

# **Disabled Travellers Awareness of Rights**

**Final Report**

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## **Executive Summary**

This document contains summary results from primary research conducted to understand the awareness of rights to assistance when travelling by rail for those who are disabled or impaired in some way.

Research was conducted between 29 January and 17 February 2014 and consisted of a survey of 350 people (300 conducted through an online survey and 50 conducted over the telephone). In addition, 10 tele-depth interviews were conducted.

The findings for the quantitative research are shown in section 3, the qualitative research is then discussed in section 4. Overall conclusions and recommendations are discussed in section 5. However, below is an overview of the key findings from both strands of research.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this research were to:

- Provide ORR with intelligence about disabled people's (both travellers and potential travellers) current awareness of train companies' obligations to provide access to the rail network to inform policy work and activities.
- To enable ORR to establish a benchmark against which they can measure the impact of their activities to test whether they are effectively delivering improvements for customers (the second prong of ORR's corporate strategy).

## **Methodology**

To meet the objectives of the research a mixed-mode data collection approach has been used comprising both qualitative and quantitative elements. The three different strands of research are as follows:

### **Quantitative**

- online survey with 300 people (circa 10 minutes)
- telephone survey with 50 people (circa 10 minutes)

### **Qualitative**

- tele-depth interview with 10 people (circa 30 minutes)

## **Quantitative Research Findings**

### **Participant Demographics**

Almost two thirds of participants (63%) were disabled or had some impairment which meant they would require assistance on public transport, whilst just over a third (37%) were carers. From the perspective of both the participant and the carer the main disability was mobility impairment (75% vs 69%). Almost half of the participants (48%) were aged 50 to 64 years of age. Over six in ten of the participants were female (62%). The main aids used were walking sticks (43%). Almost a third of respondents

were either not working or not looking for work (29%). The majority of respondents had an annual household income of less than £300 per week (60%).

## **Travel Behaviours**

The dominant public transport mode was the bus (51%), followed by the train (42%). Bus was more likely to be recorded as a main mode of transport for respondents from urban locations than respondents from rural locations (41% vs 28%). Almost a third (31%) stated that they did not use public transport, of which nearly three-fifths (58%) would like to use public transport if more help were available and just under half of these (46%) would use public transport at least one or more times a week if more support were available.

Respondents in rural locations were significantly more likely than those in urban locations to indicate that they do not use any form of public transport (41% vs 28%). Of the rail users, less than three in ten (28%) had a disabled person's railcard, with lone passengers significantly more likely to have one than accompanied passengers (52% vs 22%). Most use public transport to travel short distances (71%), with respondents living in urban areas significantly more likely than those in rural areas to use public transport to travel short distances (75% vs 53%). The majority of those who responded on behalf of themselves mainly travelled with a friend, relative or partner (64%).

## **Perceptions of Travel**

For those who didn't use public transport the main reasons were a lack of confidence in service provision in different areas, difficulties in accessing the train/bus and tickets being too expensive, each stated by 40% of participants. Of those who do use public transport 39% stated that they did not need any further assistance, whilst the range of responses regarding extra assistance related mainly to practical assistance whilst at the station or on the train rather than planning or booking requirements.

## **Travelling by Train**

The majority of respondents were either satisfied (36%) or neutral (35%) regarding travel by rail (17% very satisfied). The main reasons for satisfaction with rail travel included that the staff were helpful/well looked after (32%) and that they were happy with the service and never had any problems (26%). In terms of the 'enabling' factors for rail travel a key factor was ticket price particularly for those who do use the train. The cost of transport is also a key factor deterring those who do not use public transport from using it, with four in ten stating that they did not use public transport because the tickets were too expensive.

Rail passengers were more likely to ask for or to receive a range of assistance than users of other forms of public transport with the greatest discrepancies cited for assistance with getting luggage on/off (49% vs 21%) and to store luggage (34% vs 11%).

The main change that would encourage non-rail users to travel by rail were cheaper rail tickets (39%). When considering if adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, the majority were 'unsure' (38%) or said 'no' (35%). Whilst a minority

of respondents felt that adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, those who travel by train were most likely to feel that adequate help is available. Carers were significantly more likely to say adequate help is provided by station staff than disabled respondents.

In terms of the quality of information provided to help use the network three in ten think the provision is good (23%) or very good (7%), with train users significantly more likely than non public transport users to indicate that the quality of information provided to help disabled passengers to use the rail network was good (37% vs 9%) or very good (13% vs 3%). Five out of seven respondents (71%) felt they were not treated less favourably or received a poorer service because of their disability or impairment, or that of the person they cared for.

## **Awareness of Rights and Assistance Schemes**

When asked which groups of people have specific rights to help to enable them to use trains, the majority (72%) selected 'Disabled people' as such a group. Just under four-fifths (77%) hadn't read, seen or heard of any information from the train companies about disabled passenger rights of assistance, whilst just under a third of respondents were unsure what such rights would cover (31%). In terms of what the rights should cover there is a desire for rights to cover more aspects of rail travel. Fewer than one in ten were aware of any specific scheme to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train (9%). When the 'Passenger Assist' service was explained to respondents, fewer than one in ten had heard of it before (9%). Almost nine in ten of those who hadn't used Passenger Assist, said either they think they would use it in the future (39%) or perhaps would use it in the future (49%).

## **Qualitative Research Findings**

### **Background**

For several of the respondents we spoke to there were many practical considerations that either prohibited or limited their use of public transport such as the lack of ramps in order to independently board or alight from public transport and at-station lifts and carriages being too narrow to permit access by certain wheelchairs. However, perhaps more disconcerting was the perception from some respondents of a lack of consideration for disabled passengers that was seen to emanate both from staff and from the public alike. For the respondent with a visual impairment a lack of accessible information due to both the positioning and the lack of suitable contrast on the information boards made their public transport journey much more difficult. For the respondent with mental health issues the barriers to travel were more internal than external, and thus they made it harder for the disabled passenger to be identified as needing assistance.

Many of these respondents have to rely on taxis as they cannot access cheaper public transport. For many if they had to choose between travel by bus or train, more would choose train travel. The main perceived benefits of train travel were that they could pre-book a seat, there is more space and it is felt to be overall a more pleasant experience.

Some of these disabled passengers said they feel that they need to thoroughly research their travel arrangements and to understand the potential contingencies that could be in

place before they start their journey. They do not feel that they can necessarily rely on station staff to have the necessary expertise to know what to do should an emergency situation arise.

### **Most Recent Journey**

What was apparent from respondents recounting their last journey made by public transport was the sheer effort involved for some disabled passengers in both the planning and the making of their journeys. For many disabled passengers their ability to leave their own home is severely curtailed due to their disability and these journeys by public transport provide a much needed lifeline to the outside world. Some of these passengers mused that in an ideal world disabled passengers would be able to navigate public transport seamlessly and independently but they feel that is currently not feasible.

### **Reasons for Not Using Public Transport**

Those passengers in wheelchairs were most likely not to use public transport. For one of the wheelchair users whilst he did use the train occasionally he could not use the bus in Liverpool as the buses were not adapted for wheelchair users. Another wheelchair user didn't travel by bus or train as he lived in a rural area and neither the buses nor the train, including the train station, had been adapted for wheelchair users. His perception is that whilst he might like to take a train, the train stations he wished to travel to would not be adapted to facilitate this.

### **Awareness of Rights and Passenger Assist**

There was fairly limited awareness of the rights of disabled passengers travelling by public transport and also of the availability of Passenger Assist. The reaction to the concept of Passenger Assist was mainly very positive with respondents declaring that it was a good idea as long as it worked so that disabled passengers were met and guided as requested. There was disagreement as to whether Passenger Assist currently worked well with two respondents recounting tales of it not working, whilst another respondent felt very positively that it had worked. Further promotion of Passenger Assist to disabled passengers is encouraged. One recommendation for improving the Passenger Assist offering was that it should ensure that the disabled passenger is only left when they have advised the member of staff that they no longer need their assistance.

### **Observations on Rail Travel Assistance**

Several disabled passengers stated that they would like to have the opportunity to be able to travel independently and not have to rely on others for assistance throughout their journey. To this effect, there is a clear need to ensure that all public transport across the country is disabled friendly and accessible to all. There was some sense that rail staff members should be more proactive towards disabled passengers, positively asking them whether they needed any support during their rail journey. Furthermore, some felt that there should also be more staff training so that staff members can better predict and support the needs of disabled passengers. In order to ensure that railway stations are as accessible as possible for disabled passengers it would be helpful to have well signposted and wide lifts that can accommodate larger wheelchairs and are available on all floors. Furthermore the train carriages should be able to easily

accommodate wheelchairs. Having trains and buses that are flush with the platforms and pavements would be helpful. On the train it would be useful to have designated seats always available for disabled passengers that can either be booked in advance or are held for disabled passengers should they decide to spontaneously travel. Another factor that can deter disabled passengers from travelling is simply their own perception that the journey by public transport is not possible. Better information advising disabled passengers whether the journey is indeed feasible by public transport is required. There was a request that the travel costs for the carer by train should be offered at a reduced rate to encourage travel.



# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background**

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) is the independent safety and economic regulator of the railways in Britain.

The ORR's vision for successful railways in Britain includes:

- no workforce and industry caused passenger fatalities, with an ever-decreasing overall safety risk
- equivalent satisfaction levels amongst passengers and freight customers to the best in railways and other forms of transport
- efficiency on a par to that achieved by the best comparable railways in the world.

The ORR's principal roles are to:

- secure the industry's delivery of its regulatory obligations
- help the mainline railway meet the long-term challenges
- enhance and keep under review the industry's framework of incentives, accountabilities and competition.

As part of their remit, the ORR wished to undertake some research in order to provide clear quantitative and qualitative analysis of disabled people's (both current rail travellers and potential rail travellers) current knowledge of their rights when travelling by rail.

## **1.2 Objectives**

The objectives of this research are to:

- Provide ORR with intelligence about disabled people's (both travellers and potential travellers) current awareness of train companies' obligations to provide access to the rail network to inform policy work and activities.
- To enable ORR to establish a benchmark against which they can measure the impact of their activities to test whether they are effectively delivering improvements for customers (the second prong of ORR's corporate strategy).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

To meet the objectives of the research a mixed-mode data collection approach has been used comprising both qualitative and quantitative elements. The three different strands of research are as follows:

#### **Quantitative**

- online survey with 300 people (circa 10 minutes)
- telephone survey with 50 people (circa 10 minutes)

#### **Qualitative**

- tele-depth interview with 10 people (circa 30 minutes)

### **2.2 Approach**

The research was conducted with people across England, Scotland and Wales who have some kind of disability or impairment which means they would require assistance if travelling on public transport. Carers were also invited to take part. Participants did not have to be users of public transport as it was important to capture reasons why public transport wasn't used.

The online respondents were recruited through a panel company, Research Now, who targeted people to take part. The telephone respondents were recruited using 'Random Digit Dialling' telephone sample.

No strict quotas other than the requirement to have a disability or impairment (or be a carer of a person with a disability or impairment) were placed on those who took part in the research, preferring instead to keep an open approach.

Those taking part in a tele-depth interview were recruited from those who completed a survey and expressed an interest in taking part in more detailed research. A range of people with different types of disability and carers were invited to complete a tele-depth interview in order to explore as many issues as possible. Those who completed an interview were given an incentive of £20 in the form of a cheque.

Fieldwork took place between 29 January and 17 February 2014. The questionnaire and discussion guide used for the research are shown in Appendix A and B respectively. For brevity, only the online version of the survey is included. The telephone version is identical apart from minor amendments to assist clarity and/or flow as the data was collected by telephone rather than online.

## **3. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following section details the key findings of the quantitative research (online and telephone survey). Results for both the online and telephone survey have been combined. The qualitative research findings are shown in section 4.

### **3.2 Participant Demographics**

#### **Overall Findings**

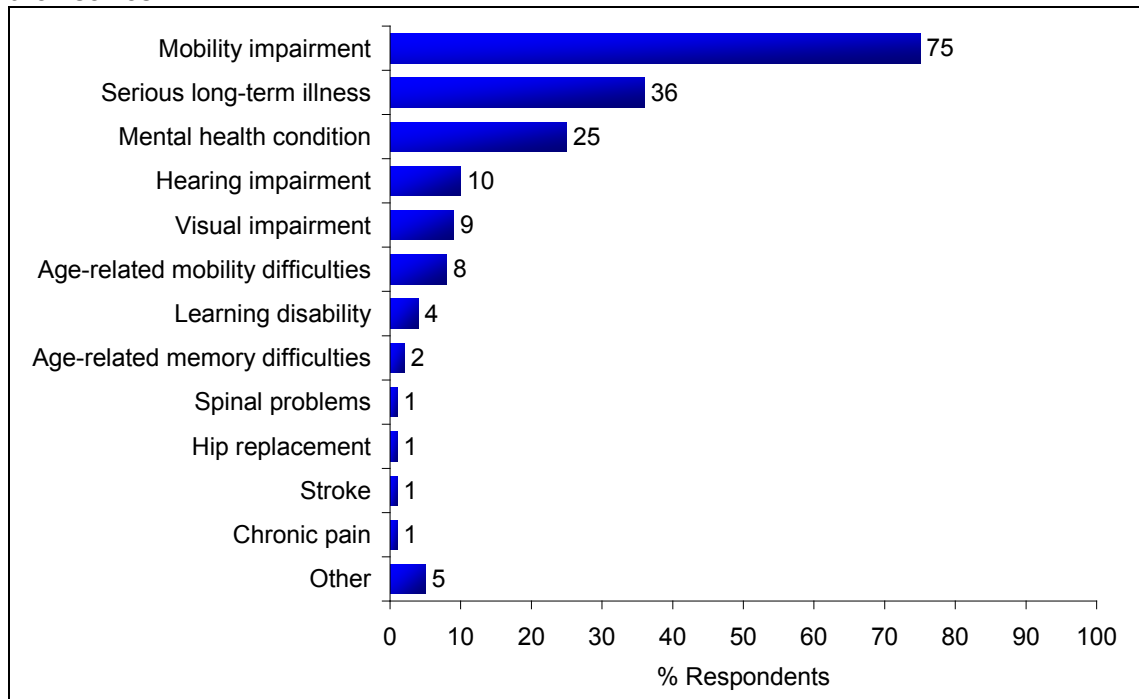
Almost two thirds of participants (63%) were disabled or had some impairment which meant they would require assistance on public transport, whilst just over a third (37%) were carers. From the perspective of both the participant and the carer the main disability was mobility impairment (75% vs 69%). Almost half of the participants (48%) were aged 50 to 64 years of age. Over six in ten of the participants were female (62%). The main aids used were walking sticks (43%). Almost a third of respondents were either not working or not looking for work (29%). The majority of respondents had an annual household income of less than £300 per week (60%).

#### **Detailed Findings**

350 people took part in the survey with 300 of these completing an online survey and 50 completing a telephone survey. Participants were spread across the three nations with 84% living in England, 5% in Wales and 11% in Scotland. Three quarters of participants lived in an urban area (76%), with the remainder (24%) living in a rural area.

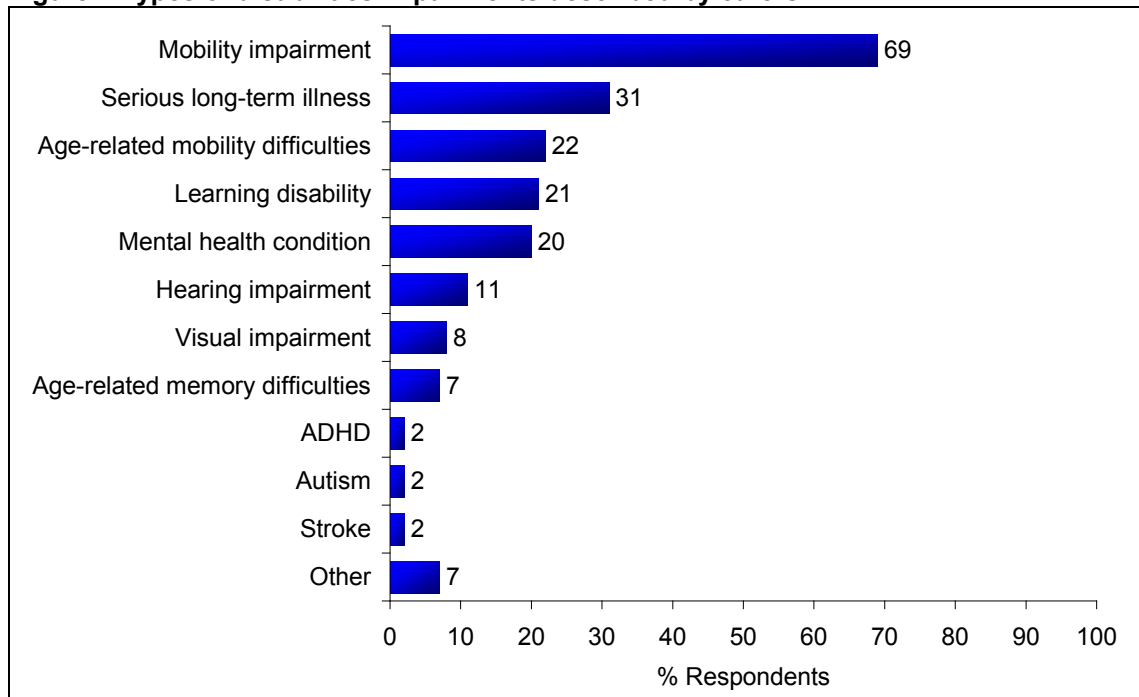
63% of participants were disabled or had some impairment which meant they would require assistance on public transport. 37% were carers. Participants had, or cared for people with a range of disabilities or impairments as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

**Figure 1 Types of disabilities/impairments described by those responding on behalf of themselves**



Base= All with a disability/impairment (222). Multi-code question.

**Figure 2 Types of disabilities/impairments described by carers**

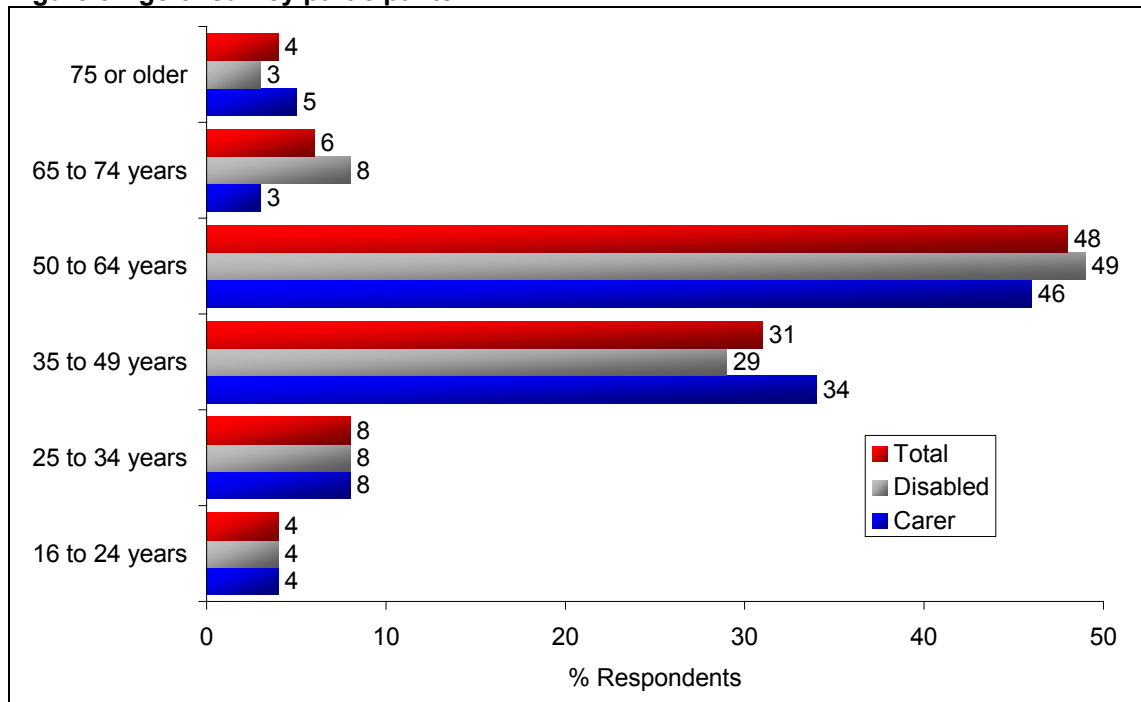


Base=All carers (128). Multi-code question.

Just under two-fifths of carers (38%) assisted their partner/spouse with just over a quarter assisting a relative (28%) and just under a quarter assisted their child/children (23%). 5% each helped a friend or a client.

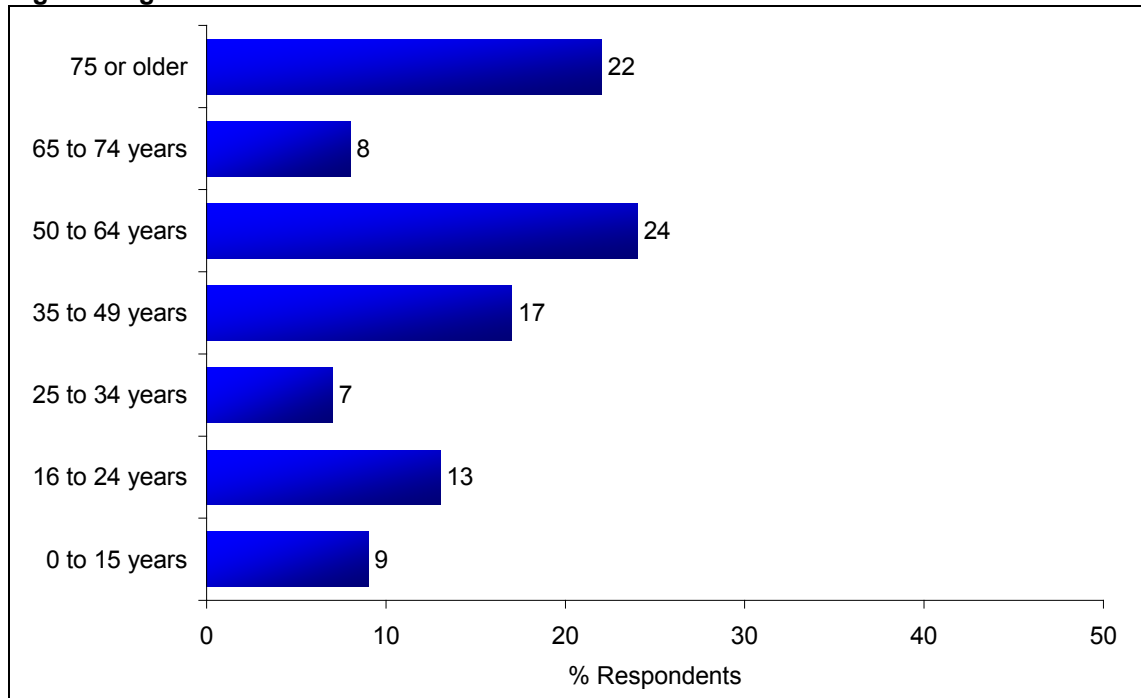
Participants from a range of age groups took part in the survey.

