

Will everyone get to the Games?

Mystery shopping the Olympic and Paralympic venue stations

May 2012

Will everyone get to the Games?

London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public.

Our role is to:

- Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media
- Consult with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users
- Investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers, and
- Monitor trends in service quality.

Our aim is to press in all that we do for a better travel experience all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.

Published by:

London TravelWatch
6 Middle Street
London EC1A 7JA

Phone: 020 7505 9000
Fax: 020 7505 9003

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Foreword

London has been preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games for many years with a commitment to ensure they are accessible for all.

There has been a strong base on which to build. All of London's bus service are fully accessible with a rising number of bus stops are also accessible¹. London Underground has been steadily introducing new lifts and ramps to allow step-free access to platforms. It has introduced new rolling stock and platform humps to enable level boarding from platform to train. We understand that almost all the new Metropolitan line trains will be introduced by Games time which will greatly improve access to the Underground.

Similarly National Rail has seen steady major investment (and continues to do so) in both new trains and station infrastructure to increase the physical access to the railway.

Less obviously the introduction of tactile paving, better automated customer information systems, better training and improvements to National Rail's Assisted Passenger Reservation System (APRS), now called Passenger Assist, further improves access.

In the last few years this investment has been targeted at key stations and interchanges with a view to the impending Games and access to the Olympic and Paralympic Venues. To see how all this planning and investment has addressed access to the Olympic and Paralympic venues London TravelWatch undertook a series of visits to all the venues and associated stations. We were accompanied by staff and volunteers from Transport for All, one of London's most effective champions for accessible transport. We are most grateful for their help and guidance as to what really matters for disabled passengers on the transport system.

We found all the Olympic and Paralympic stations were either step-free from street to train now or some intervention was planned that would mean the station would be accessible by Games time. This is a significant series of interventions over and above the present situation and transforms the accessibility of these stations.

¹ An accessible bus stop must have a traffic management order in place, signs and lines in place. The kerb should be a prescribed height above the carriageway and there should be no impediments next to the kerb.

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We identified the need for additional tactile paving at the top and bottom of staircases. Some has been installed at our request. We hope more can be installed before games time.

We found staff most helpful and the systems for assisting passengers to platforms, onto trains and then for calling ahead to the arrival station all worked well.

All our bus trips were successful. Drivers pulled up to the kerb and operated the ramps successfully. Passengers moved to accommodate our wheelchair using volunteers.

There were some maintenance issues. Three lifts were out of operation when we visited; a customer information on a Southern train, vital for visually impaired and hard-of hearing passengers, had failed; a DLR audio public address system was too quiet and a public address system in a lift at Green Park was distorted.

There were two big disappointments. At Greenwich, West Brompton, West Ham, Hampton Court and Paddington stations there is a need for minor street works that could benefit all. Similarly at Paddington station the Praed Street ramp is a real barrier to movement, particularly for wheelchair users. Some minor street works could address this. The recent addition of a traffic barrier at the top of this ramp further exacerbated these access problems.

In addition to these interventions there will be many more staff available to assist passengers during the Games. A key issue for Transport for All is whether or not these staff are able to assist interchange between service, from National Rail to Underground, from Underground to DLR. We hope this will be part of their role.

So in answer to our question "Will everyone get to the Games?" We think they will and we hope that this report is a contribution to ensuring that all will enjoy them.

Sharon Grant, Chair London TravelWatch

Executive Summary

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) are committed to ensuring that London 2012 is everyone's Games, with services and facilities to meet all accessibility requirements.

London TravelWatch, in partnership with Transport for All, London's accessible transport campaign, has visited all of the London venues (bar Lord's cricket ground) and their associated stations to look at how accessible they are.

We have found that all stations associated with the Olympic and Paralympic venues are, or will be by Games time, step-free from street to platform.

All of the bus journeys we made with our volunteer travellers were good journeys for us.

There are locations in some stations where the installation of tactile paving, particularly at the top of stairs would be invaluable to visually impaired passengers. Around some stations there should be some minor street works to integrate the stations with the street.

