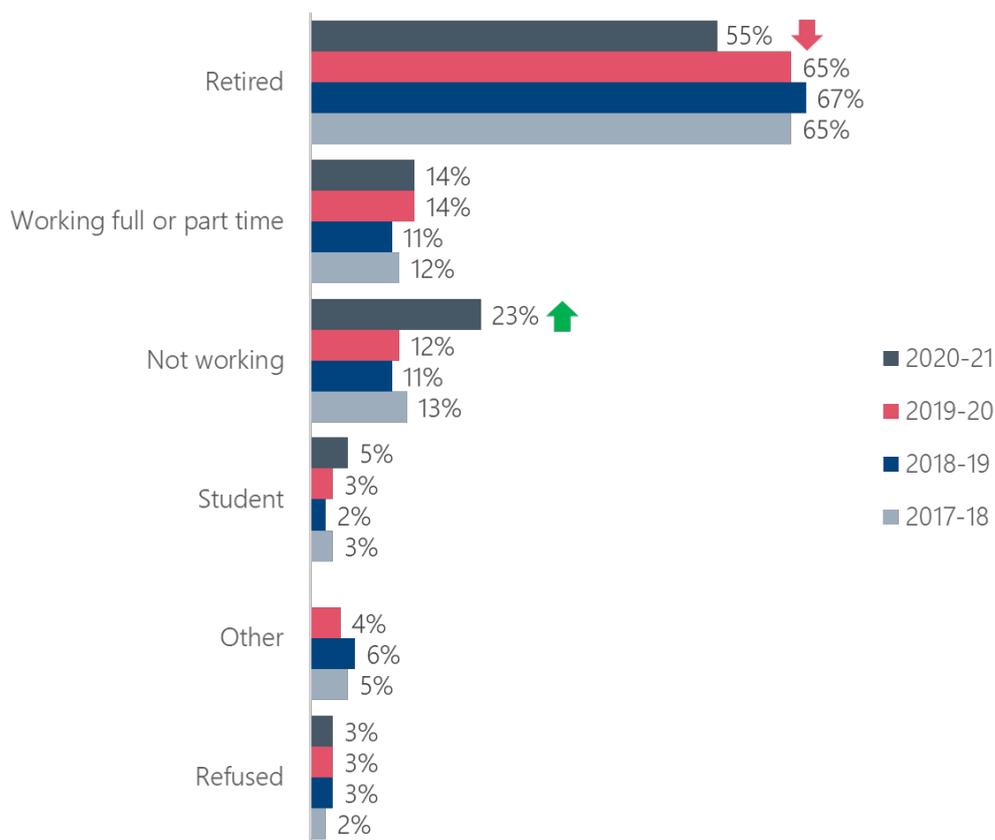
The majority of passengers requiring assistance were aged 65 or over (51 per cent), whilst only a small proportion (twelve per cent) were aged 34 or under.

The proportion interviewed aged 75+ has decreased this year from 43 per cent to 29 per cent and in turn there is an increase in the proportion aged 50 to 64 from 18 per cent to 23 per cent. This is again likely to be caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of “shielding” on many older users of Passenger Assist.



D2. What was the main purpose of the journey? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968; 2019-20: 4,079; 2020-21: 1549)

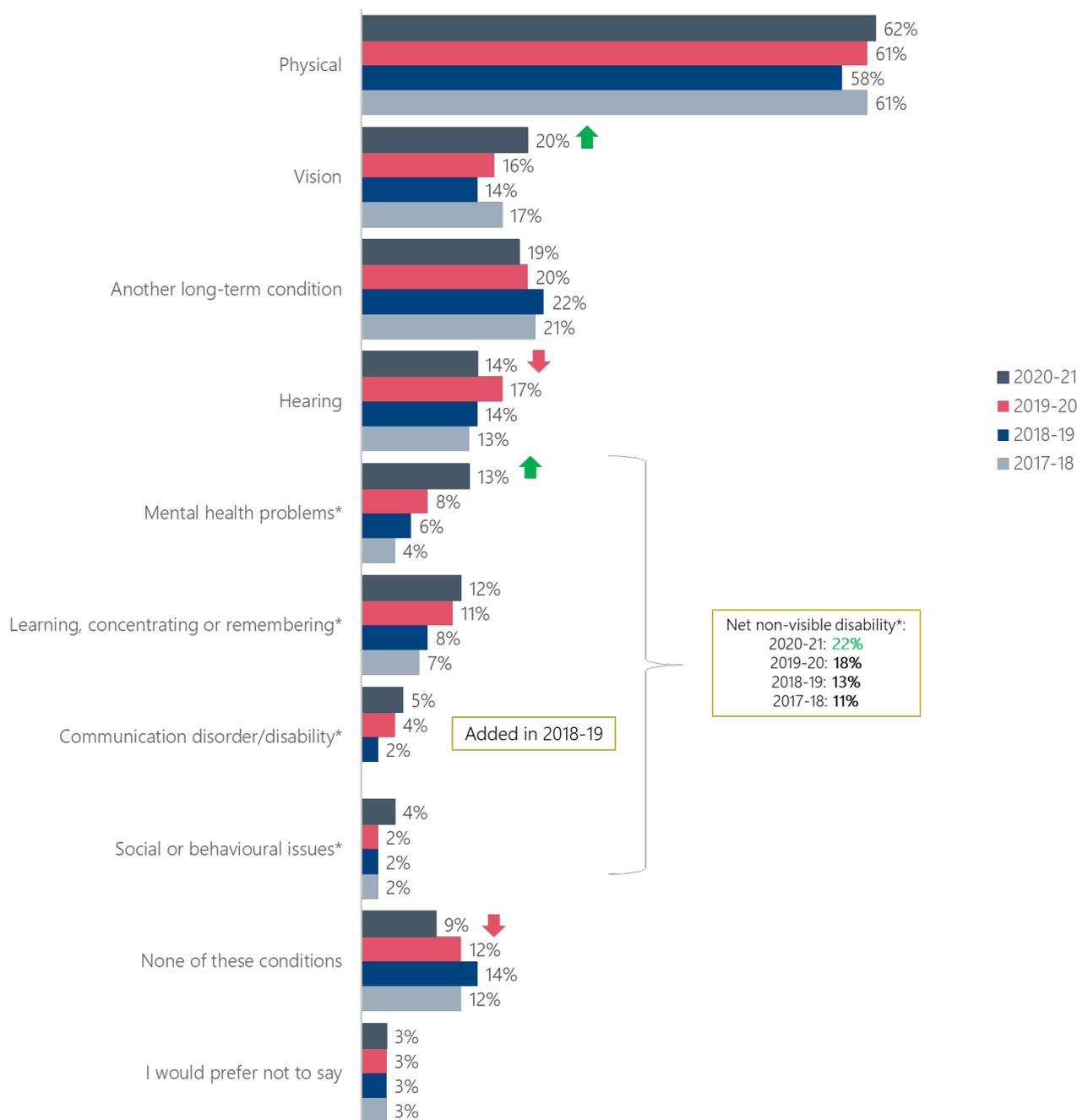
There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of passengers who are retired (from 65 per cent in 2019-20 to 55 per cent in 2020-21), reflecting the changed age profile. The increase in the proportion not working is likely to be a combination of the impact of the changed age profile and the number of people furloughed during the survey period.



F3. Which of the following best describes your current circumstances? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,048; 2020-21: 1549)

Type of disability or condition

As was the case in previous years, the most common type of disability that people requesting assistance have is physical (62 per cent). The net percentage of those with a non-visible disability (learning, concentrating, or remembering, mental health problems, social or behavioural issues and/or communication disorder or disability) is steadily increasing over time (22 per cent this year up from 18 per cent in 2019-20 and 13 per cent in 2018-19). The percentage of passengers with a visual impairment has also risen significantly (from 16 per cent to 20 per cent).



F4. Do you have any of the following long-standing physical or mental health conditions? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,045; 2020-21: 1549)

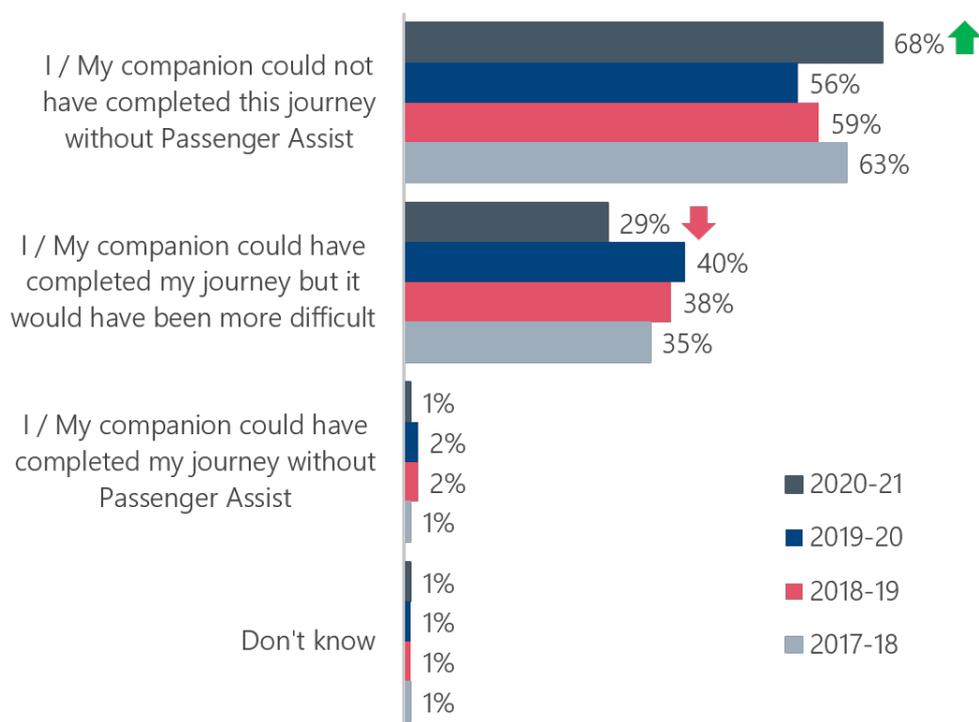
There has been a significant decrease in the number who have hearing conditions (from 17 per cent in 2019-20 to 14 per cent in 2020-21) and those who do not have a disability or long-term health condition (from 12 per cent in 2019-20 to 9 per cent in 2020-21).

The incidence of disabilities and impairments is linked to the age of the passenger using Passenger Assist and shows a very similar pattern to previous waves. A greater proportion of older passengers have another long-term condition or hearing difficulties, whereas a greater proportion of younger passengers were likely to have a non-visible disability or a visual impairment. The table below shows disability type or condition by age.

Disability or condition	16-24 (82)	25-34 (107)	35-49 (160)	50-64 (364)	65-74 (344)	75+ (449)
Physical	60%	59%	66%	67%	64%	58%
Vision	28%	30%	24%	23%	17%	15%
Hearing	9%	8%	8%	12%	13%	22%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	26%	19%	25%	13%	7%	7%
Mental health problems	22%	25%	30%	18%	5%	4%
Communication disorder or disability	7%	11%	9%	6%	4%	2%
Social or behavioural issues	18%	13%	10%	3%	1%	0%
Another long-term health condition	18%	14%	16%	21%	22%	18%
None of these conditions	6%	13%	4%	4%	9%	16%
I would prefer not to say	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%
NET: Non-visible disability	38%	39%	41%	28%	13%	10%

6. Importance of Passenger Assist

Passenger Assist is of extreme importance to those who use it: almost seven in ten (68 per cent) indicate they could not have completed the journey without it. This has significantly increased, from 56 per cent in 2019-20 and 59 per cent in 2018-19. In turn, there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of passengers who say they could have completed their journey without Passenger Assist, but it would have been more difficult (29 per cent, down from 40 per cent in 2019-20).



D20. We are keen to know how helpful you found Passenger Assist in terms of making the train journey possible or simply more convenient. Which of the following best describes your experience? Base: All met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402, 2019-20: 3,634, 2020-21: 1390)

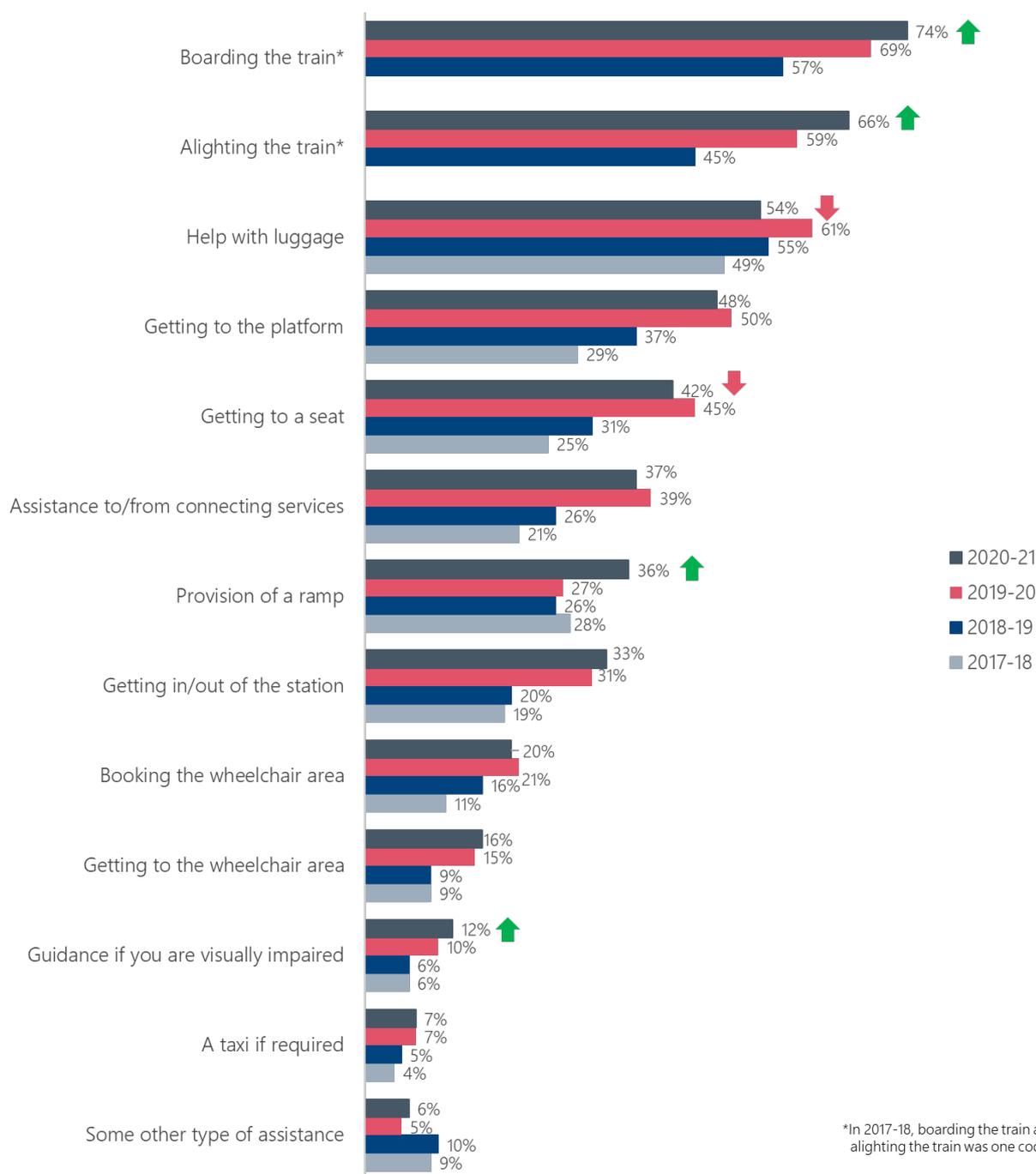
Looking at disability types, those with learning or concentration or remembering issues were most likely to agree that they could not have completed the journey without Passenger Assist this year (76 per cent).

Passengers with physical disabilities were also highly likely to say they could not complete their journey without the Passenger Assist service (74 per cent). The majority requiring assistance getting to the wheelchair area and provision of a ramp agreed they could not have completed their journey without Passenger Assist (85 per cent and 81 per cent respectively).

7. What assistance are passengers booking?

Type of assistance booked

At the assistance booking stage passengers are able to request a range of different types of assistance. Whilst there is no centralised record of the mix of assists, the interview data allows us to make reliable inferences about their general composition.



