



EAST COAST

Making Rail Accessible

Guide to Policies and Practices

February 2013

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Introduction

I'd like to wish you a warm welcome to East Coast. We run train services between London King's Cross and Peterborough, the East Midlands, Yorkshire, the North-East of England and Scotland.

At East Coast, we aim to deliver consistently high standards of safety, performance and customer service. This document, together with the booklet 'Making Rail Accessible: helping older and disabled passengers', sets out our policies for customers with disabilities. These guides detail the arrangements and services we provide, to ensure access to the rail network is as easy as possible.

Your views and suggestions about this policy and the services we provide for travellers with disabilities are important to us. We'd love to hear from you. If you have any comments please contact our Customer Relations team:

By post **East Coast Customer Relations**
FREEPOST RSRJ-LJCX-GHST
Plymouth PL4 6AB

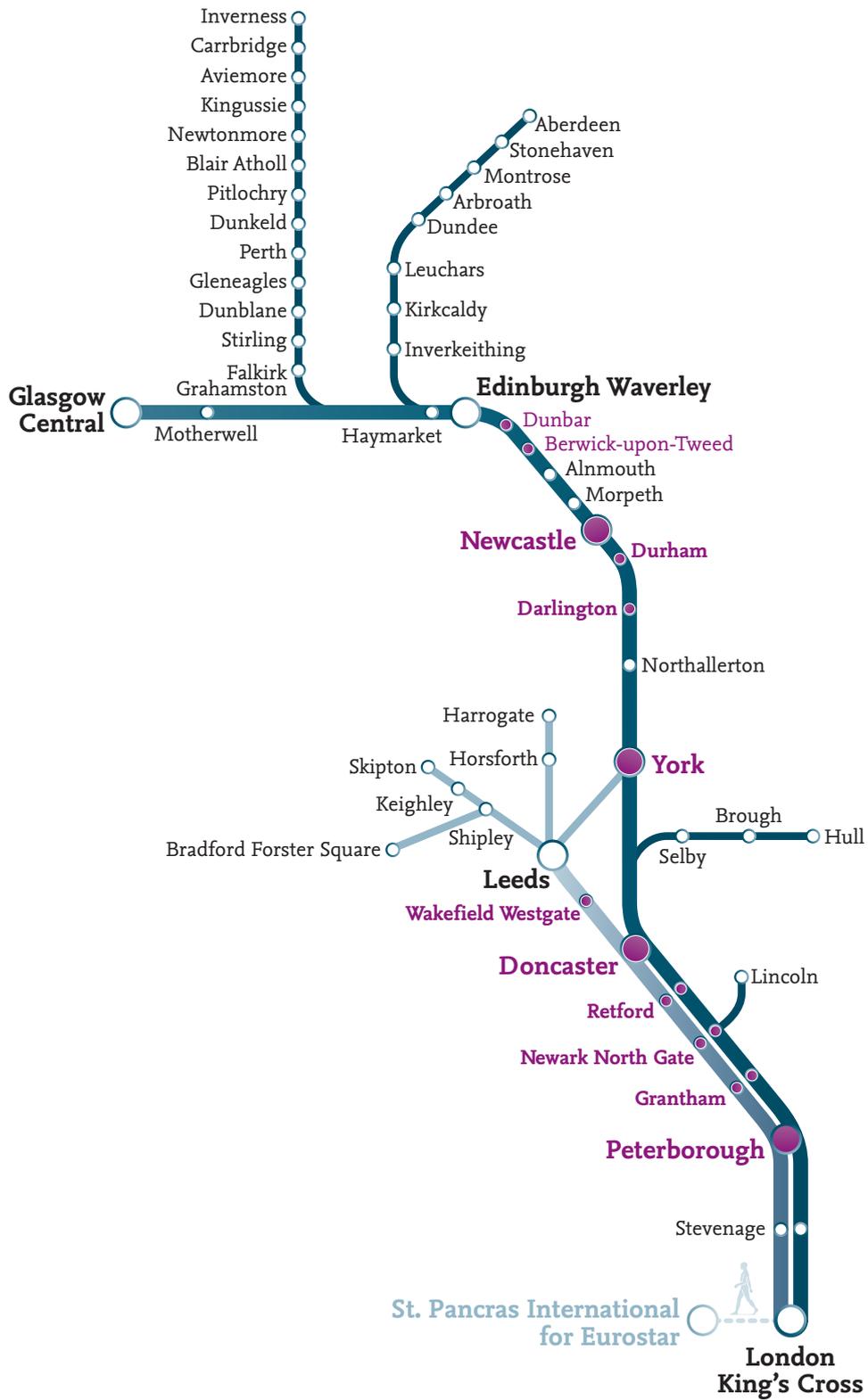
By phone **08457 225 333***

By email customers@eastcoast.co.uk

Open Monday to Sunday 7am – 10pm
(excluding Christmas Day and Boxing Day)

Or use our Customer Comments and Compliments forms online at eastcoast.co.uk

Karen Boswell
Managing Director, East Coast



England-Scotland services
 Yorkshire services

Stations managed by East Coast

Our commitment to customers with disabilities

We strive to make travelling easier for customers with disabilities, as we understand the challenges they face on the rail network. We will not discriminate against people with disabilities who wish to use our services and are committed to improve their access to the rail network, by providing additional support.

We will continue to operate and support the services and facilities introduced by previous franchisees and commit to continuously improve. This includes delivering an investment programme to enhance accessibility to our stations.

This document forms part of our Disabled Person's Protection Policy (DPPP) and fulfils our obligations under our Passenger and Station Licences, the DfT's Guidance on Disabled Person's Protection Policies, the DfT's "Accessible Train Station Design for Disabled People: A Code of Practice" and the requirements of legislation such as the Equality Act and the Human Rights Act.

We are committed to meeting the services, standards and guidance contained in the DfT's "Accessible Train Station Design for Disabled People: A Code of Practice" (The Code). When installing or refurbishing trains and facilities at stations, we will comply with "the European technical specification for interoperability relating to 'persons with reduced mobility' December 2007 (PRM TSI).