We found all the staff that we asked for assistance were obliging and well trained. But, there will need to be additional staff and training to help passengers on and off of Underground trains using manual boarding ramps. Staff will be required to assist passengers at stations, particularly between services: from LUL services onto DLR trains and vice-versa, from National Rail trains to LUL and DLR services. Ideally a single staff member will assist passengers throughout their interchange.

Maintenance is vital. We found three lifts out-of-service, but accepted assurances that this was a higher number than usual due to preventative maintenance prior to the Games. We noted customer announcements on trains not working and a distorted public address system in a lift. All these are important for visually impaired and hard-of hearing passengers and should be functional by Games time.

Mapping, journey planning, communication and publicity needs to be comprehensive detailed because accessibility is not black and white. Different passengers have different needs. For example, what can be a bridgeable gap for a fit passenger in a manual wheelchair can be impossible to negotiate by a passenger in an electric wheelchair.

1 Introduction

There are 14 London venues, including Hampton Court.

1. **The Olympic Park**
2. **Greenwich Park**
3. **North Greenwich Arena (Greenwich Millennium Dome)**
4. **The Royal Artillery barracks**
5. **Excel centre**
6. **Earls Court**
7. **Hyde Park**
8. **The Mall**
9. **Horse Guards Parade**
10. **Wimbledon tennis club**
11. **Hampton Court**
12. **Wembley Stadium**
13. **Wembley Arena**
14. **Lord's Cricket Ground**

We did not visit Lord's as it has no associated step-free station. The suggested route to Lord's is via King's Cross and a shuttle bus. St John's Wood station is nearby, but it is not step-free. Local bus services provide accessible public transport

London 2012 suggests these venues are accessible via the stations in the table below:

A group of Transport for All volunteer travellers visited these venues over three days looking generally at accessibility issues, but particularly from a manual wheelchair users and blind and partially sighted traveller's perspective.

Olympic and Paralympic venues and associated accessible stations

Venue	Station	Station	Station
Olympic Park	Stratford NR*, DLR** and LUL*** station and bus station	West Ham NR and LUL station	
Greenwich Park	Greenwich NR and DLR station		
North Greenwich Arena	North Greenwich LUL and bus station	Charlton NR station	
The Royal Artillery Barracks	Woolwich Arsenal NR and DLR station		
Excel	Custom House DLR station	Prince Regent DLR station	
Earls Court	Earls Court LUL station	West Brompton NR and LUL station	
Hyde Park	Paddington NR station	Green Park LUL station	
The Mall and Horse Guards Parade	Westminster LUL station	Charing Cross NR station	Green Park LUL station
Wimbledon	Southfields LUL station	Wimbledon NR and LUL station	
Lord's Cricket Ground	Marylebone NR station	King's Cross St Pancras station via shuttle bus	
Wembley Arena and Stadium	Wembley Stadium NR station	Wembley Park LUL station	
Hampton Court	Hampton Court NR station		

* NR: National Rail

** DLR Docklands Light Rail

***LUL London Underground Limited

2 Access issues at each Olympic and Paralympic venue and associated interchange

General access from street to platform

All of the stations we visited were step-free between the street and the platform. However, on the days of our visits there were three platforms where the lift was out of action at i) North Greenwich station; ii) Greenwich DLR station and iii) Earls Court station, District line. The North Greenwich station lift had a notice that said the lift would be out for a few days for maintenance. The Greenwich DLR station lift had been out of use for 16 weeks for refurbishment. There was no notice as to the reason. We understand from TfL that a greater than normal number of lifts have been out of action recently undergoing preventative maintenance ahead of the games and these three lifts are now back in use.

Access from platform to train



All of the Olympic and Paralympic venue station platforms are step-free, however not all trains are level with the platform allowing level boarding. In some cases there is a considerable step and gap. There are various systems adopted to bridge this gap and step.

There are new trains being brought into service on some of the London Underground lines that will mean level boarding between platform and train. This will greatly improve access. It is expected that almost all of the new Metropolitan line trains will have been introduced before the games.

On some platforms where new rolling stock does not deal with level boarding London Underground are introducing platform humps to bring a short stretch of the platform up to the train level. This system will be applied to step-free platforms on the Victoria and Piccadilly lines. Our volunteers were particularly pleased to see the installation of platform humps on the Piccadilly line at Earls Court. Signs are being installed above the platform humps to identify their location.