C1 – Which of the following types of assistance did you request at <INSERT STATION>? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079; 2020-21: 1549)

Similar to previous years, the most common types of assistance booked were those that are the broadest in relation to the needs that they meet, and therefore not linked to specific disability types or conditions. The most common type of assistance booked is help boarding the train (74 per cent); this has risen significantly from 69 per cent last year. The second most common type of assistance is help alighting the train (66 per cent, another significant rise from 59 per cent last year), followed by help with luggage (54 per cent, a significant decrease from 61 per cent in 2019-20).

Significantly more passengers requested help with provision of a ramp compared to previous years (up to 36 per cent from 27 per cent in 2019-20) and guidance if they are visually impaired (up to 12 per cent from 10 per cent in 2019-20). Significant decreases from last year have also been seen in help with luggage (61 per cent to 54 per cent) which may be linked to the drop in leisure journeys being made due to COVID-19 restrictions. Assistance getting to a seat has also dropped from 45 per cent to 42 per cent.

Significantly more passengers continue to request help boarding the train than alighting the train (74 per cent and 66 per cent respectively).

Booking help with luggage is highest amongst older passengers (69 per cent aged 75 or older and 57 per cent aged 65-74). Booking provision of a ramp remains highest amongst younger passengers and steadily decreases as age increases with only a small number (22 per cent) of those aged 75 or older book provision of a ramp.

Those with a visual impairment were most likely to request guidance (53 per cent), getting to their seat (62 per cent) and assistance to and from connecting services (46 per cent).

There were also some differences in the assistance requested depending on whether it is the passenger or travel companion booking the assistance. More passengers than travel companions book help getting to the platform (51 per cent and 36 per cent respectively). In addition, more passengers than travel companions request help getting to their seat (43 per cent and 34 per cent respectively) and assistance to and from connecting services (39 per cent and 29 per cent). This series of results could indicate that when a Passenger Assist user is travelling with a companion, there are some things that the companion will help with, rather than depending on rail staff.

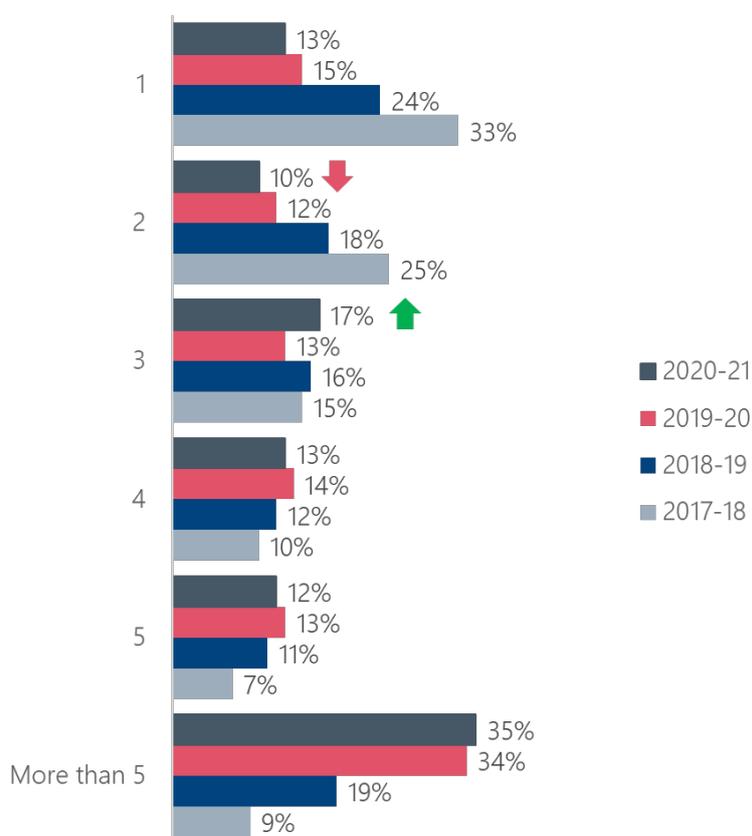
Similarly, to 2019-20, more companions than passengers book provision of a ramp (53 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). Companions were also more likely to book the wheelchair area itself (34 per cent compared to 17 per cent of passengers) and help getting to the wheelchair area (23 per cent compared to 15 per cent of passengers). We hypothesise that this is because passengers needing wheelchair assistance were more likely to travel with a companion than other Passenger Assist users, meaning that a greater proportion of assists booked by companions would require wheelchair assistance.

Number of assists booked

In previous years there has been a steady increase in passengers and companions requesting more assists per booking, however in the latest wave it has remained stable with an average of 4.07 assists booked per station (3.98 in 2019-20). As a result, there has been a continuous decrease in the percentage of those booking only one assist (13 per cent, down from 15 per cent in 2019-20, 24 per cent in 2018-19 and 33 per cent in 2017-18) illustrating the importance of delivering multiple assists for the same passenger.

Passengers with a visual impairment booked the most types of assistance (average number of assists 4.64), significantly more than passengers with a physical disability (average number of assists 4.18) or another long-term condition (average number of assists 4.04).

It is important to note that this data relates to the assistance required at a single station; therefore, the total number of assists requested on a typical journey will be a multiple of these numbers. For example, this suggests a journey from Glasgow Central to York via a change at Edinburgh Waverley could, on a routine basis, reasonably involve around five or six different types of assistance being required overall to complete the journey in each direction.

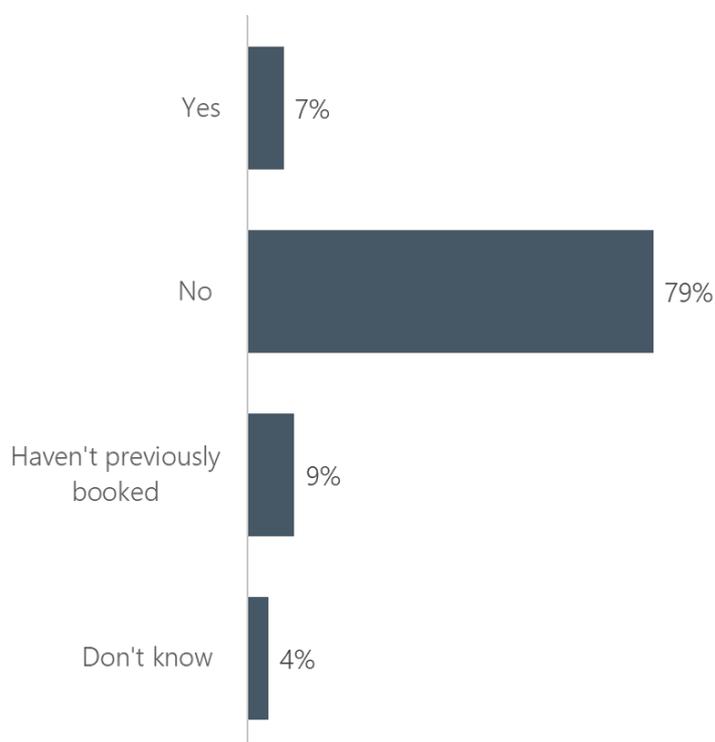


C1 – Which of the following types of assistance did you request at <INSERT STATION>? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1549)

8. Experience of booking Passenger Assist

Change in booking mode

Only 7 per cent overall said the way in which they had to book Passenger Assist was different due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no significant differences in results by disability type, age or assistance requested.



C2F. Was the way in which you had to book Passenger Assist different due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic? Base: All respondents (2020-21: 1549)

"Originally we booked on the internet and then they shut that down for a period of time and then we had to book over the phone."
75+, visual impairment, hearing impairment and physical disability

Time taken to book

Passengers took on average 9 minutes and 41 seconds to book their assistance, compared to 8 minutes and 46 seconds last year.⁴ Those with social or behavioural issues, mental health problems and learning or concentration issues took the longest to book.



Average booking time:

2020-2021: 9 mins 41 secs
2019-2020: 8 mins 46 secs

Booking confirmation received

Similar to previous years, 88 per cent of passengers and companions received confirmation of their booking this year (89 per cent in 2019-20, 87 per cent in 2018-19 and 82 per cent in 2017-18).

Booking confirmation received



2020-21:	88%
2019-20:	89%
2018-19:	87%
2017-18:	82%

C3. Did you receive confirmation of the assistance booking? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1549);

"I first booked my Travel Assistance by phone but did not receive any confirmation, so my support worker booked again ON-LINE just to make sure. He also went to Penzance Station to try and get confirmation before my journey, but they said confirmation details only get sent to them on the day of departure and not to worry".

50-64, hearing impairment, physical disability, learning / concentration, and long-term health condition

"Simple to use. Love the email confirmation."
50-64, physical disability

"A confirmation email always arrives promptly."
75+, physical disability

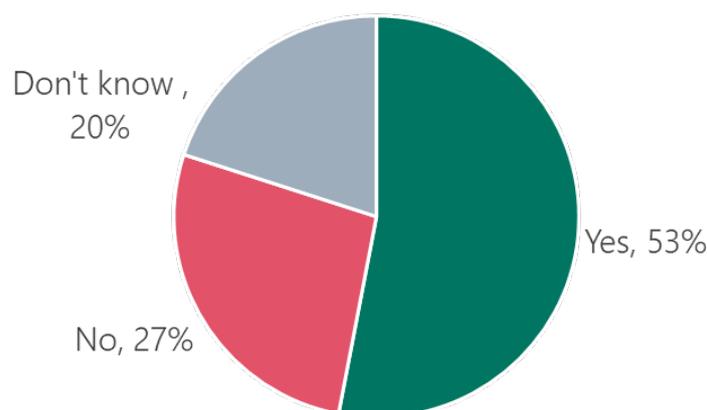
Younger passengers were more likely to say they received a booking confirmation (98 per cent aged 16-24) compared to older passengers (82 per cent aged 75+).

Looking at differences by disability types, those with a visual impairment were least likely to say they received a booking confirmation (83 per cent) and those with social / behavioural problems most likely to receive a confirmation (92 per cent).

⁴ Note: This question was asked to all respondents booking by telephone in 2019-20. However, in 2020-21 the sample file did not contain details of booking mode, so the data is based only on those booking by telephone and taking part in the survey online (where a question was added covering the booking mode).

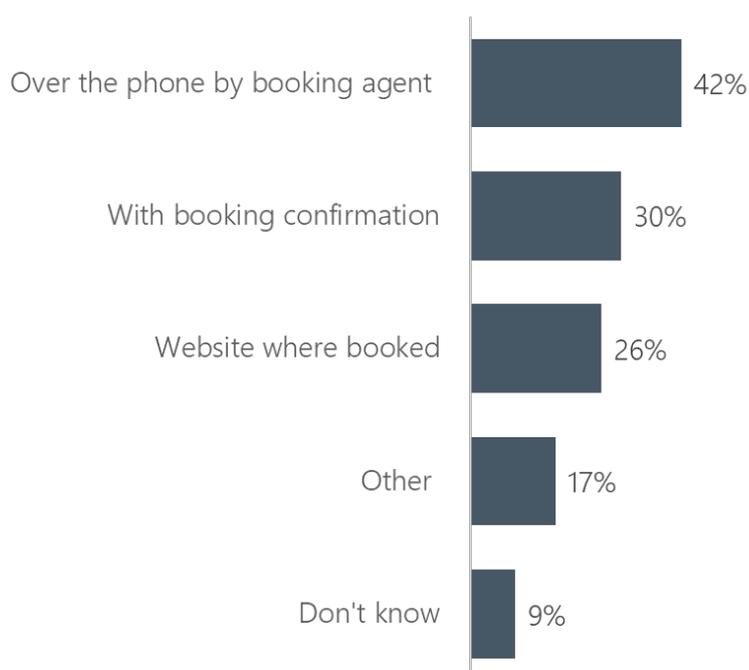
COVID-19 safe travel information

Over half (53 per cent) said they were provided with information regarding how to travel safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, one in five (20 per cent) were unsure or could not remember if they received this information and a quarter (27 per cent) did not receive any information. Passengers aged 75+ were most least likely to say they received additional information regarding traveling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic (47 per cent).



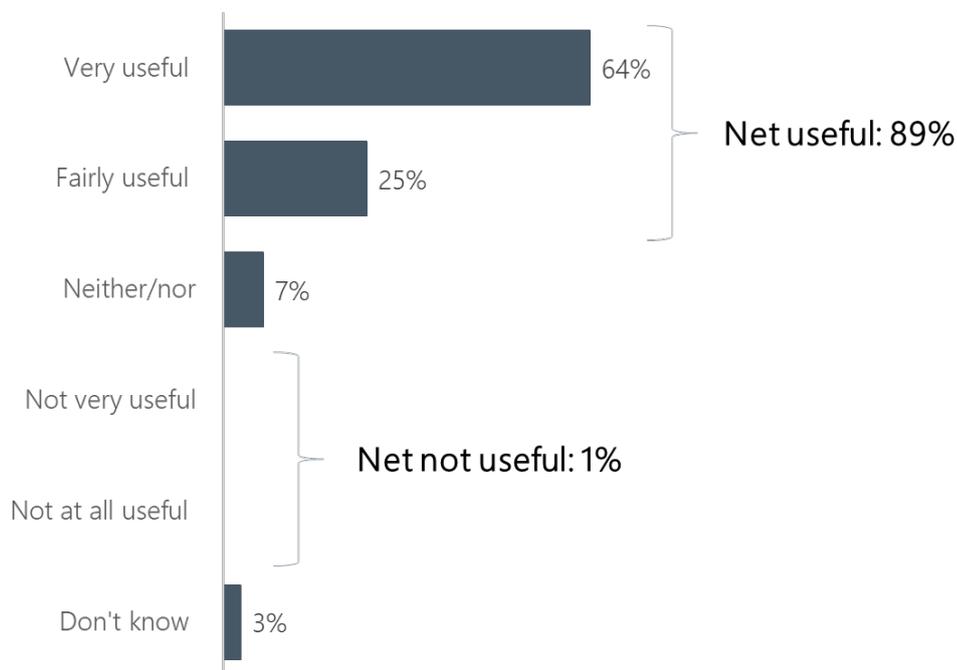
C3b: During the booking process were you provided with any information regarding how to travel safely during the COVID-19 pandemic? Base: All respondents (2020-21: 1549)

Those that did receive travel safe information tended to hear via their booking agent if booking by phone (42 per cent), within their booking confirmation (30 per cent), or on the website where they booked the assistance (26 per cent).



C3c: Where did you see / hear information regarding travelling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic? Base: All provide with information about travelling safely during COVID (2020-21: 817)

Almost all passengers that received the additional information on travelling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic found it useful (89 per cent either useful or very useful).

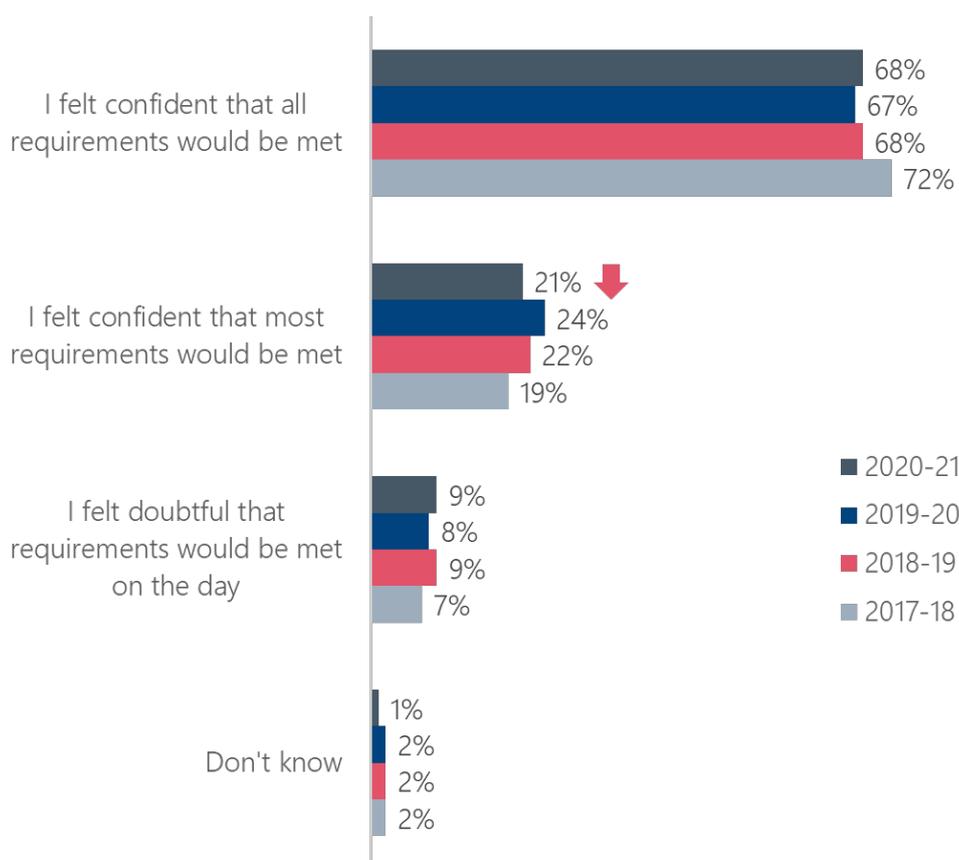


C3d. Was the information regarding travelling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic? Base: All given information about safe travel during pandemic (2020-21: 817)

Passengers with long-term illnesses were most likely to rate the safe travel information as useful (98 per cent), followed by those with a visual or hearing impairment (both 91 per cent). Those booking assistance getting in and out of the station and assistance getting to their seat also found the information useful (both 93 per cent).

