

## Contact Information



Speak to a member of Merseyrail staff or use the station help point



Email [comment@merseyrail.org](mailto:comment@merseyrail.org)  
Visit [www.merseyrail.org](http://www.merseyrail.org)



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Making Rail Accessible

# Accessibility Policy and Practises

A Guide to Our Accessibility  
Policy and Practises Across  
Our Network

**For more information call our Customer Relations Team on:**

**0151 555 1111**

The office is open Monday to Friday from 07:00 to 19:00hrs (an answer phone is available outside of these hours). Our team can also provide information on ticket refunds, disabled assistance and Group Travel. We look forward to hearing from you.

**For local journey information, fares and train times, use our Journey Planner or contact Traveline on:**

**0871 200 2233**

**Or you can write to The Customer Relations Team:**

Merseyrail  
9th Floor, Rail House  
Lord Nelson Street  
Liverpool  
L1 1JF

# Contents

<b>Welcome</b>	02
About Abellio/Serco	
Policy Summary	
Our Commitment	
Our Strategy	
Stations	
Trains	
<b>Management Arrangements</b>	04
Executive Summary	
Human Resources Director	
Asset Management Team	
Legal and Compliance Manager	
Investment	
Access for All Major Schemes	
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	05
How we will Monitor	
Complaints	
Service Quality Inspections	
External Rail Industry Surveys	
<b>Access Improvements</b>	06
Minor Works	
<b>Working with Others</b>	07
<b>Staff Training</b>	08
<b>Emergency Procedures</b>	09
<b>Communications Strategy</b>	10
Telephone	
Website	
Signage	
<b>Car Parking</b>	11

# Welcome

Welcome to Merseyrail. We want you to enjoy every aspect of travelling with us, whether it's your first journey, or you're a regular customer. This document is part of our Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) to set out the procedures and policies that Merseyrail has in place to help customers with restricted mobility and requiring assistance including:

- those with visual or auditory impairments or learning difficulties
- those whose mobility is impaired
- those with hidden disabilities which many not be immediately apparent to others
- older people
- those accompanying disabled children in pushchairs
- disabled customers requiring assistance with luggage.

In this document we provide information to help you understand how we plan to meet your expectations when you are using our services. You'll find details of the assistance and facilities we offer if you are disabled or have reduced mobility and how to plan your journey in our 'Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled Passengers' booklet.

This document reflects the guidance set out in the Department of Transport (DfT) document. 'How to Write Your Disabled People's Protection Policy: A Guide for Train and Station Operators (2009)'. This document also sets out our approach to meeting the requirements of the DfT's current 'Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations; a Joint Code of Practice', the Equality Act (2010), the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 (RVAR), and the Persons of Reduced Mobility Technical Specification for Interoperability (PRM TSI).

## About Abellio/Serco.

Merseyrail Electrics (2002) is a 50/50 joint venture company between Serco and Abellio, which has a 25-year concession agreement with Merseytravel, the transport authority in Merseyside.

## Policy Summary

We believe that when you travel with us you should expect high standards of customer service throughout your journey. We are committed to working with our industry colleagues, The Office of Rail and Road, Merseytravel, Network Rail, Local Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships and other stakeholder organisations to improve the services, products, facilities and information we provide. We will work to extend accessibility and equality across Merseyrail throughout the concession period.

We are committed to maintaining and further improving current standards of accessibility to our services for all our passengers. We will continue to review our policies annually and incorporate all the feedback we receive regarding the services we provide. This feedback is vital in shaping our policies and making continuous improvements.

## Our commitment

We recognise the broad range of our customers who require assistance, and are committed to making the best practicable provision to meet their requirements and continue to improve the services and facilities for older and disabled customers and those with reduced mobility to use the rail network by working to improve our services and facilities.

We have developed this Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP) to set out the procedures and policies that we have in place to protect the interests of disabled passengers.

Issuing and complying with a DPPP is a condition of our passenger and station operator's licences and has to be approved by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR).

We will review the documents on an annual basis at the end of the anniversary from the approval date. We will consider your feedback and comments when we are reviewing the documents. We continually review our station accessibility information to make sure that our customers get accurate information.

## Our strategy

During the concession period we will strive towards equal access to travel. We are therefore committed to making reasonable adjustments that will improve access to trains and stations.

## Stations

Our strategy is to ensure that all areas of the stations meet the needs of disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility. This will include

- training employees to better understand and deal with a wide variety of disabilities.
- the provision of new facilities
- making sure that any planned station works will comply with all legislation, including the standards set out in the DfT's current code of practice – 'Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations'
- providing alternative accessible transport at inaccessible stations.

