
Minutes of the Leeds Bradford Airport[®] Accessibility Group Forum (Hybrid Format)

Microsoft Teams Remotely & In-Person at Britannia Hotel, Leeds Road, Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9JJ.

Wednesday 5th August 2026, 10:00-13:00 hours.

Agenda:

- **Previous Minutes**
- **Welcome & Introductions**
- **Quality Standards & Performance Review**
- **Airport Journey**
- **Open Forum**

Attendees

Kay Atkin	Chairperson
Haley Sabah	Customer Experience Operations Manager, LBA [®]
Sophie Downes	Customer Experience Operations Manager, LBA [®]
Matt Talbot	Health and Safety, LBA [®]
Reece Jones	Training co-ordinator LBA [®]
Kirsty Wilkinson	Customer Specialist LBA [®]
Ishrat Hussain	Customer Specialist LBA [®]
Carol Ballinger	Security Training Manager LBA [®]
Andy Lawty	Airport Security Manager LBA [®]
Joselyn Jones	Director of External Affairs LBA [®]
Salli Warr	Ehler-Danlos UK
Bairbre McKendrick	Leeds City Council
Linsay Medica	Little hiccups
Andrew Simister	Trustee, Disability Action Yorkshire
Robert Kernighan	Trustee, Disability Action Yorkshire
Erica West-Padgett	Pets 4 Therapy
Michelle Sample	Gray Dawes Sport

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Tracey Fennell

Gray Dawes Sport

Christine Pearce

AVSED

Apologies

Dan King

Andy Leat

1. Previous Minutes

These had been emailed out following the previous meeting. No amendments have been raised.

2. Introduction, Welcome & Apologies

Hayley and Sophie introduced themselves and their role at LBA. They are both new to the team having started at the airport within the last 8 weeks. Each person in attendance gave a brief intro to themselves and involvement with the forum.

3. Quality standards & performance Review

Overview of CAA Standards

A recap was provided of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) performance standards for departing, arriving, and transit passengers. These benchmarks continue to frame operational expectations and are used as the primary reference point for monitoring service quality and compliance.

Performance Trends and Influencing Factors

Operational performance has been affected by two major contextual factors:

- **The airport regeneration project**, which has introduced temporary constraints across passenger flows and staff deployment.
- **The introduction of the Avtech system**, which required staff adaptation and procedural changes.

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A measurable dip in performance occurred in May, coinciding with the Avtech launch and the onboarding of several new starters. Performance improved in June, and with the team now fully staffed, further stabilisation and improvement are expected.

Demand for assisted travel has risen significantly, running approximately 27% higher than at the same point last year. This increase continues to place pressure on response times, resource allocation, and equipment utilisation.

Missed Flights

A total of 11 customers have missed flights so far this year:

- 9 in April
- 2 in June

The majority involving a single carrier. Several incidents were linked to the introduction of the Avtech system, particularly during the early transition period.

One incident involved a passenger who did not make themselves known when called, leading the Ambulift crew to assume they belonged to another flight. Since this incident mandatory boarding pass checks by Ambulift crews and Airside meeting point coordinators have been introduced to prevent misidentification.

Staffing, Training & Equipment

There have been a number of new starters join the team since March.

Staff are being encouraged to proactively:

- Confirm assistance needs early, including for passengers with hidden disabilities.
- Clarify requirements before security to ensure appropriate support is provided throughout the travel chain.

Operational capacity has been strengthened through:

- Increased use of Avi ramps, improving efficiency for groups of assisted passengers.
- Expansion to five Ambulifts, reducing onboard waiting times and improving turnaround consistency.

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Training remains a priority, particularly for ramp operation and Ambulift use. Increasing the number of staff competent in these areas is essential for meeting CAA timing standards during peak periods.

Closer coordination with airlines has led to:

- Increased contact stand arrivals, reducing the need for Ambulift deployment.
- More efficient towing of aircraft to remote stands, helping minimise onboard times for passengers requiring assistance.

These improvements are expected to contribute to more predictable operational flows and reduced delays.

Ambulift Temporary change in process

- Currently all passengers must be transferred into seats on the ambulift, this includes passengers who have their own wheelchairs
- This change is temporary whilst investigation and new processes are developed after an incident during an emergency stop.
- The group raised concerns regarding the impact of this change, especially for those passengers who need the postural support of their chair

Signage & Passenger Wayfinding

Assisted travel branding has been consolidated in yellow across check-in halls and post-security doors. This visual consistency aims to:

- Improve passenger visibility of assistance points.
- Reduce confusion and ensure passengers can easily locate meeting points.

Top 3 Complaints:

Waiting Area

Increase in customer feedback relating to the temporary Gate 6 waiting area since renovation work commenced.

