



On Track for Inclusive Train Travel

Easy Read summary



Funded by



**Motability
Foundation**

Supporting partners:



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About this report

This report explains what we learnt from a project about making train travel work better for disabled people.

The project looked at:

- What happens when disabled people travel by train
- What happens when they need help from staff
- How good the disability awareness training for rail staff is

The Motability Foundation gave some money to RNIB and Community Rail Network to do some research and write a report. We also worked with Community Rail Lancashire and Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Community Rail Partnership.

We spoke to disabled people and rail staff. We also looked at research from the UK and other countries.





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Why we did this work

Disabled people often have problems when travelling by train. This includes:

- help not arriving
- long waits for help
- not being able to find staff
- unclear or confusing information

These problems can make people:

- feel anxious
- lose confidence
- stop travelling by train



Help from staff is very important. Good help means:

- people feel more confident
- journeys are easier
- people can travel on their own



When support works well:

- train travel is fair and open to everyone
- more people can go to work, education and activities
- this helps people live their lives more independently

What we found

Most rail staff have training about different disabilities and how to support people well.



But we found that training on its own is not enough. What matters most is what happens when people need help in real situations.



Even when staff are well trained, they may not be able to give good support if the system does not work well.



This means problems are often caused by how the railway works, not just by staff.



What affects journeys

Journeys are affected by how the railway works.

This includes:

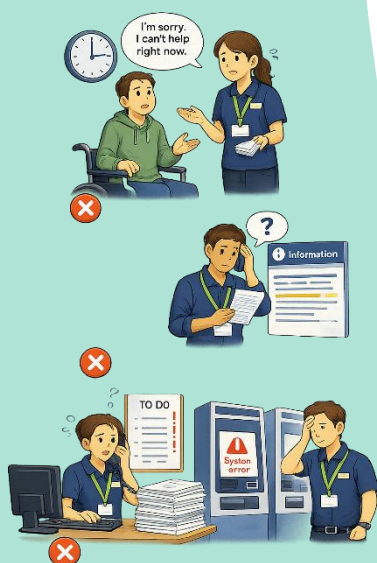
- if there are enough staff
- if staff have time to help
- how staff share information
- if systems and technology work properly
- how stations and trains are designed

If these do not work well, support is not reliable.

What is going wrong

We found several problems:

- help is not always reliable
- staff do not always get the right information
- staff are often under pressure
- systems do not work well





Train companies often look at how many staff complete training. They do not often look at:

- whether passengers feel supported
- whether journeys go well

Involving disabled people

Disabled people are already involved in improving rail services. For example, they help with:

- training
- giving feedback
- sharing their experiences



This is important and improves services. But it does not always happen in a consistent way.

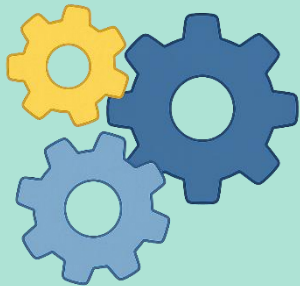
Sometimes:

- it only happens at certain times
- It does not have the influence it deserves
- learning is not shared across the whole railway industry





This means good ideas are not always used to improve services everywhere.



What needs to change

There is no single solution, but it is important to make sure different parts of the system work together, not separately.

Training should be:

- designed with disabled people
- practical and based on real situations

Day-to-day work should include:

- enough staff to help everybody that needs to travel
- good communication between all the people who need to be involved
- flexibility when things go wrong





Stations should have:

- clear signs
- good lighting
- easy-to-understand information



What happens next

This work does not give final answers. It shows areas to explore and test. Whatever comes next should focus on:



Trying changes in real situations

Small changes should be tested during real journeys. This includes how staff work and how systems operate.



Learning what works

We should learn from what works and what does not. This will help improve services over time.



Working together

Disabled people and rail partners should work together. They should help design, test and improve services.



Changes should be tested before being used more widely to make sure they work well.



This would help make train travel more reliable and accessible for disabled people.



You can find the full report here:

<https://communityrail.org.uk/reports-and-research/on-track/>