Where existing services and facilities do not comply with the requirements of The Code we will work to make these better, ensuring any changes, improvements or investments carried out, comply with the standards of The Code and the PRM TSI. Where we are not able to fully meet the standards, we will consider alternative measures or seek dispensation where it is not possible to achieve compliance. This policy will be reviewed in the light of any updates to The Code or the PRM TSI.

We proactively talk to rail industry partners, national and local representatives of disabled travellers and stakeholders in the communities we serve to identify opportunities for improvement, on our trains and across the UK Rail network.

Our aim is to support the creation of consistent and high quality standards of access across the rail network for customers with disabilities. We fully support the Disabled Persons Railcard and the national initiative, Passenger Assist.

Continuous improvement, future developments and investment

Improvement to access

We will work and consult with colleagues across the rail industry, including other train operating companies, Network Rail, ATOC and representatives of customers with disabilities, such as the Disabled Person's Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), to identify and make improvements to access across our services, the national rail network and the wider transport network for customers with disabilities:

- We will seek continuous improvement in the way we provide facilities and services for customers with disabilities
- We will identify remaining shortfalls in accessibility at the stations we operate and work to identify improvements
- We will work to identify funding for developments we believe represent value for money for our customers and the taxpayer, and work with Local Authorities and other third parties to secure additional funding for accessibility improvement projects, in particular the 'Access for All' initiative
- We will work with the operators of stations where our trains call, but we are not the station facility operator, to deliver consistent improvements to access and services across the rail network. In particular we will work with Network Rail at London King's Cross, Edinburgh Waverley, Glasgow Central and Leeds stations
- We will ensure when improvements are made to our stations, the needs of people with disabilities are included, such as providing appropriate signage, tactile, step-free and wheelchair-friendly surfaces and lighting
- We will ensure every new ticket machine we install offers the Disabled Person's Railcard discount
- We will work with our colleagues in the rail industry to improve connections with other modes of transport, taking into account the ability to provide accessible vehicles
- We will update our policies to reflect changes to relevant legislation or guidance.

