

Minutes: Stansted Access for Everyone (SAFE) Forum

Tuesday 10th March 2026, 10:30 am, Enterprise House

Attendees:

Libby Herbert - Chair SAFE Forum & CEO, Colostomy UK	Stephanie Putt - Accessibility Manager, STN
Mark Waithman - QHSE Manager ABM, STN	Sarah Yianni - Accessibility Support Officer, STN
Lauren Wood – STP Stakeholder Engagement Lead, STN	Daniel Burford – Head of Stakeholder Communications, STN
Dave Powell – Consultant, Develop Consulting	Paul Stribling – Security Officer, STN
Mark Neville - Alzheimer's Society	Peta Barratt - Spinal Injuries Association Member, Colostomy UK
Emily Kilby – Civil Aviation Authority	Amy Askew - Thomas Pocklington Trust
Donovan Samuels – ABM Operations Manager	

Apologies:

Anne Wafula Strike - Paralympian and Traveller	Sonia Sparkes - Representing Travellers with MS
Alice Fullicks - JDRF (Type I Diabetes support)	Gobi Ranganathan - Norman Rourke Pryme Consulting
Kevin Gay – Representing Travellers with Autism	

Welcome and introductions

Steph welcomed SAFE Forum members, the Accessibility Team, the Civil Aviation authority, and colleagues from the Stansted Transformation team to the meeting.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Steph explained the purpose of the SAFE Forum as a space to share views, raise any safety or accessibility considerations, and help shape changes across the airport.

The Stansted Transformation team were welcomed and invited to present their plans to the forum, with the aim of gathering feedback and views from members.

Steph outlined the purpose of the meeting: ensuring the delivery of end-state designs that meet customer needs. Dan provided an overview of the terminal extension programme. The TTS will be removed and replaced with Sky links to improve the customer experience. A transformation video was shown. Steph highlighted key design changes most check-in will move to shoreline, passport control will be located one level below, leading up into baggage reclaim.

Interim PRM Process, North Terminal Extension – PRM Departure Routes, Immigration Hall, PRM Lounge, Sensory room

Dave noted that the initial plans for the level change in immigration showed only one lift to the baggage area. This has now been revised. He advised that consideration should be given to the fact that hoarding may impact PRM access, including escalator use.

Dave explained that the current PRM lobby, located along the baggage hall road, must close to allow construction. As a result, PRM operations will move to the CTA building. A safe space will be required for minibus and ambi lift drop-off. Dave presented a map of the CTA plans.

Steph explained that the loop outside the CTA will allow vehicles to enter and drop off safely. Dedicated parking for ABM vehicles will be provided, ensuring other traffic can continue to flow.

Dave added that a road cut-through will be available to ease congestion.

Libby asked whether ABM or airlines had raised concerns.

Mark confirmed that consultation has taken place, and Eve has been working closely with Dave to understand operational requirements.

Dave presented the proposed PRM route inside the CTA. Facilities will include a toilet and a desk. A team of runners will escort passengers to the Cube area, which will offer seating, water, and a more comfortable waiting environment.

Mark asked how long the interim solution will be in place.

Dave confirmed it will be required for several years until end state is delivered so could be a couple of years.

Steph noted ongoing work with ABM and airlines to ensure the process functions effectively. Construction is expected to begin in May, though this may change.

Libby asked whether the CTA toilet will be accessible.

Steph confirmed it will be, and additional toilets will be available near the Cube.

Dan stated that the route will be communicated at the appropriate time, and the facility will be fully prepared before opening.

Steph added that trials will be conducted to track customer movements, test beacon functionality, and ensure CCTV coverage for wait-time audits.

Mark asked about seating in the Cube.

Steph said it will likely include armchairs or sofas that are easy to clean.

Dan presented the Sky links design, including maps and layouts.

Steph explained that the TTS will be decommissioned. An interim link will be installed before the main building extension is complete.

Satellite 1 will operate 8-seater buggies with a frequent service aligned to flight schedules.

Satellites 2 and 3 Sky links will not use buggies.

A new APV with ramps will serve the bus stand for remote stands.

Steph invited questions from the group.

Amy asked whether the walk to the gate will be longer.

Dan confirmed that only Satellite 1 involves a longer walk, which is why buggies will operate there.

Peta asked whether any buggies are wheelchair-accessible, as the increased distance may be challenging for self-propelling passengers.

Mark W there was some discussion and Steph agreed to review this as part of the process.

Steph noted that other airports use attachments and alternative solutions, and this should be explored further.

Dan will provide specifications for the buggies.

Amy raised a concern from a blind person's perspective, noting that with a higher number of buggies operating, there may be a need for an additional system to help visually impaired passengers navigate safely.

Mark confirmed that the buggies will emit a beacon noise to make passengers aware of their presence. He added that the buggies will operate in a single, consistent direction around the loop, which should support predictability and reduce confusion.

Steph explained that the team is working closely with Border Force to introduce one or more E-Gates suitable for wheelchair users. The group discussed operational considerations, including how the E-Gate process would work for passengers being pushed in a wheelchair, given that only one person can pass through an E-Gate at a time. Options are being explored for whether ABM staff would need a separate accompanying route while still allowing the customer to use the E-Gate independently.

Libby suggested that larger, more prominent signage would be helpful, particularly during busy periods when crowds may obstruct visibility.

PRM Lounge Location, Sensory Room, Help Points – Sky links and Terminal Areas, Departure Level Help Points, Arrivals Level Help Points

Steph emphasised that as the design phase progresses, input from the forum is essential to ensure the space meets customer needs.

