



Department
for Transport



Inclusive Transport Strategy: Summary report

Looking at how well the Government's
plan for accessible transport is
working



About this easy read booklet



This is an easy read version of a bigger booklet called: **Inclusive Transport Strategy: Evaluation Summary report: Learnings and lessons for future policy.**



This easy read booklet tells you about the main things in the bigger booklet.



If you want more information, you can find the bigger booklet on our website:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/inclusive-transport-strategy-achieving-equal-access-for-disabled-people#research

What is in this booklet



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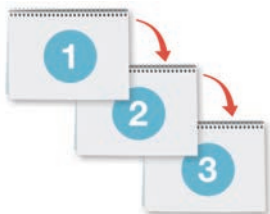
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About the Inclusive Transport Strategy



Transport is things like trains, buses, taxis and cars.



In 2018, the Government wrote a plan called the **Inclusive Transport Strategy**.



The plan said how the Government would make **transport** better for disabled people by 2030.

The Government wanted to:



- Help disabled people to feel more **confident** when they travel. **Confident** is feeling like you can do something.



- Make it easier for disabled people to travel.



- Make sure disabled people don't have to pay more than other people when they travel.

Things like having to pay extra because you need someone to travel with you.



**National Centre
for Social Research**

We are the National Centre for Social Research. We ask people what they think about things.



We use what people tell us to help make things better for everyone.



The Government asked us to look at their plan. They wanted to know if the plan is working well.

What we did



We gave out 2 surveys to ask people what they think about using transport.

We sent out the 1st survey in 2020 and the 2nd survey in 2023.



We also spoke to disabled people and staff from transport services to hear their stories.



We looked at everything people told us.



We also looked at lots of other reports and information.



This report tells you:

- What we found out

and



- Things the Government could do to make travel better for disabled people in future.

What we found out



We looked at people's answers from the surveys.



Overall, the surveys told us that transport did not get better for disabled people.



But this is not because the plan did not work.

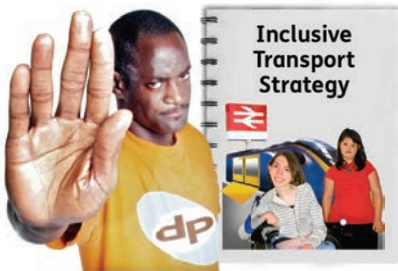
Other things affected it. Things like:



- **COVID-19.** **COVID-19** is an illness that spread around the world. It started in 2020.



Because of COVID-19, everyone had to follow lots of rules. Services had to change how they worked.



This meant transport services had to stop working on some of the things in the transport plan.



Some things in the plan were finished late and some things are still not finished.



People changed how they travel after COVID-19. Lots of people used transport less.



We gave the survey to people across the country.



Some of the things in the plan only made things better for people in some places.



That means the survey might not have shown everything that changed.

5 areas the plan worked

Area 1: Planning and information



Good information is really important for disabled people. It helps them to plan their journeys more easily.

Things the Government wanted to do in their plan:



- Set up a new website that shows how **accessible** different train stations are.

Accessible means easy for everyone to get around.



- Give some money to bus companies to make their information better for people.



Things like clearer signs and speakers to tell you when the next stop is.

Things we found out:

Some disabled people still find it hard to plan their journeys. This was because:



- It can hard be hard for people to use things like computers, websites and apps on a phone.



- The website does not include every train station in the country.



- Some bus companies did not get the money in time to make their information better.



This might have been that things were late because of covid.

Or they got the money but didn't have time to do everything before we checked how things are going.

Area 2: Awareness and training



It is important that people who work on transport understand disabled people's needs.



It is important that other people who travel understand their needs too.



Things the Government wanted to do in their plan:

- Do some work to help people think about different people's needs when they travel.
- Set up a new law. The law says that transport staff should have training about understanding disabled people's needs.





- Set up a certificate for transport services. The certificate shows they are doing good work making their services accessible.

Things we found out:



Disabled people still do not have a good experience with transport staff or other people who travel.



Services did not know about the law or the certificate.



They did not have enough money to give everyone disability training.

Area 3: Getting help and services for disabled people



It is important that disabled people know what help they can get when they travel.

Things the Government wanted to do in their plan:



- Set up a new app called Passenger Assist. You use an app on your phone or tablet.

The app will help people to travel and ask for the help they need.



- Set up new **Changing Places** toilets at motorway service stations.



A **Changing Places** toilet has extra things in it like a changing table and a hoist. It is a room for disabled people to use when they are out and about.



- Make sure people can use Sunflower Lanyards on buses and trains.



