



# HS2 Online Community

## Monthly Report

# Discussion: Task 50

In previous tasks, you've talked about the importance of luggage storage on trains and have suggested that you'd like there to be an option of 'checking in' luggage (like on planes)

We'd like to understand a bit more about how you think this could be organised on board HS2:

Would you, personally, use a luggage check-in system? On which types of journey would you use it?

How would it work – for example, how/where would you check in/ retrieve your luggage?

Would you expect there to be airport-like security with check in bags?

If airport-like security checks were conducted, it might take a while to check in your luggage. If this were the case, would you still want to use a check-in system - or not?

How early would you be prepared to arrive before your journey, to check your luggage in?

Task 50, posted 03/07/2015

# The concept of luggage check-in divided the panel into two groups



Those in favour thought this was a fantastic idea as it would help towards reducing some of the stress that comes with travelling.

*"I would definitely use this. I think that it would be too cumbersome to sort out children and bags and would prefer it if someone else could"*  
(Commuter, Birmingham, 31-40)

Those against luggage check-in thought it went against the whole ethos of train travel as a quick, hassle-free form of travel.



*"I feel a check in luggage system would take away the ease of getting the train and the ability to arrive a few minutes before"*  
(Car driver, Leeds, 31-40)

- However, some of those opposed to luggage check-in did say that they could see the use for *certain journeys* e.g. holidays

# Those in favour of a luggage check-in system think it would greatly improve train travel

Panellists came up with multiple reasons as to why luggage check-in would be a huge benefit to train travel

## TOP QUOTE!

- It would help those who **struggle to lift** their luggage onto trains and into luggage space

*"I would use it on long journeys as I'm 5 ft 2 and have stick like arms so find it a bit difficult getting massive bags onto the train."  
(Commuter, Sheffield, 18-30)*



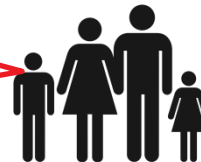
- It would be **one less thing** to think about when making a journey

*"its one less thing to think about, knowing your luggage is stored, hopefully safely, on board for you!"  
(Commuter, Sheffield, 18-30)*

*"As I'm sure that everyone on the whole of Planet Earth - and possibly beyond - must know by now, this would be an absolute godsend for me! So yes, yes, yes, I would absolutely use a luggage check-in system!"  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

- It would help those **travelling with children** and luggage during the boarding process and on board.

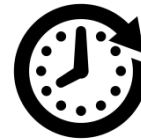
*"I would be happy to use the luggage check in purely due to the amount of luggage that you need when you have a young family"  
(Leisure, Newcastle, 18-30)*



# Those opposed to the idea think that it would slow the whole process of train travel down

- It would take **too much time**

*"I personally would not use a luggage check in on the train. The best bit about train travel is arriving five minutes before you get on the train" (leisure, Leeds, 31-40)*



- **Against the ethos** of 'high speed' train travel – especially HS2



- **Experience with airports** has shown how luggage check-in can add stress

*"That defeats the whole reason why I use the train, for me travelling by plane is very stressful and a big part of it is baggage check in."  
(Commuter, Sheffield, 18-30)*



- Can't just **pick up luggage and run** off to destination/connecting journey



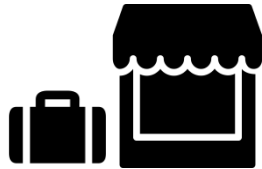
## TOP QUOTE!

*"I would not use a luggage check-in system. It seems an idea which is totally at odds with the ethos of HS2. What is the point of designing and building a rail system which is mainly being sold on the idea of speed and reduced journey times, and then slowing the system down by adding time-consuming luggage check-in"  
(Business, Birmingham, 51-60)*

# There are a number of ways luggage check-in could work

## Check-in Options

- Drop off at convenient locations nearer home, like shops



*"if I could check in my luggage in advance at a location nearer to my home, which would save me having to drag it onto the bus ride to the train station. I rather like Lowegill's idea of a local shop or post office." (Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

- An x-ray system as passengers arrive on the platform.
  - Luggage would then go onto a separate carriage in containers for each stop.
- Check in counters similar to those at airports with retrieval areas that are securely controlled.