**Figure 3 Age of survey participants**



Base=All respondents (350); Disabled (222); Carers (128).

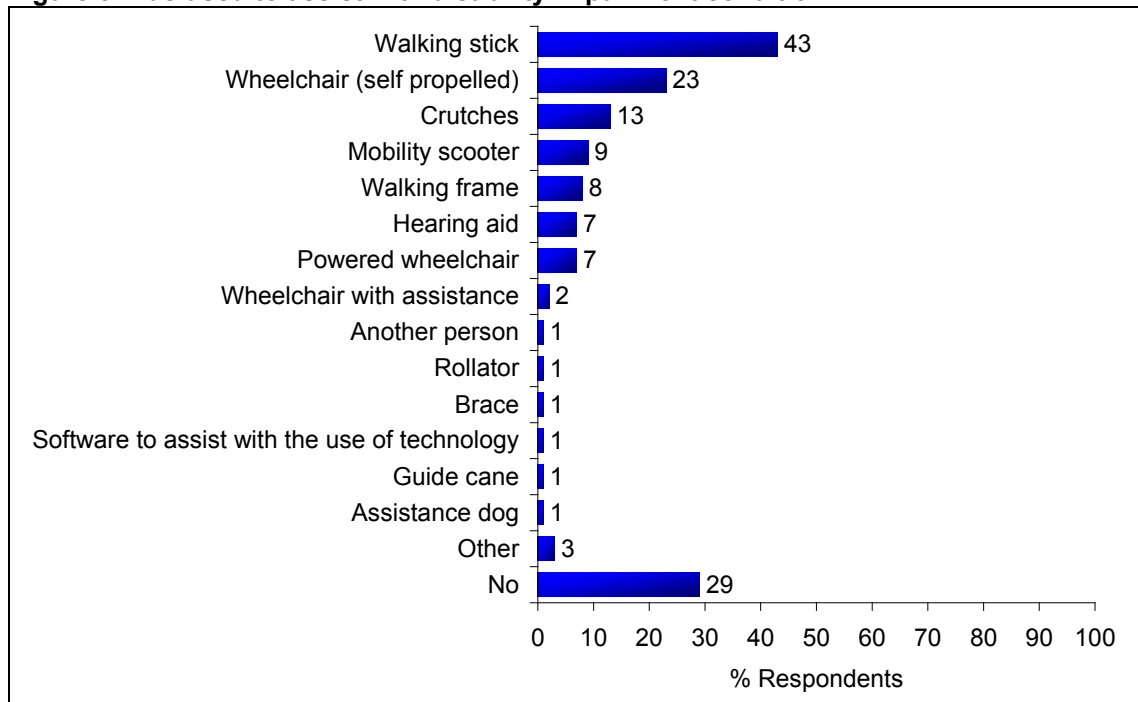
**Figure 4 Age of those who have assistance from a carer**



Base=Carers (128).

Participants used a range of aids to assist with travel. These are listed below in Figure 5.

**Figure 5 Aids used to assist with disability/impairment/condition**



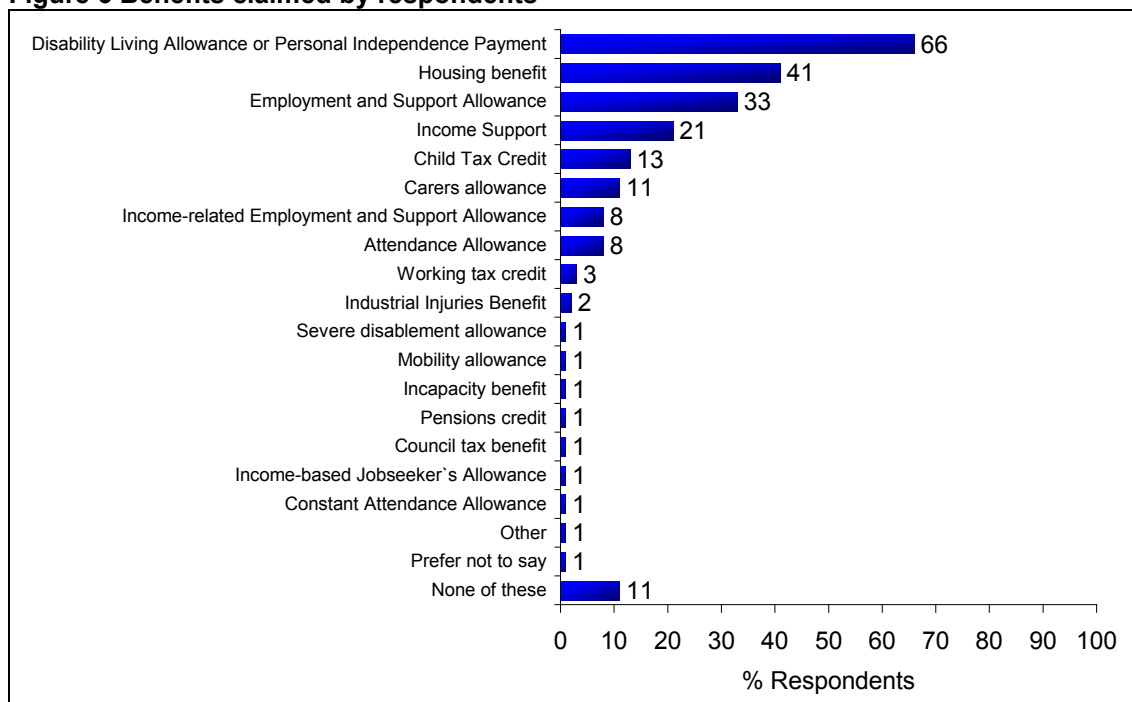
*Base=All respondents (350). Multi-code question.*

Overall, 38% of respondents were male and 62% were female. The majority of respondents were either not working and not looking for work (29%), retired (17%) or looking after the home (17%).

The majority of respondents had an annual household income of less than £300 per week (60%). Just under a quarter (23%) were in the £301-£1000 bracket and only 2% had an income higher than this. Note, 15% declined to respond.

Respondents claimed a range of benefits which are shown below in Figure 6.

**Figure 6 Benefits claimed by respondents**



Base=All respondents (350). Multi-code question.

Respondents were categorised under the following socio-economic groupings:

**Table 1 Socio-economic groupings (SEG)**

Main mode of transport	Proportion
<b>A</b> Higher managerial, administrative and professional	1%
<b>B</b> Intermediate managerial, administrative and professional	7%
<b>C1</b> Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative and professional	13%
<b>C2</b> Skilled manual workers	11%
<b>D</b> Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	9%
<b>E</b> State pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only	59%
<b>Not stated</b>	1%

Base=All respondents (350)

### 3.3 Travel Behaviours

#### Overall Findings

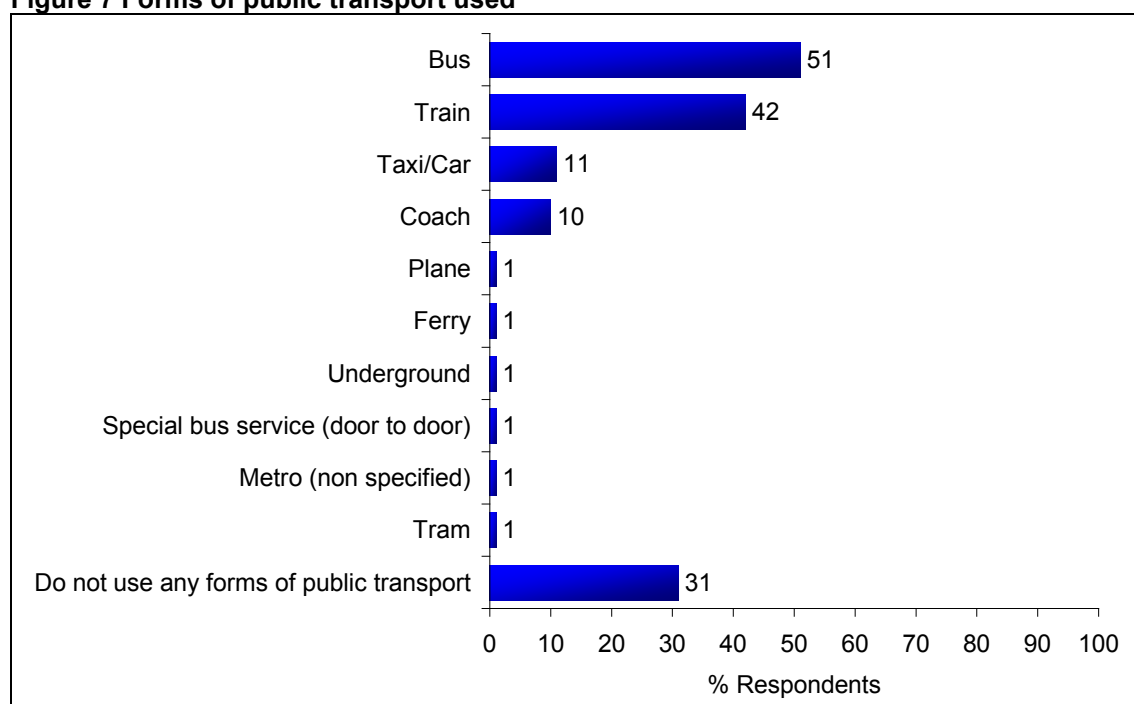
The dominant public transport mode was the bus (51%), followed by the train (42%). Bus was more likely to be recorded as a main mode of transport for respondents from urban locations than respondents from rural locations (41% vs 28%). Almost a third (31%) stated that they did not use public transport, of which nearly three-fifths (58%) would like to use public transport if more help were available and just under half of these (46%) would use public transport at least one or more times a week if more support were available. Respondents in rural locations were significantly more likely

than those in urban locations to indicate that they do not use any form of public transport (41% vs 28%). Of the rail users, less than three in ten (28%) had a disabled person's railcard, with lone passengers significantly more likely to have one than accompanied passengers (52% vs 22%). Most use public transport to travel short distances (71%), with respondents living in urban areas significantly more likely than those in rural areas to use public transport to travel short distances (75% vs 53%). The majority of those who responded on behalf of themselves mainly travelled with a friend, relative or partner (64%).

## Detailed Findings

Participants used a variety of public transport, shown in Figure 7. The main forms of transport used are listed in Table 2.

**Figure 7 Forms of public transport used**



*Base=All respondents (350). Multi-code question.*

**Table 2 Main mode of transport used (without non-users)**

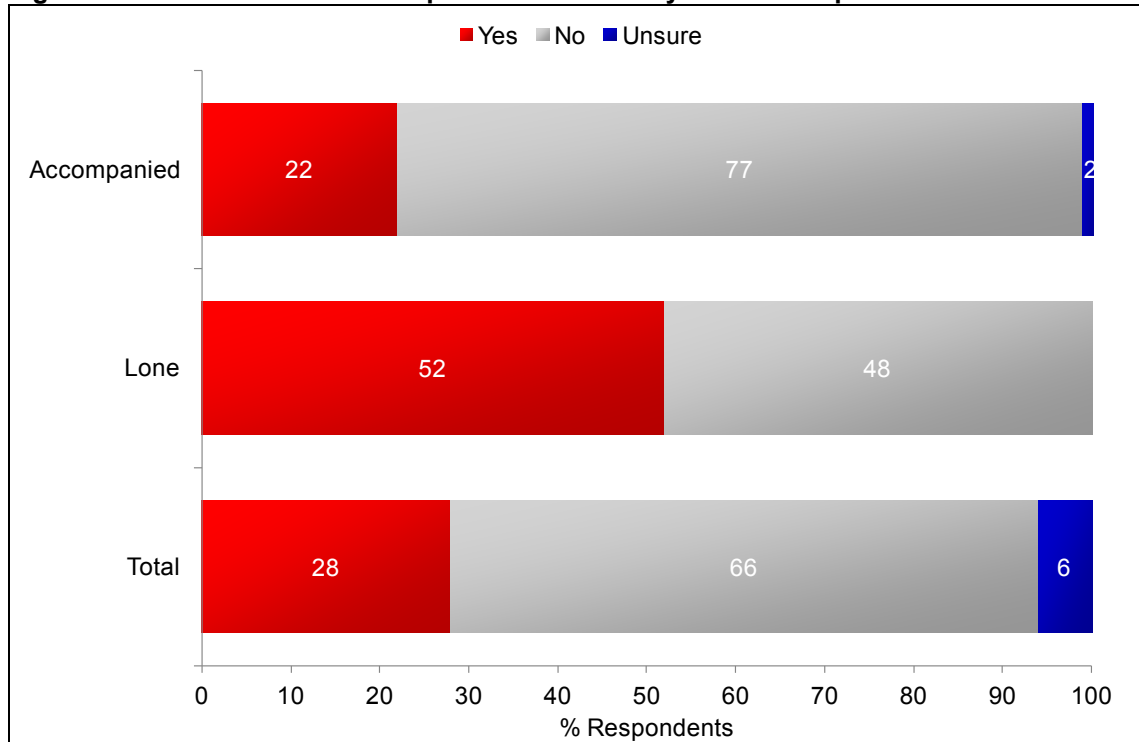
Main mode of transport	Proportion
Train	20%
Bus	55%
Taxi/car	8%
Coach	1%
Other	8%
Use all equally	8%

*Base=All except those who do not use public transport (240)*

Of those who used rail, 28% had a disabled person's railcard, 66% did not and 6% were unsure. Lone passengers were significantly more likely to have a disabled person's railcard than accompanied passengers (52% vs 22%).



**Figure 8: Whether have disabled person's railcard by lone/accompanied travel**

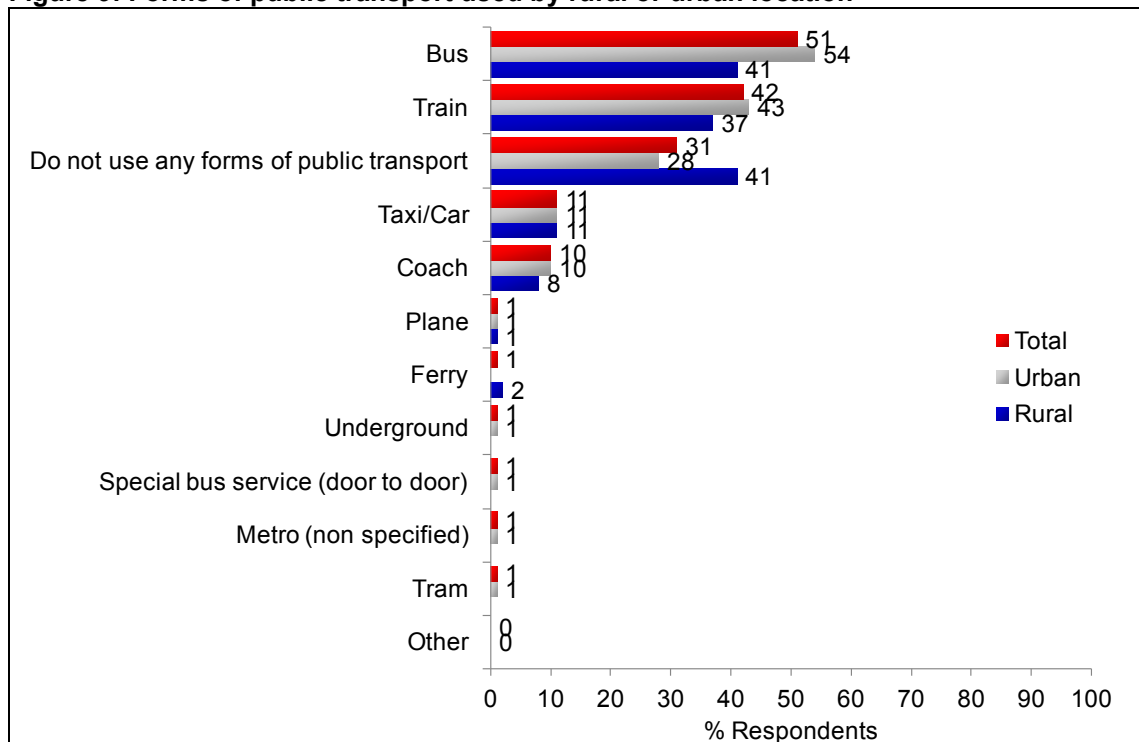


Base=Those who travel by train (146); lone (25\*), accompanied (60)

\*NB low base size

Respondents in rural locations were significantly more likely than those in urban locations to indicate that they do not use any form of public transport (41% vs 28%).

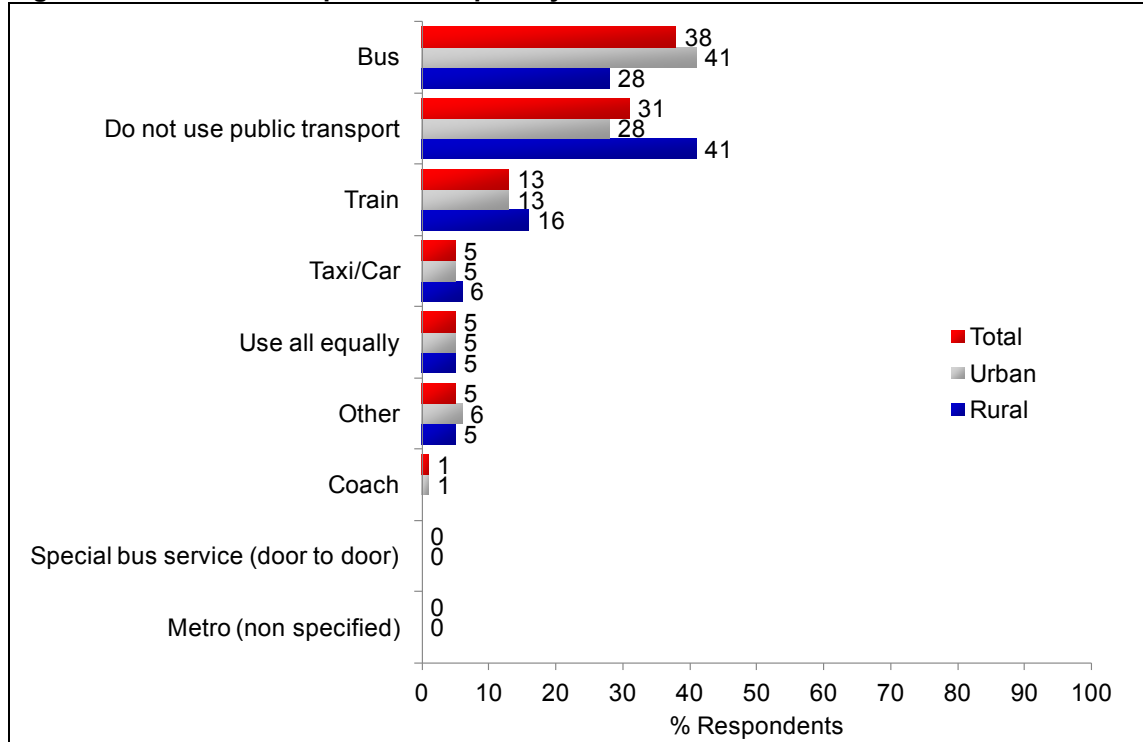
**Figure 9: Forms of public transport used by rural or urban location**



Base=All respondents (350). Multi-code question

In terms of the main mode of transport bus was significantly more likely to be recorded as a main mode of transport for respondents from urban locations than respondents from rural locations (41% vs 28%).

**Figure 10: Main mode of public transport by rural/urban location**

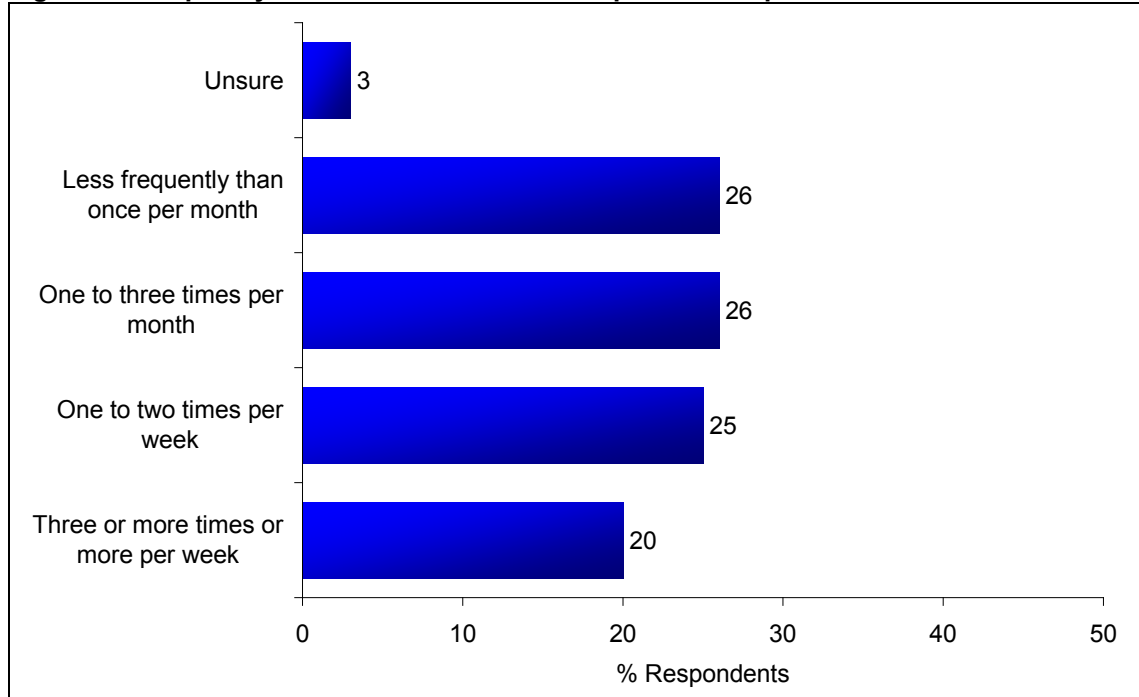


Base=All respondents (350).

However, just under one-third did not use any form of public transport (31%). Of those who didn't use public transport, nearly three-fifths would like to use public transport if more help were available (58%).

Of those who travel by public transport, respondents displayed a range of travel frequency behaviours.