Confidence in booking

Anecdotal comments from Passenger Assist users suggest that confidence that their bookings will be fulfilled is important to their overall experience of the journey. Two thirds of passengers (68 per cent) were confident after booking that **all** of their requirements would be met on the day of travel. The number who feel confident **most** (but not all) of their requirements would be met has significantly decreased from last year (from 24 per cent in 2019-20 and 21 per cent this year. Nine per cent feel doubtful their requirements will be met at all.



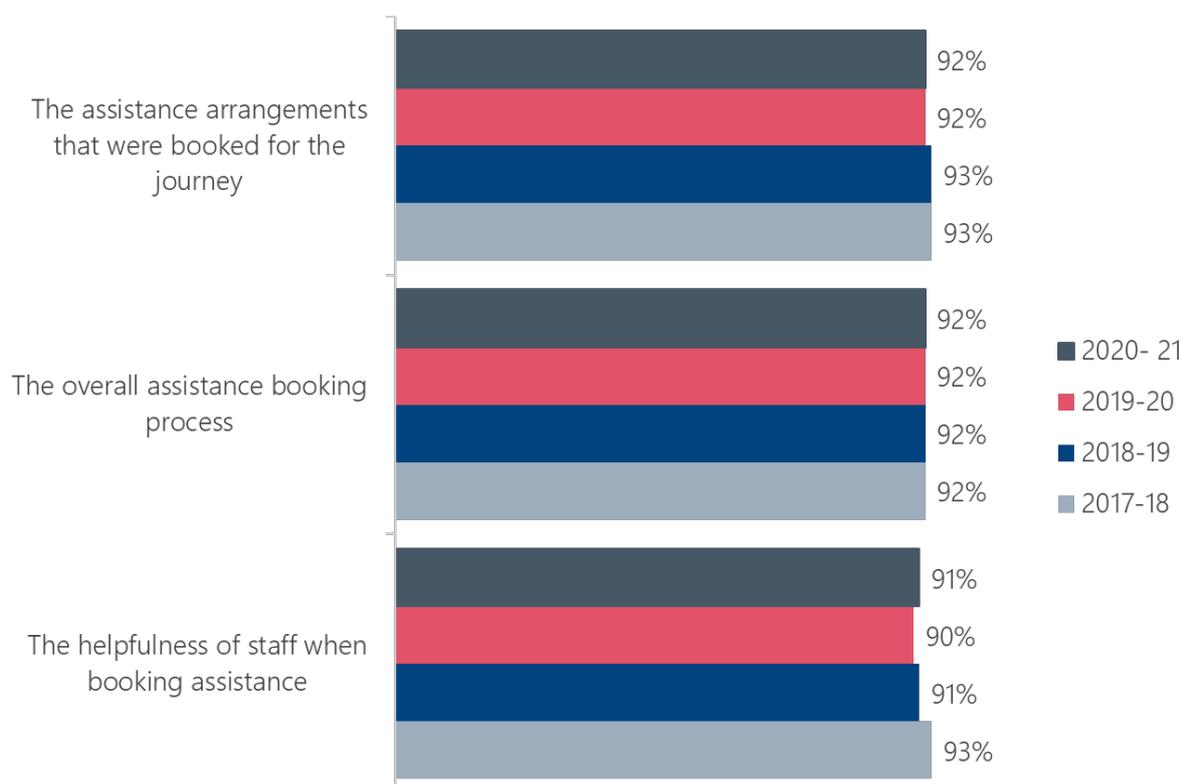
C6. Before we go on to discuss the actual day of your journey, please tell us which of the following best describes how you felt after making your booking? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

Those with a social or behavioural issue or mental health condition were least likely to feel confident in their requirements being met (55 per cent and 61 per cent respectively). Indeed, passengers with these two non-visible conditions were also the most likely to feel doubtful (both 17 per cent).

Those receiving a booking confirmation were much more likely to feel confident all of their requirements would be met (71 per cent) than those not receiving a booking confirmation (53 per cent).

Satisfaction with the booking process

The proportion of passengers and companions either fairly or very satisfied with arrangements booked, the overall booking process and helpfulness of staff when booking remains consistently high. There have been no significant changes since last year.



C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with... What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

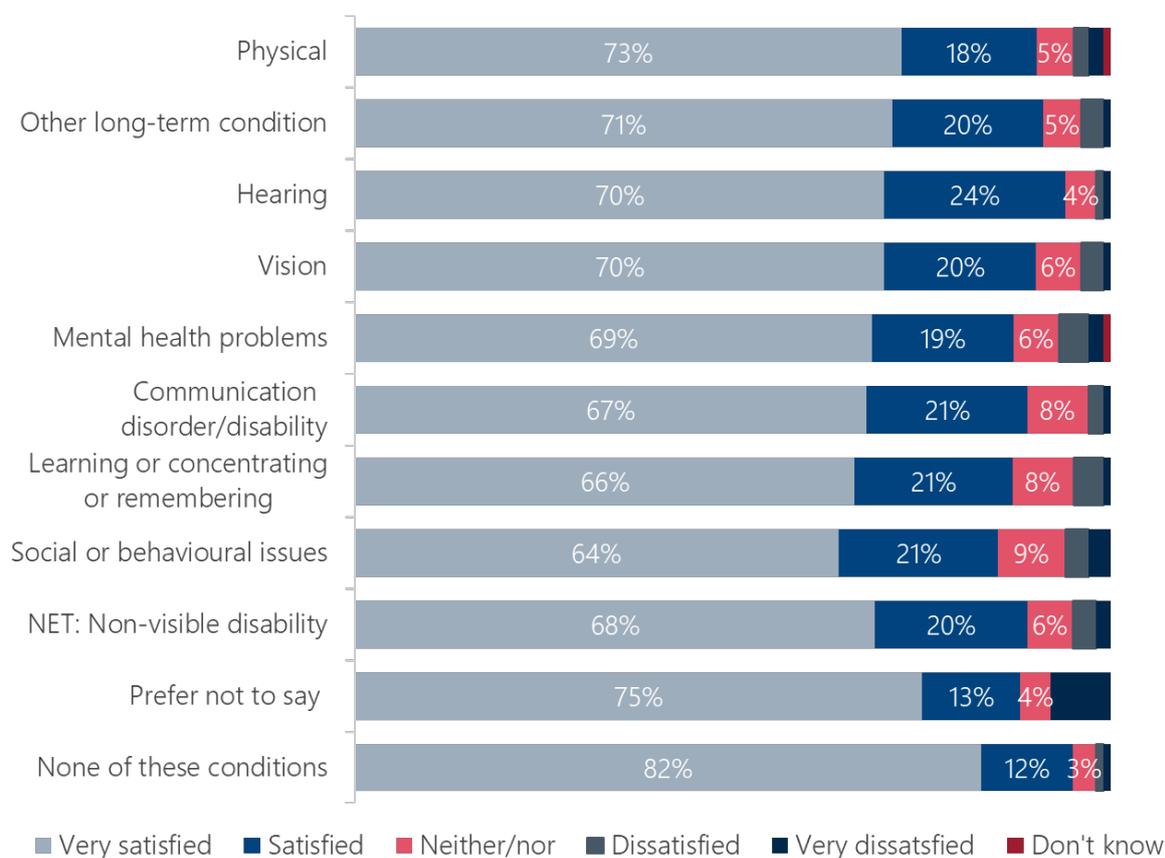
"Staff at the end of the telephone, when booking, have been concerned and supportive, explaining (for instance) why seat booking has been suspended"

50-64-24, physical disability

"The booking process was easy, and the staff are wonderful and so helpful."

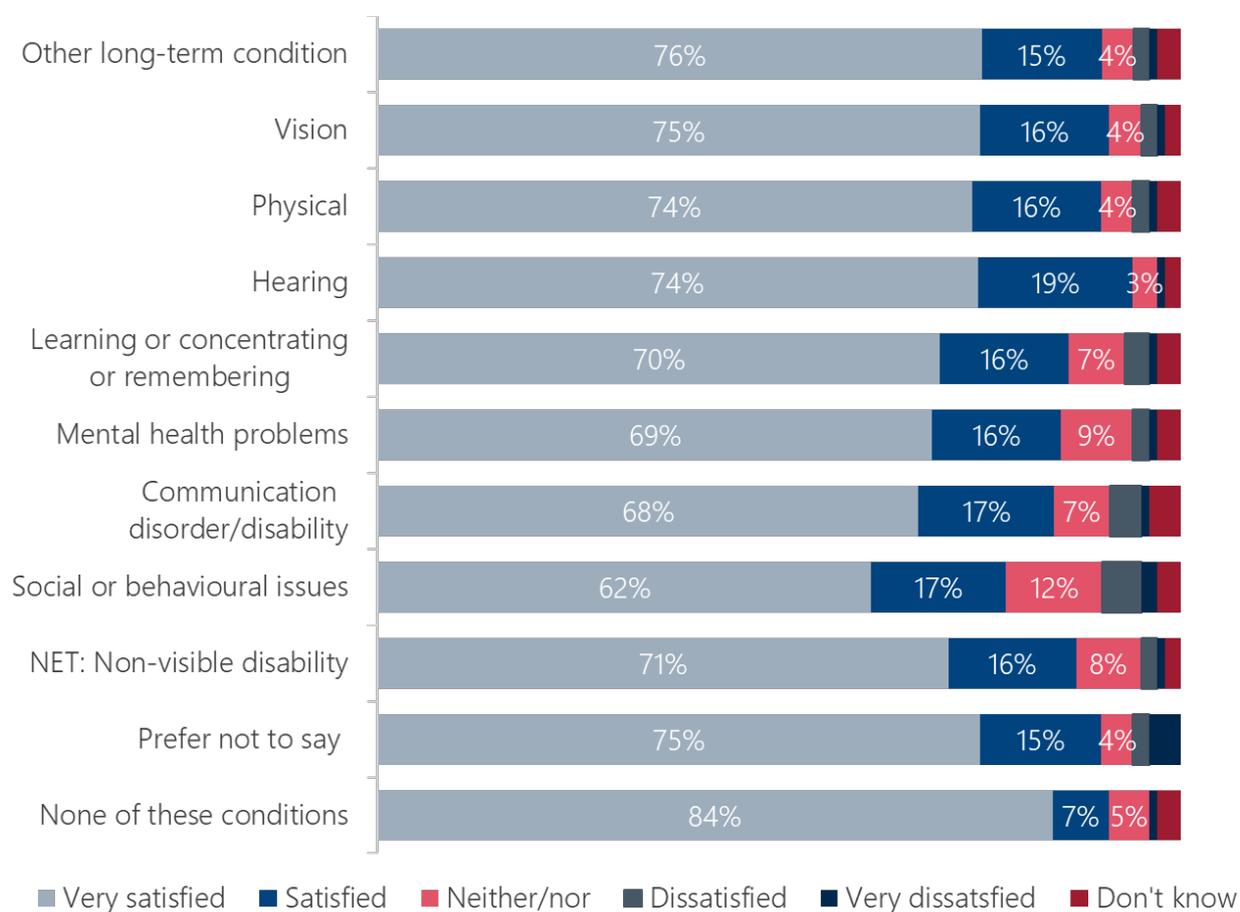
75+, no disability or long-term condition

There are some differences by disability type in terms of overall satisfaction with the booking process: those with social or behavioural issues were significantly less likely to be satisfied compared to the average (85 per cent compared to 92 per cent). This was also the case in the 2019-20 research.



C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with the overall booking process? What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

As in previous years, passengers with social or behavioural issues were also less likely to be satisfied with the helpfulness of staff when booking assistance (79 per cent compared to an average of 91 per cent).

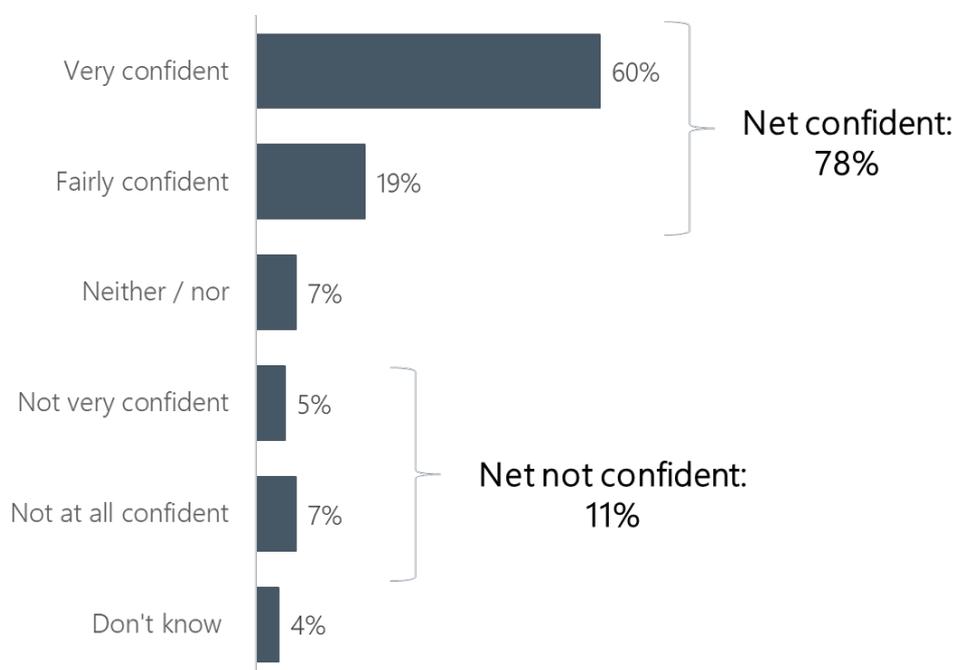


C7. Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with the helpfulness of staff when booking assistance? What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

9. Experience on the day of travel

Confidence using Passenger Assist during the COVID-19 pandemic

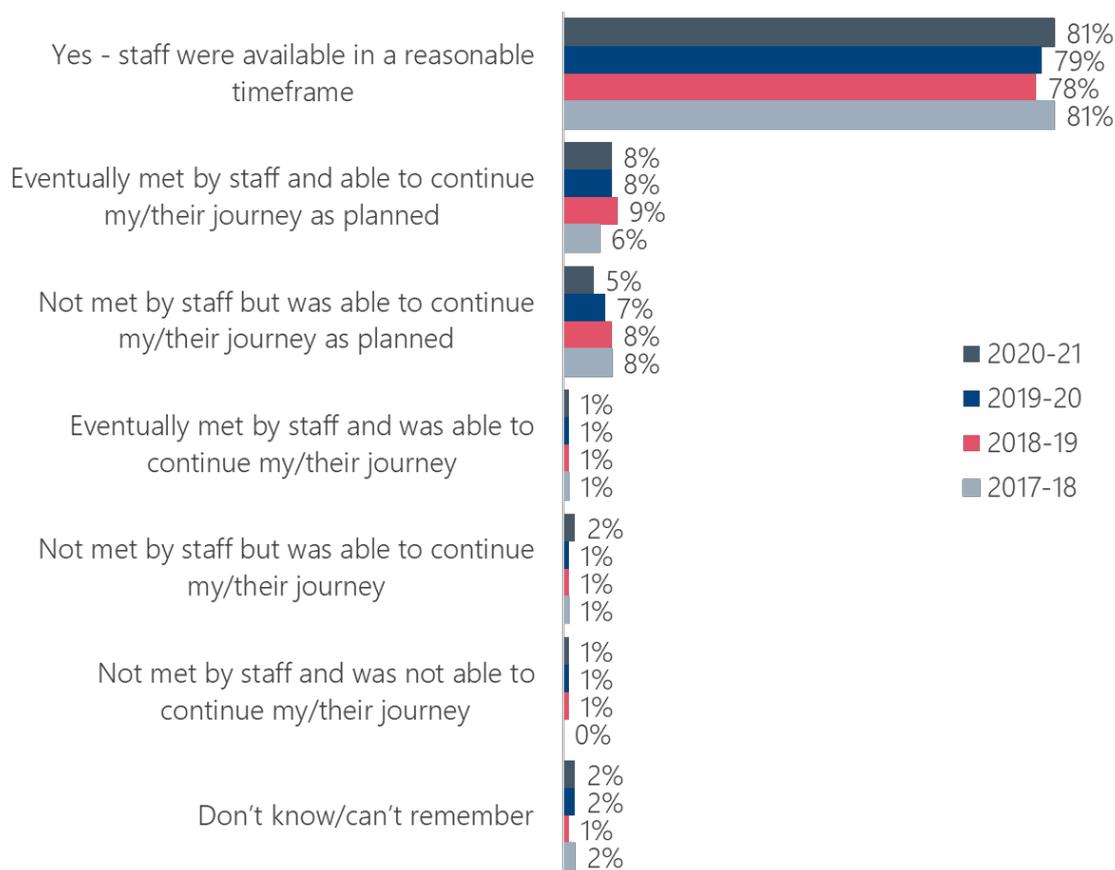
Over three quarters (78 per cent) of passengers interviewed said they were confident using Passenger Assist during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no significant differences in confidence by disability type, assistance booked or age.