## Alternatively....



- Safe storage on board rather than luggage check-in
  - With a personalised code on your ticket to lock/unlock your storage

# The prospect of having an airport style security system divided the panel

## Security



On one side, people thought it would be a necessary requirement in this day and age with security threats



On the other side, people didn't understand why it should be necessary if people can take luggage onto trains now without it

## Early arrival

Most people said that they would be willing to arrive 30 minutes early to check their luggage in.

- If there was comfortable seating and enough facilities within the station, then waiting the extra time for this was not seen as an issue

*"Having to wait a bit longer for my luggage to be security checked would not put me off using a check in service. The extra time would be outweighed by the sheer convenience, relief and increased comfort of not having to drag my luggage on 3 or 4 different trains in order to reach my eventual destination."*

*(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

Despite the opposing ideas about luggage check-in, it was collectively agreed that if a luggage system was put in place, it must be optional



# Discussion: Task 51

You may have heard in the news over the last year that the Gare du Nord in Paris is being completely redeveloped. As well as new station technology, increased space and aesthetic improvements, the station is due to include facilities for both passengers and non-passengers. Imagining you had a blank canvas to create a brand new train station, what do you think would make a great looking station?

- What features would be needed to make it great - and great looking?
  - What colours would be used within the station?
  - How could the station layout be designed to help create a seamless journey?
  - What should be avoided to make it more user-friendly?
  - Are there facilities that you haven't seen in stations you have used that you think would improve user experience?
  - How could the needs of non-passengers be incorporated into the station?
- If possible, it would be great if you could include any examples of stations, airports, offices, leisure centres or other buildings you have visited that you think are particularly impressive. What was it about it that made it stand out? What could HS2 take from this when thinking about station design?

Try and be as creative as possible in thinking about how the station would look. Feel free to include pictures, drawings, photos or anything else you think would help us understand your vision.

Task 51, posted 10/07/2015

# The panel came up with some really artistic ideas about how they would create the ideal HS2 train station

There was one overriding theme to their answers...

...The design of an ideal HS2 station should have areas that replicate nature to help promote a **relaxing**, calm environment



Example of a building design sent from the panel



*"I like the idea of an indoor garden, as mentioned, I love the Madrid station as I think it conveys calmness and tranquillity, which would I feel impact on my mood and experience at the station"*  
(Leisure, Liverpool, 31-40)

The design of the station should **set the mood** for the rest of the journey

# Old vs New

There were two main ideas for creating a station with a timeless design:

## 1. Old on the outside – modern in the inside

- Incorporating or renovating old buildings is a great way of preserving history
- Stations such as St Pancras and Nottingham are good examples of this

## 2. Modern on the outside – modern in the inside

- Architectural capabilities now mean buildings with creative design can be created, and with the right minds, stand the test of time

...Either way, the design should promote flow through...