**Figure 11 Frequency of travel of those who use public transport**

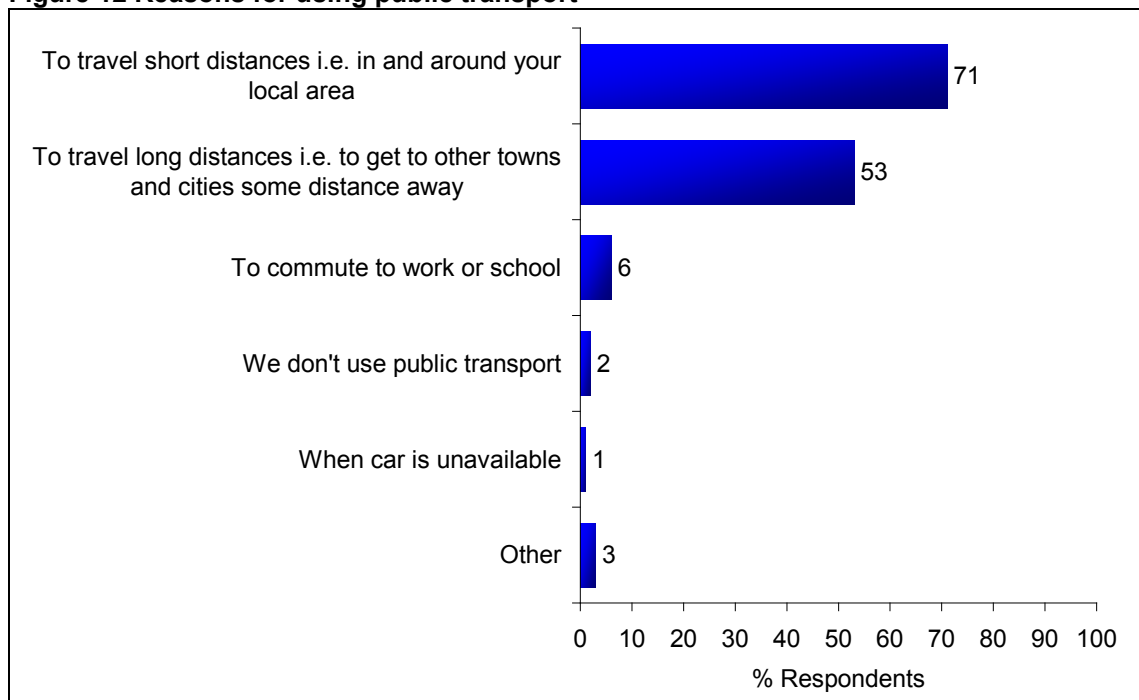


*Base=Those who use public transport (240).*

Of those who do not use public transport but would like to, just under half (46%) said they would use public transport at least one or more times a week if more support were available.

Most use public transport to travel short distances (71%) but just over half also travel longer distances using public transport (53%). 6% commute to work or school, with 6% citing various other responses.

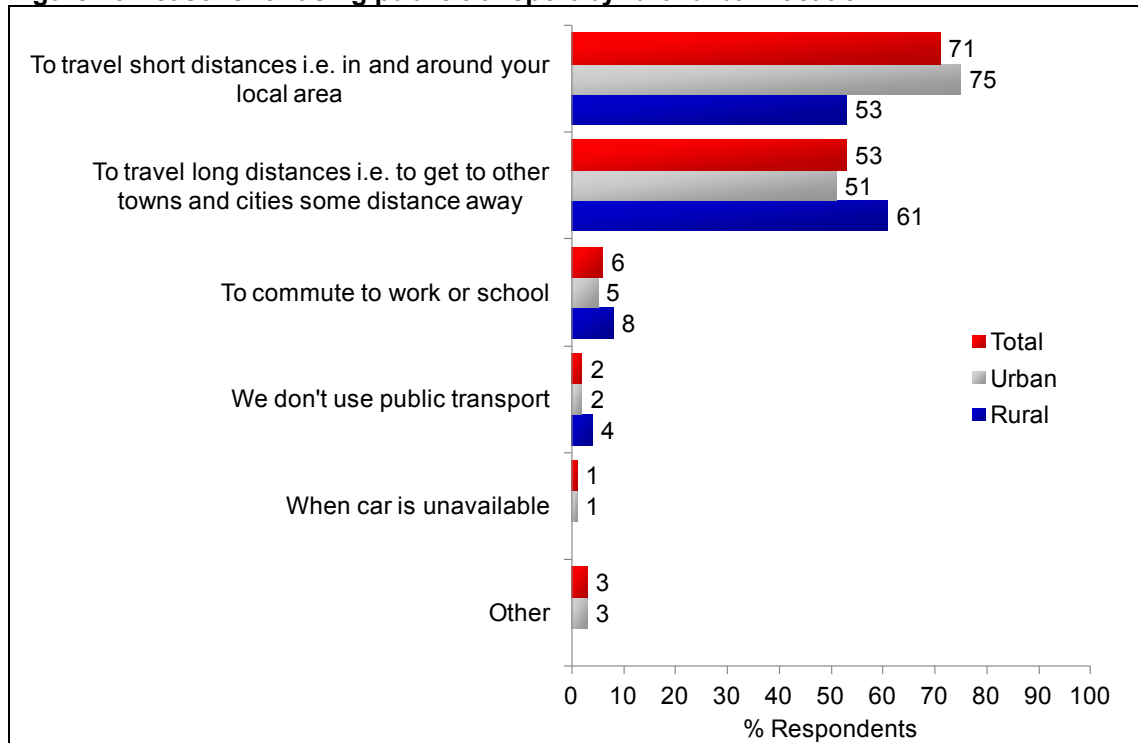
**Figure 12 Reasons for using public transport**



*Base=Those who use public transport (240). Multi-code question.*

Respondents living in urban areas were significantly more likely than those in rural areas to indicate that they used public transport to travel short distances (75% vs 53%).

**Figure 13 Reasons for using public transport by rural/urban location**



Base=Those who use public transport (240): Urban (191) and Rural (49). Multi-code question.

The majority of those who responded on behalf of themselves mainly travelled with a friend, relative or partner (64%). Just over a quarter travelled by themselves (27%) and just under one in ten (9%) travelled with a carer or personal assistant.

### 3.4 Perceptions of Travel

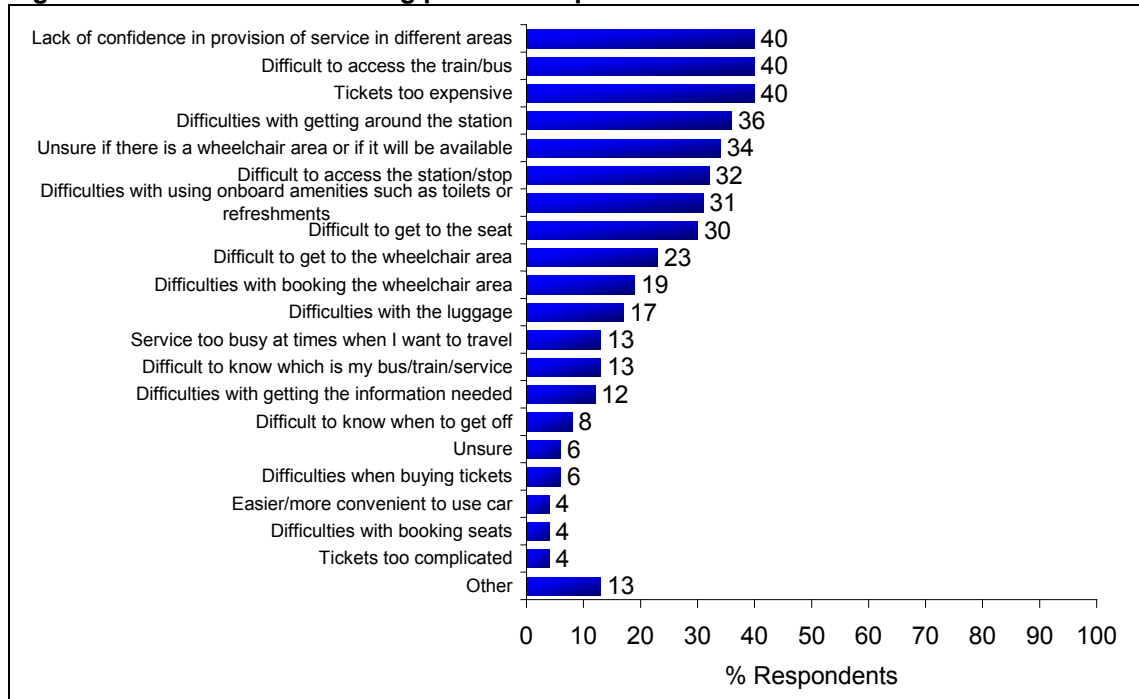
#### Overall Findings

For those who didn't use public transport the main reasons responses were a lack of confidence in service provision in different areas, difficulties in accessing the train/bus and tickets being too expensive, each stated by 40% of participants. Of those who do use public transport 39% stated that they did not need any further assistance, whilst the range of responses regarding extra assistance related mainly to practical assistance whilst at the station or on the train rather than planning or booking requirements.

#### Detailed Findings

Of those who didn't use public transport, a range of responses were given when asked what discourages such use. The top three responses related to lack of confidence in service provision in different areas, difficulties in accessing the train/bus and tickets being too expensive. Figure 14 outlines the different reasons given.

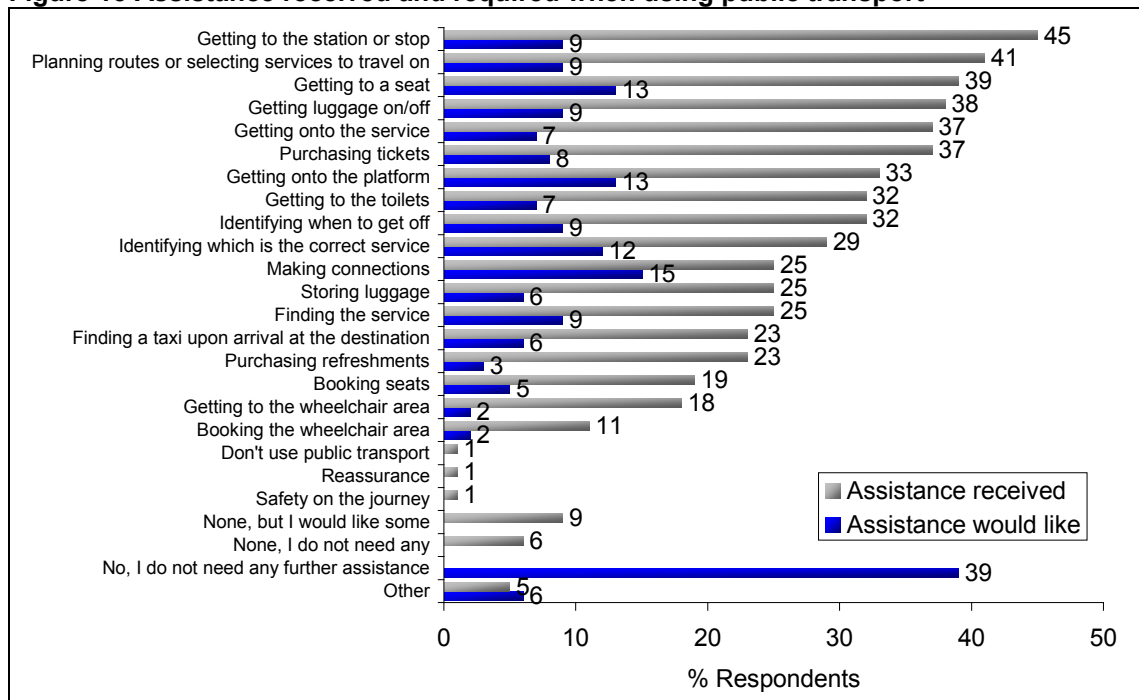
**Figure 14 Reasons for not using public transport**



Base=Those who don't use public transport (109). Multi-code question.

Those who did use public transport were asked what assistance they did receive, then, if they were responding on behalf of themselves (ie not a carer) and did need assistance, they were then asked if would like further assistance. Figure 15 shows these two responses side-by-side.

**Figure 15 Assistance received and required when using public transport**



Assistance received base=Those who use public transport (240). Multi-code question.

Assistance would like base=Those who use public transport and would like further assistance (128)  
Multi-code question.

Whilst nearly two-fifths said they did not need any further assistance, a range of responses were given regarding extra assistance – mainly surrounding being at the station or on the train rather than planning or booking requirements.

## **3.5 Travelling by Train**

### **Overall Findings**

The majority of respondents were either satisfied (36%) or neutral (35%) regarding travel by rail (17% very satisfied). The main reasons for satisfaction with rail travel included that the staff were helpful/well looked after (32%) and that they were happy with the service and never had any problems (26%). In terms of the ‘enabling’ factors for rail travel a key factor was ticket price particularly for those who do use the train. The cost of transport is also a key factor deterring those who do not use public transport from using it, with four in ten stating that they did not use public transport because the tickets were too expensive.

Rail passengers were more likely to ask for or to receive a range of assistance than users of other forms of public transport with the greatest discrepancies cited for assistance with getting luggage on/off (49% vs 21%) and to store luggage (34% vs 11%).

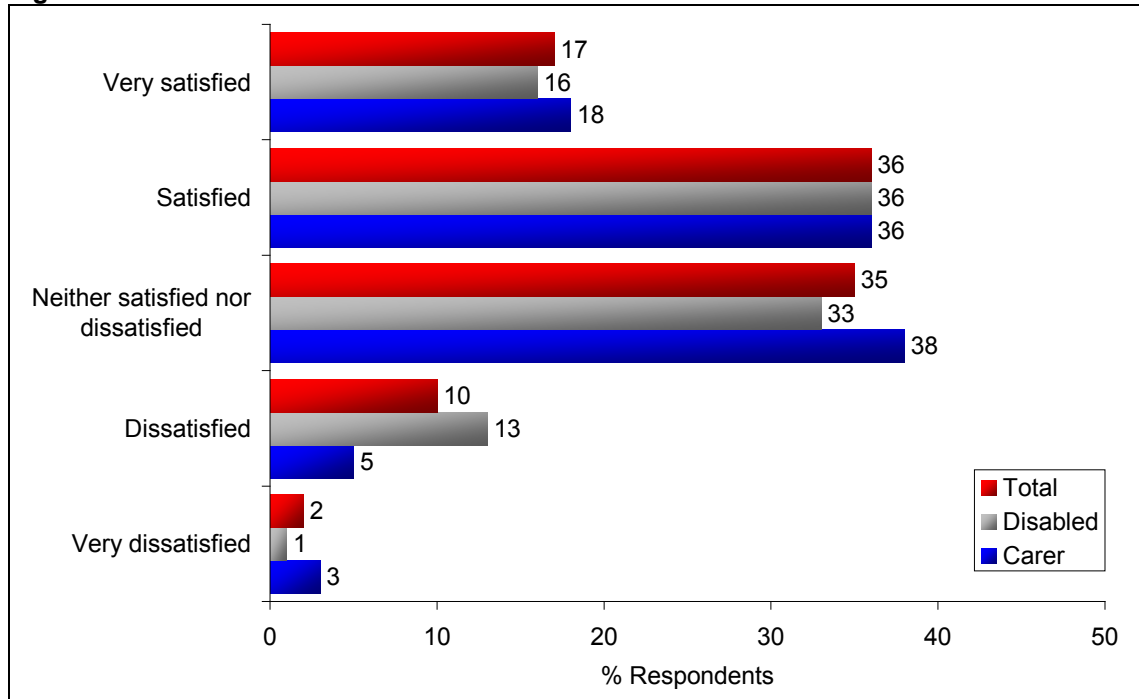
The main change that would encourage non-rail users to travel by rail were cheaper rail tickets (39%). When considering if adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, the majority were ‘unsure’ (38%) or said ‘no’ (35%). Whilst a minority of respondents felt that adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, those who travel by train were most likely to feel that adequate help is available. Carers were significantly more likely to say adequate help is provided by station staff than disabled respondents.

In terms of the quality of information provided to help use the network three in ten think the provision is good (23%) or very good (7%), with train users significantly more likely than non-public transport users to indicate that the quality of information provided to help disabled passengers to use the rail network was good (37% vs 9%) or very good (13% vs 3%). Five out of seven respondents (71%) felt they were not treated less favourably or received a poorer service because of their disability or impairment, or that of the person they cared for.

### **Detailed Findings**

Respondents who travelled by train were asked a series of questions about using rail as a form of transport. The initial question asked how satisfied they were as a form of transport. The majority of respondents were satisfied or neutral about travelling by rail. Figure 16 shows responses segmented by the different respondent types. As you can see, opinions between those with a disability and carers are broadly similar.

**Figure 16 Satisfaction with rail travel**



*Total base= All respondents who travel by train (146)*

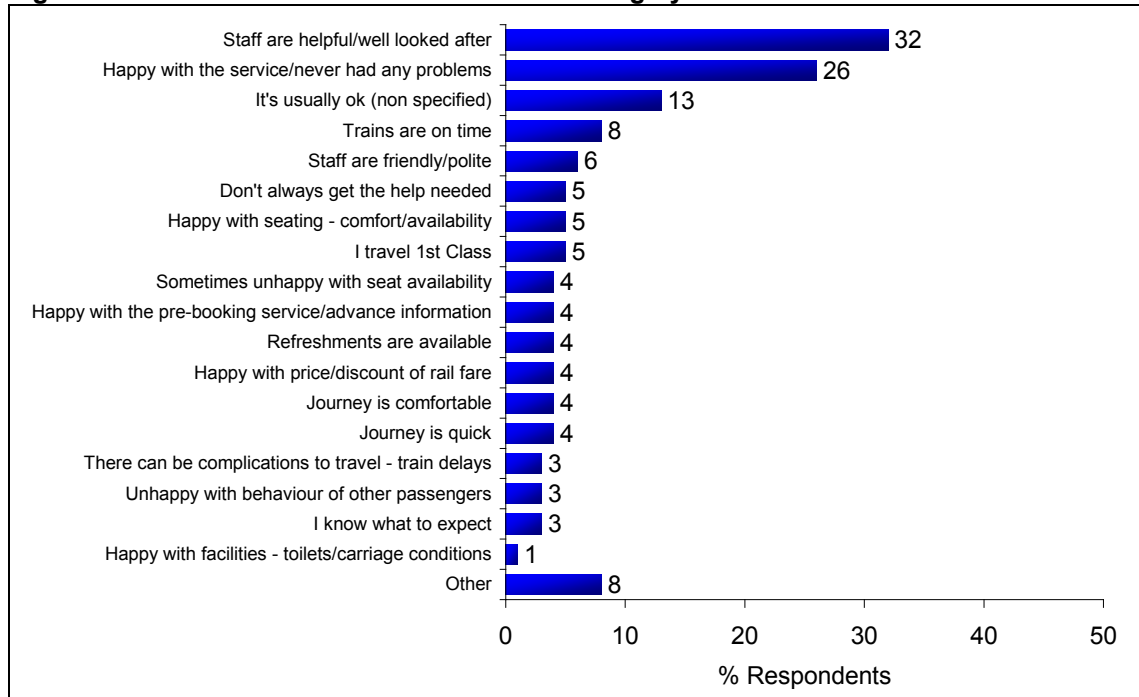
*Disabled base= Disabled respondents who travel by train (85)*

*Carer base= Carers who assist on the train (61)*

Respondents were also asked why they felt as they did about rail travel. A small minority expressed dissatisfaction and explained this was due to reasons such as: booked/disabled seats taken up; not enough seats available; bad experience booking assistance - staff shortage/staff unaware; overcrowding; problems getting wheelchair onto train; no help getting on/off - including with luggage; gap between train and platform.

However, the majority of those who travelled by train were satisfied. Figure 17 describes the reasons given for satisfaction. The key reasons surround the support provided by staff and satisfaction with the experience in the past.

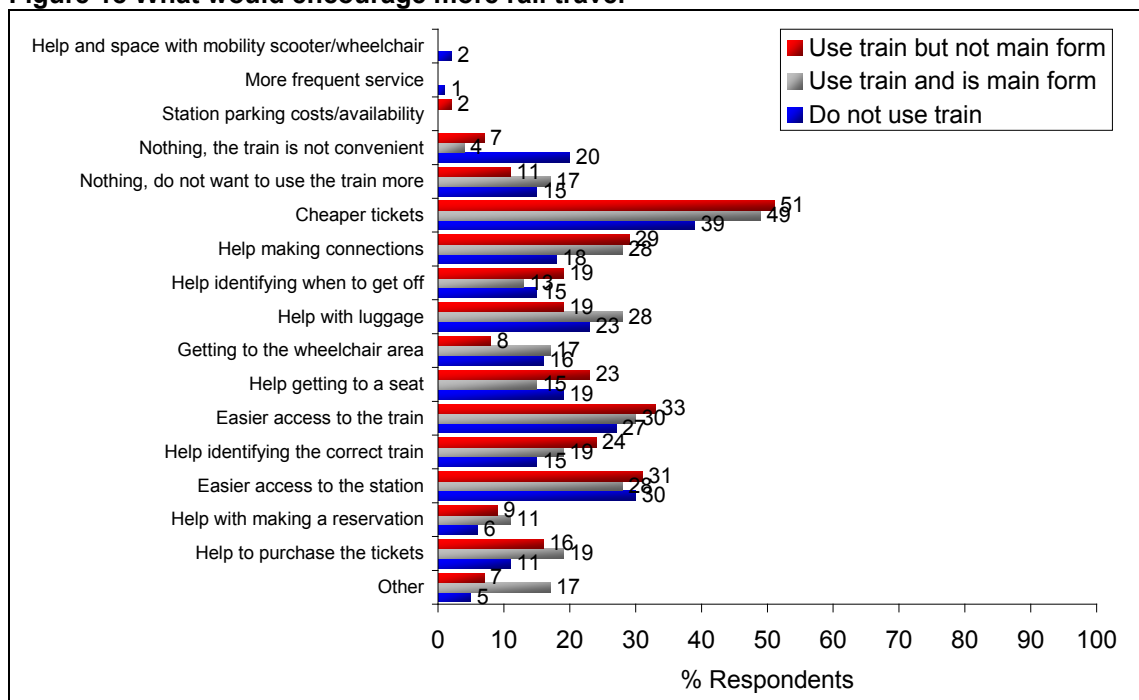
**Figure 17 Reasons for satisfaction when travelling by train**



Base= Those who are satisfied or very satisfied when travelling by train (78). Multi-code question.

In order to gain an understanding of the ‘enabling’ factors for rail travel, respondents were asked what would encourage them to use rail more. Figure 18 shows the responses given for three different types of respondent: those who use rail but it isn’t the main form of transport used, those who use rail and it is the main form of transport use, and those who do not use rail at all. Ticket price is a key factor for many, particularly those who do use the train.

**Figure 18 What would encourage more rail travel**



Use train but not main form base=99 (Multi-code question.)

Use train and is main form base=47 (Multi-code question.)

Do not use train base=204 (Multi-code question.)



The cost of transport appears to be a key factor deterring non-users from using public transport. Four in ten of those who do not use public transport stated that what discouraged them from using public transport was that the tickets were too expensive (see Figure 14).