## Trains

Merseytravel plans to have new trains on the network by the early 2020s and the procurement process is well underway. It's expected that a preferred bidder will be identified towards the end of 2016 and it will be at this point that Liverpool City Region leaders, through the Combined Authority, will be asked to commit to the project going ahead. In the meantime, improvements are continuing to maintain high standards for customers. The fleet has been recently re-liveried with new vinyls on the outside of trains. Enhancements to the inside of the trains are now also being rolled out.

## Management Arrangements

The management arrangements detailed below are designed to ensure that your needs are integrated into our business processes and to ensure that the company's progress against its accessibility goals are measured, reported and appropriately adjusted over time.

### Executive Responsibility

Equality issues are an integral part of our business activity. Our Customer Services Director has responsibility for our DPPP and will ensure the policy is integrated into the business plan at the planning stages of all projects and procedures. The Customer Services Director will ensure the requirements of disabled people are represented at Merseyrail Board level. The Customer Services Director is accountable for overall responsibility for monitoring the commitments of this guide, and making sure we deliver on our promises. All managers in all parts of our business have responsibility for implementing and delivery of the day to day elements of customer service, including this policy.

### Human Resources Director

Our Human Resources Director has executive responsibility for staff training in customer services which includes equality awareness. The Human Resources will ensure that in our recruitment and selection process we seek to identify staff committed to the principles of customer service.

### Asset Management Team

Our Asset Management Team uses robust project management processes and they will consider accessibility issues in any changes we make. The Asset Management Team will make sure that all designs meet the Code of Practice.

### Legal and Compliance Manager

Our Legal and Compliance Manager has responsibility for advising the projects management team on accessibility issues. It is the Legal and Compliance Manager's responsibility to ensure that any works fulfil our DPPP requirements including the DfT's 'Code of Practice' and our legal obligations. The Legal and Compliance Manager will attend project planning meetings to ensure that nothing in the plans compromises accessibility. Any concerns will be escalated to the Head of Asset Management for decisions by the executive team. Our Legal and Compliance Manager is responsible for the day to day aspects of these policies.

### Investment

Access for all major schemes.

We will be working with Network Rail and Merseytravel to deliver major accessibility schemes identified for implementation during the 2014-2019. This includes a complete station rebuilt at Ainsdale. Network Rail is currently carrying out feasibility studies for the installation of lifts at Liverpool Central and a new station at Maghull North. We are waiting confirmation of funding for lifts at Meols station and Merseytravel are trying to secure funding to carry out the design works for lifts at St Michaels.

We will apply for any funding when it is made available via the DfT, Merseytravel, Local Authorities and Network Rail so we deliver a programme of access improvements.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

We recognise the importance of regular monitoring and review of the implementation and impact of our policies in delivering improvements.

### How we will monitor

Our Customer Services Director will use methods detailed below to monitor our services and facilities. Our Head of Customer Experience and the Service Delivery Team will consider the feedback and help develop plans to improve our services and facilities.

### Complaints

All comments and complaints that we receive are categorised so that we can evaluate our performance against each type of complaint. The relevant manager investigates all incidents involving disabled passengers, and we will take the necessary action to prevent it happening again.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Merseyrail report against the following KPI's:

- Total number of customers who have booked assistance over a period
- Total number of complaints received about issues relating to disabled travel over the period
- Total number of employees who receive disability awareness training per year.

We also record the number the non- booked assistance we delivery at each station.

### Service quality monitoring

Merseyrail have recently recruited a Head of Customer Experience who will have overall responsibility for the Merseyrail customer experience strategy. Over the next 12 months we will introduce a new monitoring and evaluation mechanism which will include the following:

- Customer Satisfaction surveys
- Mystery Shopper exercises to test the service and facilities
- Requesting customer feedback and suggestions
- Customer forums.

### External rail industry surveys

We will also use information from the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) and Transport Focus to evaluate our performance on accessibility issues.

We are committed to complying with the PRM-TSI and the Joint Code of Practice when installing or refurbishing rolling stock and facilities at stations.

Since the last review of this document we have delivered the following Improvements:

- New lifts and tactile paving at Formby
- Help points including induction loops on all platforms
- Handrails at Spital, Bache, Walton and Rock Ferry
- Accessible counters at Manor Road, Hall Road and Conway Park.

### Stations

We will be delivering the following improvements over the 18 months:

- Accessible counters at four more stations and work has commenced at the first station
- Improve access arrangements to the platform, new waiting shelter and accessible toilet at Waterloo with work commencing in September 2016
- Station upgrade at Ainsdale with work due to commence by the end of 2016
- New car park with blue badge parking and ramped access to the platform at Hall Road with work due to commence in July 2016.