Escalators

Travellators

Smart cards

Logical layout

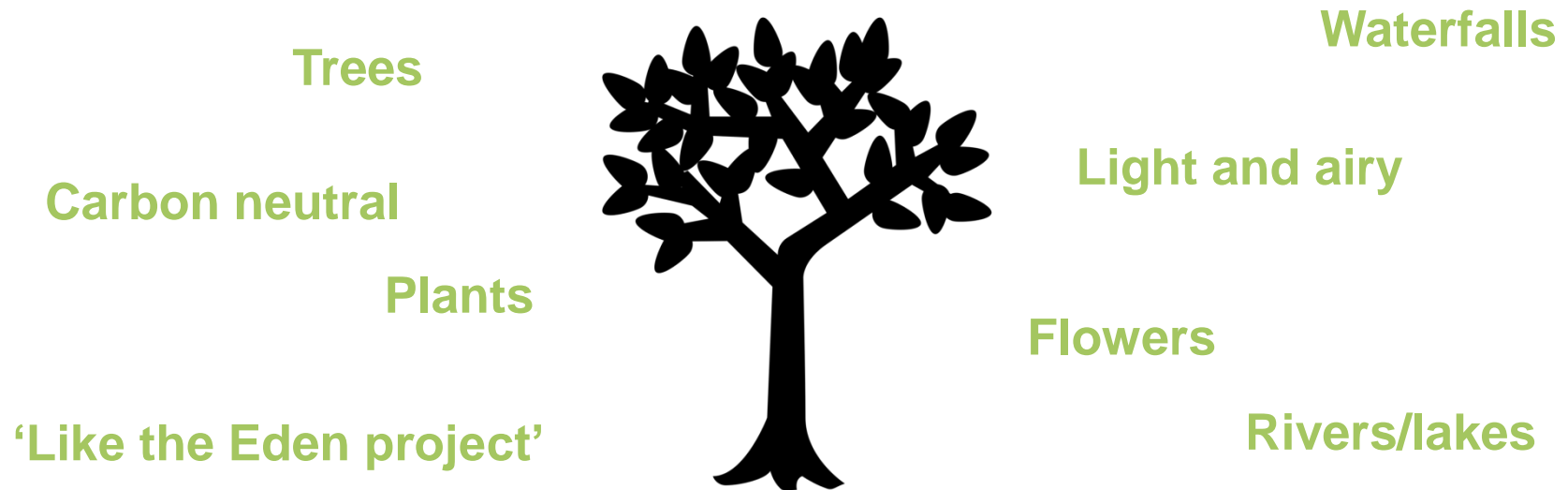
Separated arriving and departing areas

*“everyone is crammed into a single concourse waiting on their train staring at a board. Then when the platform is announced everyone runs as if the world is over”  
(Business, manchester, 18-30)*

transportfocus 

**Avoid: Single departure boards on the concourse to stop people congregating!**

The panel love the idea of the station having green areas that mimic nature in order to promote a calm and relaxing environment



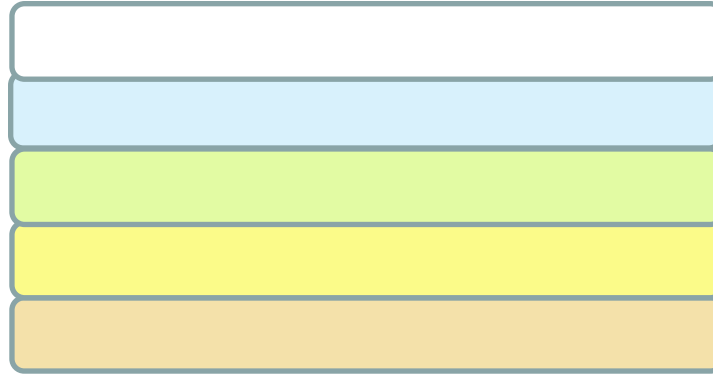
Panellists like the idea of having green areas inside and outside of the station.

- Outside – for views to look out on, and also to help blend in with the surrounding environment
- Inside – to help create relaxing spaces that passengers and non-passengers would visit.

*“I picture this meaning lots of glass to let in natural light and have a view of the surroundings.”*  
(Business, manchester, 18-30)

# The station should be decorated using natural colours

There was a strong consensus that natural colours should be used throughout the station



*“Colours have become a bit of a science and its seems in places like stations which are busy and fast moving the colours should be relaxing to ease travellers mood”  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

- White, light blues, greens, yellows and beige were highlighted as colours that would promote a pleasant atmosphere for passengers to use and visit
  - This was thought to fit in well with the theme of nature.
  - The HS2 brand should also be clear throughout!

**However splashes of colour should be used for key areas such as help points!**

# The needs of both passengers and non-passengers should also be catered for

The station should be a destination in itself!

Shops



Gym



Supermarket collection points



Pet care



Banks



Doctors



Post offices



Hairdressers



Museum of local area



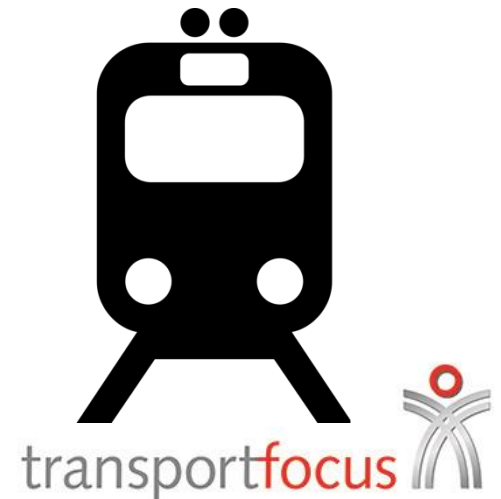
Museum in Edinburgh Waverley Station

The local community should be included within design of the station through:

- Having shops selling local produce
- installing information pods/a museum of the local area
- building green areas for people to come to and relax.