Rail passengers were more likely to ask for or to receive a range of assistance than users of other forms of public transport as indicated by the blue shading on the following table. In particular the greatest discrepancy between what rail users are most likely to get or give in terms of assistance with compared with other public transport users were assistance with getting luggage on/off (49% vs 21%) and to store luggage (34% vs 11%).

**Table 3: The forms of assistance received/given to passengers travelling by rail and on other public transport**

	Total	Train user	Other user
	%	%	%
Getting to the station or stop	45	53	34
Planning routes or selecting services to travel on	41	45	35
Getting to a seat	39	46	29
Getting luggage on/off	38	49	21
Purchasing tickets	37	43	27
Getting onto the service	37	45	23
Getting onto the platform	33	45	14
Identifying when to get off	32	37	24
Getting to the toilets	32	36	26
Identifying which is the correct service	29	34	21
Finding the service	25	29	17
Storing luggage	25	34	11
Making connections	25	33	14
Purchasing refreshments	23	28	16
Finding a taxi upon arrival at the destination	23	30	13
Booking seats	19	26	7
Getting to the wheelchair area	18	20	15
Booking the wheelchair area	11	14	6
None, but I would like some	9	8	12
None, I do not need any	6	6	6
Other...please provide details	5	4	7
Safety on the journey	1	1	1
Reassurance	1	2	
Don't use public transport	1		3
<b>Base</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>94</b>

In terms of the further assistance that rail passengers and other public transport passengers might like to receive when travelling the findings were similar across rail and other public transport users. Almost four in ten (39%) indicated that they did not need further assistance, which was slightly higher for other public transport users than rail users (44% vs 36%).

**Table 4: The forms of assistance passengers travelling by rail and on other public transport might like to receive**

	Total	Train user	Other user
	%	%	%
No, I do not need any further assistance	39	36	44
Making connections	15	17	12
Getting onto the platform	13	13	13
Getting to a seat	13	13	13
Identifying which is the correct service	12	12	12
Planning routes or selecting services to travel on	9	7	13
Getting to the station or stop	9	5	13
Finding the service	9	9	8
Getting luggage on/off	9	8	10
Identifying when to get off	9	9	10
Purchasing tickets	8	7	10
Getting onto the service	7	5	10
Getting to the toilets	7	7	8
Storing luggage	6	8	4
Finding a taxi upon arrival at the destination	6	7	6
Booking seats	5	3	10
Purchasing refreshments	3	3	4
Booking the wheelchair area	2	3	2
Getting to the wheelchair area	2	1	2
Other	6	5	8
<b>Base</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>52</b>

Once again the main change that would encourage non-rail users to travel by rail were cheaper rail tickets, which although more likely to be stated by non users of public transport than public transport users, this was not a significant difference (44% vs 33%). Non-users of public transport were significantly more likely than other public transport users to state that easier access to the train (36% vs 16%), help with their luggage (28% vs 16%) and getting to the wheelchair area (22% vs 10%) would act as motivators to travel. Conversely, other users of public transport were significantly more likely than non-users to say that nothing would encourage them to use the train as the train is not convenient (28% vs 14%).

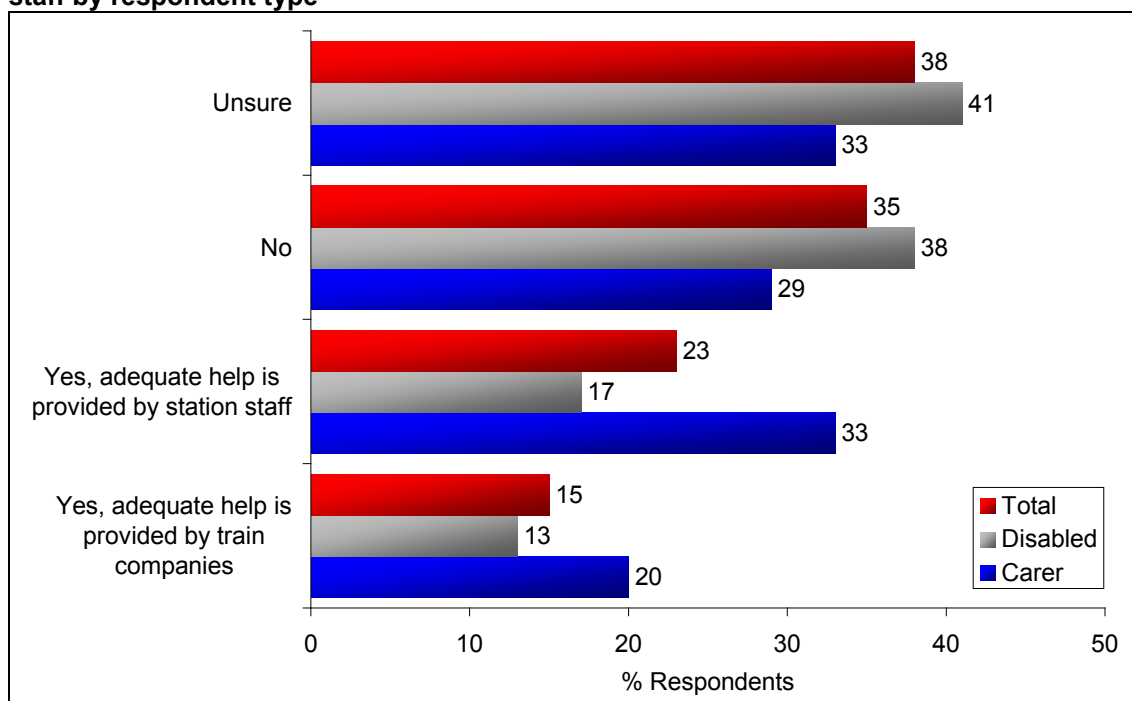
**Table 5: What would encourage non-rail users to travel by rail**

	Total	Other user	Non user
	%	%	%
Cheaper tickets	39	33	44
Easier access to the station	30	26	35
Easier access to the train	27	16	36
Help with luggage	23	16	28
Nothing, the train is not convenient	20	28	14
Help getting to a seat	19	14	24
Help making connections	18	13	22
Getting to the wheelchair area	16	10	22
Help identifying the	15	16	15

correct train			
Help identifying when to get off	15	16	15
Nothing, do not want to use the train	15	14	15
Help to purchase the tickets	11	15	8
Help with making a reservation	6	9	5
Other...please provide details	5	4	5
Help and space with mobility scooter/wheelchair	2	2	2
More frequent service	1	1	1
<b>Base</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>110</b>

When considering if adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, the majority were 'unsure' or said 'no'. Carers were significantly more likely to say adequate help is provided by station staff than disabled respondents.

**Figure 19 Views on provision of adequate assistance by train companies and station staff by respondent type**



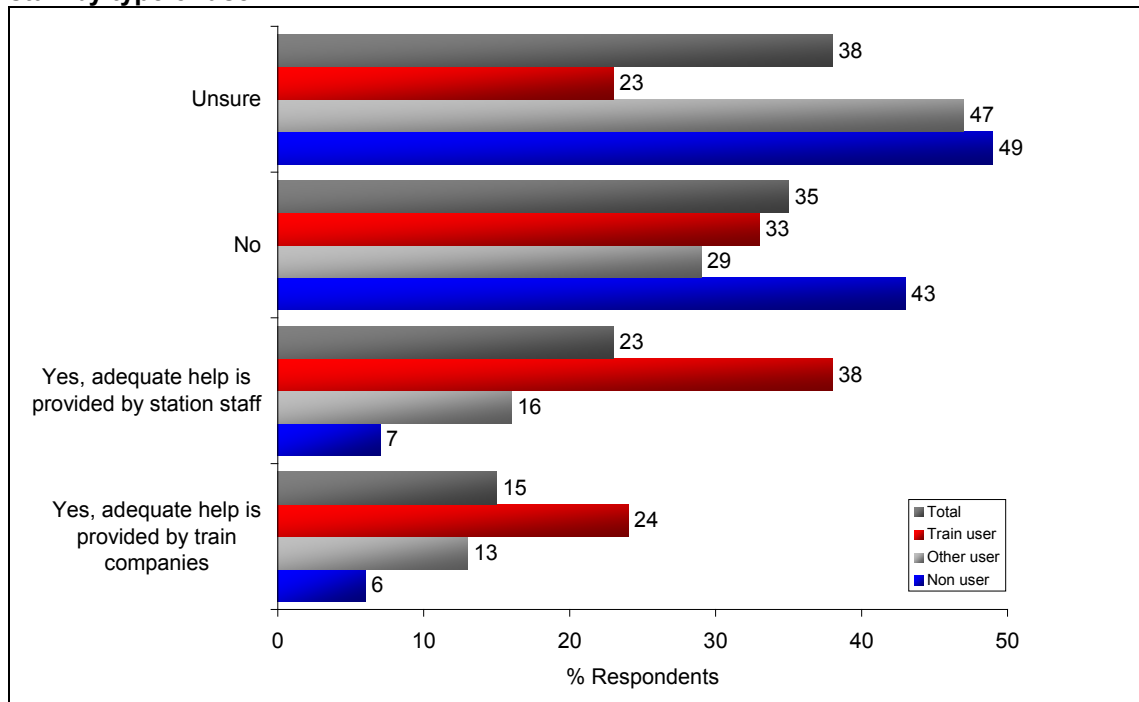
Base=All respondents (350); Disabled (222); Carers (128).

Multi-code question.

Whilst a minority of respondents felt that adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff, those who travel by train were most likely to feel that adequate help is available.

Train users were significantly more likely than non public transport users to state that adequate help is provided by train companies (24% vs 6%). Furthermore, train users were also significantly more likely than both other public transport users and non public transport users to state that adequate help is provided by station staff (38% vs 16% vs 7%).

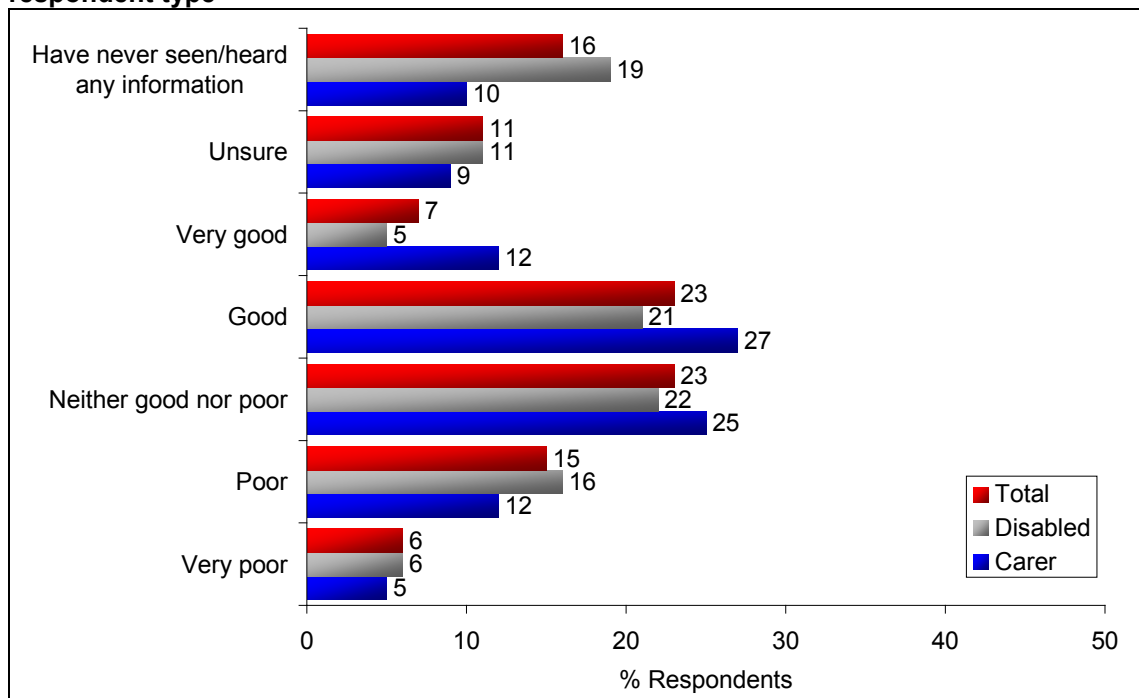
**Figure 20: Views on provision of adequate assistance by train companies and station staff by type of user**



Base=All respondents (350); Train user (146); Other user (94) and Non-user (110).  
Multi-code question

Respondents were also asked their views on the quality of information provided to help use the network. This could also include information online or given over the telephone. Figure 21 outlines the responses given. The majority are 'neutral' or think the provision is good or very good. A proportion has never seen any information, but it must be noted that non-rail travellers also answered this question.

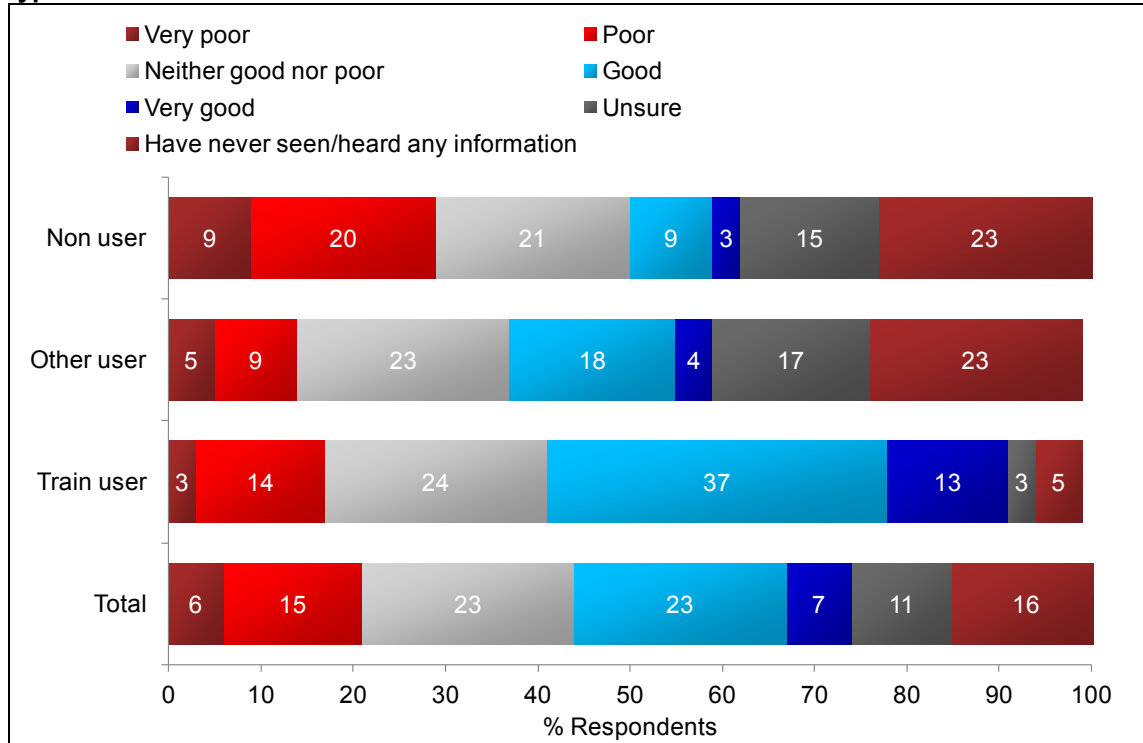
**Figure 21 Views on the quality of information provided to help use the rail network by respondent type**



Base=All respondents (350); Disabled (222); Carers (128).

Train users were significantly more likely than non public transport users to indicate that the quality of information provided to help disabled passengers to use the rail network was both good (37% vs 9%) or very good (13% vs 3%). Furthermore, train users were also significantly more likely than other public transport users to indicate that the information was good (37% vs 18%).

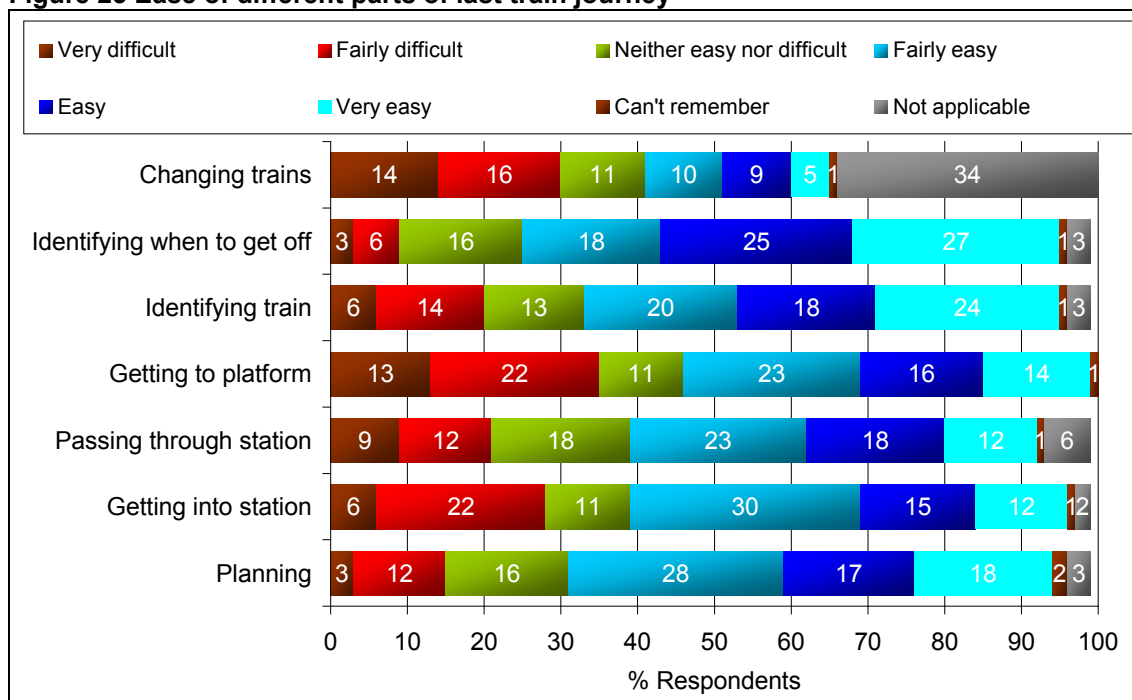
**Figure 22: Views on the quality of information provided to help use the rail network by type of user**



Base=All respondents (350); Train user (146); Other user (94) and Non-user (110).

Those who travelled by train were asked to rate how easy or difficult different parts of their last journey was. Figure 23 outlines the responses given. The three key areas which appear to cause most difficulty are getting into the station, getting to the platform and changing trains. This corresponds with the areas cited by respondents as areas they would like further assistance with.

**Figure 23 Ease of different parts of last train journey**



Base=Those who use the train (146).

When respondents were asked if they felt they were treated less favourably or received a poorer service because of their disability or impairment, or that of the person they cared for, five out of seven (71%) said ‘No’. Of those who thought they were treated less favourably, most thought this occurred during the train journey (19%) whereas only 5% thought this was during the booking process (6% couldn’t remember).

### 3.6 Awareness of Rights and Assistance Schemes

#### Overall Findings

When asked which groups of people have specific rights to help to enable them to use trains, the majority (72%) selected ‘Disabled people’ as such a group. Just under four-fifths (77%) hadn’t read, seen or heard of any information from the train companies about disabled passenger rights of assistance, whilst just under a third of respondents were unsure what such rights would cover (31%). In terms of what the rights should cover there is a desire for rights to cover more aspects of rail travel. Fewer than one in ten were aware of any specific scheme to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train (9%). When the ‘Passenger Assist’ service was explained to respondents, fewer than one in ten had heard of it before (9%). Almost nine in ten of those who hadn’t heard or had heard, but didn’t travel by train, said either they think they would use it in the future (39%) or perhaps would use it in the future (49%).

#### Detailed Findings

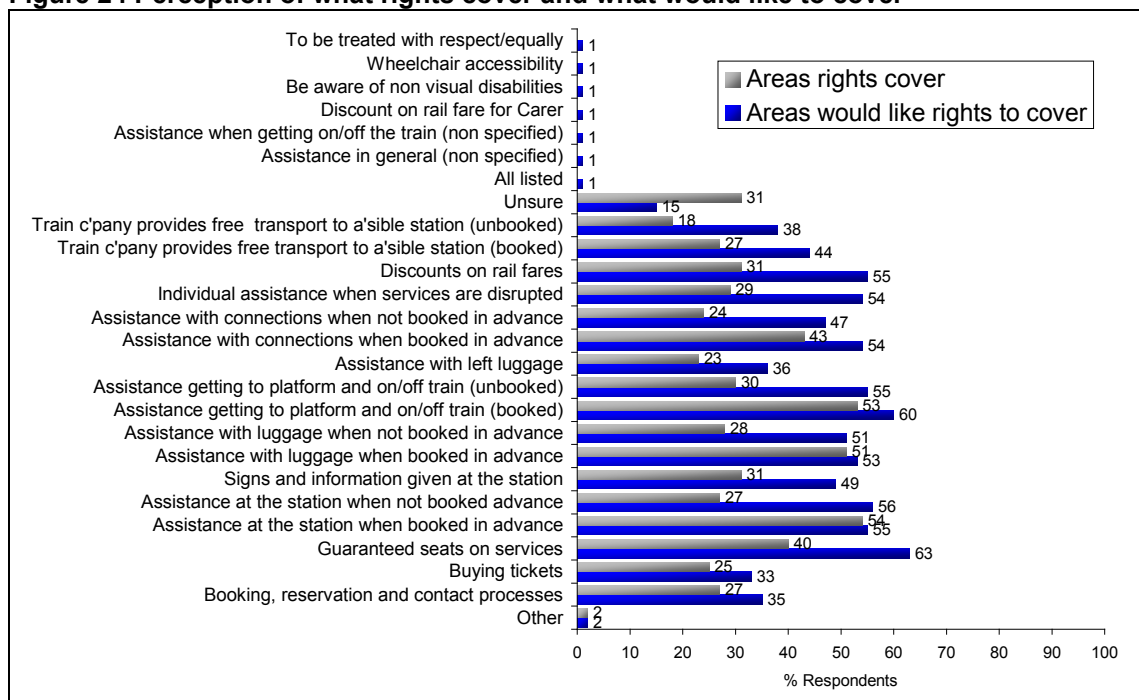
Participants were asked a series of questions about disabled passenger rights in order to establish awareness of the concept of such rights, and awareness of schemes to provide assistance, specifically ‘Passenger Assist’.

When asked which groups of people have specific rights to help to enable them to use trains, the majority (72%) selected ‘Disabled people’ as one group of people to have such rights. However, one in five (20%) were unsure and one in twenty (5%) thought no-one had such rights.

Just under four-fifths (77%) hadn’t read, seen or heard of any information from the train companies about disabled passenger rights of assistance (10% had and 13% couldn’t remember).