Improvement schemes

We aim to deliver the following schemes in 2013:

- Working with industry partners to redevelop the main station building at Wakefield Westgate – including installing a new passenger footbridge with lifts
- Redeveloping ticket offices at a number of East Coast stations to increase the availability of accessible ticket counters

In 2012 the following schemes were delivered:

- Installation of a new ticket office at London King's Cross
- Major refurbishment at Peterborough station, including the installation of wheelchair access to waiting rooms on platforms 4 and 5

Car parking

There are designated parking bays for Blue Badge holders at all our stations to ensure easy access. Normal car parking charges apply. We monitor these spaces and, if necessary, carry out enforcement to ensure only Blue Badge holders use them.

Our aim is to balance the need for parking for customers with disabilities with the availability of spaces for others. We monitor and review this every three months. Any findings and change proposals are discussed with the appropriate statutory bodies and organisations representing people with disabilities.

Emergency procedures

All our staff are trained to deal with emergencies on our trains and at our stations, including evacuation and assistance for customers with disabilities.

We will identify members of staff who can assist in the most appropriate way for your safety and that of others. If you use a wheelchair, or have significant impairment to your mobility, our normal policy is not to evacuate you from our trains until appropriate support is available unless you are in a life-threatening situation. We regularly review our emergency procedures and consult with representatives of customers with disabilities during this process.

Communication of this policy

We have a detailed guide called ‘Making Rail Accessible: Helping older and disabled passengers’. You can pick up a free copy from any of our ticket offices, from our Customer Relations team, or you can download it from eastcoast.co.uk

You can also request a copy in alternative formats, such as audio and large print.

We will work with our rail industry partners, local and national representatives of travellers with disabilities and key stakeholders in the communities we serve to promote our services and our policies for customers with disabilities.

Assisted travel

You can contact the East Coast Assisted Travel team in several ways:

By phone	08457 225 225* (select option 3 and then option 4)
By text relay	8001 08457 225 225
By email	assisted.travel@eastcoast.co.uk
Open:	Monday to Saturday 08:00 – 20:00 Sunday 10:00 – 20:00

The text relay service connects people using a text phone with other people using a telephone or another text phone. It’s a fully automated service so, when required, relay assistants provide a text-to-voice and voice-to-text translation service. For more information please see the text relay website www.textrelay.org

East Coast website

Our website, eastcoast.co.uk, is compliant to W3C standards and has been reviewed and endorsed by the Shaw Trust (www.shaw-trust.org.uk/home).

Station signage

Any contractors installing signage at our stations have to refer to ‘The Code’ and the RSSB ‘Wayfinding at stations: A good practice guide’.

* Calling an 0845 number costs 2p per minute daytime, and 0.5p per minute at all other times when calling from BT landlines. Other networks including calls from mobiles may vary, please check with your service provider.

Management arrangements

Executive accountability

Protecting and improving access to rail services for customers with disabilities is integral to our business strategy and is supported by the East Coast Board of Directors. Our Stations and Property Director have executive accountability for the delivery, development and promotion of accessibility and will ensure it is included in all aspects of business processes, including business plans, the specification and delivery of major projects, and our review of business performance indicators.

Ownership throughout the organisation

We ensure all our employees understand and deliver this policy. They all receive regular training on the best ways to support customers with disabilities and how to implement new initiatives and procedures. Disability awareness training forms part of the introductory training for all staff.

Monitoring and review

We regularly review how our policies deliver improvement. Our internal audit programme is used to audit compliance with this document across our business. Achieving benchmark scores for our audits is a franchise obligation and results are presented to the Department for Transport and the East Coast Board every four weeks.

We review customer feedback continually and our Customer Relations team provides our Directors with regular reports.

The East Coast Assisted Travel team keeps a record of all booked assistance and our Customer Relations team maintains records and reports on where assistance has not been delivered.

This policy document and the passenger document, 'Making Rail Accessible: Helping older and disabled passengers,' are live documents. This means we will update them to reflect the latest developments in our policies and facilities. They will be reviewed every year and, as part of this review, we will provide details of any key factors that have been identified to improve performance to the DfT.