# In summary a HS2 station should be...

- Beautiful but practical. It must cover the fundamentals – accessible, clear signage, intuitive layout, comfortable, not crowded...
- A destination in it's own right
- Recognisable as being part of the HS2 brand
- Able to blend in with and recognise the local community
- Setting the mood for the journey
- Timeless
- Accessible through links to other transport
- Spacious



# Discussion: Task 52

We know from previous discussions that one simple thing can have a real impact on how enjoyable your journey is.... The quality of toilets!

What should HS2 think about when designing toilets – both on the train and in the station?

Please think about:

- How the door operates
- The size of the cubicle
- How the taps operate
- Frequency of cleaning
- Features included e.g. mirrors, baby change, hand dryers
- Décor and appearance
- Anything else?

If you've ever had to use any particularly poorly designed/managed toilets in any form of transport or building, what was it that you disliked about them? Is there anything HS2 could learn from this?

Task 52, posted 17/07/2015



# Toilet design was a popular topic among the panel, with four key areas of importance highlighted

## #1 Cleanliness

- The lack of clean toilets on the current rail network was a huge gripe among many of the panel

## #2 Door Locks

- Not understanding the locking mechanism caused many to feel panic at the prospect of using toilets

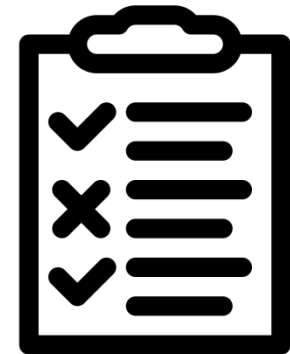
## #3 Space

- A lack of cubical space was an issue for three main reasons; wheelchair accessibility, use with children and carrying luggage

## #4 Faults

- Broken features within cubicles make many facilities unusable

*“Loos on trains should be as comfortable and easy to use as your loo at home, its so often the case that they are more of a last resort and avoided when possible.”  
(Business, Liverpool, 41-50)*



# #1 Cleanliness

The word 'clean' appeared **116** times within this task!

Many avoid using toilet facilities due to the lack of cleaning maintenance currently carried out in on board toilets.

## Cleaning Frequency:

There were a range of ideas for how frequently toilet facilities should be cleaned:

- It was largely agreed that the ideal frequency would be around every **30-60minutes**
- some members of the panel suggested having a visible **cleaning rota** on display to reassure passengers.

*"Does anyone actually sit on a public toilet seat? Sorry for the personal question - but it would be good if there's a design which could hygienically clean the toilet seat with each use. I prefer to take a disposable toilet seat cover with me. I make these at home from a bin liners"*  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)

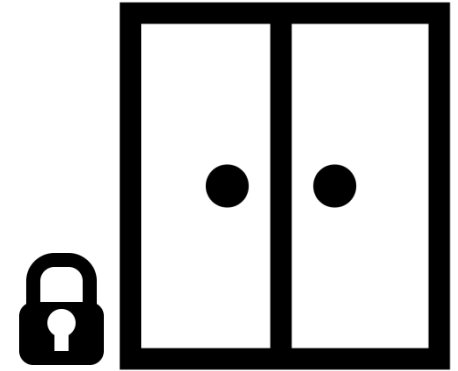


# #2 Door locks

Door locking mechanisms were a source of fear for many

- Fear of being locked in
- Fear of being exposed
- Fear of exposing others

## Door locks:



**Doors with a manual slide** lock often leave a visible gap between the door and the wall.

- They were also seen to be less secure when the train was moving

**Doors with electronic button locks** do not show clearly if the cubicle is actually locked.

- It is also unclear how the passenger is to know if the toilets are in use or not

# #3 Space



Space was a big issue for the majority of the panel, but especially so for those:

## With mobility issues

- Manoeuvring a wheelchair into and out of the cubicle can be extremely challenging

*"My biggest problem with accessing the toilets on a train is the lack of turning space, not just in the toilet itself, but surrounding the wheelchair space"*  
(Leisure, Glasgow, 51-60)

## Travelling with luggage

- Passengers do not want to leave bags on seats, but equally do not wish to put them on the cubicle floor which is often wet!