Just under a third of respondents were unsure what such rights would cover (31%). Figure 24 describes what respondents thought the rights cover alongside what they would like them to cover. Broadly speaking, there is a desire for rights to cover more aspects of rail travel.

**Figure 24 Perception of what rights cover and what would like to cover**



Base=All respondents (350). Multi-code question.

In terms of the areas that the rights of assistance do cover rural passengers were significantly more likely than urban passengers to state that the following was covered namely:

- assistance at the station when booked in advance (64% vs 51%)
- assistance getting to the platform and on/off train when booked in advance (63% vs 49%)
- assistance with luggage when booked in advance (64% vs 47%)
- guaranteed seats on services (51% vs 37%)
- individual assistance when services are disrupted (41% vs 25%).

In terms of the areas that the rights of assistance should cover urban passengers were significantly more likely than rural passengers to state that the following should be covered namely:

- guaranteed seats on services (66% vs 52%)
- signs and information given at the station (53% vs 37%).

**Table 6: The areas that the rights of assistance cover and would like to cover by rural/urban location**

	The rights of assistance cover			The rights of assistance should cover		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Assistance at the station when booked in advance	54	51	64	55	55	55
Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when booked in advance	53	49	63	60	60	61
Assistance with luggage when booked in advance	51	47	64	53	52	57
Assistance with connections when booked in advance	43	41	52	54	55	52
Guaranteed seats on services	40	37	51	63	66	52
Signs and information given at the station	31	31	33	49	53	37
Discounts on rail fares	31	31	34	55	55	53
Unsure	31	34	19	15	15	16
Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when not booked in advance	30	30	33	55	57	49
Individual assistance when services are disrupted	29	25	41	54	54	54
Assistance with luggage when not booked in advance	28	27	33	51	53	47
Booking, reservation and contact processes	27	26	33	35	37	31
Assistance at the station when not booked advance	27	25	34	56	57	51
That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when booked in advance	27	25	33	44	45	42
Buying tickets	25	25	28	33	35	27
Assistance with connections when not booked in advance	24	23	27	47	49	37
Assistance with left luggage	23	22	28	36	39	29
That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when not booked in advance	18	18	18	38	39	37
Other	2	1	4	2	1	4
<b>Base</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>83</b>



In terms of the areas that the rights of assistance cover accompanied passengers were significantly more likely than lone passengers to state that assistance with luggage when booked in advance was covered (54% vs 34%)

In terms of the areas that the rights of assistance should cover accompanied passengers were significantly more likely than lone passengers to state that the following should be covered:

- Assistance at the station when not booked advance (62% vs 42%)
- Assistance with luggage when booked in advance (57% vs 34%)

**Table 7: The areas that the rights of assistance cover and would like to cover by lone/accompanied travel**

	The rights of assistance cover			The rights of assistance should cover		
	Total	Lone	Accompanied	Total	Lone	Accompanied
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Booking, reservation and contact processes	27	21	32	35	34	38
Buying tickets	25	18	29	33	34	33
Guaranteed seats on services	40	42	40	63	50	68
Assistance at the station when booked in advance	54	47	53	55	45	60
Assistance at the station when not booked advance	27	24	25	56	42	62
Signs and information given at the station	31	18	35	49	42	54
Assistance with luggage when booked in advance	51	34	54	53	34	57
Assistance with luggage when not booked in advance	28	18	30	51	47	53
Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when booked in advance	53	39	53	60	47	59
Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when not booked in advance	30	34	26	55	50	53
Assistance with left luggage	23	29	23	36	42	35
Assistance with connections when booked in advance	43	32	45	54	53	58
Assistance with connections when not booked in advance	24	24	24	47	39	50
Individual assistance when services are disrupted	29	18	33	54	53	56
Discounts on rail fares	31	26	38	55	53	63
That the train company will provide free	27	16	32	44	32	48

accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when booked in advance						
That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when not booked in advance	18	18	17	38	32	33
Other	2	5	3	2		2
Unsure	31	32	29	15	13	13
All of the above	-	-	-	1		1
Assistance in general (non specified)	-	-	-	1	3	
Assistance when getting on/off the train (non specified)	-	-	-	1		1
Assistance with luggage (non specified)	-	-	-	0		
Discount on rail fare for Carer	-	-	-	1		
Be aware of non visual disabilities	-	-	-	1		2
Wheelchair accessibility	-	-	-	1		1
To be treated with respect/equally	-	-	-	1		
<b>Base</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>105</b>

Just under one in ten were aware of any specific scheme to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train (9%). 70% were unaware and 17% were unsure. Of those who were aware (n=33) only 1 person specifically identified the name as 'Passenger Assist', instead, most referred to the disability railcard scheme.

When the 'Passenger Assist' service was explained to respondents, just under one in ten had heard of it before (9%). Of those who had heard of it and travelled by train (n=20), fourteen people had used the service before. Seven people thought the service was 'Very good', one thought 'Good'. Three thought the service was 'Neither good nor poor'. However, three thought the service was 'Poor'.

Of those who hadn't used Passenger Assist, just under nine in ten said either they think they would use it in the future (39%) or perhaps would use it in the future (49%). Only 11% said 'No' outright. This clearly demonstrates the desire to use such as service.

## 4. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

The following section details the key findings of the qualitative research (tele-depth interviews). The quantitative research findings are shown in section 3.

### 4.2 Participant Demographics

A range of people were invited to take part in the qualitative research in order to explore a wide range of the issues involved when travelling on public transport as a disabled person or as a carer of a disabled person. To this end, a purposive sample structure was used with various quotas on gender, type of disability, travel behaviour, and location to ensure that we spoke to different ‘types’ of people.

Respondents were drawn from those who expressed an interest in taking part in further research when they completed the quantitative survey.

**Table 8 Sample structure of tele-depth participants**

Sample Features		
6 Males	4 Females	
3 Used Passenger Assist	7 Not used Passenger Assist	
4 Heard of Passenger Assist	6 Not heard of Passenger Assist	
8 With disability/impairment	2 Carers	
7 Live in urban location	3 Live in rural location	
7 Use rail	6 Used other forms also	
4 aged 35-49	5 aged 50-64	1 aged 65-74
2 SEG C1	2 SEG C2	6 SEG E

Those who took part in a tele-depth interview had a range of disabilities/impairments or cared for someone who did. Table 9 outlines the respondents’ range of disabilities. Note, some participants had more than one disability/impairment.

**Table 9 Types of disability/impairments of participants and those cared for**

Types of disability/impairment (Multi-code response)
1 Age-related mobility difficulties
7 Mobility impairment
2 Visual impairment
1 Hearing impairment
3 Mental health condition
6 Serious long term illness

### 4.3 Background

#### Overall Findings

For several of the respondents we spoke to there were many practical considerations that either prohibited or limited their use of public transport such as the lack of ramps in order to independently board or alight from public transport and at-station lifts and carriages being too narrow to permit access by certain wheelchairs. However, perhaps more disconcerting was the perception from some respondents of a lack of consideration for disabled passengers that was seen to emanate both from staff and from

the public alike. For the respondent with a visual impairment a lack of accessible information due to both the positioning and the lack of suitable contrast on the information boards made their public transport journey much more difficult. For the respondent with mental health issues the barriers to travel were more internal than external, and thus they made it harder for the disabled passenger to be identified as needing assistance.

Many of these respondents have to rely on taxis as they cannot access cheaper public transport. For many if they had to choose between travel by bus or train, more would choose train travel. The main perceived benefits of train travel were that they could pre-book a seat, there is more space and it is felt to be overall a more pleasant experience.

Some of these disabled passengers said they feel that they need to thoroughly research their travel arrangements and to understand the potential contingencies that could be in place before they start their journey. They do not feel that they can necessarily rely on station staff to have the necessary expertise to know what to do should an emergency situation arise.

## Detailed Findings

The initial part of the discussion surrounded gathering background information about the person and their travel behaviour. These questions also sought to understand the impact of their disability on travel, especially on their use of public transport.

The majority of these respondents that we spoke to did not outwardly reject the notion of using public transport. Indeed many were current or recent, albeit limited, users of public transport.

Clearly for those respondents in wheelchairs or with mobility issues there were many practical considerations that either prohibited or limited their use of public transport such as the lack of ramps in order to independently board or alight from public transport. There were also issues associated specifically with train travel such as lifts and carriages being too narrow to permit access by certain wheelchairs.

*“Not all buses are easy access, most are, but if they’re not we can’t get the thing [wife’s wheelchair] on it.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

However, perhaps more concerning was the perception from some respondents of a lack of consideration for disabled passengers that was seen to emanate both from staff and from the public alike. There were several mentions from respondents of staff either ignoring them or failing to assist them. More typically respondents mentioned fellow passengers coming to their aid when they were experiencing problems rather than staff members.

*“The one I had trouble with was when there was a strike on with the tube. They said there would be people to help you get from Paddington to Kings Cross and there wasn’t. It was actually an ordinary member of the public that came to my aid. Yes. I was crying and a man noticed. He lived down there in London and showed me that there were still some tubes working.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

*“I’m on crutches, I’m carrying a bag. No one ever stops to help me. Members of the public have more than once but members of staff just look at you and carry on walking. I get very dizzy in big crowds, basically a panic attack, which is all part and parcel of MS. Members of staff see that you’re struggling and they just ignore you. If you ask for help they say they work for a different rail company. When you go the information centre you stand in a queue for half an hour and miss your train. When you get to the front of the queue you find the person giving out the information works for the same company as the person who just said they couldn’t help you, it’s weird.”*

(Male, MS)

There was a comment from two respondents about bus drivers being inconsiderate to them as they were felt to be slow to board the bus and the driver failed to wait until they were safely seated before moving off. There was a strong sense from some respondents that their disability was actively inconveniencing other passengers which further enhanced their reticence to use public transport.

*“I don’t travel anymore by public transport because I’ve got really bad arthritis and my husband has got MS. So it’s just more convenient to go in a car. It’s not easy on public transport...My husband is wheelchair bound and the buses with ramps are very few and far between. ... It’s a crutch that I walk with. I have 2 but I find that I trip myself up. Regarding the buses I would be too frightened because the drivers are just not considerate enough and don’t give you enough time to sit down. So I would just be too frightened to use it. I haven’t used a bus now for 2 or 3 years. But I did use a train last year (with work colleagues)”.*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“Most employees of travel companies aren’t interested in you, one or two are, but most are just interested in getting money off me as fast as they can. I try and get on the bus, you have to step up to get on the bus, and I have trouble doing that, and I get tutted at by the driver. He looks at his watch and stares at me as if to say hurry up. [I feel] very degraded. I feel like a third class citizen.”*

(Male, MS)

There was also the citing of incidents whereupon member of the public were felt to be annoyed with disabled passengers for delaying their journey as they took time to board or alight the public transport or to find a seat.

*“I would be very wary of doing it [travel by train] on my own and I’d have to go in plenty of time. ... I’m frightened if there’s a lot of people I won’t be able to get off or on the train fast enough. It’s not necessarily a problem with the providers but with the other passengers as well. They’re just inconsiderate and don’t care. I had one nearly knock me over trying to rush for the train.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

For the respondent with a visual impairment a lack of accessible information made their public transport journey much more difficult. The new departure boards were considered to be erected too high and have lettering that was too small for this

respondent to read. He reminisced about the days when there were monitors available on all platforms with appropriate colour discrimination between the text and the background making them easy to read.

*“I’m visually impaired and my main problem is being in the right place at the right time. Actually I can do the right time, that’s the easy bit, whether I’m in the right place or not is the difficult bit. I find the departure boards pretty much impossible to read since they changed them. They used to be old fashioned CRT monitors. There was one on every platform and they had bright lettering on a black background. I used to be able to get quite close to those and pretty much read them. Now they’re high up like an airport departure board, little LED orange lights on a black background. So now they’re too small and too far away for me to be able to read. So normally I have to find someone to help me, which is sometimes easy and sometimes it isn’t.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

For one respondent with mental health issues the barriers to travel were more internal than external, and thus they made it harder for the disabled passenger to be identified as needing assistance. For this respondent who feared crowds and noise, travelling by bus or train was considered ‘daunting’. Her main fear associated with travelling by bus was the feeling of being ‘squashed in’ by other passengers.

*“I tend to try and not use public transport because it’s too daunting, so I tend to walk to most places. I live in Newcastle upon Tyne so the hospital and that I can walk to. When I have used the train it has been to visit my son who is in the RAF .... So for that we had to travel into London and then back out. [It is daunting] because we go online and book a quiet carriage by the window otherwise I’ll get too stressed. The quiet carriages aren’t quiet carriages anymore as people are always on their phones making noise. So what you’re expecting to get on your journey you don’t get.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

For this respondent when she was using her disabled pass she keenly felt the stares from other passengers questioning what disability entitled her to a disabled bus pass.

*“I do [travel by bus] but very little, more than the train though to be honest. People are very noisy on the buses as well. Also when I use my [disabled] bus pass they look at me as if to say I don’t need any help. ..[Who looks?]The other passengers and sometimes the bus drivers. ..It is when I’m putting my card on the machine because my hand shakes. Other than that people don’t realise how awful it is for me to use the transport.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

For this respondent her fear of using the bus was so great that she would rather walk almost three miles to the hospital for her regular appointments rather than use the bus despite having a disabled bus pass permitting free travel for her and her carer.

*“It means I don’t use it [public transport] unless absolutely necessary. The train I use as there’s no other way I can get to my son. I can’t drive*

*due to the medication I'm on. I'd only use the bus if I don't physically feel up to walking to the hospital. But I'd rather walk the 5 miles there and back than get the bus. It's 2.7 miles each way and that takes 45 minutes each way to walk. I have someone who accompanies me and that's better because I have music on and I'm not squashed up or anything...I've been going to the hospital from the very end of September until last Friday. So for 4 months I've been 4 times a week and I've got the bus twice."*

(Female, mental health issues)

Many of these respondents have to attend regular hospital appointments and to enable them to travel there in a timely manner they drive or take taxis, thereby incurring additional expense. However, for these respondents the use of taxis is a necessary but expensive alternative to inaccessible public transport.

*"The taxi drivers around here are brilliant; I have no problem with them. They are very helpful. When they come to my address they knock on the door, help me to the car and carry my shopping into the house for me."*

(Male, MS)

*"If it's me on my own I'll jump on the bus. If I'm with my wife we have to use a black cab because of the wheelchair. "*

(Male, visually impaired)

*"[Least favourite public transport?] In terms of expense it would be the taxi. For difficulty of getting on and off it would be the bus, followed by the train due to having to book it and everything"*

(Female, mobility impaired)

*"It is restrictive [being disabled]. Public transport is out of the question. Which means I need to have carers and if I have an appointment and I have a carer that can't drive it means spending more money on taxis rather than less money on public transport. The carers come and go throughout the day. They try to arrange it so that I have a carer with a car. For instance my main carer can't drive. [Why are they your main carer?] It was my request because I get on really well with them. They are really good. I have memory problems and so when I have a medical appointment my main carer because I trust her so much she comes in with me to the doctor and can say things which I had forgotten about and later on she can remind me and make a note of what was said. I have had her for 9 months. I see her about 9 times a week"*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

These respondents were asked to indicate whether if they had to choose to travel by bus or train, which one they would choose. More would choose to travel by train than bus. The main benefits of train travel were that they could pre-book a seat, there is more space and it is felt to be overall a more pleasant experience.

*"From the local train station the actual accessibility to these trains is surprisingly good. It is electric and the doors open and the doors are pretty wide. Say you are in a wheelchair or had a zimmer of one of*

*theses walkers, it is relatively easy for people to get on and off. It is wide enough to get on and off.”*  
(Female carer, elderly parent)

*“[I would choose the] train because I can pre-book a seat where I want even though it’s noisy. You know exactly where you’re going and sitting; it’s your seat. Yes, it’s just that the quiet carriages aren’t quiet and the tube was on strike one time as well.”*  
(Female, mental health issues)

*“I like train. I find it a lot nicer. It’s quicker, there’s more space, and it’s just a lot more pleasant....But then again I have the same problem with buses; I can’t read the numbers on the front of them. If I’m going from my house to town I know where the bus stop is at the end of my road and I know the only bus that stops there is the one that goes to town. I go to town, know where to get off, get what I need. On the way back I know the one stop where only my bus stops, but if I get on somewhere else I struggle because I have to stop every bus. Until the buses get close to me I can’t see which service it is.”*  
(Male, visual impairment)

*“There is a rail station nearby. That is not too bad. It is a bit more user friendly for wheelchair users. There are people around, staff around to help as well. I can get on and off a train fairly easily. I can only do a few stops by train. I can’t get to the hospital by train. I main go to hospital and doctors. I can’t get to either by public transport. I get a taxi. That comes out of my pocket.”*  
(Male, Wheelchair user)

*“We use the local bus occasionally when the needs be. We have the use of our own car. But if we go to Plymouth then we will use the train. We have had to use coaches to go to the airport when going on holiday. [How is travel determined?] It all depends on how I feel on the day....I have had 2 hip replacements and last year I had a back operation. I am much more happy now to travel on the train if we are going to Gatwick or one of the London airport’s. I will drive if I am feeling up to it to Bristol or Exeter. I would rather get the train to Plymouth. It is a lot easier. I find I don’t get so tired when I am walking around the city. I usually try to get first class it is a lot nicer let’s face it. If you are using the ordinary standard class finding a seat [can be hard]. I would say definitely the train. It is a lot easier. You can relax. You can sit down. We usually got first class if it is at all possible. [Least favourite] Some of the antiquated buses and short train rolling stock. They usually get quite packed.”*  
(Male, Mobility issues)

*“I prefer to go on the train. It is much easier. Faster. More comfortable.”*  
(Female, mobility impaired)

The reasons for not travelling by bus included the perception of over crowding and the lack of waiting for passengers however vulnerable to sit down. Other issues with using the bus included the difficulty of accessing the bus in a wheelchair due to the lack of a



disabled friendly platform. Also two respondents indicated that the drivers fail to allow sufficient time to permit passengers to sit down before the bus moves off from the bus stop.

*“On the bus my companion comes free. [How do you feel about not using the bus?] Not good because obviously my daughter has to walk everywhere with us. But she understands how stressed I get on the bus so she doesn’t mind. All through the day they are busy going to the centre of Newcastle. We only live 4 stops from the centre of Newcastle and we have to go from one end of the centre to the other to get to the hospital, so it’s always really busy.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

*“Regarding the buses I would be too frightened because the drivers are just not considerate enough and don’t give you enough time to sit down. So I would just be too frightened to use it. I haven’t used a bus now for 2 or 3 years. But I did use a train last year (with work colleagues)”.*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“The buses are improving. I’ve had the front wheel of my wheelchair broken when the bus driver refused to put the bus down low enough, or he said it was as low as it was going to go, and it wasn’t near enough to the curb. They are trying in Peterborough, they’ve removed the curbs from the bus stops. London buses are lovely, they open in the middle, there’s plenty of space, and it was free which surprised me. But you could just go straight on and they’re very accessible. The Buses in Peterborough aren’t so good because you have to manoeuvre yourself into a very tight space, and if there are people sitting in the other seats you can’t do it, and they’re not for getting up, they’ll just sit and watch you trying. So it’s doable, but I prefer not to because they’re not that accessible. In Peterborough they’ve worked on the bus stops but they haven’t brought in the new style buses. If they got newer buses, with a more accessible space, that would be easier.”*

(Female, mobility issues)

*“You can’t get up the step onto a bus and there is nowhere for a wheelchair to go. The bus is all packed out with seats. There is nowhere for the wheelchair to go. I used to live in Cambridge and in Cambridge it was different. They had buses that would lower down. They would make them low so it was pretty level for the wheelchair to get on and they had a place for wheelchairs, if it wasn’t full with mothers with babies in buggies. But in Liverpool it doesn’t seem to have that.”*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

*“I do use the bus. To go and see relatives I go on the train because it is a longer distance. I use the bus if it is a nice day. If a bad day I would use a taxi. I have someone with me every time I go out really. I am on crutches. Getting on and off a bus. Sometimes they don’t give you time to sit down. Sometimes they start the bus when you haven’t sat down. You also struggle to get up and off the bus as you can’t get up when it is moving. I travel once a week by bus and 1-2 times a month by train.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

However, one carer who lived on a small Scottish island felt that the bus service was capable of dealing with disabled passengers.

*“There is only the bus. Getting on the bus it is like [taking] any old person. We are fortunate here. There are 2 bus companies. They actually share the business. Both buses have the facility that the ramp lowers so it has made it that bit easier to get on and off the bus no problem. It has made a big difference.”*

(Female carer, elderly mother)

Some disabled passengers feel that they need to thoroughly research their travel arrangements and to understand the potential contingencies that could be in place before they start their journey. They do not feel that they can necessarily rely on station staff to have the necessary expertise to know what to do should an emergency situation arise.

*“I feel that I have to look into every avenue of what I’m doing before I even start my journey. I’ve got to know exactly what’s what before I do it. Going back to the experience when we got stuck in Thornby, I don’t feel the station master on duty at the time knew exactly what to do. He did his best but he had to make some phone calls to see how he should deal with it. He was trying initially to get everyone on the bus; I don’t think he knew about the cab situation. They couldn’t get us on a bus, they left it too late, he couldn’t get us a taxi to Liverpool station as it would have been too late, so I don’t think he knew how to deal with it. That’s probably because he had never come across that situation before.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

*“[Did you need to seek out any information in advance to help plan your travel?] Yes all the time because you’re going to get stuck otherwise. I did it so that we were going straight from the train station and getting a taxi. Because we were in my manual chair we could get a black cab. Like I said before several wouldn’t stop for us, but one eventually did and he said lots won’t bother because it takes too long to load up apparently. Then we went to Tate Modern because it’s all flat and easy to get round. We just didn’t feel comfortable enough to think about tubes and things like that.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

## **4.4 Recent Journey**

### **Overall Findings**

What was apparent from respondents recounting their last journey made by public transport was the sheer effort involved for some disabled passengers in both the planning and the making of their journeys. For many disabled passengers their ability to leave their own home is severely curtailed due to their disability and these journeys by public transport provide a much needed lifeline to the outside world. Some of these passengers mused that in an ideal world disabled passengers would be able to navigate public transport seamlessly and independently but they feel that is currently not feasible.

## Detailed Findings

All respondents were asked to think about the last journey they had made using public transport.

For one respondent their last journey had been by train travelling from Birmingham to London with their work colleagues. Travelling with work colleagues meant that the respondent had good support whilst they were travelling, which was required. Her colleagues had to help her negotiate the steps at Birmingham International station as there was not a lift and they had to help her to her seat. When they reached London they also had to wait until all other passengers had disembarked in order to permit the respondent to leave the train without fear of bumping into other passengers.

