

London City Airport Accessibility Panel Meeting 1 Wednesday 11th December 2024

Attendees:

Jessie Buckle (Accessibility Panel Chair)
Dave Christie, Head of Customer Experience (London City Airport)
Juwairiyah Ali, Head of Training, Compliance and Landside Security (London City Airport)
Azmir Khan, Operations Manager (Mitie and London City Airport)
Patsy Ryan, Customer Experience Delivery Manager (British Airways)
Emily Kilby, Civil Aviation Authority
Pareisse Wilson, Inclusive Design Strategic Change Consultant (Harmonise Change)
Emily Yates, Head of Accessibility and Inclusive Design (Mima)
Josh Wintersgill, Founder easyTravelseat, Co-Founder ableFly and Co-Founder Rights on Flights
Ruth Rabet, Global Business Director (Hidden Disabilities Sunflower)
Sasha Hailey, Business Disability Partner (Business Disability Forum)

Apologies:

Gemma Cook, HR Business Partner (London City Airport)
Sheraz Faisal, PRM Supervisor (Mitie and London City Airport)
Matthew Clark, RNIB
Carrie-Ann Lightly, AccessAble

Summary:

The first London City Accessibility Forum meeting took place on Wednesday 11th December 2024. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the panel members to one another, address the current environment, data, business development and accessibility training processes, acknowledge imperfections and look ahead to improve inclusion and accessibility at London City Airport.

The importance of lived experience and inclusive environments expertise was emphasised during the meeting. The airport's high NPS score of 76% and a 90.6% positive feedback rate for assisted travel were highlighted. Key points included the need for better benchmarking, transparency on budget allocation, enhancing awareness and training for staff and feedback mechanisms. The potential for mystery shoppers and leveraging industry connections for benchmarking was discussed.

Recent improvements at the airport include upgrading scanning equipment, increasing disabled parking bays, and enhancing signage and customer service. Future projects include transitioning to 100% self-service check-in and expanding gate capabilities.

The panel discussed site visits for panel members in the New Year and the date for the next panel meeting was announced as Wednesday 12th March 2025.

Actions:

1. Site visits to be organised for the New Year
2. Training processes to be sent in the New Year for review by the panel

1. Introductions

Panel members introduced themselves.

2. London City Assisted Travel Advisory Group

Dave Christie, the Customer Experience Manager at London City Airport gave an overview of the previous London City Airport PRM and Hidden Disabilities Forum.

3. Business and Performance

Dave Christie provided an update on London City Airport's business performance, mentioning the airport's unique position, high customer satisfaction, and recent renovations. The panel emphasised the importance of a diverse accessibility panel to capture the growing diversity of accessibility requirements at the airport. Including budget information in future panel discussions to ensure accountability and effective use of resources was suggested, noted and will be discussed ahead of the next panel meeting.

Dave shared that London City Airport has a high NPS score of 76%, significantly higher than other London airports, and has recently renovated its departure lounge. the airport's use of CT technology for security, which significantly speeds up the process for all customers was highlighted. An enquiry was raised regarding readiness for summer and it was communicated that staffing and equipment are in place, including plans to acquire a third ambulift. The procurement process for the new ambulift was highlighted and it was agreed that a follow-up on any due diligence is needed. Dave provided an overview of the airport's ECAP performance and assisted travel numbers, highlighting the high levels of pre-booked travel and the airport's focus on timely services.

Benchmarking against other airports or sectors was suggested, and the need to explore benchmarking options beyond the aviation industry was highlighted. Jessie agrees and emphasises the importance of learning from different sectors to improve accessibility at the airport. Dave and Jessie suggest including benchmarking in the agenda for future panel meetings. Dave provided additional context on the airport's growth strategy and the need to adapt to changing customer profiles and accessibility requirements.

4. CAA Audit Key Themes

Accessibility Panel Chair, Jessie Buckle gave an overview of the CAA Audit which took place on Wednesday the 4th of December 2024, and was conducted by one of the panel members Emily Kilby. Positives that were highlighted by Emily and Lewis following the audit regarded user journey, innovative signage and the efficient use of space considering the scale of London City Airport. Jessie mentioned that the audit will be shared with the panel once published in the New Year, and the audit will be a good foundation to create improvements.

5. Terms of Reference

Jessie Buckle ran through the work-in-progress Terms of Reference. Themes such as purpose, objectives and focus, membership, panel meeting agenda, minutes, frequency, location, focus and atmosphere, panel duties and the role of the chair were addressed. Jessie highlighted that the Terms of Reference is a work-in-progress document and welcomed input from the panel.

6. Format and Direction of the Accessibility Forum

Jessie Buckle highlighted the panel's involvement in the format and direction of the accessibility forum and that a survey will be circulated.

7. London City Airport Accessibility Training

Juwairiyah Ali, the Head of Training, Compliance and Landside Security at London City Airport explained the current training processes at London City Airport. Juwairiyah and Jessie highlighted that London City would appreciate the panel's input into the development of future accessibility training.

8. Projects

Dave Christie detailed projects which have taken place in 2023 and 2024, such as London City Airport significantly investing in customer proposition including a complete upgrade of the departure lounge including doubling the size of the priority seating area, all new security scanning equipment, additional disabled bays in the car park and drop-off area, new signage throughout the airport and a 100% response rate to customer feedback.

Throughout 2025/2026 London City Airport will continue to invest as our airport grows and changes from business to VFR and Leisure including new security lanes, 100% body scan enablement, new check-in with biometric functionality and expanded gate facilities.

9. Summary and Closing Thoughts / AOB

N/A