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Where platform humps are not planned for London Underground platforms that are step-free it is anticipated that manual ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations, will be in use during the Games. Passengers using ramps will be met at their destination station as appropriate. It should be noted that further new rolling stock is planned for the District, Hammersmith and City and Circle lines and so installing platform humps at these stations only to remove them later is probably not a sensible option.

National Rail operators are obligated to assist elderly and disabled passengers. To do this all participate in Passenger Assist, known until recently as the Assisted Passenger Reservation Service or APRS. This is a pre-booked service, however, where staff are available they will offer assistance on a turn-up-and-go basis.

When we visited National Rail station staff were available to help without prior notification and responded professionally to requests for assistance. The system worked insofar as staff helped our wheelchair using volunteer onto the train using a manual ramp, the destination station was informed and a staff member was available to help the wheelchair user off the train.

It should be noted that all Docklands Light Rail (DLR) stations are all step-free from street to train with level access between platform and train, but that they are generally not staffed.

Help for visually impaired travellers

Subject to the availability of staff the Underground escorts partially sighted and blind passengers onto the platforms and onto their train. It also arranges for the passenger to be met at their destination. This service is offered without pre-booking. The service is available where there is an interchange between Underground and DLR. During Games time, with additional staff at DLR stations, there will be similar help available at staffed DLR stations for passengers to access platforms and on and off of trains. Staff will also be able to call ahead to staffed DLR stations to request assistance for alighting passengers.

Visually impaired travellers really value tactile paving to orientate themselves. It is especially useful at the top and bottom of stairs and is generally installed as standard. Where it is not installed, particularly when indicating steps or the edge of a platform, it is potentially dangerous. However, there were several locations where it had not been installed at the top of a flight of stairs. We reported the lack of tactile paving at Greenwich DLR station and understand this will be installed by the end of May 2012. We hope this can happen more generally across the Olympic and Paralympic venue stations, though we understand this is not planned.

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Audio information

Audio information is nowadays much improved. It is of great value to visually impaired and to hard-of-hearing travellers who can understand clear audio, but not distorted or very quiet information. It is generally clear and now widely used. However, we noted three instances (on a Southern train, a DLR train and a lift at Green Park station) where the system was either not working, too quiet or distorted such that it was of little use. We hope these systems will be checked and maintained prior to the Games.

The availability of staff

Some of the issues that disabled travellers have can be dealt with by making available staff who are trained to understand their needs. TfL tell us that there will be many additional staff and trained volunteers to help disabled passengers.

Bus services



We used several bus services during our visits. Generally the buses and the bus stops serving the interchange were accessible, but not all. Those that are not are reported below. We hope that where minor streetworks can resolve this then the local highway authority will carry them out.

The local street environment around the Olympic and Paralympic venue stations

The biggest disappointment of our visits was outside of some of the stations. Disabled passengers need wide, clear, level and continuous pavements. They need pedestrian crossings demarked by tactile paving. We found kerbs that had not been dropped, tactile paving missing and numerous obstructions on the pavement. The latter is a particular problem around Paddington Station. TfL has raised these issues with the relevant Highway Authorities and it is hoped that some of these works may be undertaken before Games time.

Pedestrian crossings

Disabled travellers may need more time to cross the road safely. At all the crossings we used, the time was sufficient. In addition, at all the crossing we checked, the conical rotating cones and audio signals were working, ensuring that visually impaired travellers were aware of when it was safe to cross. With the exception of Southfields station, we found that there was sufficient provision of pedestrian crossings.

Station signs

All Olympic and Paralympic venue stations will have an overlay of Olympic and Paralympic signage, though some visually impaired travellers may struggle with the planned white-on-pink pallet as this is low contrast.

Accessible Shuttle buses

Accessible shuttle buses are to serve many of the venues. They will be an adapted vehicle with a driver and trained assistant which are able to carry disabled passengers and multiple wheelchair users. These services will operate to and from many London 2012 venues from the venue's recommended accessible station. They will be solely for disabled spectators, are free and do not need to be pre-booked.

Accessible shuttles will also operate between key National Rail termini in London where there are limited onward step-free journeys. They will also run from transport hubs which are a significant distance away from venue entrances, park-and-ride sites, remote accessible parking sites and coach parks.