E11. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all confident and 5 very confident, how confident are you using Passenger Assist during the current COVID-19 pandemic? Base: All respondents (2020-21: 1549);

Proportion of passengers met by staff

Just over eight in ten passengers (81 per cent) were met by rail staff in what they considered to be a reasonable timeframe. Those with a visual impairment were most likely to say they were met within a reasonable timeframe (85 per cent) whereas those with mental health conditions were least likely to say staff were there within a reasonable timeframe (75 per cent).

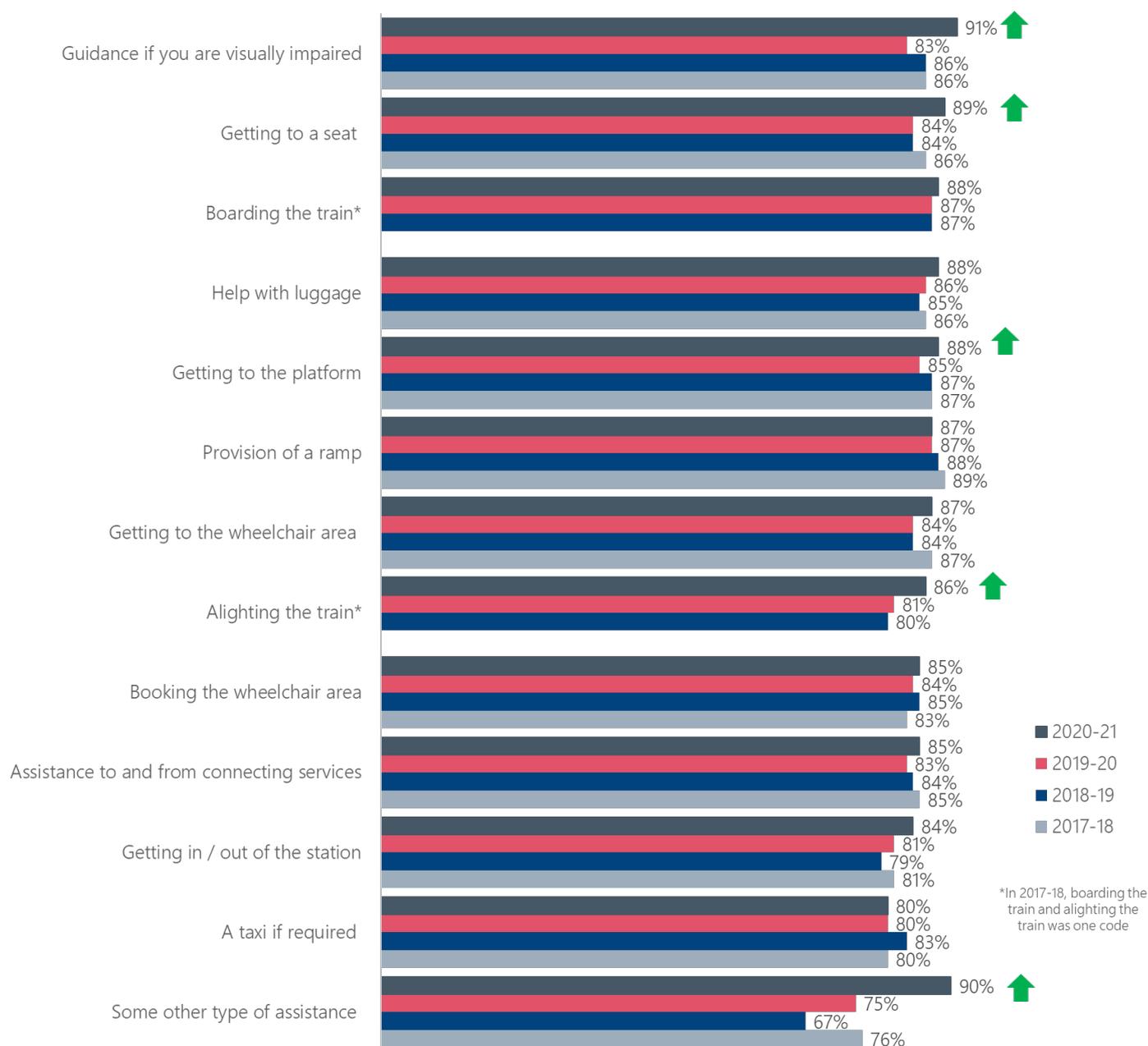


D4. Was a member of staff available to meet you within an acceptable time frame? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1549)

Assistance received

The majority of assistance booked is received, with all assists scoring 80 per cent or higher. For the assistance most commonly booked, boarding the train, 88 per cent of those who booked this assistance received it.

There has been a significant increase from 2019-20 to 2020-21 in the proportions receiving guidance if visually impaired, getting to a seat, getting to a platform, alighting the train and some other type of assistance. Other mentions include general assistance at stations with a wheelchair and use of a buggy service.



D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance? Base: All who booked that type of assistance (2017-18: varies between 166 and 2,372; 2018-19: varies between 250 and 2,855; 2019-20: varies between 211 and 2,829; 2020-21: varies between 89 and 1,033)

The gap between receiving assistance boarding the train compared to alighting the train has closed compared to previous waves (from 6-7 per cent to 2 per cent). The improved scores for alighting the train may be due to an increased staff to passenger ratio caused by fewer passengers travelling due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It may also be an effect of the 'passenger assistance handover protocol' as outlined in ORR's Accessible Travel Policy which was introduced part-way through 2020-21 and was targeted at improving the coordination of assistance between stations.⁵

There were only small differences in completion rates by disability type, with the exception of getting to the platform, boarding the train, alighting the train and assistance to and from connecting services – where those with a visual impairment were more likely to have received this assistance.

"Finding out about passenger assistance and being able to use it has made a big difference to me in being able to go to different places or to make a journey where a change is necessary...all the passenger assistance staff I have encountered have been very professional, helpful and friendly. They seem to have good awareness about mental health issues, such as anxiety and panic attacks and how this can affect people's ability to manage train journeys."

35-49, mental health issues

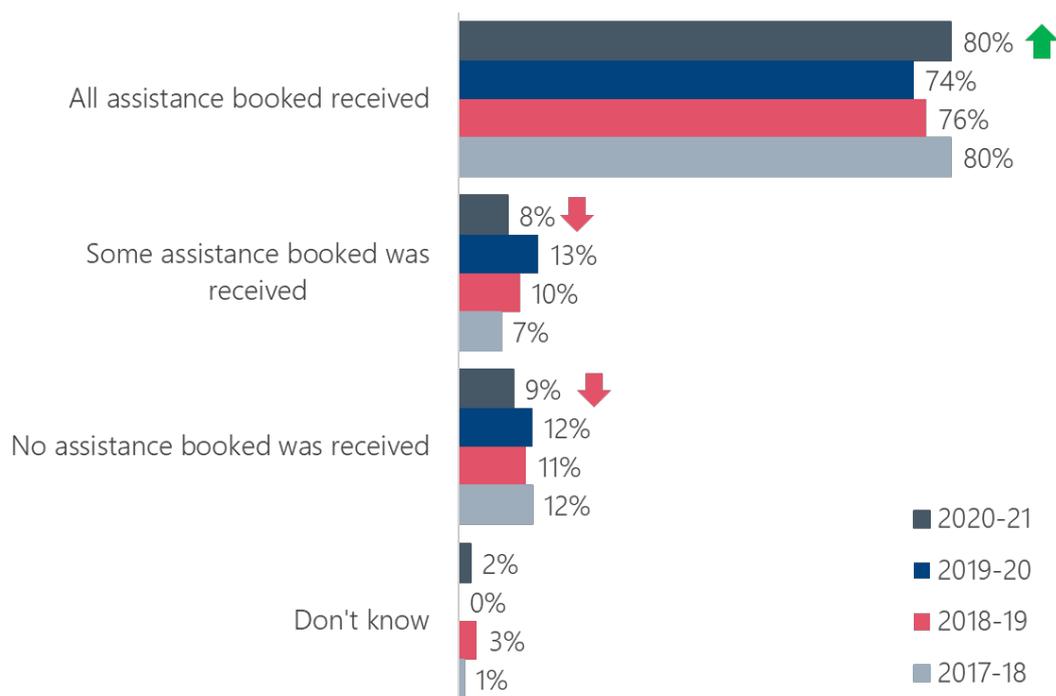
"Staff from booking assistance on phone, at Milton Keynes Station and at London Euston are very friendly, helpful and always polite. Use this service 2-3 times a month as have to go for specialist treatment at a London Hospital and every time I use Assistance and have never had any problems. The service is always excellent."

50-64, physical disability and long-term health condition

⁵ See appendix C: https://www.orr.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/accessible-travel-policy-guidance-for-train-and-station-operators_2.pdf

Amount of assistance received

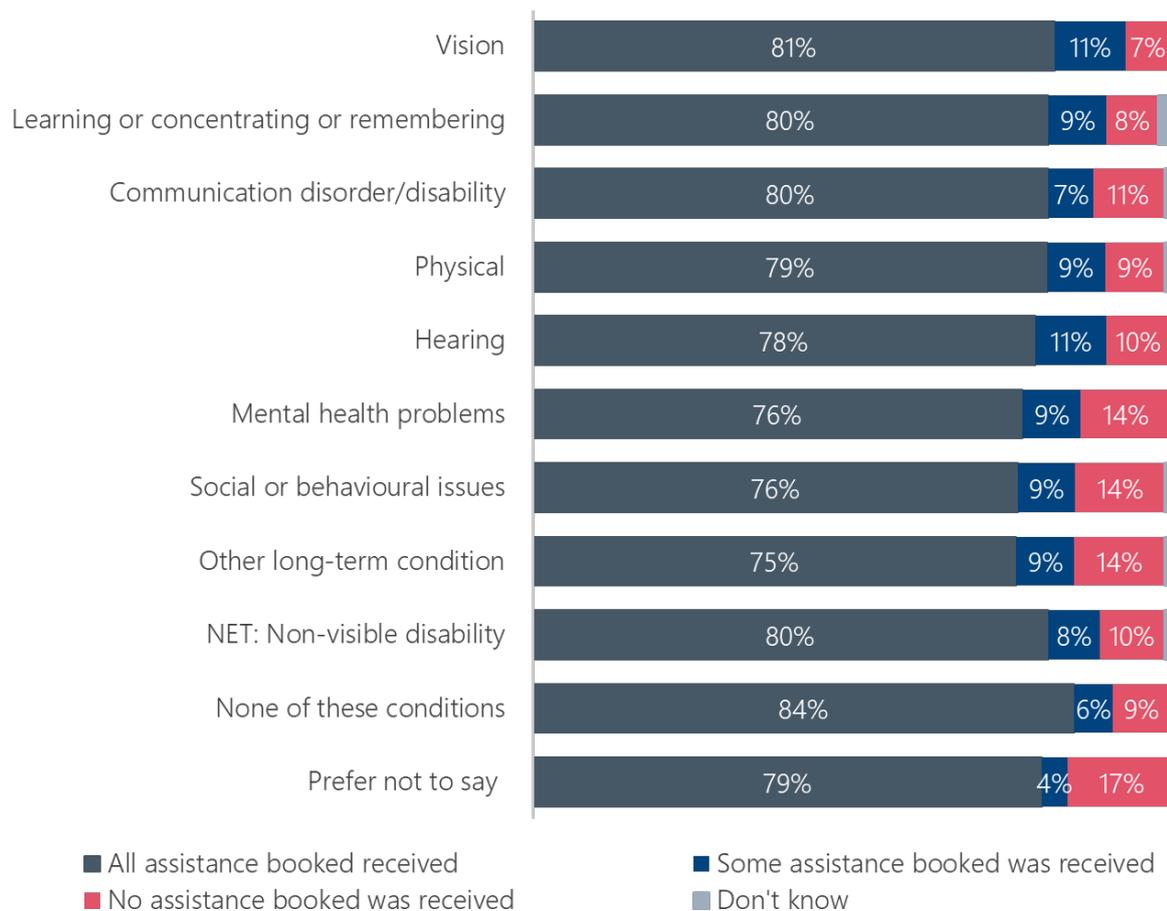
As noted above, many passengers book multiple types of assistance for each journey leg meaning that it is important that all the different aspects of assistance are delivered for a satisfactory journey. In total four in five passengers (80 per cent) received all of the assistance they booked in this wave; this is up significantly from 74 per cent in 2019-20.



D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

Comparing results by disability type or condition, the highest proportion who receive all assistance are passengers with no disability (84 per cent). A lower proportion of those with other long-term conditions, receive all assistance booked (75 per cent), as well as those with mental health conditions and social or behavioural issues (both 76 per cent). The remaining differences by disability type for whether the assistance booked is received were small (between 78 per cent and 81 per cent receiving assistance).

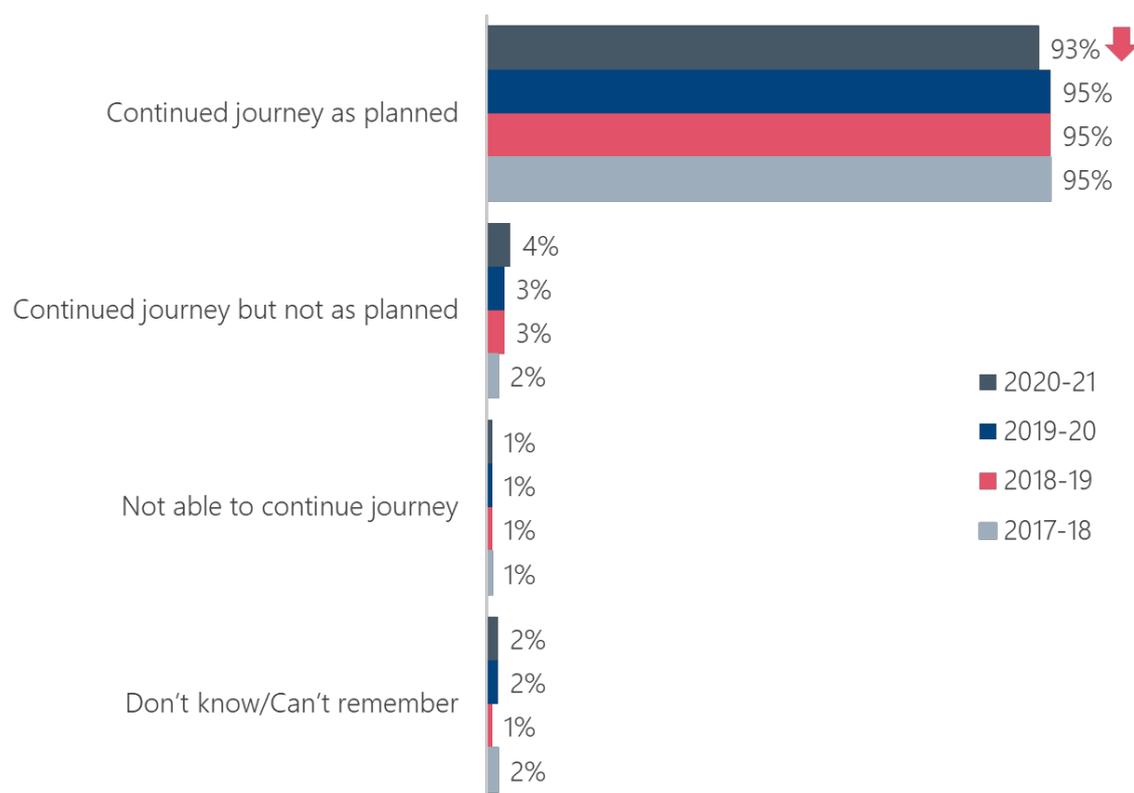
Assistance to and from connecting stations is also challenging with just 77 per cent booking this type of assistance receiving all of the assistance they booked.



