

Our approach to accessibility and inclusion

Everyone should be able to benefit from intuitive, safe and simple public transport. We know that when services are genuinely inclusive and accessible, everyone gets a better experience.

East West Rail is for everyone. We want to make sure that all customers have a fantastic experience on the railway and raise standards for the industry by embedding the concepts of inclusive design into our developing plans. But equality, inclusion and accessibility starts long before the railway is operational. We are working hard to find new standards and approaches, creating a culture that recognises and values inclusivity - for our customers, our supply chain, our team, and the communities we serve.

At EWR Co, we're carefully considering how we build a railway that meets a range of physical and mobility needs, as well as mental wellbeing, neurodiversity, and assessing where we can remove barriers for our customers.

Customer needs we're considering include:

- Customers who are wheelchair users
- Customers who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Customers with visual impairments
- Customers with dementia, neurodiversity
- Customers who have mobility impairments
- Customers with young children
- Customers with impairments that are not obvious
- Customers with luggage

Equality Impact Assessment and Inclusion Strategy

The team has worked on an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the Route Update announced in May 2023 and is currently finalising an Inclusion Strategy which will formally embed inclusion across our organisation and into our programme. We've defined our outline commitments below, which we will use to build practical guidance to inform our decision making.

Accessibility Advisory Panel

We've also set up an Accessibility Advisory Panel, made up of local people who live along the route, to help us to better understand barriers to travel, identify opportunities for more inclusive access, and understand the impacts to communities from the work we do. We've set up our panel at an early stage, before services are operational, to help us build the right railway and infrastructure to meet a range of needs as the Project progresses through design, construction and operational stages.

Our commitments to accessibility and inclusivity

- We'll ensure that all stages of our Project are inclusive, from our consultations through to our construction and, ultimately, our operations
- We'll actively look for ways to make stations, trains, digital services and any other EWR experiences inclusive for all
- We'll work with local communities, and consult with user groups, to ensure East West Rail is a railway for everyone
- We'll create a workplace of mutual trust and respect. Our team, our customers and our stakeholders must all feel welcome, without exception
- We'll set goals, track our progress, and continuously evaluate to ensure that East West Rail is inclusive for all

Scope of our commitment

- Design stage
- Construction stage
- Operation of railway
- Site specific impacts

Help us shape a truly accessible and inclusive railway

We recognise that we are at still in the early stages of this journey, we're continually looking to increase our understanding of the needs of communities and customers to inform our ongoing activities, so welcome all comments to help shape the path we take.

In the weeks following the route update announcement we will be holding public information events and meeting stakeholders across the route, to answer questions about the updates or any other aspect of EWR. Details of these events will be added to our website: www.eastwestrail.co.uk

You can read more about our Accessibility Advisory Panel here www.eastwestrail.co.uk/news/project-news/lifting-the-barriers-to-accessible-rail-travel.

Get in touch

You can email, call or write to us

✉ contact@eastwestrail.co.uk

☎ 0330 134 0067

✉ FREEPOST East West Rail