Accessible toilets

Some disabled travellers plan their journeys around the availability of toilets. London TravelWatch has highlighted before the need for accessible toilets at interchanges (London for the Continent, published January 2003). Where they are available at or around stations they should be clearly signed. Additional temporary facilities would be welcome.

Publicity

Disabled passengers, more than others, need accurate and detailed information if they are to have the confidence to use public transport, particularly when using lines and stations that are unfamiliar to them. One of the criticisms from disabled passengers of TfL mapping has been the use of the white wheelchair symbol for a station where there is only step-free access from street to platform and not street to train (where the blue wheelchair symbol is used). These differences are important and need to be well communicated to passengers, and to staff so that

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they can advise passengers on journey planning appropriate to their access needs. A step-free Tube guide detailing step and gap distances is available at: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/step-free-tube-guide-map.pdf>

This and many other helpful guides are available at:

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/gettingaround/accessibility-guides/default.aspx>

3 The venues

1. The Olympic Park

i) Stratford station

For a number of years significant new rail infrastructure has been built at Stratford station with new lines, platforms and lifts. The streets around Stratford station are level and continuous with appropriately dropped kerbs.

As such many of the services are step-free from street to train by our volunteers except for the Central line and National Rail services where there is a step between the platform and the train. The National Rail operators routinely use manual boarding ramps to assist wheelchair users. LUL will be using manual boarding ramps on the Central line at Stratford.

We noted that there was an error in the signage at one end of platform 10 where the signs implied there was a lift between it and the Overground platforms. In fact the access is by ramp. It has also been brought to our attention that better signing to the lift up to the Westfield shopping centre entrance from the station forecourt is needed. TfL is to address these issues with additional signage during Games time

There may well be queuing for the lifts at Stratford station during busy times. This issue is recognised by TfL who plan to manage lift queues with dedicated, trained staff.

With the use of manual boarding ramps during Games time on the Central line platforms all of Stratford station rail services will be step-free.

Measures that would further improve access at Stratford station would be:

- Platform humps for the National Rail platforms.
- Platform humps for the Central line.

ii) West Ham station

National Rail, Jubilee line and DLR will be step-free from street to train.

The District and Hammersmith and City lines are step-free between street and platform, but not between platform and train. However, during Games time manual boarding ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations will be used.

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The northbound bus stop P, directly outside West Ham station, is not accessible due to the kerb height.

With the use of manual boarding ramps during Games time on the District and Hammersmith and City line platforms all of West Ham station rail services will be step-free.

Measures that would further improve access at West Ham station would be:

- The kerb height of bus stop P needs raising.

2. Greenwich Park

i) **Greenwich station**

Greenwich station has had much work undertaken over recent years with the arrival of the DLR. The DLR is an accessible railway, lifts have been provided between DLR platforms and the street and National Rail services. The station forecourt has been much improved and provides an accessible route out of the station to the street and the eastbound bus stop.

On the day of our visit we found the lift between the Lewisham bound platform and the interconnecting subway was out of use undergoing refurbishment. It had been out of use for 16 weeks. TfL tell us the lift is now back in full service.

There was no tactile paving at the top and bottom of the steps down from the Greenwich station, DLR Lewisham bound platform. We are pleased to hear that tactile paving is currently being installed during engineering hours.

Bus stop F, Greenwich, National Maritime Museum has a kerb level with the carriageway and as such is not accessible to wheelchair users. The stop at the opposite side of the road is similar. Also stop S, Trafalgar Estate has a sub-standard kerb height. TfL tell us that the two stops in front of the Maritime Museum will not be used during Games time due to security reasons and so will not be prioritised for works, However, TfL have are working with Greenwich Council to restore the original kerb height.

Bus stop P, at Greenwich station, is located on a very narrow footway, further narrowed by a waste bin. However, TfL tell us that this stop will be relocated to a location with a wider pavement before Games time.

Generally we were disappointed with the pavements around the station. The pavements along Greenwich High Road near the DLR entrance, along the entrance road to the DLR station and at the Deptford Creek side of the station all need dropped kerbs or similar treatments. The Deptford Creek side of the station is inaccessible due to parked vehicles and the lack of a level, continuous pavement.

