

New map to boost disabled passengers' confidence to take the train

April 18, 2019

Rail Delivery Group



National Rail



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The rail industry is launching a new interactive map which will make it easy for passengers to find out about accessibility at stations, helping to boost their confidence to travel by train.

This is part of the industry's wider programme of work to improve access to rail and deliver long-term change.

The new '[Access Map](#)' has information about all stations across Britain and allows people to, at a glance, identify whether any station in the country is accessible so they can plan according to their needs and have smoother and more reliable journeys. Passengers can search for specific stations or view anywhere in Britain using Access Map, which clearly displays:

- whether stations have step free or partial step free access
- what facilities are available at a station, including accessible toilets and changing places
- where alternative accessible stations are for on-the-go planning.

Ensuring customers know what to expect at any station will give them greater confidence to travel by train. Access Map is compatible with accessible features on iPhone, Android and desktop computers, including for visually impaired people. It is also being developed as an app, which will be released in the coming months to make it even easier to use on the go, at the touch of a button.

This new map is one part of the rail industry's long-term plan to increase access to the railway, supporting more people to travel by train. The rail industry is also trialling a revolutionary app and upgrading back-office computer systems used by booking centres and station staff to speed up booking assistance. From November, people will be able to set up user profiles and spend far less time on the phone booking assistance. Beginning next year, rail staff will start using the upgraded systems and by summer 2020, the customer app will go live, helping passengers have more control over their journey.

Train companies are also introducing new, more accessible trains in the next year, which include on-board passenger information systems that provide better audio-visual information about journeys, for example the new Stadler trains for MerseyRail and Greater Anglia, the Class 800 'Azuma' from LNER and the new class 717 trains being introduced by GTR. The rail industry has delivered over £500 million of improvements since 2006 and after the government announced £300 million of additional funding, it will make 73 more stations accessible by 2024.

Robert Nisbet, Director, Regions & Nations at the Rail Delivery Group, said: "Our new map will help to boost passengers' confidence when they travel by train, eliminating the element of surprise and giving them the reassurance that comes with planning a journey and knowing what to expect.

"We know we need to go further and the rail industry is driving bigger changes to make the railway accessible for everyone. We're investing billions of pounds into thousands of more accessible carriages, developing an app to speed up booking assistance, and upgrading infrastructure to make stations across the country more accessible."

The Rail Delivery Group worked in collaboration with train companies and the Department for Transport to create Access Map.

Transport Accessibility Minister Nusrat Ghani said: "I am delighted to see this new interactive map launched, marking an important step towards our aim of providing disabled passengers with the information they need to travel independently – a key commitment in our Inclusive Transport Strategy.

"However, we know there is more to do, which is why earlier this month we announced the 73 stations across the country which will receive a share of £300 million Access for All funding to improve disabled access."

Accessibility Campaigner Sarah Ward said: "Knowing in advance what features are at a station before I get there increases my confidence hugely. I think the map will be beneficial for a whole range of people. The more information you can have before you travel, the easier it is."

The rail industry has delivered over £500million of accessibility improvements since 2006, with 75% of journeys now made through step-free stations.