

TPE launches new initiative to help neurodiverse passengers build travel confidence

April 9, 2024



TransPennine Express (TPE) has launched its new Social Stories aimed at enhancing the travel experience for individuals with autism, learning disabilities, and social anxieties.

Social Stories are narrative descriptions and graphics of everyday situations, designed to help individuals understand social cues, anticipate events, and navigate unfamiliar scenarios with confidence.

Amy French, Accessibility Co-Ordinator at TransPennine Express, said: “We’re really pleased to be one of the first train operators to introduce Social Stories as a part of our ongoing commitment to making rail travel more inclusive.

“We recognise that traveling by train can be overwhelming for many people, and we want all of our customers to feel confident and safe when travelling with us.

“That’s why we’ve launched our Social Stories, which help take away as many surprises when travelling as possible and allow customers to have an idea of what to expect from the comfort of their own homes.”

The Social Stories are developed using training delivered by the North West Autism & SEND Consultancy and are tailored to the unique needs of neurodiverse individuals and those with social anxieties.

Chris Jeffery, Accessibility and Transport Integration Manager at TransPennine Express, added: “This is an ongoing project, and we will continue to produce Social Stories of different scenarios and topics, taking on board feedback from customers and our Neurodiversity Network Group.”

Earlier this year, TPE announced the official launch of its ‘Neurodiversity Network Group’ as part of the trailblazing TPE Week of Inclusion.

Harriet Harbidge, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at TransPennine Express, said: “The introduction of our Neurodiversity Network Group and Social Stories is just the beginning of the many steps we will take to ensure all colleagues and customers who fall under the neurodiversity umbrella feel welcome and supported onboard our trains, in our stations, and at work.”

To learn more about TPE’s commitment to accessible travel visit: [Accessibility | Transpennine Express \(tpexpress.co.uk\)](https://tpexpress.co.uk)