This station will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time. We welcome the works to install new tactile paving at the top and bottom of the stairs down to the subway.

Measures to further improve access at Greenwich station would be:

- Streetworks around the station to provide a level and continuous footway.
- The reinstatement of the differential height between various bus stop kerbs and the carriageway.

3. North Greenwich Arena (Greenwich Millennium Dome/O2)

i) North Greenwich station and bus station

This is one of the very modern Jubilee line stations with an associated bus station that has been built to be accessible. We were pleased to see a well signed accessible toilet. The lift to the ticket hall was out of action on the day of our visit and as such we were unable to visit the platforms, however we are confident that our volunteers would be able to access the trains. The lift being out of service was part of planned maintenance and a notice explained that three days of work were being undertaken.

This station will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time.

ii) Charlton station

We arrived by bus and alighted at a purpose built bus stopping area. There was a step-free route to both platforms and tactile paving at the appropriate locations, although there was a steep slope in front of the crossing and our wheelchair-using volunteer needed assistance. Following an unbooked request to the station staff our wheelchair using volunteer was assisted onto the train using the manual boarding ramp. The staff called ahead to Woolwich Arsenal station to alert them to our arrival and a staff member was available to meet us and assist our wheelchair using volunteer off of the train.

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This station will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time. It should be advised that journeys should be pre-booked.

4. The Royal Artillery Barracks

i) Woolwich Arsenal station

Woolwich Arsenal station is a recently refurbished station following the arrival of the DLR service. The DLR service is step-free from street to platform. The National Rail platforms are step-free between street and the platform. National Rail trains are accessible using a manual boarding ramp with staff assistance. There have been recent street works and a new public square outside of the station that has delivered level continuous footways. There was an accessible toilet available. The only disappointment to our volunteers was the signage to the lifts and the numbering system for the level buttons -2, -1, 0 etc.

This station will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time.

Measures to further improve access at Woolwich Arsenal station would be:

- Improved signage to the lifts and a better labelling system for the lift buttons making it clear which button to press for which train service etc.

5. Excel Centre

i) Custom House station

This station will be the arrivals station during Games time. It is part of a modern integrated venue / station and was accessible to our volunteers.

ii) Prince Regent station

This station will be the departures station during Games time. It is part of a modern integrated venue / station and was accessible to our volunteers.

6. Earls Court

i) Earls Court station

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This station serves Earls Court and is an interchange between the Piccadilly and District lines. The introduction of ramped access to the ticket hall from Earls Court Road and the installation of lifts mean all the platforms are step-free from the street. On the day of our visit the eastbound District line platform was out of service for scheduled pre-Games maintenance. We understand that it is now back in service.

Recently platform humps have been installed on the Piccadilly line platforms which was pleasing for our volunteers, but to date the publicly available maps do not reflect this with the blue wheelchair logo. We are assured that they will do by Games time.

The District line is step-free between street and platform, but not between platform and train. However, during Games time manual boarding ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations will be used.

There is no tactile paving at the top and bottom of the stairs down to the District line. TfL tell us tactile paving will not be introduced prior to the Games.

Outside the station there was a good standard of level and continuous pavement. Tactile paving had been introduced at the pedestrian crossing of Warwick Road.

With the use of manual boarding ramps during Games time on the District line platforms all of Earls Court station rail services will be step-free and generally accessible.

Measures to further improve access at Earls Court station would be:

- The introduction of tactile paving at the top and bottom of the stairs down to the District line from ticket office level.

ii) **West Brompton station**

West Brompton station is the interchange between National Rail's London Overground service and the District line. Only the National Rail lines are step-free. The station is managed by London Underground staff who do not have the training to allow them to assist passengers using manual boarding ramps. Thus a passenger wishing to board at West Brompton cannot arrive and expect to be assisted. Booked assistance can be provided by the train operator's staff.

There is no tactile paving at the top and bottom of the stairs. TfL tell us tactile paving will not be introduced prior to the Games.

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There is a formal crossing adjacent to the station, but no tactile paving has been installed. TfL has raised this with the local Highway Authority, L. B. Hammersmith and Fulham

National Rail services will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time if the journey is pre-booked through Passenger Assist.

