

Award-winning advisory group seeking new members to help shape inclusive Bee Network

May 11, 2023



People with disabilities living in Greater Manchester are being invited to apply to join an award-winning advisory group which plays a key role in helping to ensure that public transport and active travel is accessible to all.

The Disability Design Reference Group (DDRG), which is independently managed by Breakthrough UK on behalf of Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), is recruiting for paid members, with applications open until Friday 9th June.

The DDRG was set up in 2008 to assist with designing requirements for an integrated, accessible transport network, with a particular focus at that time on Metrolink. The group is made up of members with a range of impairments including physical and mental health, as well as people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and ages.

Members of DDRG provide advice based on lived experience of their impairments and as independent users of public transport and active travel routes across Greater Manchester.

With the first locally controlled bus services launching in September, alongside wide-ranging infrastructure developments for both active travel and public transport, the DDRG and its refreshed membership will play a vital role in using its Greater Manchester voice to help design an inclusive Bee Network for the region.

Emma Flinn, Head of Partnerships, Engagement and Inclusion at TfGM, said: “Greater Manchester is on a journey to delivering a joined-up, sustainable and inclusive transport system which supports safe, seamless and affordable end-to-end journeys across public transport and active travel – the Bee Network.

“DDRG has been fundamental in the journey of GM’s transport system so far. As we move ahead with the next phase of the Bee Network through bus franchising, as well as the continued focus on inclusive and accessible active travel and public transport infrastructure, they will continue to be so.

“By embedding lived experience in the Bee Network’s design and delivery, and providing a meaningful platform for feedback and suggestions from individuals who are dealing with barriers on the transport system day-to-day, we can actively tackle inequalities for people with disabilities and work towards a better system for all users.”

Recent focus areas for DDRG have included being part of a working group to improve printed and digital customer information, attending a site visit to comment on the use of bus stop boarders and feeding back on plans for the future of Greater Manchester bus services.

In addition to attending four formal quarterly meetings a year, DDRG members will be asked to contribute to ‘task and finish’ opportunities around specific requirements which may be in-person and/or site visits, planning and reviewing sessions, joining other meetings or reviewing and inputting into documents and communications as helpful.

The position as a DDRG member is for two years, with potential to extend to three years. Members are paid £75 per meeting or site visit, plus limited travel expenses within Greater Manchester.

Applicants for this role must live or work or volunteer within the boundaries of Greater Manchester. Breakthrough UK particularly welcome applications from disabled people facing racial inequalities, young people and from people who have never done anything like this before.

To apply for this role, please provide the following to Helen Clark:

- More about yourself, including your contact details.
- Why you would like to be a member of DDRG.
- What you think about public transport in Greater Manchester

Applications can be made by sending up to 500 words in your preferred format, or by sending a short video or audio file of you talking or signing up to five minutes in length by 9th June 2023.

To apply, email Helen Clark h.clark@breakthrough-uk.co.uk or WhatsApp your video or audio to 07706 733768.