

Liverpool Airport Accessibility Committee

6th June 2019

1100 – 1430

Cavern Suite

Attendees:

Andy Wright	Accessible Travel	Chair
Julie Simpson	Autism Adventures	Owner
Nick Wilkinson	AOHL	Head of Access Solutions
Gary Dawson	SIA	Member
Becky Clarke	Guide Dogs	Volunteer
Sarah Oldnall	The Brain Charity	Volunteer
John Irving	Liverpool Airport	CEO
Christina Smith	Liverpool Airport	Customer Services Executive
Lisa Crosby	Liverpool Airport	Contracts Executive
Kai Francis	Liverpool Airport	Customer Services Administrator
Pat Broster	Dementia Action Alliance	Founder member
Tommy Dunne	Dementia Action Alliance	Member
Chris Evans	Omniserv	Duty Manager

Apologies:

John Walsh	Stomawise	Founder member
Tony Rice	LACC	Disability representative
Kitty Powner	Whizz klds	Member

General introductions:

Tommy Dunne (TD) has been living with dementia for several years and works closely with Pat Broster (PB)who has been working to increase dementia awareness across public transport accross the Liverpool City Region for the last 5 years. Pat also sits on the All Party Parliamentary Group representing dementia. Pat is looking for a consistent travel experience accross all forms of travel. Pat and Tommy are currently working with the airport and the Mayor’s group to create a dementia awareness module.

Becky Clarke (BC)represents Guide Dogs with Rishton who has his own social media account to promote Guide Dogs in the North West. Becky has attended several accessibility visits and training events at the airport.

Sarah Oldnall (SO)from the Brain Charity represents travellers needing physical, neurological, cognitive and emotional support. Some with hidden disabilities.

Gary Dawson (GD)also sits on Manchester Airport’s group. Gary has a spinal injury and travels through both airports often. Gary travels as part of a wheelchair basket ball group as well as for pleasure. The SIA provides help , support and advice to encourage those with physical disabilities.

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Nick Williamson (NW) from Action on Hearing Loss (AOHL) RNID provides access to solutions. 1 in 6 has a hearing impairment. 11 million hearing impaired people in the UK. The organisation provides training in BSL in the workplace, facilities assessments and assisted technology, including hearing loops. Nick advises that many organisations including cab drivers have hearing loops but don't know how they work. He assisted the Omniserv team to use the hearing loop this morning.

Julie Simpson (JS) from Autism Adventures has worked with Autism Together as a training provider to the airport. Julie has a teenage son who she has been travelling with through LPL since he was an infant. Julie has been providing advice with the Sensory facility project to date and works with numerous organisations around the region including EFC. Julie flew last month with Joe and a friend with her daughter. Both young people have ASD and Ollie is peg fed. They trialled the Sunflower lanyard, having previously used the Butterfly Flyer. Julie reported that the Sunflower lanyard helped with the arrival passport control process as well as departure security. They were not offered the option to pre-board at the departure gate on this occasion.

Kai Francis (KF) reported on accessible travel inquiries, compliments and complaints.

Legislation & compliance

Andy Wright (AW) advised that following the introduction of legislation (EC1107) in 2006 airports must provide a consistent standard of assistance. The CAA have a league table against which the 30 main UK airports are ranked as Very Good, Good or in need of improvement. The ranking process has included Hidden Disabilities in the last 2 years. Liverpool ranked as very good in 2018 and we are awaiting the results for 2019.

The legislation (CAP1228) requires airports to hold Accessibility Consultative Committee meetings to offer structured feedback from groups and users and to create action plans to maintain and improve services.

We intend to meet twice a year.

Feedback from the group suggested that issues reported are often outside of the airports control and relate to the airlines.

Action: JLA to approach our airline partners to request involvement at future meetings.

Action: JLA to issue Sept follow up date for the next meeting

The Passenger journey : Difficulties

As a group we will find out what areas are the most difficult and weak. We aim to encourage passengers with disabilities to travel.

Audio impairment

NW reported that not all with a hearing loss use hearing aids. Glasses are accepted but there is still a stigma for many who would benefit from hearing aids. New generation hearing aids aren't always visible. 5 million people of working age suffer with hearing loss but many won't use hearing aids. We accept glasses but hearing aids carry a stigma for some. 54% of those at work are afraid to raise their hearing concerns. 30% of those with hearing loss experience bullying.

Our ability to communicate makes us human. Hearing loss and tinnitus makes it more difficult to communicate. Some report they feel less human, depressed, anxious or suicidal. AOHL mission is to raise awareness. In 2-3 decades a cure for hearing loss is expected.

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CE, Omniserv, confirmed that the number of pre booked PRMs with hearing loss is low.