Measures to further improve access at West Brompton station would be:

- London Underground staff could be trained to use manual boarding ramps.
- Tactile paving should be introduced at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Tactile paving should be introduced at the nearby controlled crossing.

7. Hyde Park

i) Paddington station

As well as an Olympic and Paralympic Venue interchange Paddington will be one of the most important gateway stations for the games. Paddington station National Rail platforms are step-free with the use of manual boarding ramps, but the Underground platforms are not.

There are step-free routes to the street via the Praed Street ramp, however one pavement is not step-free due to the lack of dropped kerbs and the other is step-free only if you join it at the bottom end, otherwise you have to mount the kerb. The situation has been made worse recently by the introduction of a traffic barrier at the top of the slope. London TravelWatch has asked Network Rail, on several



occasions, for minor street works to be undertaken on the Praed Street ramp, but so far to no avail.

The local streets around the stations are not clear, continuous and level. There is too much clutter (guard rails, A-boards etc) and this should be cleared away.

National Rail services at Paddington will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time if the journey is pre-booked through Passenger Assist.

Measures to further improve access at Paddington would be:

- There are a series of street works inside and outside the station that should be undertaken as a matter of urgency to improve the step-free route from the concourse to the local streets. Failing that, staff should be posted at the top and bottom of the Praed Street ramp to stop wheelchair using passengers using the Hilton Hotel pavement and to lift the traffic barrier for wheelchair-using passengers.
- The streets around Paddington station need to be cleared of highway obstructions.

ii) **Green Park station**

Green Park station has very recently had major lift installation works undertaken to improve access between the street and all three lines: Victoria, Piccadilly and the Jubilee line. This has included the installation of platform humps on the Victoria line platforms. Presently there are steps between platform and train on both Jubilee and Piccadilly lines. Platform humps are to be installed on both these lines prior to Games time.

Our visually impaired volunteer noted that public address system in one of the lifts at Green Park was working, but distorted.

With the introduction of platform humps on the Piccadilly and Jubilee line platforms at Green Park station all rail services will be step-free and generally accessible by Games time and in legacy.

8 & 9. The Mall and Horse Guards Parade

i) **Westminster station**

Westminster station's Jubilee line platforms are step-free from street to train. The District and Circle lines are step-free from street to platform, but not between platform and train. However, during Games time manual boarding ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations will be used.

There may well be queuing for the lifts which will have to be managed. We understand that there will be staff available to manage lift queues at Westminster station.

With the use of manual boarding ramps during Games time on the District Circle line platforms Westminster station rail services will be step-free.

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ii) Green Park station (see above)

iii) Charing Cross station

Charing Cross station is a terminus station and is step-free between the street and the platforms. Staff are available to assist passengers onto the trains using a manual boarding ramp. On the day we visited we had not pre-booked, but nevertheless our volunteer was assisted in a professional manner.

National Rail services at Charing Cross station will be step-free and generally accessible during games. Booking through Passenger Assist is advised.

10. Wimbledon Tennis Club



i) Wimbledon station

Wimbledon station has newly installed, high capacity lifts and all services are step free from street to platform, but there is a large step between the platform and the District line trains. However, during Games time manual boarding ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations will be used.

With the use of manual boarding ramps during Games time on the District line platforms all of Wimbledon station rail services will be step-free.

ii) Southfields station

At Southfields station the staff were unaware of the arrival of our disabled volunteers, however with a little assistance our wheelchair using volunteer was able to alight. There is a lift to the ticket hall and the street.

We used bus stop U to catch the 493 and although there were several impediments on the footway the driver stopped correctly and deployed the ramp. Interestingly there was already a wheelchair user aboard and both wheelchair users were carried despite neither being properly located in the bay.

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On arrival at Gate 1, the museum entrance, we alighted easily, but there were neither pedestrian crossings, nor dropped kerbs to assist crossing the road.

On our return to Wimbledon station it was pleasing to see the 156 bus driver switch on the recorded message to buggy users to vacate the wheelchair space; which the passenger did.