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Feedback is primarily centred on the restricted access to the main terminal, limited food and drink options, and the overall appearance of the temporary facility.

Due to move to the new area within the departures area at the start of October.

Arrival process

Since the terminal extension opened, customer feedback has highlighted a noticeable improvement in the journey from the aircraft to the baggage reclaim hall.

Due to the temporary pedestrian corridors in place during the redevelopment, feedback is now predominantly focused on the onward journey from baggage reclaim to the car parks.

+1 Policy

No significant change in the volume of feedback relating to the +1 Ambilift policy.

Customers continue to express frustration with the capacity restriction, with many not fully understanding the operational and safety reasons behind limiting the number of accompanying passengers.

Compliments

A range of positive feedback left by passengers was shared with the forum

Feedback QR cards

It was advised feedback cards are provided to all passengers using the assistance service. However, attendees of the forum reported they had never had them provided, including those who have travelled in recent weeks. The team will look into this and continue to emphasise they need to be provided to every passenger.

4. Airport Journey**Departures**

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Departures moved upstairs and gradually more areas are opening as sections are refurbished. The Starbucks has opened this week which incorporates part of the old terminal with the new terminal. As more areas open the temporary corridor will go.

The assistance meeting point is going to move to within departures rather than the small area after security downstairs

Official start date 5th October, although some signage and seating has been placed already

The signage is being moved to avoid confusion for passengers in the interim as no staff will be based in the area

There is a doctor surgery style screen installed at this area so passengers can see information regarding their flight. This includes initials of passengers but not full names or details to retain privacy.

Photo of new seating and the area designated for the move was shared with the group.

Feedback from the group:

Seating area – seats not suitable, no wheelchair spaces, need to ensure a mix of seating, ability to transfer from wheelchair to a chair, different height/styles, areas for luggage near seats so doesn't block the area, tables so if people have drinks they have somewhere to put them.

Signage – current is to be removed until live, will be reviewed and signage increased as goes live

Query if the food order to seat will apply as it does in other areas of the departures area. It is expected that this will be available

Quiet Area

Photo shown of the current area.

It is a temporary area until next phase of work.

Feedback from group is urgently need to improve. Suggestions were made considering the temporary status:

- Can use mobile items so that can move when relocates.
- Acoustic pictures which are magnetic to reduce noise and soften, easy to apply then move
- Different seating types like bean bags, or chairs
- A projector or light tubes to help the area.

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- Clock/flight info

Consideration to if this is to be a quiet space or a sensory space. Discussion around what's available in other venues. The group are keen to influence this area to improve. There was a feeling that the group should have been consulted earlier to assist with this area.

Arrivals

Feedback positive around new arrival hall

Those who have travelled through commented much easier to get from aircraft to the baggage reclaim

Main challenge is the temporary exit route back to main entrance

Temporary exit route back to entrance is in use until around May 2027

The group noted:

- Noted that its an abrupt change in environment
- No seating and no warning to the distance
- No way to summon assistance if need during that section
- Better signage and information regarding the exit route would be beneficial

Security

Delays to security build have caused the extension of the temporary arrivals corridor mentioned earlier, the date has kept being moved back which is why short term has become long term

Had it been anticipated it would have been in place for an extended period then consideration would have been given to this

The new security layout has now changed due to structural components which cannot be removed, so the new security will have one lane less than planned

Automatic guidance will be given at the front of the queue to improve passenger flow,

Loading bays at the start are numbered, there will be a section designated to assistance passengers keeping time in security to a minimum.

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There will be a new search room. They are hoping to include equipment within the room to avoid staff having to go in and out. It is much larger than the current room.

Feedback was given to consider the environment of the room, in terms of colour palette/lighting etc to make it appropriate for all passengers

The group asked re the new scanners and current updates regarding medical devices. The guidance remains unchanged.

Information is available for passengers online but also in security regarding the new scanners.

Training

- Training is now run in house
- New starters have a two week training period within the training centre before moving to the airport.
- A training room with mock up cabin and stairs with stair climber has now launched to allow training to be more realistic
- Avtech software introduced in May so training undertaken to familiarise all staff with this software.
- Members of the group expressed an interest in feeding in to training, or visiting to improve awareness of conditions and experiences

5. Open Forum

Discussion has occurred throughout the meeting so no further topics were raised in addition. However, the group reiterated they are keen to support and engage with the airport. The group would like to see progress from suggestions and feedback in practice as it is reported similar feedback is given at each meeting but no progress has been made.

Meeting Closed

Attendees' thanks for giving up their time to attend.

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Meeting Actions:

- Organise sub group to look at the quiet room
- Organise a site visit for Gray Dawes sport to understand the assistance service offered
- Link with Barbara for the information regarding seating regulations
- Review feedback card distribution methods
- Review if any areas of training could benefit from the groups contribution