D5. And did you actually receive the following assistance? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

Journey leg completion

In addition to asking whether staff met the passenger and if they received their assistance, passengers were also asked if they were able to continue their journey. By combining this with data on whether passengers were met by staff, this allows us to measure the proportion of those using Passenger Assist who completed their journey leg.



D4. Was a member of staff available to meet you within an acceptable time frame? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1549)

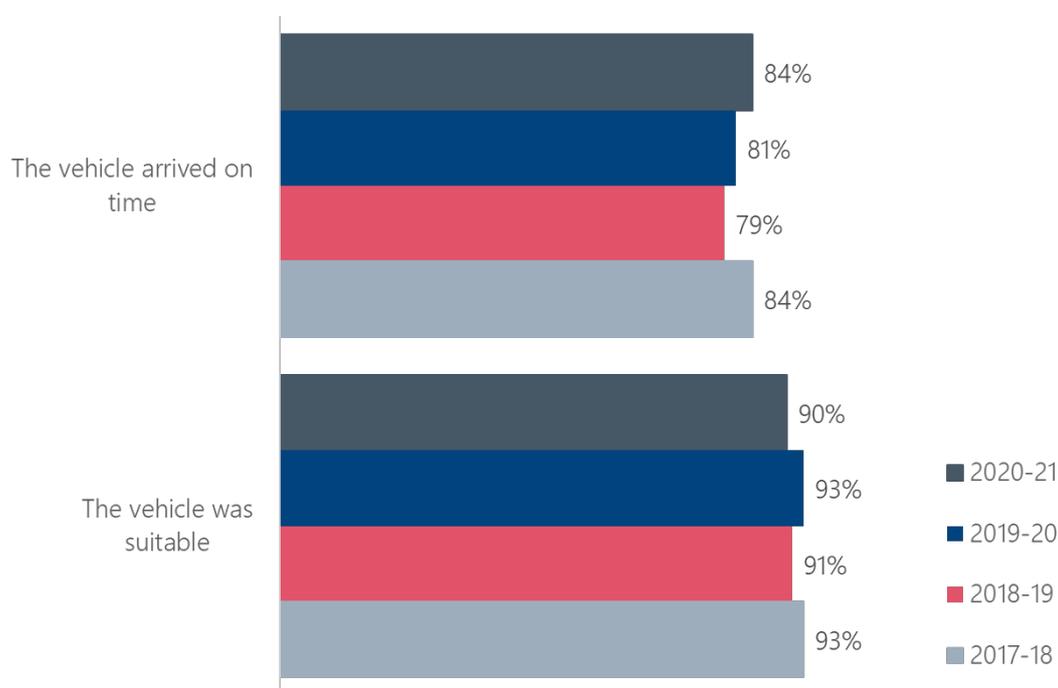
As in previous years the vast majority of passengers were able to continue their journey as planned (93 per cent) although this has dropped from 95 per cent in 2019-2021. Of the remainder, the majority were able to continue their journey but not as planned (four per cent) and just one per cent were unable to continue their journey due to a lack of available staff one per cent).

Those with other long-term conditions were least likely to continue their journey as planned (89 per cent). There were no significant differences by age or whether the passenger was travelling on a weekday or at the weekend.

Alternative accessible transport provided

Train and station operators are obligated under the requirements of their ATP to provide Alternative Accessible Transport (AAT) to passengers, usually in the form of an accessible taxi, when a station or train service the passenger wants to use is inaccessible to them. For example, if a passenger is a wheelchair user and their local station has no step-free access to the platform, then AAT should be provided to take the passenger to the nearest or most convenient accessible station to allow them to continue their journey.

For the majority of passengers using AAT, the vehicle arrived on time (84 per cent). This has risen slightly from 81 per cent in 2019-20. Vehicles were thought to be suitable by 90 per cent of users, a slight drop from 93 per cent in 2019-20.



D11. Did the vehicle arrive on time? Base: All who used a taxi (2017-18: 300, 2018-19: 447, 2019-20: 401, 2020-21: 147). D12. Was the vehicle suitable for you? Base: All who used a taxi (2017-18: 300, 2018-19: 447, 2019-20: 401, 2020-21: 147)

"This service is vital to anyone who needs it. One journey we made to London we went to Euston we then needed to get the underground to our destination of Stansted airport. The assistance officers there said we could not use the elevators with the scooter and the lift would not take us far enough down to get the train. They then arranged a taxi, at their expense, to take us to the nearest underground station to continue our journey. We felt this was above and beyond what they were required to do and have been grateful ever since. The service has been superb for me and I can't fault it.."

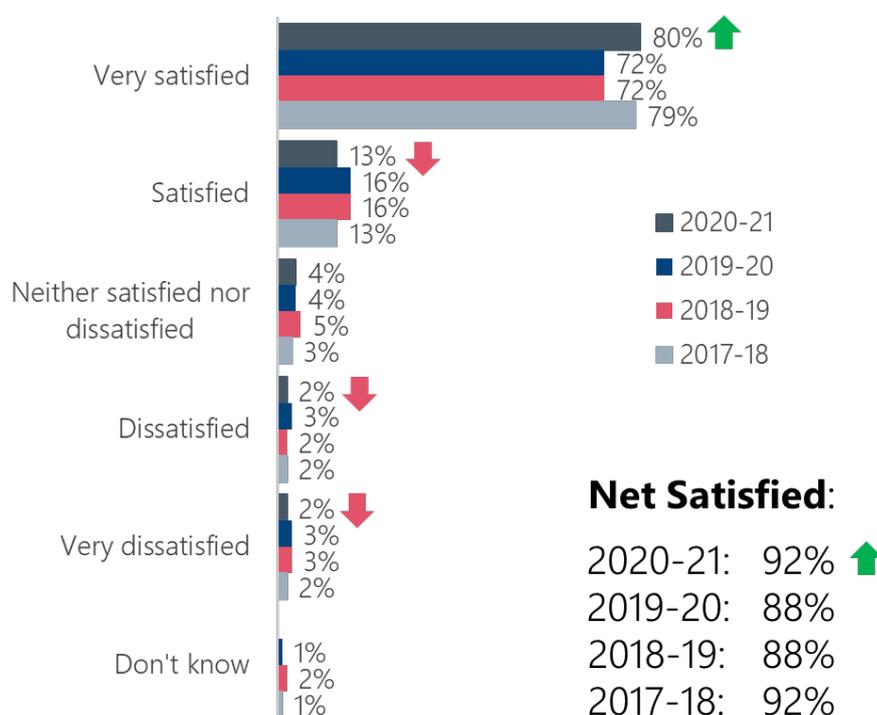
75+, Hearing impairment, physical disability

10. Satisfaction with assistance on journey measured

Overall satisfaction with assistance at the station

It is important to note that overall satisfaction with the assistance received on the journey leg measured is not asked of everyone who had booked assistance, but only those who were met by staff (89 per cent). The remaining respondents who were not met by staff are assumed not to have received the assistance they booked and therefore that the assistance had failed, meaning questions about their satisfaction with assistance received are not applicable.

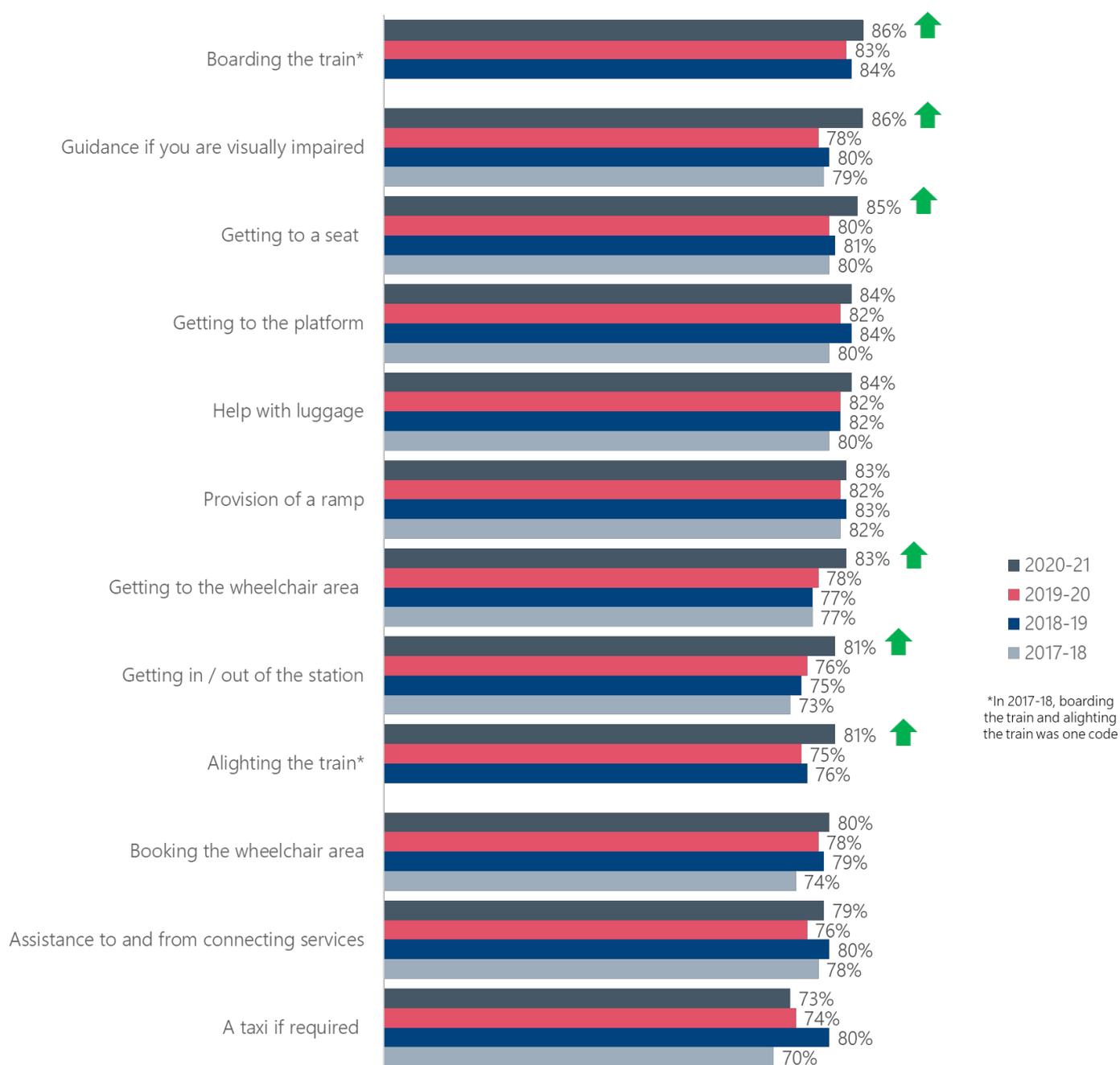
The majority of passengers who receive assistance at the station were satisfied: 92 per cent, a significant increase from 88 per cent in 2019-20. There are no significant differences in net satisfaction levels by disability type, type of assistance booked, traveller type or age.



D7. And how satisfied were you with the overall assistance? Base: All respondents met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402, 2019-20: 3,634, 2020-21: 1,390)

Overall satisfaction with each type of assistance booked

Satisfaction levels were relatively high across all types of assistance received, with a significant increase in those expressing satisfaction in 2020-21 with assistance boarding the train, getting to a seat, guidance if visually impaired, getting to a wheelchair area, getting in and out of the station and assistance alighting the train compared to 2019-20.



D6. And how satisfied were you with...? .Base: All who booked that type of assistance (2017-18: varies between 166 and 2,372; 2018-19: varies between 250 and 2,855; 2019-20: varies between 211 and 2,829; 2020-21 varies between 97 and 1140)

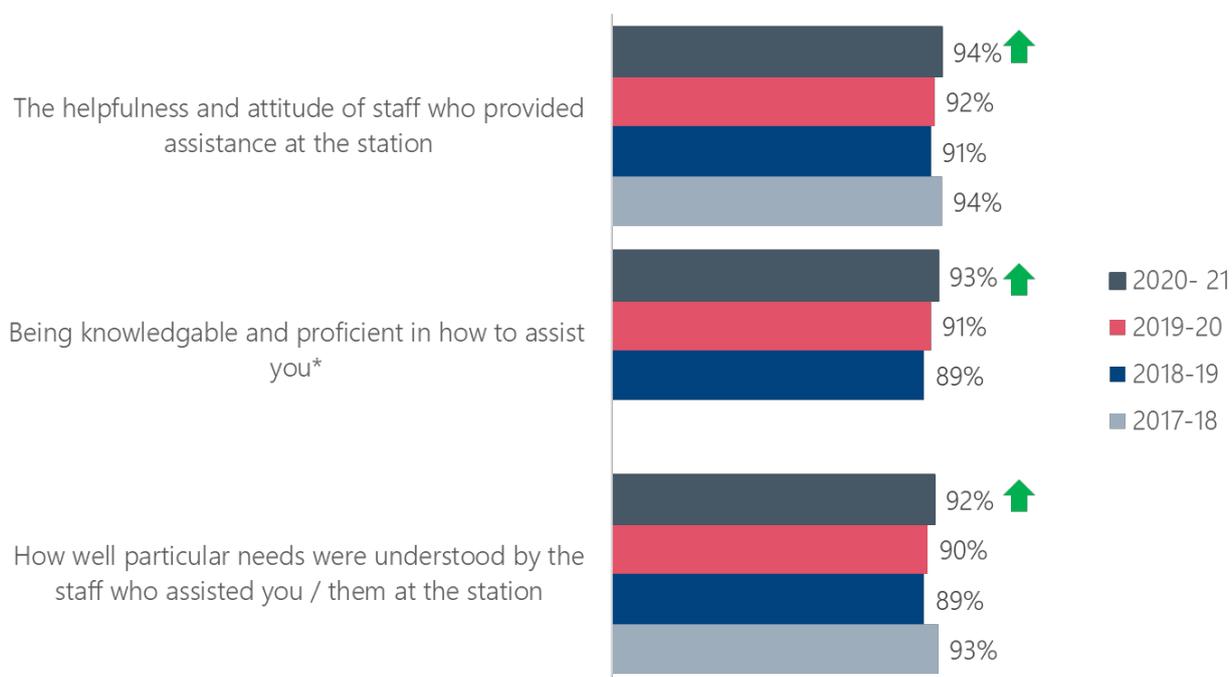
Those with visual impairments were more likely to be satisfied with guidance provided (87 per cent), help getting to the platform (90 per cent), assistance boarding the train (88 per cent) and alighting the train (86 per cent).

"I am completely blind, I couldn't do it without the assistance, they're a big help."
75+, visual impairment

"I find the whole experience very helpful, the staff are always on time and make sure you walk at your own pace. The assistants always make sure that all the information regarding your journey is correct and I never feel stressed in fact I feel I could not travel without their friendly help."
50-64, physical disability

Satisfaction with staff at the station

Satisfaction with staff has significantly increased across the board this year. The vast majority were satisfied with the helpfulness and attitude of staff providing assistance at the station (94 per cent), staff being knowledgeable and proficient to assist (93 per cent) and how well particular needs are understood by staff (92 per cent).



*Statement wording changed for 2018-19 so not comparable with 2017-18

D17. Thinking about the journey assistance at <INSERT STATION>, how satisfied were you with... Base: All respondents met by staff (2017-18: 3,716, 2018-19: 4,402, 2019-20: 3,634, 2020-21: 1,390)

Passengers with learning or concentrating issues were least satisfied with how well staff assisting them understood their particular needs (85 per cent) and staff being knowledgeable and proficient in how to assist them (88 per cent).

There has been a significant increase in satisfaction however amongst those with social or behavioural issues with the helpfulness and attitude of staff (95 per cent in 2020-21 compared to 85 per cent in 2019-20). Those with a communication disorder were also significantly more likely to express satisfaction with staff being knowledgeable and proficient in their assistance (95 per cent in 2020-21 compared to 85 per cent in 2019-20).