*“I was with a group of colleagues going from Birmingham International..... I went from Birmingham International and as far as I know there wasn't a lift to take me down to the platform. That was painful because I have problems with my knees and hips and you have to walk down the stairs to the platform. Then when I was on the platform another passenger nearly knocked me over trying to push in front of me. My colleagues noticed this and they walked me to my seat and sat me down. Then when we got to Euston we just got a taxi to our destination .. but then you think if I wasn't with them how would I manage?[When we got to Euston] we basically waited for everybody in front of us to get off so I could take my time... I always leave plenty of time.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

For another respondent the last public transport trip was made by bus to attend a hospital appointment. However, the respondent who was travelling alone inadvertently boarded the wrong bus, an express bus, which then travelled two miles in the wrong direction before she could get off it. At that point she phoned a friend who came to collect her and took her to the appointment instead. This experience has made her even more reticent to board a bus on her own.

*“That's what I mean about not being able to do it, because you get panicked. My daughter had a doctor's appointment, I had to go to the hospital, and the heavens opened when I was half way there. So I had to jump on a bus if I could and the bus looked empty. I now know why as it was the wrong one... I started shaking and everything. I couldn't believe I'd got on the wrong bus again. It happened before when my daughter couldn't accompany me and someone else came instead. So it was the same wrong bus as we got on then. [I am less inclined to use the bus] because I can't get things right.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

A further respondent spoke of his last train journey whereby he accompanied his elderly father to watch a football match. They were driven to the station by the respondent's mother and the reason they travelled to the football ground by train was that the destination station was near to the football ground. Perhaps the most striking thing about this recounting of the last journey by public transport was the respondents' inability to get on board the train himself. Rather he had to rely on his elderly father pushing him up in order to get into the carriage. What is also evident from this

recounting of the last journey was the joy at being treated ‘like a human being’ by train staff.

*“It’s brilliant at Kidderminster, they are very well prepared and they treat you like a human being. It just seems to be at the mainline stations that you get problems. A few years ago they didn’t have a bridge to get over to the other platforms but they do now and there’s a lift which is great. [Would you say it was disabled friendly?] Yes. It is now. [So locating the platform and getting to it all worked well?] Yes. [What about physically getting on the train?] I step up, grab hold of the rail, and the old man pushed me up.”*

(Male, MS)

A fourth respondent spoke of their travel to Liverpool station and then to Southport. For this respondent the journey had been an uneventful one as they had done it on many occasions previously.

*“We were going to Southport. For the Liverpool leg of it we didn’t need any help. It’s probably a bad example because it’s very easy; you can’t really get it wrong. As long as you can find your way around the underground system in Liverpool. They have sign boards in Liverpool station and they tell you the third, second and first train. They have the destination and how long before departure. I can’t read the name on the front of the train as it comes in to know whether it’s right. If that system went wrong I could very easily get on the wrong train. There are no station announcements anymore telling you when trains are arriving, you just have to rely on this board. If you’re blind that’s obviously a bit of an issue. Now I’m not totally blind but I don’t see too well. There might be a way of doing it but it’s not something that I’m aware of.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

In stark contrast a wheelchair bound respondent encountered her last public transport journey by rail with its many difficulties. There had been issues with her journey right from the start with, for example, the wheelchair hoist of the taxi booked to take her to the station malfunctioning and so another taxi had to be called. Then at the train station the wheelchair was found to be too wide to fit through the carriage door and so she had to get out of the wheelchair whilst it was collapsed to enable her to enter the carriage. It transpired that this excursion was the first time that this respondent had been out of the house for months and so although the journey was problematic she was still delighted that she had made the journey.

*“It was a pretty abysmal train journey. It started off by my booking the night before a chair lift cab to take me to the train station. When it turned up the chair lift wasn’t working. Then we had to wait for another taxi and we made it to the station with a little less time than I would have liked. I’d booked the Passenger Assist and that all went smoothly. I went to reception, they had the print out, a member of staff escorted me to the place where you wait, they got the ramp and got me on the train. When we got to the top of the ramp the wheelchair was too wide to get through the old style carriage door. So I had to stand up, which luckily I can do for a couple of minutes, and my friend squashed the chair up a bit to get it through. If I’d been in my electric chair I wouldn’t have been able to*

*get on the train at all. From that point the service was fine. I'm always thinking back to when I was independent and what I could have done, which isn't good because obviously you can't be like that anymore."*  
(Female, mobility impaired)

For a respondent who uses crutches her last journey was to go to a concert. Negotiating the station was fine but getting information regarding the correct platform numbers can be challenging if there are no staff around to assist her. She also felt that getting onto the train was hard for her even with a carer present.

*"I went by train. I picked the tickets up at the station. I travelled to the station by taxi. It is a 10 minute drive. Getting into Bradford station was fine. Getting the tickets was fine. There are no steps. Getting to the platform was ok. Finding the platforms can be difficult but it was ok that time. Getting on to train was hard but carer was with me. Using the toilet was difficult. The toilets are so small especially if you are on crutches. There is not much room to turn around... A larger toilet and more handrails would be better. I didn't have to change trains. There were a lot of steps at Victoria. I didn't notice any lifts."*  
(Female, mobility impaired)

For another wheelchair user a day out with his son turned to embarrassment when they got to their destination station and the respondent couldn't get off the train due to a large gap between the platform and the train carriage. A passenger had to come to their aid but whilst this was a necessity in order to disembark the train, the respondent felt "uncomfortable and embarrassed" about this. Also the respondent felt that the initial staff member at the destination station when approached for assistance was dismissive and unhelpful.

*"I was with my son. He is twenty-six. We were going from Liverpool to Cheshire. His girlfriend lives in Cheshire. We were going to spend the day there. My son booked the tickets in advance. We went by train because it was a lot more convenient than the coach. Son just booked the tickets. There were problems at Cheshire with the platform. It wasn't that great. It was a problem getting off the train onto the platform. There was quite a gap and a drop between the train and the platform. We needed help, another passenger saw that him struggling and come along to help. Didn't see any staff. Liverpool station was ok completely level. I thought Cheshire would be the same as Liverpool station which was easy. But Liverpool station is a very new station and that wouldn't have taken into account all of the possible problems. Cheshire is an old station. To be honest I felt a bit uncomfortable and embarrassed. Getting back on the return journey was a problem. When my son got off the train he spoke to a member of staff that was on the platform and he said they were pretty dismissive about it and didn't really want to know. But on the return journey he spoke to a different member of staff and they came and helped us onto the train. They lifted the wheelchair. Again [I felt] uncomfortable and embarrassed. A level platform or staff that could put a ramp from the train to platform would have helped. It was a good journey until I got to Cheshire. They had space on the train for wheelchairs and so you are not in anyone's way and my son could sit beside me. [The bad bit]*

*getting off the train at Cheshire and getting back on the train. It has put me off a bit. Getting on and off at different stations.”*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

For the respondent who was mobility impaired their last journey was to go on holiday and it was a straightforward journey. All elements of the journey worked seamlessly including the support offered by Passenger Assist.

*“The last time [we used public transport] was on holiday. We used the train. I just wasn’t up to driving that particular time. It was just more practical to get the four of us in the most comfortable and practical way to the airport. [Did you plan the travel in advance?] Yes. I think my wife booked the tickets and everything for the train and as far as I know she did the Passenger Assist. I did it for the airport. That is how it all worked out. We had a lift in a friend’s car to the station.”*

(Male, mobility impaired)

For the respondent who was a carer the last journey was to go to the dentist on the mainland. They live on an island and so to attend the appointment they had to first get a bus and then a ferry. The journey was regarded as straightforward as it was one they had undertaken on several previous occasions.

*“If you miss one ferry you don’t have much time to wait for the next. The bus stop is 5 minutes walk from where we live. As we know the bus driver he stopped outside where we live. It was quite straightforward. I was there just to make sure she didn’t fall. It was ok getting onto the bus and the ferry. ..The ferry is new. Whoever designed it must have sat down and really thought about it. It is wide enough for a wheelchair. There is no need for assistance getting off the ferry. Off the ferry the dentist was a five minute walk... As we live on an island of 1,500 the bus driver makes allowances for us. There is no discrimination.”*

(Female carer, elderly mother)

What was apparent from respondents recounting their last journey made by public transport was the sheer effort involved for some disabled passengers in both the planning and the making of their journeys. For many disabled passengers their ability to leave their own home is severely curtailed due to their disability and these journeys by public transport provide a much needed lifeline to the outside world. Some of these passengers mused that in an ideal world disabled passengers would be able to navigate public transport seamlessly and independently but they feel that is currently not feasible.

*“If I compare it [the last journey by public transport] to when I was able bodied then I’d rate it quite low, probably 3 out of 10. If I go from the point of view of not having been out of the house for months and months, and it only being my second trip out, then it would be a 5 or 6 out of 10 because I was just so grateful to be anywhere. My ideal would be a carriage with a nice wide opening and a little ramp that you could get up yourself”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

## 4.5 Reasons for Not Using Public Transport

### Overall Findings

Those passengers in wheelchairs were most likely not to use public transport. For one of the wheelchair users, whilst he did use the train occasionally he could not use the bus in Liverpool as the buses are not adapted for wheelchair users. Another wheelchair user didn't travel by bus or train as he lived in a rural area and neither the buses nor the train, including the train station, had been adapted for wheelchair users. His perception is that whilst he might like to take a train, the train stations he wished to travel to would not be adapted to facilitate this.

### Detailed Findings

Those passengers in wheelchairs were most likely to indicate that they did not use public transport. For one of the wheelchair users whilst he did use the train occasionally he could not use the bus in Liverpool as the buses are not adapted for wheelchair users.

*"I can't use public transport. I am a wheelchair user and public transports isn't good for wheelchair users. The problems are getting on and off and no space set aside for a wheelchair. With my health condition I can't have a wheelchair that I wheel myself so someone has to wheel me around... I get anxious anyway and that just adds to it...I was trying to go to a hospital appointment. My carer was with me. She knew the bus routes and so we said we would get a bus. We went down the road to the bus stop but when it arrived there was no way to get on. It wasn't adapted for wheelchair users. I waited for another one and it was the same. After that incident I asked my carer and she has never come across a bus that is adapted for wheelchair users."*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

Another wheelchair user didn't travel by bus or train as he lived in a rural area and neither the buses nor the train, including the train station, had been adapted for wheelchair users. His perception is that whilst he might like to take a train that the train stations he wished to travel to would not be adapted to facilitate this.

*"I have never used public transport that much. I had my own car. I had an accident and broke my neck and ended up in a wheelchair. I have always found it a bit difficult to access. Round here is a bit rural and the buses you just don't even think about it as you'll never get off them. It's the same with the trains. I have never been in the position where I have needed to use one. I think it is a perception that they are difficult to access. I live in a small village near a small town and you tend to think that things are less accessible for that kind of thing as less people use them. I certainly think it is true with buses. Most of them look like they have high access whenever I have seen them. The last time I went to the train station which was many years ago now to meet a friend it was hard enough just getting into the train station, even opening the door was difficult as it wasn't automatic. It was a bit of an old fashioned train station and it was little things like that that tend to add up and if you*

*think the door was hard to access then they wouldn't have bothered with anything else .”*  
(Male, mobility issues)

## **4.6 Awareness of Rights and Passenger Assist**

### **Overall Findings**

There was fairly limited awareness of the rights of disabled passengers travelling by public transport and also of the availability of Passenger Assist. The reaction to the concept of Passenger Assist was mainly very positive with respondents declaring that it was a good idea as long as it worked so that disabled passengers were met and guided through their journey as required. There was disagreement as to whether Passenger Assist currently worked well with two respondents recounting tales of it not working, whilst another respondent felt very positively that it had worked. Further promotion of Passenger Assist to disabled passengers is encouraged. One recommendation for improving the Passenger Assist offering was that it should ensure that the disabled passenger is only left when they have advised the member of staff that they no longer need their assistance.

### **Detailed Findings**

There was fairly limited awareness of the rights of disabled passengers travelling by public transport and also of the availability of Passenger Assist. Indeed only one of the respondents that we spoke to had actively researched disabled passenger rights in order to understand what support they were entitled to when travelling by public transport.

*“[Passenger Assist] I didn't know it existed. It is quite a good idea because it will cut down the chances of everyone having an incident. You know what it is like here. We all suffer form 'litigationitis'. It protects the passenger and that rail company also.”*  
(Female carer, elderly mother)

*“The truth is most of the places I want to get to these days I can get into. My general attitude is if I can't get into a place then you don't want my business. I don't think I have even heard of disabled rights before. Now I think, why I haven't heard of it? ....On the British Airways website they made it clear what help I could get. I am a disabled person. I probably should know about it [disabled passenger rights] but I don't...It is all right saying the rights exist but it more about can I get from A to B then I am not so worried about the rights... It is about knowing you can do something and do it reliably. .. It is knowing that you can complete the journey, that is the thing.”*  
(Male, wheelchair user)

*“No. I can't say I have. I can't think of anything at the moment. I know disabled people have got rights but I could not honestly tell you about them. I imagine they cover to have assistance to have your journey so you are not discriminated against. I would say disabled people are treated very well. Same as the airline staff. I would say 99.9 times out of a 100 it is superb. I would use Passenger Assist again.”*



(Male, mobility impaired)

*“I haven’t seen anything specific but I use my common sense. I know we do have some rights but I’m not someone who jumps up and down anyway. I’ve got enough things to worry about without doing that. I’m not very big on my rights; if it’s not easy I just give up and don’t worry about it. It’s all very well having rights but if the thing isn’t in place all you get is a lot of angry people jumping up and down shouting. I tend to stay away from that because I don’t like it.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

*“I’m aware of the one that if a service is cancelled they have to get you home, to the nearest station, or the station that you were supposed to finish at. We actually had that on the way back from Southport one time. The service was cancelled at Thornby on the way back. That was fun. They put replacement buses on to get people back to Liverpool but we couldn’t use the buses because they weren’t easy access. They had to black cab us but by the time they’d sorted it out the Liverpool service back to Chester had stopped. So in the end they black cabbied us from Thornby back to Chester. It wasn’t anyone’s fault, it was a maintenance issue, and they sorted it eventually.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

*“[Passenger rights?] I can’t recall them now. I wasn’t aware of my rights regarding assistance. I would think [I have] a right to a seat. When you catch those early trains you don’t necessarily get a seat. I’ve been told that in America disabled people don’t have to queue to get on things. The longer I stand the more pain I’m in, so even just standing in the queue can be really painful.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“I thoughts the rights of disabled were the same as the rights as non-disabled but it has to be accessible to disabled. The law has changes that things have got to be adapted for disabled people with ramps and accessibility and things like that. I understand that there are certain places that can’t be adapted. Historical places and things like that., But all other places should have disabled access. But I haven’t found that on any buses in Liverpool.”*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

The reaction to the concept of Passenger Assist was very positive with respondents declaring that it was a good idea as long as it worked and disabled passengers were met and guided through their journey as required. The respondents felt that Passenger Assist would be most helpful for practical help such as negotiating the train station and accessing the train rather than for booking tickets. Being met at the train station was considered especially useful if disabled passengers had luggage with them or if there was a long distance between, for example, the car park and the main station.

*“I think it sounds like a good idea and yes it certainly would use if it made life easier to get there.”*

(Male, mobility impaired)

*“It would be useful to have help with the stairs. It can be quite slippery if it is raining.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

*“If you could guarantee the help would be there. There’s no point in planning a trip if it’s such a struggle to get there that you’re completely exhausted by the time you arrive.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“Yes I think that’s a good idea. It would mean I wouldn’t put off going to places. My son does 3 years abroad and 3 years at home, and I only do 1 or 2 journeys a year because I have to get somebody to come with me. If there was somebody to put me on and off the trains I would be able to manage to see him more. Just that I think Passenger Assist is a good idea. It’s good for people you can see are disabled but also for people who you can’t see are disabled.”*

(Female, mental health issues)

However, the perception from a couple of respondents was that Passenger Assist did not always work. One respondent had a friend who had tried to use Passenger Assist on three separate occasions and on each of these occasions the staff member failed to meet them. Another respondent had used Passenger Assist which had worked efficiently and effectively up until the final leg of their journey when pre-booked staff failed to meet them and they experienced other problems relating to access to the platform.

*“He has done it 2 or 3 times and never has the person been there... Well he struggles in pain. One time he didn’t bother and actually came back. It would put me off [using Passenger Assist]. If I was to organise that for me and my husband and there was nobody there we would be in a right pickle.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“I haven’t used it that recently. My wife is disabled as well, she has mobility issues. We used it on a trip down to Bournemouth a little while ago and it was very good until we came back. I booked it in advance, booked the tickets in advance, we were met at the station when we started, we changed at Birmingham New Street and someone met us there and helped us transfer trains – perfect. Then we got the train to Bournemouth, although there was another unnecessary change, and then we were met at Bournemouth and helped to a taxi to take us to the hotel. On the way back it was exactly the same until we got to Chester and there was no assistance even though it had been booked. Also, if I remember correctly, the lift to get out of the station was out of order and we had to go over the level at the end of the platform that they use for parcels and stuff. We had to physically go and find someone to take us over that because we couldn’t have got out of the station otherwise. I was impressed with the service until then but that problem there ruined it. It was literally the last 5-10 minutes of the journey that spoiled the whole trip.”*

(Male, visual impairment)

One passenger had experience of Passenger Assist working. Passenger Assist helped them with their luggage for the train connection as they felt they didn't need it for the other parts of the journey.

*"[Have used Passenger Assist] It is mainly when we have had to take my wife's [elderly] parents with us and we have been on the train and we have used Passenger Assist and that has been handy for transporting luggage if we have had to change trains. We also try to book the seats in advance. It is just a nicer way to travel if you know you have some assistance when you require it. [How did you find out about it?] My wife and daughter were both in the travel trade and so these things you do get to know them through the family. Also we have used them on the airlines also. It all went like clockwork. I couldn't fault it. It was very good. We had it for the transfer part from one train to another. We had first class travel. It is just more pleasant. We made out on way into the airport. That was ok. We then had travel assist with the airline to take us to the plane"*

(Male, mobility impaired).

One respondent was keen to point out that they would use like to use Passenger Assist if they could guarantee that the support from the staff member was assured and not liable to be forgotten.

*"If you book the assistance it needs to be guaranteed you're going to get it. From what friends have told me it's never there."*

(Female, Arthritis)

One recommendation for Passenger Assist was that it should ensure that the passenger is left when they have advised the member of staff that they no longer need their assistance. Hence the relationship between the staff member and the disabled passenger needs to be a more involved and discursive one rather than simply ensuring that the passenger is taken to the right place at the right time. The staff member must ensure that the passenger is content and able to continue the journey on their own before they leave.

*[So was the service from Passenger Assist ok?] Yes they were there when booked and the ramps went up. They wait in the right place, put the ramp up, and get you up the ramp, that was really as far as they went. Now that may have been because I had a friend with me who pushed me and got me into the space. But at the point at which we were trying to get me into the carriage itself they were pulling up the ramp and going off....and that's when we found we couldn't get through the door. We had to find a way of doing it, but if I'd be in my electric chair, or on my own, we would have been well stuck."*

(Female, mobility impaired)

For those respondents who had not heard of Passenger Assist they felt that it needed much more prominent advertising to ensure that it was not overlooked by those who need it most. As one respondent noted the box to tick when purchasing a ticket for Passenger Assist was very small and could be easily overlooked.

*"I haven't heard of Passenger Assist...I think more advertising on television so people will know about it."*

(Male, Wheelchair user)

*“The lady said that on the British Rail website there was a little tiny box you could tick, that I didn’t see, that asked if you wanted Passenger Assist. But it needs to be more prominent because I didn’t see it and a friend that was helping me also didn’t see it. This is when I was doing my initial search for train times. What you’d like to do is book the train, give a little tick saying you need assistance, and that would take you to another box or web page where you could put in your details. Then when you turned up you’d know there would be someone to help you on.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

## **4.7 Observations on Rail Travel Assistance**

### **Overall Findings**

Several disabled passengers stated that they would like to have the opportunity to be able to travel independently and not have to rely on others for assistance throughout their journey. To this effect, there is a clear need to ensure that all public transport across the country is disabled friendly and accessible to all. There was some sense that rail staff members should be more proactive towards disabled passengers, positively asking them whether they needed any support during their rail journey. Furthermore, some felt that there should also be more staff training so that staff members can better predict and support the needs of disabled passengers. In order to ensure that railway stations are as accessible as possible for disabled passengers it would be helpful to have well signposted and wide lifts that can accommodate larger wheelchairs and are available on all floors. Furthermore the train carriages should be able to easily accommodate wheelchairs. Having trains and buses that are flush with the platforms and pavements would be helpful. On the train it would be useful to have designated seats always available for disabled passengers that can either be booked in advance or are held for disabled passengers should they decide to spontaneously travel. Another factor that can deter disabled passengers from travelling is simply their own perception that the journey by public transport is not possible. Better information advising disabled passengers whether the journey is indeed feasible by public transport is required. There was a request that the travel costs for the carer by train should be offered at a reduced rate to encourage travel.

### **Detailed Findings**

Several respondents indicated that disabled passengers would like to have the opportunity to be able to travel independently and not have to rely on others for assistance throughout their journey. To this end there is a need to ensure that all public transport across the country is disabled friendly and accessible to all.

*“It would be to make it completely accessible like the London buses where you go in the doors at the centre and straight into the disabled area. Every train should have a coach like that with a ramp that came out when you pushed a button. Then you could travel whenever you wanted without bothering any staff at the stations, you could just come and go like an ordinary person.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

*“People need the information. People need to know that they can use the trains. Not just that they can but in some cases that maybe they can’t. Even to me as far as I am concerned I don’t see how I can use [the local station]. Peterborough I don’t know if I can. It is all right saying something is disable friendly....But there are different levels of disability... It may not be wheelchair friendly. It is all about information.”*

(Male, wheelchair user)

*“I would change the way they tell you about where the services are and which services are running. In some stations, like Chester, they still have announcements, but I still have to ask people. In an ideal world I would like to be able to do these things without having to ask anybody. I can get a ticket myself easily. I would then like to be able to look at the board and see if a train is delayed, and then be able to work out my options for myself. At the moment I can’t do that, I have to go and find somebody.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

*“In a truly equal world the trains would have little hydraulic ramps that come out of at least one carriage on the train, the carriages would have much wider seating and doors so you could get in with your wheelchair, then you wouldn’t even need a member of staff to be there. If every train had one coach you could be totally independent and come and go as you please.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

There was some sense that rail staff members should be more proactive towards disabled passengers, positively asking them whether they needed any support during their rail journey. For some disabled passengers simply leaving their seat during travel could be problematic and having someone enquire about them and offer them support would be encouraging. It would be helpful to have staff available to support disabled passengers should issues arise with other passengers, for example, over the allocation of seats or space in the train.

