Manchester Airport Accessibility Forum – Annual Report 2025 / 2026

Introduction

This statement covers the period April 2025 to March 2026. The mission for the Forum in this period has been to support and collaborate with the airport's Management team and their service provider ABM in improving the experience of passengers with a disability using the airport.

Forum Membership

The forum consists of 24 members representing those with disabilities that include mobility (that ranges from those requiring transfer assistance through the airport to those with the most complex physical disabilities) hearing loss and impairment, sight loss or impairment, neurological conditions and other non-visible disabilities.

The forum met on four occasions during the reporting period (June, September, November 2025 and March 2026) with members being able to join the meeting in person or remotely. BSL interpreters were available at each meeting.

An additional practical walkthrough inspection of Terminal 2 was completed in March 2026, attended by six members representing a range of disabilities. This valuable exercise highlighted some further areas for development including support for profoundly deaf passengers at Passenger Security.

Minutes of the Forum meetings are available here.

A survey of Forum members was conducted in March 2025 to gather their views on this group and it was positive to see strong scores in all areas. Some valuable verbatim feedback was also received which will help shape the structure of future meetings.

Question	Rating Average (out of 5)
Ease of participation	4.5
Timing & Length of Forum meetings	4.5
Meeting format & agenda	4.5
Inclusiveness of discussions	4.6
Forum effectiveness in driving change	4.5
Diversity of forum participation	4.8

It was pleasing to see an increase in scores for driving change and diversity of the group, with all other areas remaining the same as the previous survey.

Discussion topics and goals achieved

Common to all Forum meetings is discussion around operational performance. In this reporting period, the Airport achieved between 99.2% and 100% of the regulatory

waiting time target for both departing and arriving passengers. The full results are available here .

The nature of the Forum meetings has been open and collaborative, allowing for a range of topics to be discussed and consulted on, with realistic actions. The result of this has led to the successful delivery of the following items during this reporting period;

- New T2 Assisted Travel Lounge
- Design of the upcoming T2 sensory zone
- New standard boarding process for passengers that can manage stairs unaided
- Introduction of mobility aid damage prevention tape
- Design and participation in new journey videos to be added to the website
- Consultation on the PRM contract tender due to take place in 2026

Ongoing workstreams

Other areas of operations

As previously noted on the previous years report the Forum wished for greater inclusion from other areas of operation including Security, Airlines and Ground Handling.

The Forum has been joined at meetings by representatives from Security operations, Jet2 and Virgin Atlantic, to improve understanding of the PRM journey through the airport and highlight the importance of regular training for all staff.

An active role is played by DSN, representing the Deaf & Hearing impaired community

“DSN has had performed well through the forum and has delivered both in terms of Deaf Awareness and BSL training opportunities and has been influential in gaining better access for deaf people supported by the forum. To date it’s been a rewarding experience for DSN, working closely with Ed and your team, but also extending our work to service provides and tour operators. The ability for deaf people to have a voice around our table has driven confidence, both in terms of travel experience and communication.

Once more, being able to advise on processes that have been pinch spots for deaf travellers has been gratifying, as changes have been made to accommodate those suggestions presented in our meetings are brought to fruition throughout the airport. In closing, the forum has been pivotal in achieving better access for disabled passengers.

DSN has delivered training to date

- MAN
- ABM
- Aether

Currently in talks with

- TUI

- MAG security

During this reporting period the **Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group report** was published. The full recommendations can be found at

Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group report - GOV.UK

MAN Accessibility team, the Forum and ABM have been working to ensure that recommendations in the report are followed to provide ongoing improvement in the PRM journey.

The airport have also provided a number of Accessible Travel Visits to the airport to help passengers who may be anxious about unfamiliar processes, sights, sounds and smells. These are always very well received and provided very positive feedback from those that have taken part.

Customer Survey & Feedback

Throughout the course of the year, the Airport has openly shared the results of their dedicated PRM Survey which allows assisted passengers to rate aspects of their journey.

Forum members were actively invited to put forward suggestions to increase the response rates to this survey and increase real-time feedback. Different options to improve levels of feedback that complement existing methods, have being looked at.

A Mystery shopper option has been proposed but the small numbers that could be represented by this method would not provide a true reflection of overall performance.

A variety of online form options have been considered but none have been deemed to provide a satisfactory solution. Research into what would provide the most effective means of allowing large scale passenger feedback is ongoing.

Encouragement of PRM's to provide feedback is ongoing through a number of large social media groups.

Wider disability awareness training

The Forum would like the wider airport experience to be more inclusive. As an action of this, the Forum will support in the ongoing development of General Disability Awareness training that could be offered to all staff that work at the airport. It is widely recognised that those who do not live with or are in close daily contact with disability in general do not know how to approach it.

ABM Training

ABM, the Airport's sub-contracted assistance services provider, openly invited forum members to attend classroom sessions of their training which has been accredited by Disability Rights UK.

Following on from the inspection process of their training programmes in 2024, ABM will continue to review training content in the areas of Sight and Hearing impairment in the next reporting period which has been a particular focus for the Forum.

Regular inspections and reviews of their induction and refresher training programmes will be carried out during the next reporting period.

Terminal 2 multi-functional Assisted Travel support space

This space was completed and opened for PRM use on 3 September 2025 and is located in the departure lounge close to all amenities , in a quiet location.

Summary

I believe in this last reporting year, that the Airport's Leadership Team and ABM, supported by the Forum, have delivered significant improvements to the customer journey.

The objective for the coming year is to encourage greater involvement of representatives from airlines, passenger security and ground handling organisations to better understand the PRM journey and improve the overall experience of those travelling with a disability.

In addition, a continued programme of improvement in services provided by ABM and continued development of the provision coordinated by Manchester Airport, supported by the Forum, should ensure that Manchester Airport remains one of the best airports in the UK for accessibility and safe, high-quality journeys for disabled passengers.

Charles van Berckel
Manchester Airport Accessibility Forum Chairman