Aviation Accessibility Implementation Group
Update Report 2026

Easy read version



Introduction



Aviation means travelling by airplane.

It includes airports, airlines, airplanes, people who help passengers at airports, and people who need help with luggage and mobility equipment.



This is an Easy Read version of the **Aviation Accessibility Implementation Group** report.

It does not include all of the information, but it will tell you about the important parts.

What is the Aviation Accessibility Implementation Group?



The Aviation Accessibility Implementation Group is a group which works separately from the government. It is led by people from businesses that run airports and airplanes and accessibility professionals.



Members include airlines, airports, industry organisations, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), disabled people and accessibility experts.



Disabled people's experiences are important to the Group's work.



The Group are working on making 19 changes happen to make air travel easier for disabled and older people.

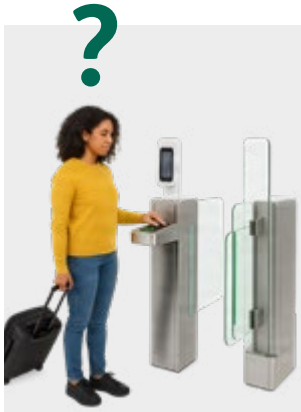
Why is this work needed?



Nearly 6 million passengers asked for help at UK airports in 2025. This is higher than the years before.



More people need to have assistance each year.



Many disabled people still have problems when they travel. About half of disabled people said in a CAA survey that using airports or flying was difficult.



The Group wants disabled and older people to travel with confidence, dignity and as much independence as possible.

The Group wants the businesses that run airports and airplanes to give good support, not just the minimum support the law says it should give.

What is the Group doing?



The Group has 4 main areas of work:

- Training



- Information



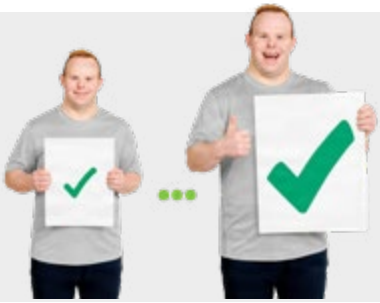
- Support for each person's needs



- Mobility aids



The Group also makes sure the needs of people with disabilities you cannot see are included in all areas of it's work.



They are focusing on changes that the businesses that run airports and airplanes can make now, while government and the CAA continue their work on laws and regulation.

What the Group has done so far



In 2026 the Group started work on better training, better information and finding new ways to share passenger needs.



The Group has worked with:

- Airlines
- Airports
- Ground services - people who help passengers and get planes ready to travel while the plane is at the airport
- Travel agents
- Accessibility organisations and
- The National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat).

Training



All staff need to understand disability and accessibility. This includes managers, customer-facing staff and other airport and airline staff.

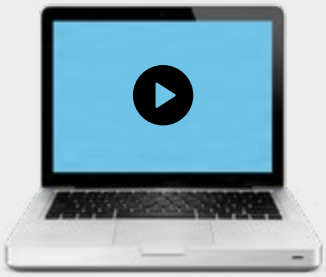


The Group has reviewed existing training and identified what needs to improve.



The Group is developing training at 3 levels:

- Basic,
- Intermediate, and
- Advanced levels.



Next, the Group will make shared training materials and use different ways of learning, including films and graphics.



People with lived experience of disability should help create and deliver training. This means that disabled people's experiences are included in staff training.



The Group is working with the industry to introduce the changes step-by-step, as it may change how airlines and airports work.

Information



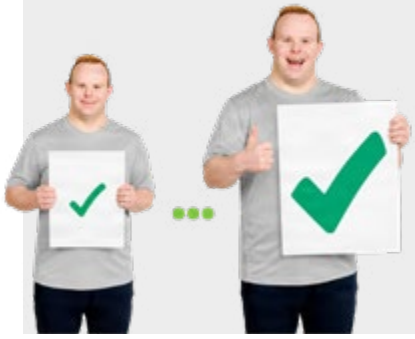
Disabled people need clear and accessible information before and during their journey. This helps people know what support is available and to plan their journey.



The Group looked at information airlines and airports give now. They then worked with others to agree what information airports should provide.



Assistance information should be easy to find, ideally within 1 click from the main website.



Next, the Group will work with airports, airlines and travel agents to improve information before and during travel. The Group will also look at making it easier to make a complaint.

Support for each person's needs



Disabled people do not all need the same help. Passengers should be listened to and given support that is right for them. This helps them to travel independently, with dignity and choice.



Technology could help staff understand people's needs, but technology cannot replace good human support.



The Group is developing a new way to help airlines, airports and other services to share information about passenger needs. The Group will test it with a small number of organisations and make sure it works with existing systems.



Delays, cancellations and gate changes can cause extra problems for disabled people. Clear information given in good time is very important when plans change.

Mobility aids



People who use wheelchairs and other mobility aids can be very worried about their equipment getting lost or damaged. Equipment means the things people use to help them move around and be independent.



Damage to equipment can affect a person's health, independence and the whole trip.



Safe and careful handling of mobility aids is also important for flight safety. This is because many mobility aids have batteries. There are strict rules about taking batteries on airplanes.



The Group has worked with companies that make mobility aids, airlines, airports, ground services and other organisations.



The Group launched the "Flier Friendly Programme" in 2026. It aims to improve information and how electric mobility aids are handled.



The programme includes an Electric Mobility Aid Air Travel Pack for passengers.

The pack helps passengers tell staff how to handle their mobility aid safely.



Next, the Group want more companies to join the programme. It wants more passengers to receive the pack before travelling.



The Group will also work with international organisations to improve mobility aid safety and handling.

Disabilities you cannot see



Airports can be stressful for people with disabilities you cannot see, such as autistic people. Bright lights, loud noise, crowds and confusing information can be upsetting or make travel difficult.



People may need extra time, understanding or support, so the Group is making sure disabilities you cannot see are considered in all areas of it's work.



The Sunflower lanyard can help some people show that they may need support, but it should not be the only way to show an access need.



People should have safe and private ways to tell staff what support they need.



The Group will work with people with different disabilities you cannot see and use their lived experience to improve training and services.

Civil Aviation Authority

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) looks after air travel in the UK. It checks that everyone is keeping to the rules, and is making changes to improve the experience of disabled people.



The CAA is improving it's guidance on airport accessibility and things like training, waiting times, airport design and mobility aids.



In 2025–26, the CAA checked 5 airports to make sure they were meeting the rules.



It found some problems with training and airport design. It also found some problems with relief areas, which are where assistance dogs can go to the toilet. The problems found with relief areas were fixed.



The CAA also asked airlines about medical clearance and support for disabled people during flight disruption.

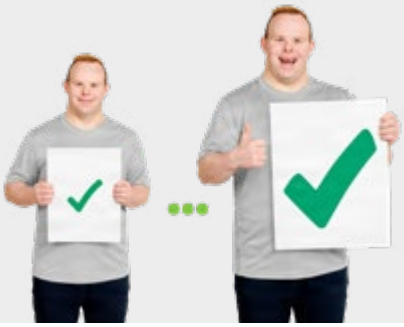


Next, the CAA plans to:

- Update its airport accessibility guidance
- Develop a checklist for organisations to see how well they are doing and what they can do to improve.

They also plan to check 8 airports in 2026–27.

What happens next?



The Group will continue to move from planning to making changes happen.



It will measure whether the changes improve air travel for disabled people.



They will continue working with disabled people, airlines, airports, the CAA, government and other organisations.



The Group wants the businesses that run airports and airplanes to provide safer, clearer and more consistent support.