*“Clear signage on the lifts and a member of staff walking up and down the platform to make me feel more secure and to point things out. [At Kidderminster] They’re more friendly and helpful there. If I’m not quite on the train yet they’ll wave to the driver to make him wait for me. They make me feel secure because there’s a member of staff walking around. I do feel quite vulnerable. At a busy station people are just focussed on where they’re going and if someone stops in front of me I can’t stop in time. So I walk in to people by accident and I’ve been threatened on several occasions. People in their late teens/early 20s aren’t bothered they’re just focussed on where they’re going.”*

(Male, MS)

*“Actually physically getting on it is not a problem for me. Finding a seat is also not a huge issue. My wife has more trouble because of having the wheelchair and you’ll find someone has hogged her space with a couple of prams. Then we do have a problem because her wheelchair isn’t particularly standard. If we get there first it’s a case of racing the prams for the space. Yes. She can walk a little bit so we have to get her out of it*

*to get her on. She'll sit in it for the journey and then we'll do the reverse on the way back. But we do need the space and it's not always available because the prams will be in the disabled space and they won't move. Some of the people have got quite nasty about it."*

(Male, visually impaired)

*"The staff are fine as they just look at your pass and say ok. They just look at my pass when I'm on the train. [Do they offer you any help?] No. [Do you think they should be offering you help or saying anything at that point?] Sometimes I think they could offer to get a drink for you, obviously out of your own money. I can't get up and go to the buffet car because I just sit in my seat and don't move. ..I just wait. I just sit in my seat and don't move."*

(Female, mental health issues)

There was also a desire for staff members to be better trained to deal with the needs of disabled passengers in order to more effectively support them during their travel. Some disabled passengers said they sometimes felt like a 'nuisance' rather than simply another passenger.

*"I think that the members of staff should be better trained than a contractor but as a disabled person I'm finding that they're not... The company should know what my rights are. I shouldn't have to go to them and say what my rights are. But the reality is you've got a member of staff who is probably only on a temporary contract and they're only worried about Friday when they get paid. ... There's no care and consideration. If they had it their way we wouldn't be allowed on trains. [You said their, who is they?] The rail operating companies."*

(Male, MS)

*"[How disabled people are treated?] Sometimes they are treated as a nuisance, depending on the personnel. The staff don't have much time. It is as if you are eating their time. [What would improve your travel?] More staff in the station, on the platform giving people information. A bit more compassion. They look at disabled people as a bit of a nuisance. Sometimes when you walk up to them they get this look on their face as if to say, Oh no. A bit more help with luggage [would be good]."*

(Female, mobility impaired)

*"If you are disabled you are from another planet....It is this whole concept now that a disabled people should be locked away in an asylum and forgotten about. It has never been addressed."*

(Female carer, elderly mother)

There was a perception from some (non-wheelchair bound) respondents that disabled passengers travelling in a wheelchair may get offered more assistance than other disabled passengers as their disability was more apparent. However, another strand emerging from these stories is the possible dehumanising of the disabled passenger in a wheelchair and their demotion to someone who can no longer answer questions for themselves.

*"Yes definitely [wheelchair using husband gets more sympathy]. Well I think it's a visual thing. The opposite view to that is that my husband*

*doesn't get treated like a real person because he's in a wheelchair. We've been to places where the people don't talk to my husband at all, they just look at me. I've actually corrected them and said don't ask me, ask him."*

(Female, Arthritis)

In order to ensure that railway stations are as accessible as possible for disabled passengers it would be helpful to have well signposted lifts available on all floors to ensure that passengers can easily access all platforms. Also having staff prominently available to answer questions and direct passengers are important as mechanisms for these respondents in reassuring them that their travel will go smoothly. Having train carriages that are flush with the platform and buses with platforms that are flush with pavements are important for disabled passengers to support their independence. Alternatively if ramps are to be used they should not be too steep that it is hard for the carer of the wheelchair to use the ramp. On these occasions there should be a staff member available to help the carer with the ramp.

*"It is just about making it as accessible as possible. I don't expect people to make Mount Everest accessible to me in a wheelchair. It is the same thing. It would be nice. It is simply about being able to get into the station, get on the platform and get into the train. And somewhere I could just sit in my wheelchair."*

(Male, wheelchair user)

*"[West Bromwich station] It was very unfriendly. The signage for the lifts was non-existent and I didn't see any members of staff. [So did you have to work it out for yourself?] No a member of public pointed the lifts out to us. [What about on your return journey, did anyone help you then?] I didn't see a member of staff there at all. [So if you were to sum up how happy with the journey you were, what would you say?] I wasn't very satisfied with the West Bromwich end because there was no signage and no member of staff on the platform to assist."*

(Male, MS)

*"Level platforms, level with the train, not a big gap, only a small gap as you are getting on the train. That would be ideal. Ramps at all stations so you can get out of the station ok. Disabled toilets. Disabled toilets that are clean. A lot of disabled toilets are disgusting."*

(Male, wheelchair user)

*"In a perfect world all buses, trains and platforms would be suitable for disabled people in wheelchairs. [Train] If it was more accessible, if you can get on and off the train ok and there is room in the carriage for wheelchairs"*

(Male, wheelchair user)

*"Sometimes people build ramps for wheelchairs and ok they are ramps but sometimes they are on the steep side and that might be difficult. If there was somebody there who you knew could help that would be good...Sometimes you just need someone there to help. Even if it something you can do yourself just knowing there is someone there is reassuring."*

(Male, wheelchair user)

A further recommendation is that all railway stations have lifts that are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs that may not be of a standard size. It should not be assumed that passengers are able to get out of their wheelchairs and collapse them in order to get them into a lift.

*“Also, the lifts in Liverpool station are far too narrow to get the wheelchair in. Again we have to get my wife out and fold it up to get on.”*  
(Male, visually impaired)

On the train it would be extremely helpful to have designated seats always available for disabled passengers that can either be booked in advance or are held for disabled passengers should they decide to spontaneously travel. Some of these respondents were keen to point out that their health could be erratic so that they could not always plan their travel in advance. Rather they are forced to wait and see if they were well enough to travel on a certain day and boarding the train they really needed to be certain of having a seat available. There is a need to offer disabled passengers a guaranteed seat should they decide to travel and also guide them to their seat to ensure there are no problems such as other passengers already sitting in their seats. There was a call for more space and individual seating so that disabled passengers did not have to sit beside others if this made them feel uncomfortable or anxious

*“If they see you with a crutch they just think you can still walk, but they don’t consider the awful lot of pain I’m in. I think you should be guaranteed a seat.”*  
(Female, Arthritis)

*“One of the things that has got to be addressed is the booking of seats. There are a lot of people in my boat who can’t book 3 weeks in advance because they might be in hospital or too ill to travel when the day comes. On some journeys the disabled seating has all been booked out by the train company to able bodied people. There should be seats reserved only for disabled people.”*  
(Male, MS)

*“With Multiple Sclerosis I cannot plan in advance. If I get up in the morning and feel great then I go, if I don’t feel great then I don’t go. The problem with train travel is that last time I went to Paignton all the seats were booked, I could hardly get a seat. Even the disabled seats were booked as well with able bodied people. I couldn’t have booked a seat in advance. I don’t know if you know New Street Station in Birmingham? It’s not very friendly for an able bodied person but for a disabled person it’s a joke. The signage for the lifts is terrible and the staff are very ignorant. I was asking different members of staff for help and they just said sorry they worked for a different rail company and I needed to speak to somebody else. It’s winding me up.”*  
(Male, MS)

*“More space so you’re not squashed in and more seats where you don’t have to sit beside people. Obviously you can’t stop people staring at you when you use your pass so I don’t know how to solve that one. My daughter got me a different card holder so they can’t see the pass but they still look.”*



(Female, mental health issues)

For wheelchair users the doors to the carriages should be wide enough to enable a wheelchair to move inside. Other mobility impaired respondents stated that the aisles were too narrow to negotiate with crutches and walking sticks, especially if other passengers or their luggage were protruding from the seats. These respondents would encourage the aisles to be wider or to have separate spaces for disabled passengers.

*“In the past (not the last journey) people have been standing on the Virgin service to London. If you’re disabled it is an issue to get past them and it’s embarrassing to keep having to say excuse me. Also sometimes the aisles are not wide enough. When you’re walking through people stick their feet out so you have to be visually prepared. I think sometimes people just don’t realise how hard it is.”*

(Female, Arthritis)

*“The ramps for getting on and off of the train are fine but when you go and turn into the carriage it’s too narrow, and you can’t physically get your chair on. I’ve got a standard NHS electric chair but they are bigger than the manual chairs. You have to get out of the chair and collapse it a bit to get through the door. In the newer carriages my manual just fits in but the electric one won’t.”*

(Female, Mobility impaired)

The lack of spontaneity regarding travel was an issue mentioned on several occasions by one respondent. If travel arrangements were made and staff at stations were booked to assist the pre-arranged journey then it was considered impossible to change these plans at short notice should, for example, the weather deteriorate or the passenger wish to alter their plans. Empowering the disabled passenger by permitting them to alter their plans should their circumstances change would encourage their travel.

*“[Impact of disability on travel] Massively. Peterborough railway station is incredibly difficult to get to, too far really unless I get a taxi. They’ve just spent a lot of money doing it up so the actual station is now a lot better. You have to book in advance; you cannot be spontaneous at all. So you have to know what day you’re travelling, you have to book the station staff at each end. If it’s pouring with rain or your having a miserable time you can’t just decide to come home early. You have to wait for the staff you’ve arranged to be there to help. So all spontaneity has gone out of the window, and I was a very spontaneous person. I would just go down to London and decide to take in a show or the opera, but I can’t do that now, you have to book everything meticulously.”*

(Female, mobility impaired)

Another factor that can deter disabled passengers from using public transport is the perception that the journey is not possible by public transport. The journey may actually be feasible by public transport but the disabled passenger may not have the information to hand to confirm this.

*“The main thing really it’s about the accessibility of being able to get on the train and not going to miss it because you are busy changing platforms. When I think of the local train station the other thing that I*

*think of is there are 2 platforms and there is a bridge to get between them. Now my wheelchair is not going to get up the steps and across that bridge. It is not going to happen. When I think of Peterborough it is the same. There are five platforms and there is a bridge across. Now there might be lifts now but I don't know. So it is not going to happen. ..It is knowing stuff. If you knew it was accessible that would be a lot easier."*  
(Male, mobility impaired)

There was a request that the rail costs for the carer should be offered at a reduced rate as it was perceived that the disabled passenger currently has to pay full fare for this person even when they themselves could not travel independently.

*"If my husband and I were to go to an amusement park then the carer of the disabled person gets in for half price. My husband couldn't go on a train by himself could he? Therefore there should be some sort of discount for the carer."*  
(Female, Arthritis)

*"A discount for the carer would be good. For those who can't travel independently they need to have someone with them. If I have a carer with me I need to pay for the carer's train ticket and a subsidy in that case would be good."*  
(Male, wheelchair user)

For some passengers with mental health issues the need for a quiet carriage to be truly quiet was essential.

*"Please keep quiet carriages quiet. I think that's the worst thing for me. I chose to sit in that one because it's meant to be quiet but it's not. Obviously it won't be easy for staff to ask people to be quiet as some people on the trains are really horrible."*  
(Female, mental health issues)

For one visually impaired respondent improving the information and his inability to access this information was key to supporting this travel. He felt that the current provision of information did not actively support visually impaired passengers such as him. Whilst he acknowledged that staff members were knowledgeable there was still the issue of locating them when you needed them. So once again visibility of staff members who can offer support is key here.

*"I think the information at the station is geared towards the able bodied, more so now than it was. So I think that could do with improving. I've got to say the staff are very good; everyone seems to know everything. I can ask any member of staff and they all seem to know what train is leaving from where and at what time. They seem to have memorised the timetable which is very good, but you can't always find somebody. Signage is an issue. For me information is hard to get hold of, if I have somebody properly sighted with me it isn't so bad, but on my own it is tricky. If it was something I couldn't plan in advance, and I was travelling alone, I would need assistance, but I couldn't get it there and then. On the whole I try and avoid that, I don't like that sort of situation, but it does happen if I'm in a hurry."*

(Male, visually impaired)

There was also felt to be a need to better advertise Disabled Rail Cards as many of these respondents appear to have happened upon them by chance as opposed to seeing advertising promoting their use.

*“I was on the internet trying to find the cheapest way to get down to Paignton and I found a form you filled in and sent off to get a disabled rail card. When you’re at the stations you see family railcards, young person railcards all advertised, but you do not see disabled. I have never seen an advert either at a station or on the internet for a disabled person’s railcard. So again they are discriminating against disabled people... I just stumbled across it on the internet. I was just looking for the cheapest fares and I was putting in my destination, etc. Then it came up with do you have a disabled rail card and I clicked on that and got all this information on disabled railcards.”*

(Male, MS)

*“Now the rail companies have been privatised the management needs to look down in the trenches and see what’s going on. One of the best things you can do is get a disabled person to go through the station and secretly film it. ..I’ll tell you the management will be shocked.”*

(Male, MS)

There was a perception from one respondent that station layouts were not intuitive for disabled passengers thus making them harder to navigate.

*“Chester station has been modernised but I don’t think it’s as good as it was. I would expect walking through the concourse the first thing that meets you should be the ticket office. That’s not the case. The first thing that meets you is some automated ticket machines, which I can’t use, and the ticket office is way over to the right. There are also a couple of offices before it, a café or a waiting room, and then you get the queue for the ticket office. I would expect the ticket office to be quite near the barriers where you’re going to go through.”*

(Male, visually impaired)

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is evidence that disabled passengers would like to use public transport more but there are practical issues deterring them from doing so. For those who didn't use public transport the main reasons preventing them were a lack of confidence in service provision in different areas, difficulties in accessing the train/bus and tickets being too expensive. The main extra assistance required by disabled passengers related mainly to practical assistance whilst at the station or on the train, for example, carrying luggage and accessing the correct train. In terms of the 'enabling' factors for rail travel a key factor was ticket price.

The majority of respondents hadn't read, seen or heard of any information from the train companies about disabled passenger rights of assistance. Whilst few had heard of the 'Passenger Assist' service there was enthusiasm for it as long as it worked effectively. Hence there is a need to further promote this service.

However, perhaps more disconcerting was the perception from many respondents of a lack of consideration for disabled passengers that was seen to emanate both from staff and from the public alike. Appropriate staff training was called for so that staff could positively champion disabled passengers thus preventing, for example, harassment from other passengers. Staff training should also include awareness of the contingencies that are in place for disabled passengers should problems with travel occur. There was some sense that rail staff members should be more proactive towards supporting disabled passengers, positively asking them whether they needed any support during their rail journey.

Some disabled passengers expressed a desire to be able to travel independently and not have to rely on others for assistance throughout their journey. To facilitate this there is a need to ensure that all public transport across the country is disabled friendly and accessible to all. In order to ensure that railway stations are as accessible as possible for disabled passengers it would be helpful to have well signposted and wide lifts that can accommodate larger wheelchairs and are available on all floors. Furthermore the train carriages should be able to easily accommodate wheelchairs. Having trains and buses that are flush with the platforms and pavements is essential. On the train it would be extremely helpful to have designated seats always available for disabled passengers that can either be booked in advance or are held for disabled passengers should they decide to spontaneously travel. Another factor that can deter disabled passengers from travelling is simply the perception that the journey is not possible by public transport. Better information to advise disabled passengers whether the journey is indeed feasible by public transport is required. There was a request that the rail costs for the carer should be offered at a reduced rate to encourage travel.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Questionnaire**

## SYSTEM INFORMATION:

Date:

Time interview started:

Q0 Please select the size of text you prefer to see on the screen **DISPLAY IN 16 font size**

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A A A A

## Introduction

### **PROGRAMMING NOTE: ALL ON SCREEN TEXT WILL BE SIZED ACCORDING TO THE RESPONDENTS PREFERRED FONT SIZE**

Thank you very much for agreeing to complete this on-line survey which is being conducted by Accent. The closing date for completion of this survey is **5 February**.

The research is being conducted under the terms of the Market Research Society (MRS) code of conduct and is completely confidential. If you would like to **confirm** Accent's credentials please call the MRS free on 0500 396999.

The research is on behalf of the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) who would like to understand how accessible travelling by rail is. Any answers you give will help them to improve services in the future.

To take part we would like to invite people who have a disability, impairment or any condition which affects their ability to get around, to give their views about public transport – in particular, travelling by rail.

We would also welcome the views of carers, personal assistants or anyone who helps someone (with a disability, impairment or any condition which affects their ability to get around) with their travel or travel arrangements.

You do not need to travel by rail at the moment.

We will just ask you a few questions to check that you are eligible to take part in this research.

Any answer you give will be treated in confidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society.

## Scoping questions

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Q1. Which of the following categories best describes you? **[single code]**

I have a disability, impairment or condition which means I would require assistance when I travel

I am a carer/helper/friend/relative who assists someone with their travel or travel arrangements [the person I help has a disability/impairment/condition which means they would require support when travelling or making travel arrangements]

I do not require assistance when travelling **THANK AND CLOSE**

I do not help anyone with their travel or travel arrangements **THANK AND CLOSE**

### **QUOTA MONITORING POINT**

---

Q2. Which country do you live in? **[single code]**

England  
Wales  
Scotland  
Northern Ireland **THANK AND CLOSE**

### **QUOTA MONITORING POINT**

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Q3. **ASK IF Q1=1 ELSE SKIP** Which of the following categories describes you? You can tick more than one if required.

I have a.... **[multi-code]**

Mobility impairment  
Age-related mobility difficulties  
Age-related memory difficulties  
Visual impairment  
Hearing impairment  
Learning disability  
Mental health condition  
Serious long-term illness  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

### **QUOTA MONITORING POINT**

---

Q4. **ASK IF Q1=2 ELSE SKIP** Which of the following categories describes the person you help with their travel? If you help more than one person, think about the person you help most throughout the survey. You can tick more than one answer if required when considering this person.

The person I help has a.... **[multi-code]**

Mobility impairment  
Age-related mobility difficulties  
Age-related memory difficulties  
Visual impairment  
Hearing impairment  
Learning disability  
Mental health condition  
Serious long-term illness  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

### **QUOTA MONITORING POINT**

---

Q5. **ASK IF Q1=2 ELSE SKIP** Who do you help with travelling by public transport? If you help more than one person, think of the main person you help.

I help my child/children  
I help my spouse/partner

I help a relative  
I help my friend  
I help a client (I am a professional carer or personal assistant)  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

### QUOTA MONITORING POINT

---

- Q6. Which of the following categories best describes **Q1=1** 'where you live?'  
**Q1=2** 'where your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children;  
spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] lives?'

A city, town or built up area  
A rural area

### QUOTA MONITORING POINT

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- Q7. Which of the following methods of public transport **Q1=1** 'do you use?'  
**Q1=2** 'do you help your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children;  
spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with?' Tick all that apply.  
**MULTICODE**

Train  
Bus  
Coach  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
Do not use any forms of public transport **GOTO Q8 LOGIC CHECK – not with other codes**

### QUOTA MONITORING POINT

---

- Q8. **ASK IF Q7=5 ELSE SKIP** Would you like to use public transport if more support were available?

Yes  
No

- 
- Q9. Which of the following age categories are you in?

15 or under **THANK AND CLOSE**  
16 to 24 years  
25 to 34 years  
35 to 49 years  
50 to 64 years  
65 to 74 years  
75 or older  
Do not wish to say **THANK AND CLOSE**

### QUOTA MONITORING POINT

---

- Q10. **ASK IF Q1=2 ELSE SKIP** Which of the following age categories is your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] in who you help with their travel? If you do not know exactly, just provide a rough guess if you can.

0 to 15 years  
16 to 24 years  
25 to 34 years  
35 to 49 years



50 to 64 years  
65 to 74 years  
75 or older  
Do not wish to say  
Don't know

## QUOTA MONITORING POINT

### Main Questionnaire

Thank you, I can confirm you are in scope for the survey. The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. You do not have to answer questions you do not wish to and you can terminate the interview at any point.

For convenience you can stop and return to complete the questionnaire as many times as you wish, although once submitted you will not be able to enter again.

**DISPLAY IF Q1=2** As a person who helps someone with public transport, when you are answering the questions, consider the journeys or travel arrangements when you were helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] (whom you have said is the main person you help with public transport). In some of the questions, we will be asking what you think or know, please answer from your own viewpoint here, not what the person you help thinks.

---

Q11. **SKIP IF Q7=5** How frequently do you **IF Q1=1** 'travel' **IF Q1=2** 'help your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] travel' by public transport?

Three or more times or more per week  
One to two times per week  
One to three times per month  
Less frequently than once per month  
Unsure

---

Q12. **ASK IF Q7=5 AND Q8=1 ELSE SKIP** How frequently would you use public transport **IF Q1=2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]' if you could?

Three or more times or more per week  
One to two times per week  
One to three times per month  
Less frequently than once per month  
Unsure  
Would not use public transport

---

Q13. **SKIP IF Q7=5** Why do you use public transport **IF Q1=2** 'when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with their travel' ? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

To travel short distances i.e. in and around your local area  
To travel long distances i.e. to get to other towns and cities some distance away  
To commute to work or school  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

---

Q14. **ASK IF Q7=5 AND Q8=1 AND Q12≠6 ELSE SKIP** Why would you use public transport **IF Q1=2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]' ? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

To travel short distances i.e. in and around your local area  
To travel long distances i.e. to get to other towns and cities some distance away  
To commute to work or school  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
Unsure

---

Q15. **SKIP IF Q7=5 OR Q1=2 OR Q12=6 ELSE ASK** When travelling by public transport, do you mainly travel by yourself or with someone else?

By myself  
With a friend/relative/partner  
With a carer/personal assistant

---

Q16. **IF Q1=1 DISPLAY** 'Do you use any form of aid to assist you with your disability/impairment/condition?' **IF Q1=2 DISPLAY** 'Does your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]' use any form of aid to assist them with their disability/impairment/condition? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

No  
Walking stick  
Walking frame  
Crutches  
Wheelchair (self propelled)  
Powered wheelchair  
Mobility scooter  
Hearing aid  
Assistance dog  
Guide cane  
Software to assist with the use of technology  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

---

Q17. **SKIP IF Q7=5 OR Q12=6 ELSE ASK** Earlier you said that you **Q1='used'** **Q1=2** 'helped your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with' the following forms of public transport.

Out of these, what is the main form of public transport you **Q1= 'use'** **Q1=2** 'help them with'? **[SINGLE CODE]**

**INSERT RESPONSES TO Q7 ONLY + ADD ADDITIONAL COSE: 'USE ALL EQUALLY'**  
**NOT ASKED IF ONE RESPONSE GIVE AT Q7 AS WE KNOW MAIN MODE**

Train  
Bus  
Coach  
Other...please provide details **[specify]** **INSERT REPONSE AT Q7**  
Use all equally

---

Q18. **ASK IF Q8=1 ELSE SKIP** Earlier you said that you didn't use public transport **IF Q1=2** 'when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]' but would like to.