### Minor Works

As and when funding becomes available we plan is to improve facilities in the following areas:

- Accessible Toilets
- Automatic Doors
- Dropped Kerbs
- Step free access to waiting rooms
- Additional Handrails
- Accessible ticket office counters
- Tactile Paving

We recognise the importance of working in partnership in order to make continuous improvements to the accessibility of our stations and trains. Merseyrail works closely with a number of partners and stakeholders including Merseytravel, Network Rail and our local councils whilst developing improvement schemes to ensure we achieve accessibility for all our customers.

Merseyrail are currently working with, Liverpool Dementia Action Alliance, The Clockface Tower, a residential home for people with mental health, Mencap and Age Concern to understand the requirements and support the needs of customers with these disabilities when travelling on our network.

Merseyrail is also represented on Merseytravel Customer Forum which includes representation from various different disabled groups. The Forum gives an opportunity for all members to view the opinions of transport within the Merseyside area. It is also used for briefing its members of forthcoming engineering works and improvements.

We attend the quarterly ATOC Disability Group and any associated meetings, we consult on disability issues with Merseytravel and Transport Focus.

Our Corporate Social Responsibility Manager is responsible for working closely with our local communities. Merseyrail recognises that transport is a key element to social inclusion and we are work closely with our local community groups.

### Awareness of our staff

All our managers and staff are made aware of their responsibilities to disabled customers during their induction training.

All new staff undertake disability equality training on joining the company. The training, which follows the guidance in the Joint Code, allows staff to understand their responsibility to disabled customers, and to understand how to assist people regardless of the nature of their disability.

All frontline staff who assist passengers will receive appropriate training in the use of equipment provided to assist people with disabilities such as wheelchair ramps, induction loops and wheelchairs.

Our training also covers a variety of techniques that can be used to aid communication with passengers who have communication related impairments (e.g. learning difficulties and hearing impairments).

The training also describes a variety of 'invisible' impairments such as degenerative conditions, long term and mental illness and the appropriate techniques to assist passengers.

All staff who answer telephones will be trained in communicating clearly with people who may have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding. Refresher training and briefing is provided in order to maintain and update staff knowledge and skills to improve service and accessibility to all disabled passengers. The needs of individuals and frequency of refresher training will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Merseyrail has produced briefing material when there have been either changes in the law or in our policy and practices. The briefing material was sent to all members of staff. We will continue this approach and develop further material as and when required.

Merseyrail provide an overview of the relevant staff training, including the timetable and the number of staff that have received the training once a year to the ORR.

Our staff are trained in evacuation, safety and basic First Aid procedures to ensure that your needs are considered at all times and particularly at times of emergencies. We have special arrangements for providing assistance at times of emergency. Details of our emergency evacuation procedures are held at all our stations and issued to all our train crew staff.

The evacuation procedures for each station vary according to such factors as the physical layout, the presence and accessibility of facilities, and the availability of staff.

Our policy is not to evacuate customers from a train, before the emergency services arrive, unless they are in a life threatening position.

We will make copies of our passenger document available to local access panels and groups in the local area. The documents are also on our website for download, and a hard copy can be obtained from our staffed stations or by writing to our Customer Relations Team. We provide a variety of information and assistance for people with sensory impairments. If you need information in formats we do produce (e.g. audio or Braille) we will produce these within seven days.

### Telephones

Merseyrail is committed to ensuring all recorded information given by telephone is clear. If a passenger contacts our Customer Relations Team outside opening hours they will be told to contact our Control Centre which is staffed 24 hours a day.

We encourage passengers with hearing difficulties to use email or our website facilities.

### Websites

Our website has been built from the ground up with accessibility in mind and meets the W3C standards. We have taken all steps possible to make sure that it is accessible for all.

### Signage

Merseyrail works closely with Merseytravel and the Local Authorities to ensure that stations are clearly and consistently signposted.

Many stations have free parking facilities including Blue Badge spaces. The dedicated Blue Badge spaces are situated as close as possible to the station entrance.

We monitor usage of Blue Badge parking spaces. Such monitoring will enable appropriate enforcement action to be taken when non-Blue Badge holders park in designated spaces.

CCTV cameras cover car parks and the usage of Blue Badge spaces is monitored either locally or remotely at Merseyrail Control or Security Centre.

Merseyrail and Merseytravel regularly monitor car park usage and work together to make every effort to increase car parking facilities for all customers across the network. In the last few years we have increased parking facilities at Bidston and Birkenhead North stations. We shall endeavour to ensure that all new or refurbished Blue Badge spaces installed in our car parks conform to the Joint Code. If we cannot conform to the Code we that will ensure dispensation is sought from the DfT, once all possible means of achievement have been exhausted. All car parks on the Merseyrail network have been awarded 'Secure Car Park' status.