A **lanyard** is a card that you wear around your neck. A sunflower picture is used to show **hidden disabilities**.



A **hidden disability** is when someone cannot see your disability just by looking at you.



Wearing a **Sunflower Lanyard** is a way of telling staff you might need support.

Things we found out:



49 Changing Places toilets were set up. 10 more will be set up in the future.



Lots of people know about and use Sunflower Lanyards.



People do not know about the Passenger Assist app or how to use it.



Some people used the app but still did not get the help they needed.



People want to be able to get help when they get to a train station. They do not want to have to book help before they travel.



Disabled people use buses and taxis more than trains.



Services need to tell more people what help they can get at train stations. This will help more people to use the train.

Area 4: Transport for people who use wheelchairs



Disabled people found taxis easier to use than buses and trains. This is even though taxis cost a lot of money.

Things the Government wanted to do in their plan:



- More taxis with space for people who use a wheelchair.



- Local councils to keep a list of taxis in their area that have space for a wheelchair.



Things we found out:

Lots of local councils wrote a list.



But there are not more taxis with space for a wheelchair. This is because it costs too much money.

Area 5: Complaints

A **complaint** is when you tell a service you are unhappy about something.



Things the Government wanted to do in their plan:



- Make sure disabled people know how to make a complaint.



- Set up a Rail Ombudsman. This is an organisation who looks at complaints about travelling by train.



- Set up a way for people to complain online about travelling by bus.



Things we found out:

People still don't know how to make a complaint.



More work needs to be done to support disabled people to know their **rights** when they travel.

Your **rights** are things you are allowed to do and how you should be treated.



Bus services did not set up the new way to complain online. People still cannot complain easily about travelling by bus.

Important things to think about in the future



Here are some things we found out that would help the Government with their transport plans in the future:

Include disabled people



It is really important to involve disabled people in any decisions about transport.



This will help the Government and transport services to make changes that meet everyone's needs.



The Government needs to find more ways of working together and planning services with disabled people.



This might be things like using **social media**. **Social media** is things like Facebook, Instagram and X.



The Government could work also work more closely with the Disabled Person's Transport Advisory Committee.

This is a group that gives advice about transport for disabled people.



Make services better for everyone

It is harder for disabled people when journeys do not go as planned.



This might be if there are roadworks or the bus breaks down.



Disabled people often do not use trains or buses because they are too busy.



Too much noise or too many people can be very stressful.



If trains and buses are busy or do not run on time, people often use a taxi or car instead.



It is really important that services run on time and are not too busy.



This will help everyone who travels. And it will help more disabled people to use buses and trains.

Make travel fair for everyone



Transport is about more than just getting from 1 place to another.



It is linked to things like money, jobs and people's **wellbeing**.



Wellbeing is feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.



Some disabled people cannot afford to travel in a way that meets their needs.



Some disabled people cannot get a job because it is hard for them to travel to work.



Some people feel they are treated unfairly when they travel. This might be people with mental health problems or hidden disabilities.



People might not understand why someone needs extra support if they cannot see the person's disability.



The Government needs to think about these things when they think about transport for disabled people.

Give people better information to help them plan a journey



It is really important that disabled people have good information to plan their journey before they travel.



This must be in different ways that are easy for everyone to understand.



People also need to know things like:

- Where the toilets are

and



- If there are lifts or handrails at the station.



Travel services need to find new ways to give people information. This might be online or on apps on people's phones.



But we know that older people find it hard to use phones and computers.



To support everyone properly, services need to give information in lots of different ways.



Think about different types of transport

Transport usually means trains, buses and planes.



Sometimes, these cannot meet people's needs.



The Government needs to find ways to make other types of transport cheaper for people to use.

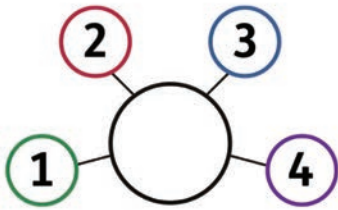


Things like mini buses or sharing a car journey with other people.

Make better plans



Any transport plans written in the future need to be very clear. They need to say:



- How all the things in the plan will work together.



- What the Government wants to see happen and when by.



- Who is going to make the plan happen. More managers and leaders need to be involved to make the plan work well.



- How the Government will know that the plan is working.



There needs to be enough staff and money to make the plan happen.



The Government needs to work together better with transport services to make the plan happen.



This includes smaller companies like taxis and minibuses.



The Government needs to be clear what services need to do.



They need to have a way to check transport services keep getting better.

What happens next



We will keep looking at the transport plan.



We will get more information about people and transport.



This will help the Government to write future transport plans.