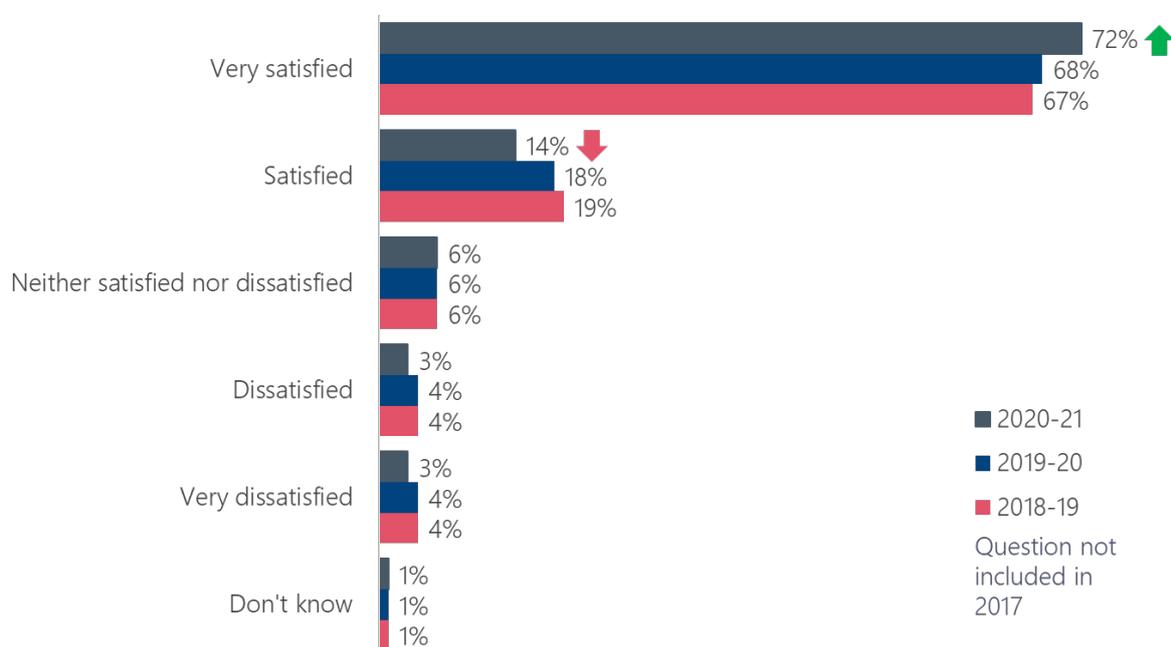
"Staff are friendly, knowledgeable and understanding, gave me enough time to get on the train."

25-34, physical disability

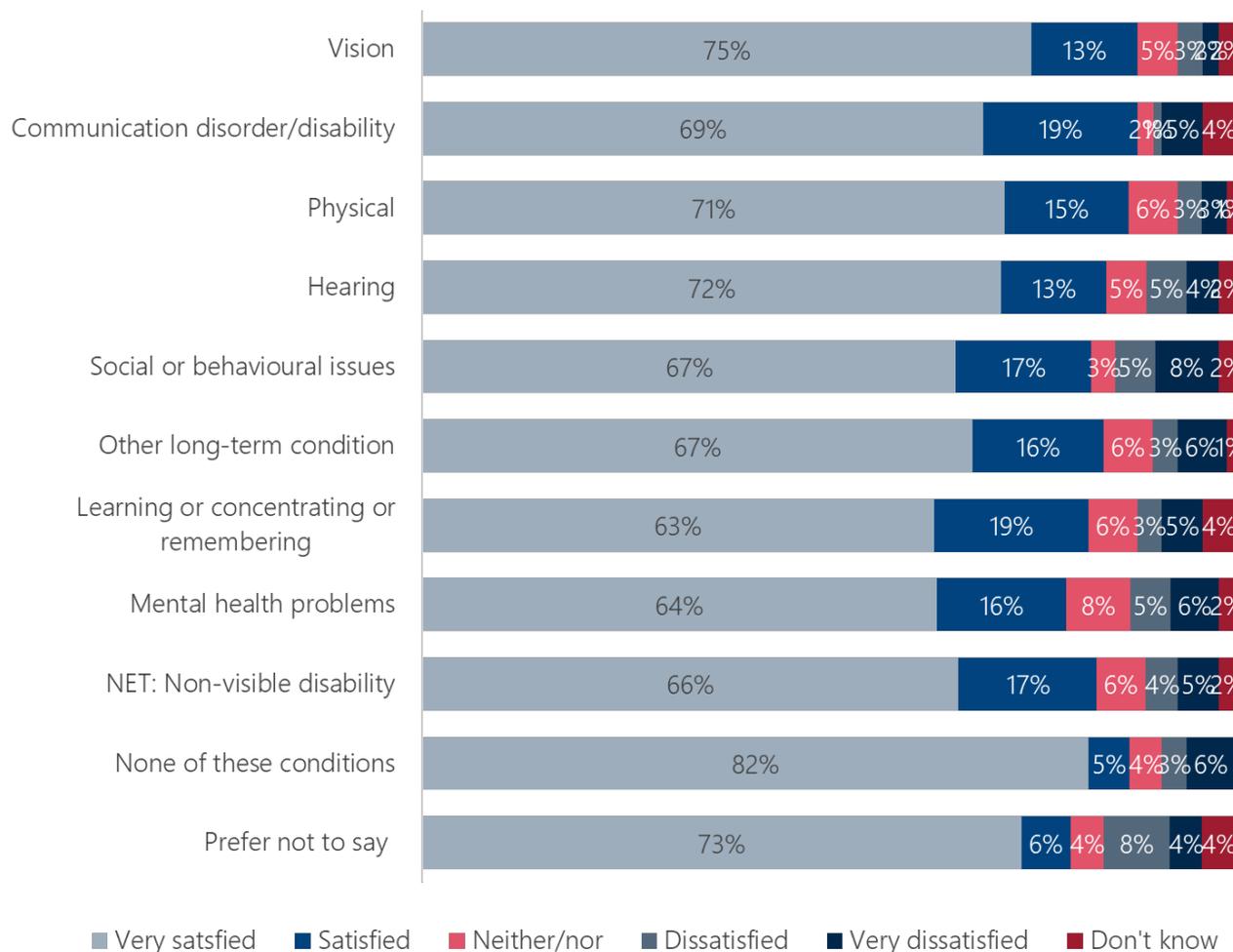
11. Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist, staff, and station facilities

Satisfaction with the whole process – booking and assistance

The first of three overall satisfaction measures covers the entirety of the particular journey discussed in detail in the interview. The majority (86 per cent) were satisfied with the overall process from their initial booking to receiving assistance at the station, this is consistent with 2019-20 findings. However, a significantly higher proportion were 'very satisfied' with the whole process this year (72 per cent compared to 68 per cent previously).



QD21. Overall, how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at <INSERT STATION> on <INSERT DATE>? Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)



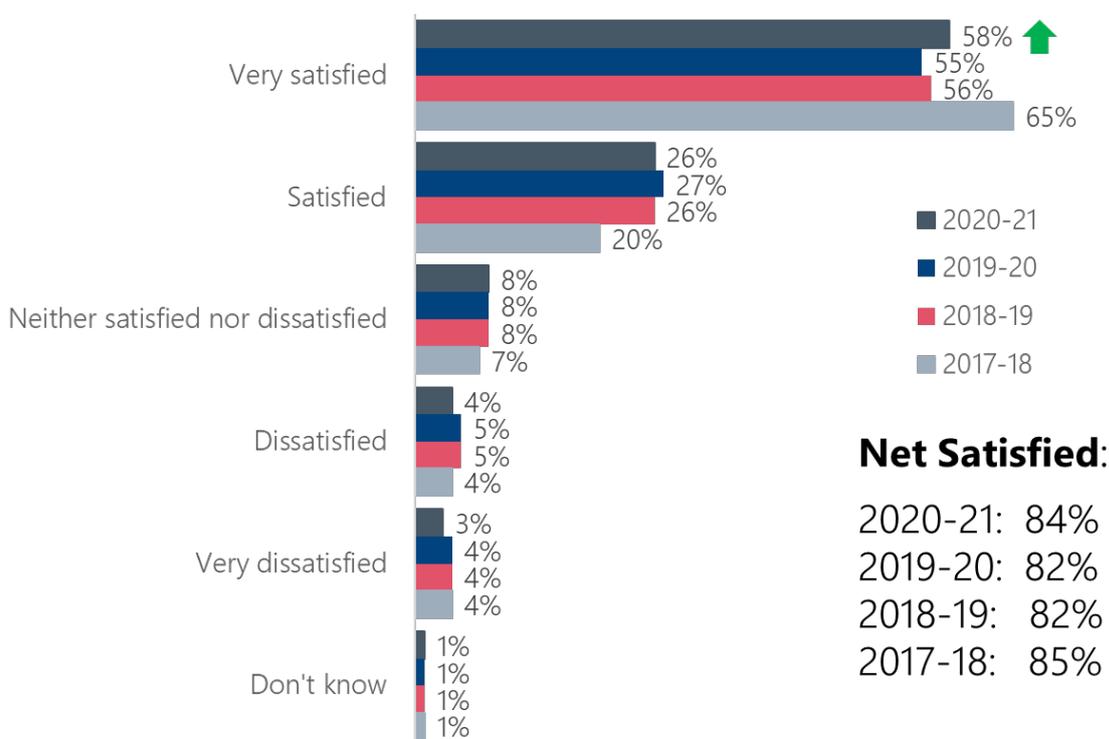
QD21. Overall, how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at <INSERT STATION> on <INSERT DATE>? Base: All respondents (2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

Passengers with mental health conditions were least likely to express satisfaction with the whole process (79 per cent). Those most satisfied were those with a visual disability (88 per cent). Please note that this question was introduced in 2018-19.

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist

The second overall satisfaction measure is designed to track satisfaction with Passenger Assist as a whole, in other words summing the passenger experience across all journeys they have made. This is recognising the fact that if a passenger is taking multiple journeys, their experience will be adversely affected if any one of those journeys is unsatisfactory. As such it is a more demanding measure and that is reflected in the lower satisfaction scores.

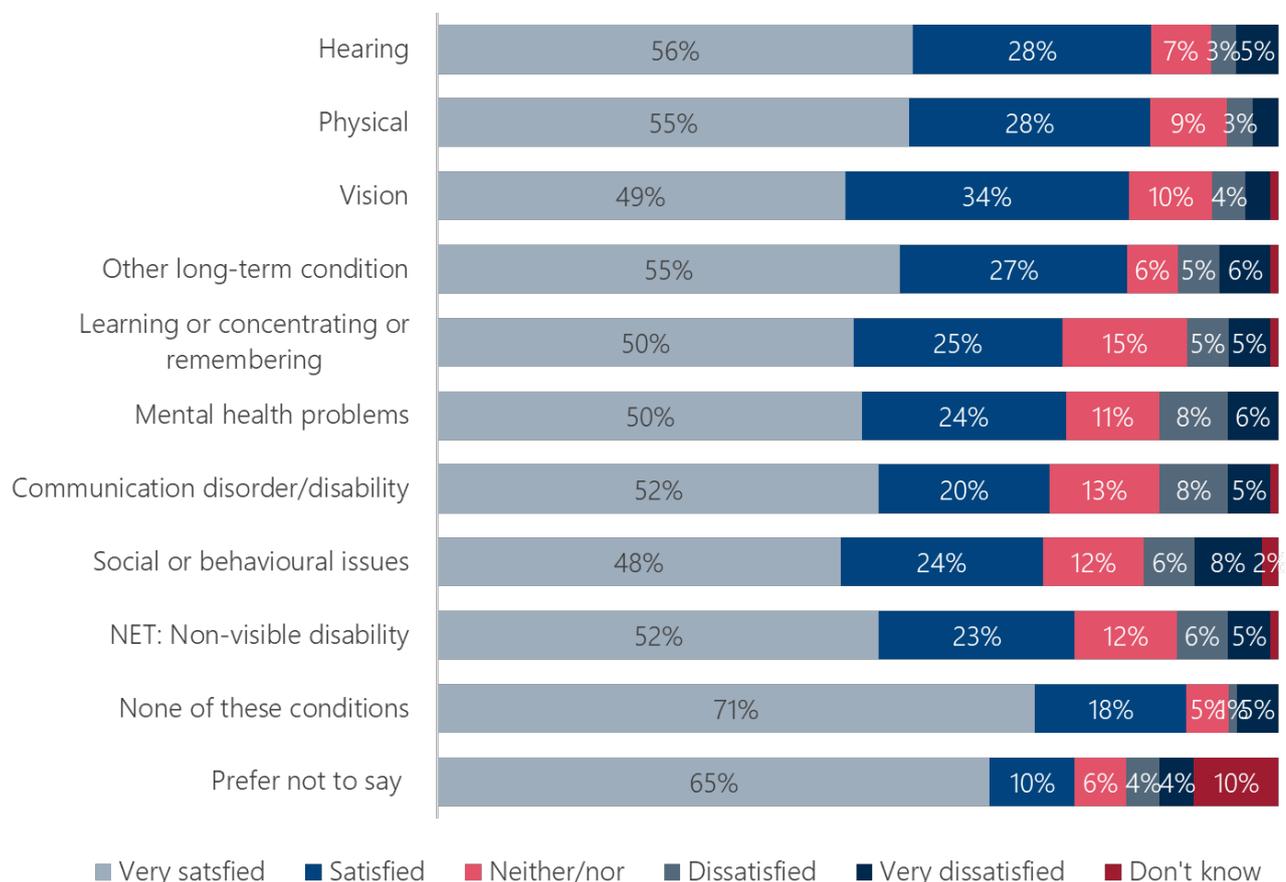
Overall satisfaction (those replying 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied') with Passenger Assist based on all past usage is at 84 per cent this year, a slight increase from 2019-20. However, passengers this year were significantly more likely to say they were 'very satisfied' (58 per cent) compared to 2019-20 (55 per cent).



E1. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist? Base: All respondents (2017-18: 4,210, 2018-19: 4,968, 2019-20: 4,079, 2020-21: 1,549)

Overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist ranges from 73 per cent among those with social or behavioural issues and communication disorders to 88 per cent of those with no disability.

Those with mental health problems were most likely to be dissatisfied (14 per cent) as well as those with a communication disorder (also 14 per cent).



E1. Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist? Base: All respondents (2020-21: 1,549)

Experience using Passenger Assist during COVID-19 pandemic

Feedback provided regarding experiences travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic were generally very positive, with the exception of a few bad experiences (some of which relate to other aspects of the journey experience).

"Arriving at Kings Cross at approx. 08.30 hours in the morning I was met with a wheelchair, as requested and I had minimum contact with busy people who thronged the station. Easily kept at a social distance from them and transported to a waiting taxi. A really smooth operation completed with masks and social distancing as far as possible"
75+, hearing impairment and other long-term condition

"The passenger assist staff have always been wearing masks and we felt very safe walking with them. And on most occasions the staff member has asked passengers to allow us on in front of them which is extremely helpful as my husband is partially blind and gets very anxious when there are large amounts of people around"
50-64, visual impairment and learning / concentrating issues

"My only complaint, which I have already informed [TOC], was 3 businessmen entering train wearing face masks yet removed them for the rest of the journey. Although the train manager warned on speaker that it was mandatory no one asked them to comply. It made me feel vulnerable."
75+, hearing impairment and other long-term condition

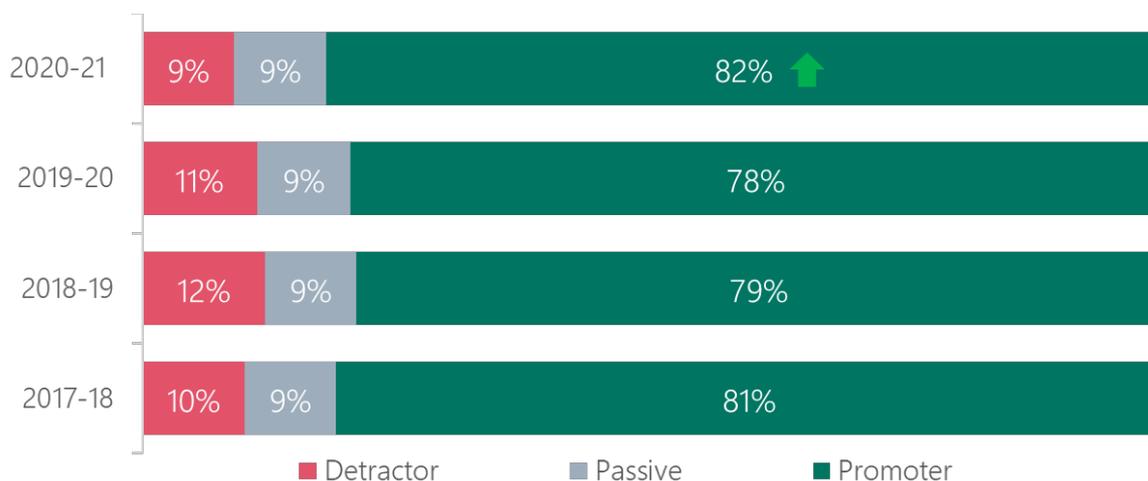
"Honestly, it was not any different to what I expected it to be, everyone wearing masks and sanitised their hands before touching my things and that was it."
16-24, no disability or long-term condition

Likelihood to recommend Passenger Assist

The third overall satisfaction measure is the Net Promoter Score (NPS). NPS is a customer loyalty score, ranging from -100 to 100, calculated by asking passengers one question: "On a scale from 0 to 10, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend or family member who may require such a service?"