Southfields station has newly installed, high capacity lift and District line services are step-free from street to platform, but there is a large step between the platform and the trains. However, during Games time manual boarding ramps, similar to those used at National Rail stations will be used.

With the use of manual boarding ramps at Southfields station platforms during Games time District line services will be step-free.

Measures to further improve access at Southfields station and at the museum entrance to Wimbledon Tennis Club would be:

- The relocation of the litter bin from its position next to the kerb where the bus stops at the museum entrance.
- The introduction of dropped kerbs and a pedestrian crossing outside of the museum entrance.

11. Hampton Court

i) Hampton Court station

Hampton Court station is a terminus station and is step-free between the street and the platforms. Staff are available to assist passengers onto the trains using a manual boarding ramp.



However, there are two difficult steps on the pedestrian desire lines that one would have hoped would have been dealt with by either the local authority, Surrey County Council or the station operator South. West. Trains (the land ownership just outside of the station is unclear).

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There is an extant planning permission that will eventually address this level change issue.

National Rail services will be step-free and generally accessible during Games. Booking through Passenger Assist is advised.

Measures to improve access at Hampton Court station would be:

- Bringing forward works planned to deal with the ground level change in front of the station

12 & 13. Wembley Stadium and Arena

i) Wembley Park station

Wembley Park station has level access between street and platform.

There is an accessible toilet.

The Metropolitan line trains will be level access following the introduction of new trains which are due before the Games. The Jubilee line trains are generally below the level of the platforms at Wembley Park. However the rear end of the platform drops down and the last carriage does have level access. If a wheelchair user arrives in the wrong carriage they may need manual assistance to alight. TfL will be encouraging wheelchair users to board in the correct part of the train to be able to alight at Wembley Park

The station will be step-free and generally accessible during Games time, however there should be publicity to alert wheelchair using passengers that they need to travel in the rear carriage.

ii) Wembley Stadium station

Wembley Stadium station has been rebuilt to be step-free between the street and the platforms via a steep ramp. However, there is a step between platform and train. The station is generally unstaffed. Therefore, booking via the Passenger Assist system is necessary.

There is a lift between the platforms and the high level walkway to the stadium. This lift operates on request, but was unavailable when we visited.

National Rail services will be step-free and generally accessible during games. Booking through Passenger Assist is advised.

Will everyone get to the Games?

Measures to improve access at Wembley Stadium station would be:

- Staff should be available to assist passengers to board using a manual boarding ramp.
- The very steep ramp should be re-modelled to allow some level areas to allow wheelchair users to stop and rest although this may not be possible before the games. Staffing is required to help passengers use this ramp

14. Lord's Cricket Ground

The accessible route to Lord's Cricket Ground is suggested via King's Cross St Pancras station and a Games time shuttle bus. We therefore did not include Lord's in our visits.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

We found all the Olympic and Paralympic stations were either step-free from street to train or some intervention (new train stock, platform hump, manual boarding ramp) was planned that would mean the station would be accessible by Games time. This is a significant series of interventions over and above the present situation and transforms the accessibility of these stations.

We identified the need for additional tactile paving at the top and bottom of staircases. Some has been introduced at our request. We hope more can be.

We found staff most helpful and the systems for assisting passengers to platforms, onto trains and then for calling ahead to the destination station all worked well.

All our bus trips were successful. Drivers pulled up to the kerb and operated the ramps successfully. Passengers moved to accommodate our wheelchair using volunteers.

There were some maintenance issues. We believe preventative maintenance is being undertaken. This is particularly important for disabled users.

There were two big disappointments. At Greenwich, West Brompton, West Ham, Hampton Court and Paddington stations there is a need for minor street works that could benefit all. Similarly at Paddington station, the Praed Street ramp is a real barrier to movement, particularly wheelchair users. Some minor street works could address this. The recent addition of a traffic barrier at the top of this ramp further exacerbating access problems.

In addition to these interventions there will be many more staff available to assist passengers. A key issue for disabled passengers is whether or not these staff are able to assist in the interchange between stations, from National Rail to Underground, from Underground to DLR. We hope this will be part of their role.

So in answer to our question “Will everyone get to the Games?” we think they will.

However, we would very much like to see some of the minor issues raised in this report resolved between now and Games time.

5 Acknowledgements

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