Dave presented a map of the new IDL area.

Steph advised that consideration for food delivery to the lounge is being considered.

Dave confirmed that the lounge will be a generous size, appropriate for expected passenger volumes.

Mark asked how the lounge will be advertised and added that it should be advertised by signage on the way to the lounge

Steph said it will use purple signage, consistent with the current PRM lounge branding. She added that the lounge will have higher walls to provide privacy, and it will be staffed to prevent misuse and ensure a welcoming presence.

Amy asked whether family members will be allowed in the lounge.

Steph confirmed that family members can enter, but during busy periods ABM may need to manage capacity. She noted that ABM already manages the existing lounge and takes pride in maintaining it.

Steph explained that the lounge will include charging points, flight information screens, and adequate space.

She noted that the lounge will sit in the middle of the food and beverage area, which raised concerns about whether it might feel too exposed or attract non-PRM customers. The current design aims to balance openness with privacy, maintaining the look and feel of the IDL.

Steph has requested that part of the lounge include a higher-walled section to support passengers who experience sensory overload.

Libby said she likes the openness but is concerned about noise levels.

Amy asked whether the lounge is intended to be a quieter space.

Steph confirmed that some ambient music may play

Amy also asked about lighting.

Steph said the area will benefit from natural light and skylights, with consideration given to winter lighting conditions.

Mark suggested incorporating pods to support passengers who need a quieter, more enclosed environment.

Sensory room

Steph explained that the sensory room will be located close to the PRM lounge, and the team wants to ensure it is designed correctly. She asked the group whether the space should function more as a quiet room or a soft-sensory area.

She showed examples of an enclosed pod and an interactive pod. One concept includes a soft sensory area designed to resemble an aircraft cabin, which may help passengers prepare for boarding.

Mark felt the room should not appear too childish as this may be being use by customers with dementia and other conditions. He suggested considering either two sensory rooms or ensuring the design is. **Amy** questioned whether a highly colourful design might cause sensory overload.

Mark agreed that the room should provide a retreat from the busy atmosphere of the terminal.

Steph stressed that the room should not be perceived as a playroom.

She suggested that Kevin would be best placed to advise on how to create a calming environment, as he has previously recommended elements such as soft lighting, gentle sounds, sensory toys, and a space that removes passengers from a busy environment.

Mark agreed that the room should provide a retreat from the manic atmosphere of the terminal.

Sensory Room – Next Steps

The agreed outcome is to liaise with Kevin for expert input on sensory room design and bring recommendations back to the group for further discussion.

The group highlighted the need for a balanced approach that works for both children and adults, avoiding a space that feels too childish or overly stimulating.

Skylinks Help Points

The intention is to ensure help points are used appropriately and not misused and are fully available for PRM customers. Proposed locations include one near the start of the satellites and one near the satellite end, to support passengers who may have gone the wrong way and require assistance back to the terminal

Dan presented a map showing the proposed help point positions, which will be designated for assisted travel.

General Feedback

Mark noted that walking-distance signage is helpful for passengers to understand how long routes will take and to plan accordingly.

Departure Level Help Points

Seating should be positioned close to help points to support passengers waiting for assistance.

Help points should not be placed too close to travelators to avoid congestion and confusion.

Arrivals Level Help Points

Dan will consult the CAA for recommendations on optimal help point placement.

Steph will also speak with other airports for insight, although Stansted remains ambulift-heavy, which may influence requirements.

Mark emphasised the importance of considering not only what is legally required but also what enhances the customer experience.

Additional Suggestions

Amy proposed using QR codes to allow passengers to request help or access advice quickly and discreetly.

The group acknowledged that the new security hall has already incorporated ideas previously provided by the forum, demonstrating the value of continued collaboration.

Donavan presented the new Hello Lamppost app an app which supports PRM passengers by allowing them to ask questions, while providing reassurance during their journey through the airport and promoting awareness of the assistance and support available.

Forum members tested how accurate and up to date the app is by asking a range of questions to understand how it works and what information it provides. **Donavan** confirmed that the information within the app can be updated continuously.

Once fully ready, the app will be launched live.

Dave asked how the app will remain accurate as airport processes and layouts change.

Donavan confirmed they will work closely with the airport team to ensure updates are made promptly and consistently. QR codes will be placed around the airport to give passengers quick access to the app.

Amy asked where the QR codes will be located.

Donavan said he will work with **Steph** to identify the most effective locations, noting that placing them near help points could be particularly useful.

Mark N stressed the importance of always keeping the app up to date.

Peta would use the app where it is relevant to her needs and when she requires specific information.

Libby suggested that the app could flag users to the Safe Forum link.

Steph proposed including a link to the STN website, incorporating clear photos, wording, and maps. Each panel should include an accessible link to current, up-to-date advice, with outdated information removed.

Amy recommended that interaction points be positioned near key hubs such as entrances, exits, lifts, and help points. She also suggested providing alternative interaction methods, including tactile elements, to ensure the experience is not purely visual.

Donovan The mock-up has already been shared and is currently being tested.

Libby considerations regarding governance should be formally incorporated and considered as part of the ongoing review process.

Actions

Steph to explore attachment options and alternative solutions to improve buggy accessibility for wheelchair users and take this forward for further investigation.

Steph to liaise with Kevin to obtain expert input on the sensory room design and bring recommendations back to the group at the next meeting.

Steph to liaise with Donovan regarding the most appropriate locations for QR codes.