Customers that give a 6 or below are Detractors, a score of 7 or 8 are called Passives, and a 9 or 10 are Promoters. To calculate your Net Promoter Score, subtract the percentage of Detractors from the percentage of Promoters. So, if 82 per cent of respondents were Promoters and 9 per cent were Detractors, your Net Promoter is a score of 73.

The NPS for Passenger Assist is at 73 this year, up significantly from 67 in 2019-20. Passengers with mental health conditions have the lowest NPS (54 per cent) followed by those with social or behavioural issues and communication disorders (both 55 per cent).



Net Promotor Score (NPS):

2020-21: 73% ↑
 2019-20: 67%
 2018-19: 66%
 2017-18: 71%

E4. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very unlikely and 10 very likely, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend/ family member who may require such a service? Base: All respondents (2019-20: 4,062, 2020-21: 1,549)

"I have recommended the service to many people and have even passed on the telephone number!"

75+, physical disability and hearing impairment

"We shall definitely use the service again and recommend it to our elderly friends and relatives. First class service."

65-74, no disability or long-term condition

12. Conclusions and recommended improvements to Passenger Assist

Conclusions

The importance of Passenger Assist to the passenger and the difference it makes in terms of enabling them to make a journey, means there are huge implications when Passenger Assist does not work well. Passengers who have bad experiences when using Passenger Assist may choose not to travel by train in future if the service has not met their needs or expectations, or in extreme cases not allowed them to complete their journey as planned, or indeed at all. This can lead to social isolation and can undermine the rail industry's investment in making rail accessible for all.

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Passenger Assist numbers with fewer people travelling and/or people travelling less frequently. Three in five (59 per cent) reported their travel has been impacted due to COVID-19 pandemic, with over eight in ten (85 per cent) of these seeing a decrease in travel.

However, Passenger Assist continues to play a crucial role in making rail travel accessible, with over two thirds stating (68 per cent) they would not have been able to travel without it. Indeed, there is evidence that with the decline in leisure travel during 2020 both the reasons for travelling and the importance of Passenger Assist became even more critical for the remaining passengers using the service. This is likely to have been accentuated by the greater proportion of passengers travelling alone rather than with a companion.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted the mode of booking for the majority of people, although the average time spent booking on the telephone is slightly longer this year. Satisfaction with the overall booking process remains high, with approximately nine in ten passengers satisfied overall. Similar to previous years, almost nine in ten received booking confirmation and those receiving a booking confident are more likely to feel confident all their requirements would be met.

Over half (53 per cent) received information regarding how to travel safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, and almost nine in ten (89 per cent) receiving the information found it useful. For those that did travel during 2020-21 over three quarters were confident doing so despite the pandemic.

There is, however, still a concern that only two in three (68 per cent) passengers are confident that all elements of the assistance they have booked will be delivered on the day of travel. This proportion is notably lower amongst those not in receipt of a booking confirmation (58 per cent), although anecdotal evidence suggests it could also be influenced by previous bad experiences of assistance failures which can undermine users' confidence when making future bookings.

"It has made me scared to use the train again, because I booked a week in advance, had all my information, and still didn't get the assistance I needed."

35-49, physical disability, learning / concentrating issues and another long-term health condition

Confidence in the booking arrangements, and a possible nervousness or uncertainty about what to expect for each leg of the journey can affect the quality of passengers' journeys, regardless of whether the assistance is eventually received.

Eight in ten (81 per cent) passengers are met by staff at the station within what they consider an acceptable time frame. For those met by staff either late or not at all, only a very small proportion are unable to complete their journey.

The proportion of passengers receiving all of the assistance they booked increased significantly this year, also to eight in ten (80 per cent). Considering the individual types of booked assistance, the majority of those booking each type of assistance receive it (all types of assistance were received by at least eight in ten of those booking). When assistance is received, passengers are generally satisfied with the quality provided. Levels of satisfaction are high across all sub-groups, although there is some evidence of lower satisfaction amongst those with non-visible disabilities.

Satisfaction with rail staff providing assistance is high and has significantly increased to at least nine in ten across all aspects such as helpfulness and knowledge / attitude towards the passenger. Again, passengers with non-visible disabilities are less likely to express satisfaction with staff understanding their particular needs.

The first of three overall satisfaction measures covers the entirety of the particular journey discussed in detail in the interview. The majority (86 per cent) were satisfied with the overall process from their initial booking to receiving assistance at the station, this is consistent with 2019-20 findings. However, a significantly higher proportion were 'very satisfied' with the whole process this year (72 per cent compared to 68 per cent previously).

The second overall satisfaction measure is designed to track satisfaction with Passenger Assist as a whole, in other words summing the passenger experience across all or multiple journeys. This is recognising the fact that if a passenger is taking multiple journeys, their experience will be adversely affected if any one of those journeys is unsatisfactory. As such it is a more demanding measure and that is reflected in the lower satisfaction scores.

Overall satisfaction (those replying 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied') with Passenger Assist based on all past usage is at 84 per cent this year, a slight increase from 2019-20. However, passengers this year were significantly more likely to say they were 'very satisfied' (58 per cent) compared to 2019-20 (55 per cent).

The third overall satisfaction measure is the Net Promotor Score (NPS). NPS is a customer loyalty score, ranging from -100 to 100, calculated by asking passengers one question: "On a scale from 0 to 10, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend or family member who may require such a service?". The NPS for Passenger Assist is at 73 this year, up significantly from 67 in 2019-20. Passengers with mental health conditions have the lowest NPS (54 per cent) followed by those with social or behavioural issues and communication disorders (both 55 per cent).

Suggestion for improvements

Staff training in understanding different passenger needs

As in previous years, some passenger types (especially those with non-visible disabilities such as learning or concentrating difficulties, mental health problems and communication disorders) give lower satisfaction scores, suggesting that staff both during the booking process and when assisting passengers do not have enough knowledge to provide adequate help.

"Limited understanding and help with neurodiverse conditions such as autism - focus is on physical disabilities."

16-24, learning or concentrating impairment, social or behavioural problems and another long-term illness or condition

"Thorough mandatory autism awareness training should be conducted, in order to keep journeys smooth for passengers who are most at risk when travelling alone, as travelling alone is very distressing, especially profound for longer journeys."

25-34, physical disability, mental health conditions, social or behavioural issues and other long-term health condition

In particular, passengers suggest deepening and widening staff training to give them a better understanding of the complexity of different disabilities, and appreciation that passengers often need extra time and assurance that they are going to make their connection.

Booking tickets at the same time as assistance

A number of passengers mentioned having to book assistance and train tickets separately which makes the booking process longer and more complicated for them to deal with. It would be easier if both could be booked in one sitting either via telephone or online.

"Some train companies allow you to book tickets and assistance together, this is helpful because you don't have to go anywhere else to complete the arrangement for making the journeys. Some train companies do not allow you to book tickets and assistance together meaning you have to phone one place to do the assistance and another to book your tickets, this is inconvenient."

35-49, hearing impairment, physical disability, and mental health condition

"I get confused sometimes about when I need to book passenger assist. Is it with my tickets or should I let them book my tickets and seats?"

75+, visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical disability

"The only thing I would say was that in the booking, because I have not used it before, in the booking process what I did first of all I booked the journey through the normal channels, normal booking way. Once I booked and paid for it, I asked the person can I actually book passenger assist, he said I can't do that you have to go through passenger assist. So I then phoned passenger assist, what they could not do was take the booking I already made, they couldn't add passenger assist to the booking I made, so what I had to do is to get a refund from the booking made by conventional way and then book again with passenger assist."

75+, no long-term health conditions or disabilities

Lack of awareness

Lack of awareness could be a potential barrier to using the Passenger Assist service. Some mention they would have used the service sooner had they known about it and others mention they have friends and family who could benefit from the service but are again unaware it is available.

"This service has been a massive benefit to my wife and I. Each journey with Passenger Assist has been made as easy as possible. We were delighted to hear about the service but also surprised that details of it are not readily available. Several of our friends would benefit from the service but had no knowledge of it.

We have been spreading the word!"

65-74, physical disability and another long-term health condition

"Until a friend told me about this service, I was not aware of it. I will certainly use it again, being an elderly lady travelling alone, I felt quite safe."

75+, hearing impairment

Not being met by staff when alighting the train

As in previous years passengers still report issues when approaching an alighting station. It can be a particularly stressful time for a passenger when approaching an alighting station if they are unsure whether assistance will be waiting for them. Completion rates for assistance alighting the train and assistance to and from connecting services have increased this year, however passengers continue to report problems where staff are not there to meet them off their train. This can be particularly stressful for those using wheelchairs and requiring a ramp to alight the train.

"I find that the start is much more efficient than the end of it, they could do with better communication with the conductors and the assistance. They find it hard to find me. it's not their fault but if there was some sort of way to make it known."

35-49, visual impairment, physical disability

"On the return journey there was no one to meet us with the ramp at Ebbsfleet. I had to press the assist button to the train driver to prevent the train leaving and so a ramp could be arranged."

75+, other long-term health condition

"I found it very distressing not to be met as was promised. The station did not appear to have any staff on duty. I was eventually helped by a person who was off duty. On a previous occasion I nearly missed a connection because no one's approached me to help me get off a train."

75+, other long-term health condition

"The big problem is arriving at my destination and nobody being there to meet the train. If I was travelling alone I would have ended up at the wrong destination quite a few times! Staff are, always helpful and apologise, but it does mean I can't travel unaccompanied with any degree of confidence."

65-74, hearing impairment, physical disability

Feeling rushed

Passengers can often feel rushed especially if staff turn up late to provide assistance. Time can often be quite tight when passengers need to change trains to make a connection which can again cause stress for passengers using the service.

"Assistance should not feel rushed....when I was being taken from platform to another for connecting train, I was rushed on my CRUTCHES despite requesting a chair after disclosing information."

25-34, physical disability, mental health conditions, other long-term health conditions

"It caused me GREAT anxiety that the assistance staff turned 'up' at the VERY last minute(!) to help me onto the train?? It's all a last-minute rush!! As I had to wait while other passengers boarded the train before me? I was EXTREMEY worried that I would not get my seat? Which DID happen!!."

65-74, other long-term health condition

"The assistance at Manchester Victoria was quite poor, the time in between the trains was less than anticipated due to a delay and they do not have any buggies for transport at Manchester. The assistant managed to push my husband, but I have mobility issues too and usually when my husband is being supported I can manage but I needed to negotiate both items of luggage and to try and walk with a stick...well run...to get the connection, leaving no time to seat us on the train and our reserved seats already had passengers sat in them."

50-64, physical disability

Recommended actions for ORR and the rail industry

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Passenger Assist numbers with fewer people travelling and/or people travelling less frequently. However, over three quarters of those travelling said they were confident doing so and the pandemic does not appear to have adversely affected delivery of Passenger Assist despite the challenging circumstances for passengers and rail staff. This provides a firm base on which to rebuild usership, but we recommend that the industry consider marketing to (lapsed) Passenger Assist users that it is safe to travel and that the service is fully available to them.

The proportion of passengers receiving all of the assistance they booked has significantly increased and overall satisfaction with Passenger Assist at the station has also significantly increased. Satisfaction with the helpfulness and attitude, knowledge, and proficiency and how well needs were understood by staff in providing assistance, have all risen significantly.

Nevertheless, consistency of delivery remains an issue and failure rates for individual aspects of assistance can be as high as sixteen per cent. With passengers typically requesting four types of assistance per journey leg, ensuring consistency of delivery remains critical. With the increased number of customers expected to allow more granular measurement of performance in 2021-2022, we recommend that data on the proportion receiving all assistance they booked continues to be a metric measured at SFO level and published regularly on ORR's website.

Although satisfaction scores are high, there are still a number of improvements to the service that could enhance passengers' experience. Staff training remains key, particularly when dealing with passengers with non-visible disabilities and complex needs, as satisfaction remains lowest amongst these passengers.

Assistance can also feel rushed if staff do not turn up within a sufficient timeframe to provide assistance or if there isn't much time for getting to a connecting train, again causing passengers to become anxious and stressed. Managing demand for Passenger Assist as rail traffic volumes and stations become more crowded again will be important in making returning users feel confident.

Finally, shortly after this survey period concluded the new Passenger Assist app was launched. We recommend that ORR track awareness and usage of the app and use future waves of the research to gather key customer satisfaction metrics amongst its users.

Appendix 1 – Margins of error crib sheet

SFO	Achieved	Answer = 50%	Answer = 70%	Answer = 90%
Network Rail	432	+/-4.7	+/-4.3	+/-2.8
Avanti West Coast	179	+/-7.3	+/-6.7	+/-4.4
Great Western Railway	137	+/-8.4	+/-7.6	+/-5.0
LNER	109	+/-8.4	+/-8.6	+/-5.6
Northern	86	+/-10.6	+/-9.7	+/-6.3
South Western Railway	84	+/-10.7	+/-9.8	+/-6.4
Transport for Wales	76	+/-11.2	+/-10.3	+/-6.7
Southeastern	72	+/-11.5	+/-10.6	+/-6.9
East Midlands Trains	71	+/-11.6	+/-10.7	+/-7.0
ScotRail	66	+/-12.1	+/-11.1	+/-7.2
Greater Anglia	65	+/-12.1	+/-11.1	+/-7.3
Chiltern Railways	27	+/-18.8	+/-17.3	+/-11.3
London Midland	24	+/-20.0	+/-18.3	+/-12.0
TransPennine Express	21	+/-21.4	+/-19.6	+/-12.8
<i>Great Northern</i>	8	-	-	-
<i>Southern</i>	71	+/-11.6	+/-10.7	+/-7.0
<i>Thameslink</i>	16	-	-	-
Net: Govia Thameslink	95	+/- 10.1	+/- 9.2	+/- 6.0
Other small SFO's	5	-	-	-
TOTAL	1,549	+/-2.5	+/-2.3	+/-1.5

Appendix 2 – Key metrics by disability type

Key metrics by disability type

Disability type	Satisfaction with booking (C7)				All assistance received (D5)				Satisfaction with assistance at station (D7)				Overall satisfaction (E1)			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Vision (blindness or visual impairment)	91%	91%	90%	90%	79%	77%	72%	81%	91%	87%	89%	93%	81%	79%	78%	82%
Hearing (deafness or hard of hearing)	95%	92%	91%	93%	79%	73%	72%	78%	92%	89%	90%	90%	86%	83%	82%	84%
Physical (wheelchair user, mobility issues, amputee, dwarfism)	91%	91%	91%	92%	80%	75%	73%	79%	92%	88%	87%	92%	84%	80%	81%	84%
Learning or concentrating or remembering	88%	88%	89%	87%	75%	71%	68%	80%	90%	87%	86%	91%	82%	74%	80%	74%
Mental health conditions	87%	86%	88%	88%	73%	71%	71%	76%	90%	85%	85%	90%	78%	73%	74%	74%
Social or behavioural issues	81%	84%	82%	85%	69%	72%	64%	76%	83%	84%	84%	91%	76%	64%	66%	73%
Another long-term health condition that doesn't fit any of the above	91%	91%	93%	91%	80%	74%	72%	75%	93%	86%	89%	90%	85%	79%	81%	82%
Communication disorder/disability	-	88%	86%	88%	-	76%	67%	80%	-	88%	85%	95%	-	74%	72%	73%
None of these conditions	95%	94%	94%	95%	82%	76%	78%	84%	95%	89%	89%	92%	89%	88%	88%	88%
Prefer not to say*	94%	91%	86%	88%	78%	75%	75%	79%	94%	87%	89%	93%	87%	82%	77%	75%
TOTAL	92%	92%	92%	92%	80%	76%	74%	80%	92%	88%	88%	92%	85%	82%	82%	84%

*Base less than 50

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is _____ from Teamsearch. We are working on behalf of Breaking Blue, a professional research company. Breaking Blue are working with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). ORR is the independent regulator of the railways, this means they check services are being provided to passengers to sufficient standards.