What forms of public transport would you potentially like to use? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Train  
Bus  
Coach  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
Unsure

---

Q19. **ASK IF Q8=1 OR 2 ELSE SKIP** What discourages you when considering using public transport **IF Q1=2** 'when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?' Please tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Difficulties when buying tickets  
Tickets too expensive  
Tickets too complicated  
Difficulties with booking seats  
Difficulties with booking the wheelchair area  
Difficulties with getting the information I need  
Difficulties with getting around the station  
Difficult to access the station/stop  
Difficult to know which is my bus/train/service  
Difficult to access the train/bus  
Difficult to get to the seat  
Difficult to get to the wheelchair area  
Difficulties with using onboard amenities such as toilets or refreshments  
Difficult to know when to get off  
Unsure if there is a wheelchair area or if it will be available  
Lack of confidence in provision of service in different areas  
Service too busy at times when I want to travel  
Difficulties with the luggage  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
Unsure

---

Q20. **ASK IF Q7≠5** What forms of assistance do you **Q1=1** 'get' **Q1=2** 'give to your **Q1=2 INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] when travelling on public transport? Please tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Planning routes or selecting services to travel on  
Purchasing tickets  
Booking seats  
Booking the wheelchair area  
Getting to the station or stop  
Finding the service  
Getting onto the platform  
Identifying which is the correct service  
Getting onto the service  
Getting to a seat  
Getting to the wheelchair area  
Getting luggage on/off  
Storing luggage  
Identifying when to get off  
Making connections  
Getting to the toilets  
Purchasing refreshments  
Finding a taxi upon arrival at the destination  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

**ONLY SHOW IF Q1=1** None, but I would like some **LOGIC CHECK – NOT WITH ANY OTHER CODE**  
**ONLY SHOW IF Q1=1** None, I do not need any **LOGIC CHECK – NOT WITH ANY OTHER CODE**

---

**Q21. ASK IF Q7≠5 AND IF Q1=1 AND Q20≠21 ELSE SKIP. IF Q20≠20 DISPLAY** ‘Earlier you said you get the following forms of assistance when using public transport. **INSERT CODES CHOSEN AT Q20 EXCEPT IF Q20=20 AS A LIST**

Would you like any further assistance?’

**IF Q20=20 DISPLAY** ‘Earlier you said you do not have assistance when travelling but would like some. What assistance would you like?’ Please tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Planning routes or selecting services to travel on  
Purchasing tickets  
Booking seats  
Booking the wheelchair area  
Getting to the station or stop  
Finding the service  
Getting onto the platform  
Identifying which is the correct service  
Getting onto the service  
Getting to a seat  
Getting to the wheelchair area  
Getting luggage on/off  
Storing luggage  
Identifying when to get off  
Making connections  
Getting to the toilets  
Purchasing refreshments  
Finding a taxi upon arrival at the destination  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
No, I do not need any further assistance

---

**Q22. ASK IF Q7=1 IF Q1=1 DISPLAY** ‘Do you **IF Q1=2 DISPLAY** ‘Does your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]’ have a disabled persons railcard’?

Yes  
No  
Unsure

---

**Q23. ASK IF Q7=1** Thinking about when you travel by **train**, how satisfied are you **IF Q1=1 DISPLAY** ‘when you travel’ **IF Q1=2 DISPLAY** ‘when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with travel’?

Very dissatisfied  
Dissatisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Satisfied  
Very satisfied

---

**Q24. ASK IF Q23=1 or 2** Why did you say you were **[INSERT RESPONSE IF Q23=1 or 2]** when travelling by train?

**SPECIFY**

---

Q25. **ASK IF Q23=4 or 5** Why did you say **you** were [INSERT RESPONSE IF Q23=4 or 5] when travelling by train?

**SPECIFY**

---

Q26. **ASK WHEN Q7=1 AND OTHER RESPONSES GIVEN AND Q17≠1 ELSE SKIP** Earlier you said that you Q1='used' Q1=2 'helped your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with using' the train, but it is not the main form of transport used.

What would encourage you to use the train more Q1=2 **ADD** 'when helping with travel' ? Please tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

- Help to purchase the tickets
- Help with making a reservation
- Easier access to the station
- Help identifying the correct train
- Easier access to the train
- Help getting to a seat
- Getting to the wheelchair area
- Help with luggage
- Help identifying when to get off
- Help making connections
- Cheaper tickets
- Other...please provide details **[specify]**
- Nothing, do not want to use the train more
- Nothing, the train is not convenient

---

Q27. **ASK WHEN Q7=1 AND Q17=1 ELSE SKIP** Earlier you said that you Q1='used' Q1=2 'helped your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with using' the train and it is the main form of transport used.

Would anything encourage you to use the train even more Q1=2 **ADD** 'when helping with travel'? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

- Help to purchase the tickets
- Help with making a reservation
- Easier access to the station
- Help identifying the correct train
- Easier access to the train
- Help getting to a seat
- Getting to the wheelchair area
- Help with luggage
- Help identifying when to get off
- Help making connections
- Cheaper tickets
- Other...please provide details **[specify]**
- Nothing, do not want to use the train more
- Nothing, the train is not convenient

---

Q28. **ASK WHEN Q7≠1 AND Q17≠1 (if response given here) ELSE SKIP** Earlier you said that didn't use the train as a form of transport Q1=2

‘when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with travel’.

Would anything encourage you to use the train **Q1=2 ADD** ‘when helping them with travel’? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Help with to purchase the tickets  
Help with making a reservation  
Easier access to the station  
Help identifying the correct train  
Easier access to the train  
Help getting to a seat  
Getting to the wheelchair area  
Help with luggage  
Help identifying when to get off  
Help making connections  
Cheaper tickets  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
Nothing, do not want to use the train  
Nothing, the train is not convenient

---

**Q29.** Do you think that adequate assistance is provided by train companies and station staff to people with disabilities or impairments when they travel by rail? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Yes, adequate help is provided by train companies  
Yes, adequate help is provided by station staff  
No  
Unsure

---

**Q30.** What do you think of the quality of information provided to help you use the rail network? This can include information at the station or over the phone or online.

Very poor  
Poor  
Neither good nor poor  
Good  
Very good  
Unsure  
Have never seen/heard any information

---

**Q31.** Which of the following groups of people have specific rights to extra help to enable them to use trains? Please tick all that apply. **MULTICODE - THIS QUESTION CANNOT BE ALTERED ONCE INITIALLY ANSWERED**

**DISPLAY RANDOMLY BUT KEEP ‘OTHER’, ‘NONE’ and ‘UNSURE’ AT THE BOTTOM**

Children  
Older people  
Disabled people  
Pregnant women  
Cyclists  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**  
None  
Unsure

---

Q32. Disabled and older people have specific rights to extra help to enable them to use trains. Have **you** ever read, seen or heard any information from the train companies about disabled passenger rights of assistance?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember

---

Q33. Which of the following areas do **you** think these rights of assistance cover? Tick all that apply.

**MULTICODE**

- Booking, reservation and contact processes
- Buying tickets
- Guaranteed seats on services
- Assistance at the station when booked in advance
- Assistance at the station when not booked advance
- Signs and information given at the station
- Assistance with luggage when booked in advance
- Assistance with luggage when not booked in advance
- Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when booked in advance
- Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when not booked in advance
- Assistance with left luggage
- Assistance with connections when booked in advance
- Assistance with connections when not booked in advance
- Individual assistance when services are disrupted
- Discounts on rail fares
- That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when **booked** in advance
- That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when **not booked** in advance
- Other...please provide details **[specify]**
- Unsure **logic check – not with other codes**

---

Q33a What would **you** like these rights of assistance to cover? Tick all that apply.

**MULTICODE**

- Booking, reservation and contact processes
- Buying tickets
- Guaranteed seats on services
- Assistance at the station when booked in advance
- Assistance at the station when not booked advance
- Signs and information given at the station
- Assistance with luggage when booked in advance
- Assistance with luggage when not booked in advance
- Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when booked in advance
- Assistance getting to platform and on/off train when not booked in advance
- Assistance with left luggage
- Assistance with connections when booked in advance
- Assistance with connections when not booked in advance
- Individual assistance when services are disrupted
- Discounts on rail fares
- That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that

you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when **booked** in advance

That the train company will provide free accessible transport for you to a station that you can use where your local station is not accessible to you (for example it has no lift) when **not booked** in advance

Other...please provide details **[specify]**

Unsure **logic check – not with other codes**

---

Q34. Are **you** aware of any schemes to help people with disabilities or impairments to use the train?

Yes

No

Unsure

Can't remember

---

Q35. **ASK IF Q34 = 1** Do **you** know what this scheme is called? If you know more than one, please provide details for each one.

**No, don't know the name**

**SPECIFY**

---

Q36. The main scheme to assist rail travellers with a disability or impairment is called 'Passenger Assist'.

Passenger Assist is a service provided by train companies to disabled passengers and others who require assistance with any part of their train journey. Staff can help you plan your journey, book tickets and make reservations; they can also assist you at stations and on board trains, with anything from changing platforms to finding your seat.

Passenger Assist is free and available to anyone who needs assistance due to a disability, temporary impairment, or older age. No railcard is required.

Those who help with travel can also request this service on behalf of someone else. Booking can be done over the phone, in person at a station or online.

Have you heard of 'Passenger Assist' before?

Yes

No

Unsure

Can't remember

---

Q37. **ASK IF Q36=1 AND Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** Have you ever used 'Passenger Assist' before **Q1=2** 'when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with rail travel'?

Yes

No

Unsure

Can't remember



---

Q38. **ASK IF Q37≠1 ELSE SKIP** Do you think you would use 'Passenger Assist' in the future [Q1=2 'when helping your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with rail travel'?

Yes  
Perhaps  
No

---

Q39. **ASK IF Q37=1 ELSE SKIP** What assistance did Q1=2 'you' Q1=2 'your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]' receive from 'Passenger Assist'? Tick all that apply.  
**MULTICODE**

Help with planning the journey  
Help with booking seats  
Help with booking the wheelchair area  
Help with getting in/out of the station  
Help with buying tickets  
Help getting to the platform  
Help identifying the correct train  
Help changing platforms  
Help boarding the train  
Help with luggage  
Help getting to the seat/s  
Help getting to the wheelchair area  
Help identifying when to get off  
Other...please provide details [specify]  
Can't remember

---

Q40. **ASK IF Q37=1** Overall, how would **you** rate the experience of using 'Passenger Assist'?

Very poor  
Poor  
Neither good nor poor  
Good  
Very Good  
Can't remember

---

Q41. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** You will now be asked a series of questions about the last time you **IF Q1 = 1** 'travelled by train' **IF Q1 = 2** 'helped your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] with their rail travel. If you didn't help with a particular aspect we ask about then select 'Not applicable'.

To begin, how did **you** find **IF Q1 = 1** 'making your travel arrangements?' **IF Q1 = 2** 'helping make the travel arrangements of your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] ?' This can include arrangements made at the station, on the phone, online or reading timetables or service information.

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember

Not applicable

---

Q42. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** How did **you** find getting into the station **IF Q1 = 2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]? If you used more than one station, think of the first station in your journey.

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q43. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** How did **you** find passing through the ticket hall area of the station **IF Q1 = 2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q44. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** How did **you** find getting to the platform **IF Q1 = 2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q45. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** How did **you** find identifying the train you needed **IF Q1 = 2** 'when travelling with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q46. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** How did **you** find identifying when you needed to get off the train **IF Q1 = 2** 'when travelling with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q47. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** If you needed to change trains, how did **you** find the process of changing trains **IF Q1 = 2** 'with your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client]?

Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither easy nor difficult  
Fairly easy  
Easy  
Very easy  
Can't remember  
Not applicable

---

Q48. **ASK IF Q7=1 ELSE SKIP** Did you feel you were treated less favourably or received a poorer service because of **Q1=1** 'your disability or impairment' **ELSE Q1=2** 'the disability or impairment of your **INSERT CODE FROM Q5** [ie child/children; spouse/partner; friend; relative; client] at any point during your **train journey or booking process?** Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

Yes, during the booking process  
Yes, during the train journey  
No **Logic – not with other code**  
Can't remember **Logic – not with other code**

### Classification questions

That was very helpful. Finally, would you please answer some questions about yourself? The personal information you provide during this survey will be kept confidential by Accent and will not be disclosed to third parties.

---

Q49. Are you...

Male  
Female

---

Q50. What is your employment status?

Working full-time (30+ hours a week)  
Working part-time (8-29 hours a week)  
Not working – looking for work  
Not working – not looking for work  
Full-time student  
Part-time student  
Retired  
Retired unpaid voluntary work  
Looking after family/home  
Other...please provide details **[specify]**

Q51. To help us analyse your responses can you tell me which band below best describes your total annual household income, before tax and other deductions?

	Per Week	Per Year
A	Up to £300	Up to £15,600
D	£301-£1000	£15,601 - £52,000
C	Over £1000	Over £52,000
D	Prefer not to say	

Q52. Similarly, to help us with the analysis, do you receive any of the benefits listed below? Tick all that apply. **MULTICODE**

A	Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment
B	Attendance Allowance
C	Employment and Support Allowance
D	Industrial Injuries Benefit
E	Child Tax Credit
F	Constant Attendance Allowance
G	Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
H	Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
H	Income Support
J	Working tax credit
K	Child tax credit
L	Housing benefit
M	None of these
N	Other <b>PLEASE SPECIFY IN THE BOX BELOW</b>

Q53. How would you describe the occupation type of the chief income earner in your household?

Senior managerial or professional  
 Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional  
 Supervisor; clerical; junior managerial, administrative or professional  
 Manual worker (with industry qualifications)  
 Manual worker (with no qualifications)  
 Unemployed  
 Retired  
 Student

Q53a **IF Q53 = RETIRED, ASK else SKIP** Does the chief income earner have a state pension, a private pension or both?

State only  
 Private only  
 Both

Q53b **IF Q53a = PRIVATE OR BOTH, ASK else SKIP** How would you describe the chief income earner's occupation type before retirement?

Senior managerial or professional  
 Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional  
 Supervisor; clerical; junior managerial, administrative or professional  
 Manual worker (with industry qualifications)  
 Manual worker (with no qualifications)  
 None of these

---

Q54. Can you provide the **first** part of your postcode so we have an idea where the people who took part in the survey live.

Enter Postcode – first part only

---

Q55. We really appreciate the time that you have given us today. Would you be willing to be contacted again for clarification purposes or be invited to take part in other research for the Office of Rail Regulation?

Yes, for both clarification and further research

Yes, for clarification only

Yes, for further research only

No

---

Q56. **IF Q55=1 or 3** We will be conducting a series of telephone interviews soon, to discuss these issues in more detail – would you be interested in doing this? This would take about 30 minutes of your time over the phone at a time convenient to you. Those who take part would receive an incentive for doing so as a thank you for their time (a £20 cheque).

We would be discussing things like how you prefer to travel around and a recent journey you have taken, or why you choose not to use public transport if you don't use it. Note, not all people selecting 'Yes' or 'Perhaps' will necessarily be followed up for the telephone interview.

Yes

Perhaps, but I would like more information first

No

---

Q57. **IF Q56=1 or 2** Please enter the following details so we can call you with more information. Note, we may not call all those who enter their details. These details would not be used for any other purpose and would not be passed onto any third party.

First name \_\_\_\_\_

Last name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you. This research was conducted under the terms of the MRS code of conduct and is completely confidential.

If you require more information about people with disabilities travelling by train you can go to the following websites:

[http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations/disabled\\_passengers.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/disabled_passengers.aspx)

<http://www.disability-onboard.co.uk/passenger-assistance/>

<http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/>

<b>SYSTEM INFORMATION</b> Time interview completed:
--

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Topic Guide**

Good morning/afternoon/evening... My name is ... and I work for an independent market research company called Accent. We are conducting research for the Office of Rail Regulation looking at how accessible rail travel is. Thank you very much for agreeing to help us with this research.

The research is being conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society (MRS) and also with the Data Protection Act, with whom Accent is registered. This means that everything you say is confidential and will not be attributed to you personally unless you give your permission for us to pass your comments on in named format.

Our discussion is being recorded. This is standard market research procedure and is to ensure accuracy – so I do not have to try to remember what you have said – and for analysis purposes only. The recordings will not be passed to any third party not associated with the research project, and in our reporting of the findings from this research everything that you say will be confidential and will be reported in grouped format only, again, unless you give your permission for us to pass your comments as an anonymous case study.

The discussion will last around 30 minutes.

Can I stress that we are looking for your views. There are no right or wrong answers.

### **Background 10 mins (10)**

- **CHECK IF PERSON IS CARER OR NOT AND WHAT TRANSPORT THEY USE (OR NOT) FROM LOG**
- **CHECK WHAT NEEDS/REQUIREMENTS THEY HAVE FOR TRAVEL FROM LOG**
- First of all, I'd like to get a bit more detail about you and your travel arrangements.
- Can you tell me a bit about how your/their disability impacts travel?
- Can you tell me a bit about how you travel around at the moment?
  - **Probe for more info about how often and why – cross ref. with log**
  - **If do not use public transport – how do they get around?**
- What about using public transport? **CHECK LOG FOR MAIN AND OTHERS AND PROBE EACH ONE**
- *If appropriate* Which is/would be your preferred method of public transport – why?
  - **Probe for positive points – compare and contrast with other forms**
- *If appropriate* Which is/would be your least favourite method of public transport – why?

- **Probe for negative points – compare and contrast with other forms**
- We mentioned ‘Passenger Assist’ in the recent survey you did – I note that you were **UNAWARE/AWARE [CHECK LOG]** of this.
  - **IF AWARE** – Can you tell me a little more about how you are aware of this scheme?
  - **IF UNAWARE** – Would this scheme be useful to you? Why/why not?

**IF REQUIRED** Passenger Assist is a service provided by train companies to disabled passengers and others who require assistance with any part of their train journey. Staff can help you plan your journey, book tickets and make reservations; they can also assist you at stations and on board trains, with anything from changing platforms to finding your seat.

Passenger Assist is free and available to anyone who needs assistance due to a disability, temporary impairment, or older age. No railcard is required.

Those who help with travel can also request this service on behalf of someone else. Booking can be done over the phone, in person at a station or online.

## **FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS SKIP IF NOT: RECENT JOURNEY 10 mins (20)**

- You’ve already given some information about your travel in the survey but I’d like to talk in more detail about a recent journey you have made.
- So, can you think back to the last journey you made using public transport. To start, what was the journey for?
- **TRY TO GET A STORY ‘FLOW’ BUT PROBE FOR POINTS BELOW AND SEEK POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE POINTS TO BUILD A PICTURE – CHECK WHAT FORMS OF TRAVEL THEY USE (INC MAIN FORM)**
  - How did you decide which form of transport to use?
  - How did you plan your travel?
  - Did you need to seek out any information to help you plan your travel?
  - Did you buy your tickets in advance?
  - How did you travel to the station?
  - How was getting into the station/stop/through the ticket hall/to the platform?
  - How was finding your service?
  - How was getting on/getting to your seat/storing luggage?
  - Did you make any connections? How was this?
  - How did you find getting off the service/exiting the station/getting to your final destination



- **IF TRAIN USER** Did you use 'Passenger Assist' at any point? Good/Bad? **Probe if not already discussed**
- How would you rate your journey? Good/bad?
  - **If bad** – would you expect better service? From whom? Was this typical?
  - **If good** – was this typical?
- Are there any parts of the journey you find difficult? / easy? **Can include arranging the travel**
  - Why is this?
  - What would help?
- In a perfect world would you change anything about your public transport travel?
- **IF USE OTHER FORMS** How does your rail travel compare with other forms of public transport you use? Better/Worse? Why?

**FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT - SKIP IF USER:  
10 mins (20)**

- You've said that you do not use public transport but would like to – why is that?
  - Probe for problems with meeting personal requirements?
  - Cost?
  - Due to where they live?
- Did you ever use public transport?
  - What forms did you use?
  - How was this/these experience(s)? **Probe for experiences with different formats**
  - What did you like/dislike?
  - Why is it different now?
- In a perfect world would you change anything about how you travel about?
  - What would make travelling by public transport easier?
  - What would make travelling by rail easier?

- **IF UNAWARE OF PASSENGER ASSIST** Would you consider rail travel now you have heard of Passenger Assist? **[CHECK LOG]**

## **AWARENESS OF RIGHTS 7 mins (27)**

- **CHECK LOG FOR LEVEL OF AWARENESS**

- **IF AWARE**

- How did you know about disabled passenger rights?
- What information have you seen?
- What did you think about this information?
- Would/Do these rights encourage you to travel by rail (more)? Why/Why not?
- What do you think about how disabled people are treated when arranging and travelling by train?
- Anything that could improve travel by rail?

- **IF UNAWARE**

- The survey you did told you a little information about disabled passenger rights. What did you think about this? **Probe for whether this was a surprise or if it made sense – positive/negative?**
- What did you think about the areas the rights covered? **(Replay)**
- Would these rights encourage you to travel by rail (more)? Why/Why not?
- What do you think about how disabled people are treated when arranging and travelling by train?
- Anything that could improve travel by rail?

- **IF USED 'PASSENGER ASSIST'**

- You mentioned in your survey that you had used 'Passenger Assist' before. How was this? What did they help you with?
- How did you find the service?
- Would you have like them to do more?
- Where you aware of all the things they could help you with?

## **FINAL POINT 30 mins (30)**

- Just to finish off, as you are aware, this research is for the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). If there was one thing you wanted to say to them about travelling by rail as a disabled person what would it be? **Probe for details.**  
**Thank you for your help**

## ADMINISTRATION

### Collect address and cheque info if not on log:

NAME FOR CHEQUE:

ADDRESS

(Note, this can be donated to charity if the person wishes)

CHARITY NAME:

### PERMISSIONS

I mentioned at the beginning of the interview that all of your responses will be treated in complete confidence in line with Market Research Society guidelines, unless you give your permission for them to be attributed to you. Are you happy for the answers that you gave me today to be written into a case study? This would still be anonymous, but we would use what you've told me to highlight the particular issues that you face. If you are not happy for them to be used in this way I can confirm that they will remain confidential and will only be used in grouped format for analysis purposes. We would also if you give permission for your anonymised transcript to be passed to the client research team? **TICK AS APPROPRIATE**

- Yes, I am happy for my answers to be used in a case study (they will be anonymised)
- Yes, I am happy for my anonymised transcript to be passed to the client research team
- No, keep my answers anonymous and in grouped format.

Can I also ask whether you would be happy to be contacted again for clarification or to take part in other research for the Office of Rail Regulation? **MODERATOR: PLEASE TICK ONE BOX**

- Yes, clarification and further research
- Yes, clarification only
- Yes, research only
- No

If more information about people with disabilities travelling by train is required:

[http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations/disabled\\_passengers.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/disabled_passengers.aspx)

<http://www.disability-onboard.co.uk/passenger-assistance/>

<http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/>

