

Norwich Airport Accessibility Forum

Summary and Notes from the meeting on 14th September 2026

Attendees

Name	Organisation	
Amanda Farmer	Airside Services	
Ant Hase	AGS	
Anthony Carragher	Border Force	Apologies sent
Brad Chettleburgh	The BUILD Charity - External	
Carol Goodbody	Independent Chair - External	
Cherry Schamp	Border Force	
Dan Bean	Airside Services	
Hayley Kedge	Customer Services	
Helen King	Vision Norfolk - External	
James Kearns	The BUILD Charity - External	
Kat Wilby	Airside Services	
Mark Smith	Vision Norfolk - External	
Matthew Talbot	Deaf Connections - External	Apologies Sent
Mel Gray	Customer Services	
Neil Symmonds	Airside Services	
Penny Whitby	Vision Norfolk - External	Apologies sent
Rob Goldstone	Alzheimer's Society - External	Apologies sent
Sandra Hughes	Alzheimer's Society - External	
Shaun Hayes	Security	
Tony + Connie White	Passengers - External	
Trudy James	Security	
Zoe Harcourt	Customer Services	
Catherine Wright	Flour & Bean	
Sue Clamp	WDF	
Sallyanne Clarke	Customer Services	
Tracey Everson	Customer Services	
Zoe Brown	Customer Services	
Zoe Fullalove	Airside Services	

Ref	Topic	Summary	Actions
1	Welcome and Introductions	Welcome and introductions from James Kearns, Chief Executive of the BUILD Charity who will be providing the administrative secretariat for the Forum, and Carol Goodbody the new independent Chair of the Forum and a customer with lived experience of disability.	

2	Review of Agreed Actions from last Meeting	<i>2.1 Wayfinding, sensory zones and re-branding (Assisted Travel Team)</i> – Further re-branding using the Assisted Travel purple had taken place with only a few signs still to change. Purple tabards now worn by all Assisted Travel staff and volunteers to clearly identify them amongst other staff and passengers.	There remains a space within the departure area that could be considered for a sensory zone. Further investigations and costings being considered. ACTION – Assisted Travel Team (ATT).
		<i>2.2 BSL and visual impairment training for Airport Staff</i> – Some staff had undertaken some BSL training. Further training planned.	
		<i>2.3 Access Cards options and recognitions</i> – The Access Card could be recognised across the airport in all areas to identify a customer's needs. Individual businesses can register to be an approved user.	
		<i>2.4 Changing Places installation at Norwich Airport</i> – Carol Goodbody had identified 25 similar facilities in Norfolk and had visited one to explore options. A meeting is planned between her, a local specialist, representatives of the BUILD Charity and the Assisted Travel team to consider the space required, potential location and budget required ahead of developing a possible business case proposal for Airport management.	Meeting between ATT, Dan Bean, BUILD, the Chair and Norfolk County Council to consider options and report back to the Forum. ACTION – Independent Chair
3	Norwich Airport Assisted Travel Team - Update	Kat Wilby shared information on the specialist equipment now purchased by the airport including a variety of wheeled chairs suitable for transporting passengers through the airport and into the aircraft seat. In addition, the types of ramps now available to assist with boarding and the range of mobility aids available to support passengers with mobility challenges. She also reported on the range of resources now available to recognise people with hidden disabilities to support privacy and dignity. The 2025-26 Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Airport Accessibility Report has ranked Norwich Airport as GOOD against a scale of requires improvement, good or very good. The hope is that with an independent chair of the Forum and more external scrutiny and input the airport can move into Very Good at the next ranking. 2026 had seen a significant increase in the number of passengers requesting assisted travel on the previous	

		year with an extra 282 in May, 221 in June and 240 in July – a trend and proportion that was continuing throughout the year. 37% were people who required wheelchair assistance but could walk short distances, 38% could not use stairs, 17% had a hidden disability 3% could not walk and needed an aisle chair to board. 5% had a hearing or visual impairment. Staff experience showed that many passengers were not clear about how the coding worked when booking assistance as this was done through the airline, with them often booking too little or too much assistance. This could vary depending on the airport as assistance was booked for the whole journey meaning that a small amount of support may be required at a smaller airport, but much more at a large airport where distance between facilities and gates might be greater. Passenger feedback continues to be positive with comments like “Excellent service” and “Assisted Travel is first class from arrival to departure, all staff are brilliant” and “I would not go to any other airport anymore”. Volunteers within the team are continually receiving positive feedback and despite some initially hostile social media reaction to the use of volunteers, with 5 of the 6 original volunteers having now moved into employed roles at the airport. Areas for improvement have been identified as: • a wider range of resources such as “Fidgets” to help engage people with Autism or nervous passengers where they may have forgotten or lost their own whilst waiting to depart. • Additional mobility equipment for more complex disabilities • Promotion of Independent Journeys, where passengers are offered more self-directed travel through the airport, if they prefer with their own family carers or supporters.	ATT to consider asking for a social media campaign encouraging passengers to be clearer about their requirements when booking with their airline. ACTION – Assisted Travel Team Promotion of independent journeys as part of the service. ACTION – Assisted Travel Team
4	Exploring customer's lived experience of disability	Carol Goodbody reported on her experience as someone with a visual impairment being supported through a simulated passenger journey by the Assisted Travel Team in August. She praised Neil and Craig for providing excellent support in a calm and patient way by guiding her through check-in, security and onto the aircraft	Meeting with Assisted Travel team to feedback Carol's experience. ACTION - Chair

		explain changes in floor surfaces and coverings, visiting toilet and shopping facilities as well as refreshment zones. A meeting is being arranged to provide direct feedback to the team through a short video recorded at the end of the experience. Other disabilities are encouraged to go through a similar exercise, with each being recorded after their experience as part of the feedback. Colleagues from Alzheimer's Society, Vision Norfolk and the BUILD Charity offered to support people with lived experience to test different abilities.	Alzheimer's Society, Vision Norfolk and BUILD Charity to liaise with James Kearns to interview and record their experiences. ACTION – Alzheimer's Soc, Vision Norfolk and BUILD Charity
5	Future plans and improvements for customers using Norwich Airport – Airport Services providers	1. A suggestion for some improved luggage trolleys that are easier to move for passengers as some people struggle with the weight and steering. 2. When announcements are made via the public address system can a visual message be displayed on screens either in BSL or words as people with a hearing impairment can miss “in the moment” announcements.	
6	Hot Topics – from customers and representative groups	<i>Dementia Friends</i> – Sandra Hughes shared the training that she had provided to several airport staff with over 60 people trained to better understand the needs of people and families experiencing dementia. She advertised that this training is available online or in person. <i>Strandband</i> – Carol Goodbody shared an approach received from a creator of wristbands that identify a person's disability or specific needs who was keen to promote use and recognition by the airport, and other commercial providers. Further details to be requested, and if appropriate a presentation requested to a future Forum. <i>Flight relocations and recent industrial action by Air Traffic controllers</i> – in response to a question about how passengers requiring assisted travel are supported in such circumstances, reassurance was given that as the passenger's needs stay with the airline it will be passed to wherever the plane is re-directed, and in terms of recent industrial action, ATT staff had assisted passengers on to coaches who were relocated from Norwich.	Strandband – further info collected with a view to a future presentation. ACTION: Chair
	Next Meeting	March 2027 – Date to be agreed.	