We understand that you recently booked assisted travel. [Pipe booking agent] and other train companies are working with the ORR to improve the way the assisted travel service works for passengers. The ORR has commissioned us to conduct research to find out how satisfied you were with your assistance on [DATE] and to gather your feedback on how the assisted travel service could be improved.

Please be assured that the survey is conducted under the terms of the MRS (ESOMAR) Code of Conduct. [Pipe booking agent] have advised you have given permission for your contact details to be passed on to us for research purposes only. We guarantee that your answers will be kept completely confidential.

Due to the nature of the survey topic, please be aware that we will be asking a question about your health. You don't have to answer this question if you would prefer not to. Your personal data will not be linked with your answer to this question when passed on to the ORR. We will also ask for your contact details, and if you give us these, they will only be used for back-checking (making sure our interviewers are doing a good job) and then deleted.

Our privacy notice explains your rights in more detail, including your right to change your mind if you do not want us to use your information. Please let me know if you would like the link emailed to you (<https://www.breakingblueresearch.com/privacy-policy/> and <insert link to Teamsearch's privacy policy>)

Consent to all of the above must be recorded electronically (or on paper and then scanned) and retained as long as personal data is kept.

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Permission to record must be obtained. Respondent must be told who will have access to the recording, and what it will be used for.

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Before we continue – can I just confirm that you are over 16?

YES, 16 OR OVER – CONTINUE; NO, UNDER 16 – THANK AND CLOSE

And can you please confirm that you booked assisted travel recently?

YES, BOOKED ASSISTED TRAVEL – CONTINUE; NO, NOT BOOKED – THANK AND CLOSE

Would you have some time now to answer some questions? The interview will take approximately 15 minutes.

IF YES: Thank you very much for your valuable time. We will refer to the assisted travel service as Passenger Assist throughout the questionnaire.

IF WOULD LIKE MORE DETAIL: The MRS set out professional standards that all research practitioners must prove they work to. If you would like to contact MRS with any questions you can do so on 0800 975 9596.

IF NO: Is there a better time to call you back?

IF YES: INTERVIEWER ARRANGE TIME

IF NO: You can complete the interview online within the next week, and the link is: INSERT WEBLINK

Section A – Travel Habits

We would like to start by gathering some background information on your train travel.

ASK ALL

A1 Have you used Passenger Assist, either on your own or as a companion accompanying someone requiring the service?

SINGLE CODE

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Yes (myself) | CONTINUE AS CUSTOMER |
| 2. Yes (companion) | CONTINUE AS COMPANION |
| 3. No | THANK AND CLOSE |
| 4. Don't know | THANK AND CLOSE |

ASK IF A1 = 2 (COMPANION)

A2 What is your relationship to the person you were travelling with? They are my...

SINGLE CODE

1. Wife
2. Husband
3. Partner
4. Son (including step-son and son-in-law)
5. Daughter (including step-daughter and daughter-in-law)
6. Mother (including step-mother and mother-in-law)
7. Father (including step-father and father-in-law)
8. Brother (including step-brother and brother-in-law)
9. Sister (including step-sister and sister-in-law)
10. Grandparent
11. Grandchild
12. Other relative
13. Friend
14. Neighbour
15. Colleague
16. Other (Please specify)

ASK ALL

A3 **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1):** How often did you typically use Passenger Assist **before** the COVID-19 pandemic? (before 23rd March 2020)

(IF COMPANION AT A1): How often did your <ANSWER FROM A2> typically use Passenger Assist **before** the COVID-19 pandemic? (before 23rd March 2020)



SINGLE CODE

1. Three or more times per week
2. One to two times per week
3. One to three times per month
4. Less than once a month, more than once or twice a year
5. Once or twice a year
6. Less than once a year
7. Don't know

ASK ALL

A3b **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)**: Would you say the amount you use Passenger Assist has been impacted by COVID-19?

(IF COMPANION AT A1): Would you say the amount your <ANSWER FROM A2> uses Passenger Assist has been impacted by COVID-19?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF CODE 1 AT A3b

A3c In what way has your use of Passenger Assist changed?

SINGLE CODE

1. Increased a lot
2. Increased a little
3. Decreased a little
4. Decreased a lot
5. Don't know/unsure

ASK IF CODES 1 TO 4 AT A3c

A3d **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)**: Please can you tell us a bit more about why your use of Passenger Assist **now** is different compared to **before** COVID-19? (before 23rd March 2020)

(IF COMPANION AT A1): Please can you tell us a bit more about why your <ANSWER FROM A2> use of Passenger Assist **now** is different compared to **before** COVID-19? (before 23rd March 2020)

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

99 Don't know

ASK IF CODED 1 TO 4 AT A3c

A3e Assuming things return to a pre-COVID-19 way of life, would you expect your use of Passenger Assist to...?

SINGLE CODE

1. Increase a lot
2. Increase a little
3. Decrease a little
4. Decrease a lot
5. Don't know/unsure

Section B – Confirming journey details

We understand on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>, **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> made a journey via train. We are interested in the assistance you booked in advance for one specific part of the journey. We would like to ask what happened at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station.

ASK ALL

B1 INTERVIEWER: Confirm that the respondent recalls this journey and feels able to answer about this. If not, thank and close.

SINGLE CODE

1. Continue
2. Thank and close

Section C – The booking process

ASK ALL BOOKING BY TELEPHONE (FROM SAMPLE)

C1a Roughly how long did it take to book assistance?

Note: we are only interested in the time it takes to book the assistance only...do not include time for anything else e.g. booking a ticket

TIME BOX IN 5 MINUTE STEPS UP TO 55 MINS, THEN 1 hour, THEN LONGER THAN 1 HOUR

ASK ALL

C1 Which of the following types of assistance did you request at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station?

MULTICODE

1. Booking the wheelchair area
2. Help with luggage
3. Getting in/out of the station
4. Getting to the platform



5. Getting to a seat
 6. Getting to the wheelchair area
 7. Boarding the train
 8. Alighting the train
 9. Provision of a ramp
 10. Assistance to and from connecting services
 11. Guidance if you are visually impaired
 12. A taxi if required (if the station you wanted to use was inaccessible to you)
 13. Some other type of assistance (Please specify)
 14. DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember
- THANK AND CLOSE**

ASK ALL

C2f Was the way in which you had to book Passenger Assist different due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic? (For example did you have to book online instead of by telephone)

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Haven't previously booked
4. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF CODE 1 AT C2f

C2g How was the way you booked Passenger Assist different?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

99 Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

C3 Did you receive confirmation of the assistance booking?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

C3b During the booking process were you provided with any information regarding how to travel safely during the COVID-19 pandemic?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes

- 2.No
- 3.Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF CODE 1 AT C3b

C3c Where did you see / hear information regarding travelling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic?

MULTICODE

- 1.On the website I booked through
- 2.Told by the booking agent over the phone
- 3.Information provided within my booking confirmation <only show if code 1 at C3>
- 4.Don't know/Can't remember
- 5.Other (please specify)

ASK IF CODE 1 AT C3b

C3d Was the information regarding travelling safely during the COVID-19 pandemic...?

SINGLE CODE

5 = Very useful	4 = Fairly useful	3 = Neither/nor	2 = Not very useful	1 = Not at all useful	6 = Don't know
-----------------	-------------------	-----------------	---------------------	-----------------------	----------------

ASK ALL

C6 Before we go on to discuss the actual day of your journey, please tell us which of the following best describes how you felt after making your booking...

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- 1.I felt confident that all requirements would be met
- 2.I felt confident that most requirements would be met
- 3.I felt doubtful that requirements would be met on the day
- 4.DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know

ASK ALL

C7 Thinking about the booking process, how satisfied were you with... READ OUT FIRST ITEM?

What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?

READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW, ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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- a. The overall assistance booking process
- b. The helpfulness of staff when booking assistance
- c. The assistance arrangements that were booked for the journey

Section D – Journey experience

We'd now like to ask you about what happened with regards to the assistance **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> booked for **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE> at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station.

ASK IF A1 = 1 (CUSTOMER)

D1 Were you travelling alone or with someone?

MULTICODE

1. Alone
3. With a family member, friend or colleague
4. With someone who is a paid carer and is able to assist you

ASK ALL

D2 What was the main purpose of the journey?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

1. Commuting (e.g. to work, school or university)
2. Business/ other work (e.g. to a business meeting with a customer)
3. Leisure (e.g. shopping, visiting friends/ relatives, day trip/ holiday)
4. Other (please specify)
5. Prefer not to say

ASK ALL

D4 Was a member of staff there to meet **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> within an acceptable timeframe?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No, but I was eventually met by staff and able to continue my journey as planned
3. No, but I was eventually met by staff and able to continue my journey (but not as planned, e.g. took a later train)
4. No, I was eventually met by staff but not able to continue my journey
5. No, I was not met by staff but was able to continue my journey as planned
6. No, I was not met by staff but was able to continue my journey (but not as planned, e.g. took a later train)
7. No, I was not met by staff and was not able to continue my journey
8. DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D5 And did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> actually receive the following assistance....?

SHOW FROM SAMPLE ASSISTANCE REQUESTED, READ OUT EACH ITEM IN TURN

	Yes	No	DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know/Can't remember
SHOW CODES FROM C1 SINGLE CODE FOR EACH ITEM	1	2	3

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D6 And how satisfied **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <were you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <was your ANSWER FROM A2> with....

SHOW CODES WHERE D5 = 1, READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D7 And how satisfied **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <were you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <was your ANSWER FROM A2> overall with the assistance at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station?

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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ASK IF ANY OF D5 = 2 (DID NOT RECEIVE THE ASSISTANCE REQUESTED)

D8 Did not receiving the assistance requested affect **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> being able to get to the final destination?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF C1 DOES NOT = 12 AND D4 = 1-4

D10 At any point in this part of your journey did the assistance involve a taxi or alternative means of transport arranged by the train company?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D10 = 1 OR D5_12 = 1 (ASSISTANCE INVOLVED A TAXI OR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT)

IF D5_12 = 1 SHOW: You said earlier that your assistance involved a taxi.

D11 Did the vehicle arrive in an acceptable timeframe?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D10 = 1 OR D5_12 = 1 (ASSISTANCE INVOLVED A TAXI OR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT)

D12 Was the vehicle suitable for **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1) <you> (IF COMPANION AT A1) <your ANSWER FROM A2>?**

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

D13 And did **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1) <you> (IF COMPANION AT A1) <your ANSWER FROM A2>** experience any disruption on the stage of the journey at **(FROM SAMPLE) <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED>** station?

MULTICODE

1. Yes – planned engineering works / industrial action
5. Yes – unplanned disruption, e.g. delays and cancellations
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF D13 = 5

D16 Did someone contact **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1) <you> (IF COMPANION AT A1) <your ANSWER FROM A2> (IF CUSTOMER AT A1) <you> (IF COMPANION AT A1) <them>** to offer an alternative?

SINGLE CODE

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. This wasn't necessary because the delay had no impact upon the booking
- 4. Don't know/can't remember

ASK IF D16 = 1

D16b What alternative arrangements were offered and did these meet your needs?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

99 Don't know

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D17 Thinking about the assistance at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>, how satisfied were **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <they> with... READ OUT FIRST ITEM?

What score out of 5 would you give where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied?

READ OUT SUBSEQUENT ITEMS IN TURN, SINGLE CODE PER ROW, ROTATE ORDER OF STATEMENTS

REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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- a. The helpfulness and attitude of staff who provided assistance at the station
- b. How well **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <your> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2's> particular needs were understood by the staff who assisted **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <them> at the station
- c. Staff being knowledgeable and proficient in how to assist you

ASK IF D4 = 1-4

D20 We are keen to know how helpful **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <you> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <your ANSWER FROM A2> found Passenger Assist in terms of making the train journey possible or simply more convenient. Which of the following best describes **(IF CUSTOMER AT A1)** <your> **(IF COMPANION AT A1)** <their> experience?

PROBE AS PER PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

- 1. I/They could not have completed this particular train journey without Passenger Assist

2. I/They could have completed this particular train journey but it would have been more difficult (e.g. would have taken more time, needing another person etc.)
3. I/They could have completed this particular train journey without Passenger Assist
4. Don't know

ASK ALL

D21 Overall how satisfied are you with the whole process from booking the assistance to the assistance received at **(FROM SAMPLE)** <STATION WHERE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED> station on **(FROM SAMPLE)** <DATE>?

SINGLE CODE

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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Section E – General views on the assisted travel service

We would now like your thoughts on Passenger Assist as a whole. We're keen to understand your perspective on what works well, what doesn't work so well, and how you think the service could be improved.

ASK ALL

E1 Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied, how satisfied are you with Passenger Assist? (*Thinking about all journeys you have made using Passenger Assist*)

SINGLE CODE

5 = Very satisfied	4 = Satisfied	3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2 = Dissatisfied	1 = Very Dissatisfied	6 = Don't know
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ASK ALL

E2 Do you have any other general comments on the Passenger Assist service?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

- 98 Nothing
- 99 Don't know

ASK ALL

E4 On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very unlikely and 10 very likely, how likely would you be to recommend Passenger Assist to a friend/ family member who may require such a service?

SINGLE CODE

Very likely = 10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Very unlikely = 0	DK = 11
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ASK ALL

E10 What concerns do you have about using the Passenger Assist service during the COVID-19 pandemic?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

98 No/none

99 Don't know/unsure

ASK ALL

E11 Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all confident and 5 very confident, how confident are you using Passenger Assist during the current COVID-19 pandemic?

SINGLE CODE

5 = Not at all confident	4 = Not very confident	3 = Neither/nor	2 = Fairly confident	1 = Very confident	6 = Don't know
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ASK IF CODE 4 OR 5 AT E11

E12 Why don't you feel confident using Passenger Assist during the COVID-19 pandemic?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

99 Don't know/unsure

ASK ALL

E13 Can you tell us a bit about your experience(s) using Passenger Assist during the COVID-19 pandemic?

OPEN RESPONSE, PROBE FULLY

99 Don't know/unsure



Section F – Demographics

Before we finish, we would just like to ask a couple of final demographic questions. This is important as it helps us to better understand if Passenger Assist is meeting the needs of all types of customers.

ASK ALL

F1 **IF CUSTOMER AT A1: DO NOT ASK AND CODE GENDER**

IF COMPANION AT A1: ASK IF A2 = 3 OR 10-16: Is your <ANSWER FROM A2>...

SINGLE CODE

1. Male
2. Female
4. Other (Please specify)
3. Refused

ASK ALL

F2 **IF CUSTOMER AT A1: How old are you?**

IF COMPANION AT A1: How old is your <ANSWER FROM A2>?

SINGLE CODE

1. 16-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-49
4. 50-64
5. 65-74
6. 75+
7. DO NOT READ OUT: Refused

ASK ALL

F3 **IF CUSTOMER AT A1: Which of the following best describes your current circumstances?**

IF COMPANION AT A1: Which of the following best describes your <ANSWER FROM A2>'s current circumstances?

READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

1. Working full or part-time
2. Not working
3. Student
4. Retired
5. Other (Please specify)
6. DO NOT READ OUT: Refused

ASK ALL



F4 (IF CUSTOMER AT A1) <Do you> (IF COMPANION AT A1) <Does your ANSWER FROM A2> have any of the following long-standing physical or mental health conditions?

READ OUT, MULTICODE

- 1. Vision (blindness or visual impairment)
- 2. Hearing (deafness or hard of hearing)
- 3. Physical (wheelchair user, mobility issues, amputee, dwarfism)
- 4. Learning or concentrating or remembering
- 5. Mental health problems
- 6. Social or behavioural issues, for example, due to neurological diverse conditions such as Autism, Attention Deficit or Asperger's Syndrome
- 10. A communication disorder/disability
- 7. Another long-term health condition that doesn't fit any of the above
- 8. None of these conditions SINGLE CODE
- 9. I would prefer not to say SINGLE CODE

ASK ALL

F5 Thank you for sparing the time to help ORR with this study. Occasionally, it is very helpful for us to be able to re-contact people we have spoken to, either to clarify certain issues, or to get a bit more detail on topics that ORR is particularly interested in. Would you be happy for us to call you back briefly if necessary?

Just to remind you: Your details will be kept completely confidential and all your answers will remain anonymous.

SINGLE CODE

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

ASK ALL

F6 INTERVIEWER: CAPTURE NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER

OPEN RESPONSE

NAME:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

Those are all of the questions I have for you today. Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. Your answers will help ORR to understand more about passengers' experience of the assisted travel service and identify areas for improvement.

Stay in touch



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