NW reported that stats on working hearing loops is low. This is due in part to lack of knowledge on how they work. LPL has 2 fixed loops at the landside and airside assistance desks, 3 portable units at check in and 2 in security. Loops work within 1 metre range.

JLA confirmed that there are no loops in food & beverage, retail units and departure gates, JI, JLA, confirmed it is our responsibility to review provision.

Action: JLA to check all are in working order. Schedule checks.

Action: Ensure leaflets on how to use are available. Visual aids recommended

Action: Ensure hearing loops are plugged in to maintain charge

Action: Review provision of hearing loops as none are in place at key locations. Units cost c.£5.00

Action: Advertise the location of the Hearing loops on the website.

ASD – Hypermobility, behavioural and incontinence.

Autism Adventures has 3,500 FB followers. Many members have not flown before and have concerns that their children are non verbal. A recent experience reported at Boots in the departure lounge where the sales person recognised the lanyard.

Security colleagues awareness has improved massively in recent years.

JS, Autism Adventures, reports that the Butterfly Flyer/ Sunflower lanyard enable users to avoid queues at check in, security and gates. In some instances those with ASD are not able to preboard with those with physical disabilities.

CE, Omniserv, advised that this sounds like a timing /communication issue on the occasion.

JS recommended JLA promotes the lanyard more on social media.

Action: JLA to promote the Sunflower lanyard more prominently on social media

Action: Review boarding process with airline/GHA & assistance provider

Promoting services

GD suggested that JLA promotes accessibility highlighting our USPs on social media #faster #Easier #friendlier

GD & JS suggested that we add links on the website pages to reviews of personal experiences.

Action: Add links to report on personal feedback to website pages

Physicality

TD reported that large, busier airports can be daunting to those with dementia. Clear directional signage is important. Separation during security screening creates major anxiety. Speech may be heard as though it is a breaking up phone signal. Talking too slow may not help. Many with dementia fear the stigma of having a physical disability. TD feels confident travelling through LPL and BHD.

Fear of ridicule is the difference between travelling and not leaving the house. Airlines need reassure travellers by promoting awareness. Those with dementia need to know what to expect on an aircraft and whether or not the crew have awareness knowledge. For example, challenges paying with cash. TD would like to share the dementia awareness module with airlines.

Stair cases, lifts, escalators and flooring types can present issues for those with dementia. (NB: Elderly pax are more prone to fall on escalators)

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Action: Share the need to promote dementia awareness with airline partners.

Visual Impairment issues at airports

Guide Dogs offer half day awareness sessions (12 delegates for GBP250.00) or train the trainer sessions. The latest visual impairment simulations use VR to simulates different eye conditons and hearing loss.

Lack of contrast on staircases makes it difficult to go up or down stairs , even with the assistance of a guide dog.

Bright colours can lead to sensory overload. Swirling and changing colours may contirubute to falls.

Action: Arrange a VR simulation passenger journey walk through to update information for visually impaired passengers

Passenger Journey times

SO advised that persons with a brain injury may not be able to calculate times. Separation causes anxiety nervousness.

Equipment

Omniserv - 3 x ambilift , 3 x aisle chairs, 3 x pro slings (all staff except for 2 are pro sling trained)
2 s-max chairs (back up use)

Wind restrictions 2 ambilift for use up to 45Knots, 1 ambulift for us up to 35 knots.

Swissport – 1 Mobiloader to load/unload Electric Mobility Aids (EMA).

GD asked for clairfcaton on colleague understanding on the loading and unloading of mobility equipment.

There are a number of restrictions dependent on the airline. easyJet website is easy to navigate for information. Not all airline sites are the same and some travel agents have little knowledge

Action: Share concerns with Swissport ramp services/ AOC and with Airport Trade colleague Ashley Morgan

Action: Based airline to join next meeting if possible

Website feedback

The tile directlry works generally.

Actions: Remove key events 2018

Actions : Look at changing 'Performance standards' to '@how are we doing?'

Actions: Can we invert the colours – see BHX website

Actions : Change 'EMA' to powered wheelcahirs and electric mobility aids

Actions: Add pictures of mobility equipment and description of what it is used for

Actions : Promote Hearing loops

Actions : Prebooking revisit page info

Next meeting

Actions: Plan follow up Septtemeber

Action: Include travel agent representation

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Action: Include airlines
Action: Include Liverpool One
Action: Include Handlign agent
Action: Include security

Accessible Open Day 1st July

We will offer am & pm 2 hour slots to individuals and groups who would like to come in to the airport to experience the passenger journey, hear about assistance options and talk to our teams

Action: Brief to be issued to all attendess 7th June
Action: Schedule social media posts to advertise
Action: Add prominent information on the website to promote
Action: Invite airport teams and airlines to be available throughout the day.
Action: Promote with local media

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