

£100k delivers better accessibility for stations across the North

April 27, 2022



Toilets at railway stations across the North have been fitted with a new electronic device to help blind and visually impaired people when it comes to navigating the facilities.

Installed by TransPennine Express (TPE) as part of a £100k investment in enhancing the accessibility of its stations, the Adi RoomMate® devices provide an audio description which maps out the features of the accessible toilet.

On entering the toilet, an automatic announcement is made and then those requiring more information can access this simply by waving their hand.

The new technology can be found at all 16 of TPE's staffed stations: Brough, Cleethorpes, Dewsbury, Grimsby Town, Huddersfield, Hull Paragon, Malton, Manchester Airport, Middlesbrough, Northallerton, Scarborough, Scunthorpe, Selby, Stalybridge, Thirsk and Thornaby.

Braille handrails have been installed on both sets of stairs at Scunthorpe station as part of the investment, with plans in place to also install these at Grimsby Town.

Natasha Marsay, Accessibility & Inclusion Manager for TransPennine Express said: “Continuing to make our trains and stations as inclusive as possible is incredibly important to us.

“The addition of audio devices in the accessible toilets at all 16 of our staffed stations, as well as braille handrails at Grimsby Town and Scunthorpe, will make a real difference and offer more independence for customers who are blind or have a visual impairment.”

Maqsood Sheikh, Regional Campaigns Officer at the RNIB said: “We welcome the installation of RoomMate in 16 locations across the TransPennine Express (TPE) network which will make it more accessible for blind and partially sighted people to navigate toilets more easily as the technology provides an audio description of the toilet layout.

“It’s great to see TPE bringing in developments across their network as part of an accessibility boost for stations across the North. We know that customers can often feel overwhelmed travelling, and this will help blind and partially sighted people travel with confidence.”

More information, including a demonstration of how the RoomMate® devices work, can be found at: easyaccessibility.co.uk/the-roommate.

TPE has been awarded Inclusive Transport Committed status as part of the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Transport Leaders Scheme for the work it is doing to make rail more accessible for all.