*"The fact that I'm travelling with a cabin bag or a large suitcase does not automatically preclude me from needing to pop to the loo occasionally. So I don't want to have to either leave my luggage outside"*  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)

## Travelling with children

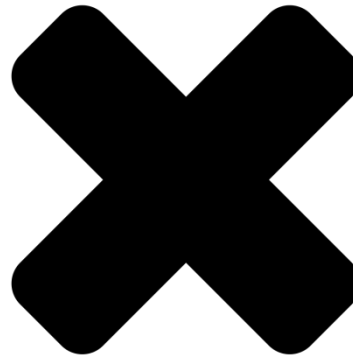
- Cubicles are too small for parents to take their small children in with them when they are using the toilets and baby changing facilities

*"for parents with a baby and an older child who is toilet trained would need to take both to the toilet. This area would have to be big enough for all of them to fit"*  
(Commuter, Glasgow, 31-40)

# #4 Faults

Many of the panel spoke about faulty features within toilet facilities

- Automatic taps that don't sense movement
- Broken soap dispensers
- Damaged locks
- Faulty hand dryers



*"These days I don't even bother or dare visit the toilets because I can bet that it is smelly and there is a high chance for it to be out of order or something broken inside"*  
(Business, Manchester, 18-30)

Toilet facilities are not currently being inspected regularly enough to check for damages and therefore leave many inoperative.

# How should HS2 design their toilets?

## DESIGN

Toilets should have a natural, clean and calming design

- Wood and marble
- Art work
- Music
- Good lighting
- Quirky signs
- Sleek
- Plants

## FUNDAMENTAL FEATURES

Spacious  
Luggage area  
Hygienic hands-free features  
Baby changing facility within toilet cubicle  
Visible cleaning rota  
Mirrors at height for wheelchair users  
Dyson hand dryer



Sound proof  
Completely enclosed (no gaps!)  
Frosted glass window  
Fragrant  
Clear 'occupied' sign  
Departure/arrival boards

# Discussion: Task 53

This week we would like you to think about how the current rail network caters to your needs and what HS2 could do to provide a better service in this respect:

Thinking about the current rail network, to what extent do you think it meets the needs of people like you?

Please consider all of the aspects that make up 'you' – e.g. your gender, age, number of children, ethnic origin, religion, income, occupation, height/ weight, mobility, health, etc...

Has the current rail network ever failed to meet your needs? In what ways were you let down?

Are there any other transport services (airlines, bus operators, boat services etc.) that you have been particularly impressed by in terms of catering to your needs? What was it that made them stand out?

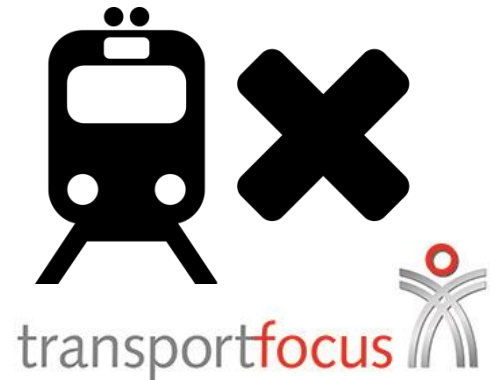
What could HS2 do to meet the needs of people like you better?

Task 53, posted 24/07/2015

# The current rail network was criticized for failing to meet the needs of passengers

- The panel identified key aspects about themselves that affect the way they travel:
  - Height, gender, mobility, health, family status, age...
- The current rail network has failed to meet their needs in relation to these key aspects in a range of ways
- Although some were able to recognize times in which it had met their needs, there were more negative experiences identified than positive.

*"When I travel with my children I have struggled on many occasions to get the pushchair onto the train and into a carriage, if it wasn't for some kind passengers, I wouldn't have been able to board the train!"*  
(Business, Manchester, 51-60)





# Individuals needs are not currently being met across the whole passenger journey

Height: 

**Taller passengers** – The seat in front is too close

**Shorter passengers** – There are no foot rests, head rests are too high and luggage space is out of reach

Health: 

**Visually impaired** - Information screens are too hard to read

**Poor health** –Requested special assistance doesn't always turn up.

Lifestyle: 

**Busy commuters** - are slowed down by leisure travellers and there are limited plug sockets for those wanting to utilise train time to work

Mobility: 

Aisles and doors can be too narrow and toilet space can be too small to comfortably manoeuvre **wheelchairs**. Platform stairs are a NO!

Families: 

There are no visible staff to help board **children**, the platform stairs can be too steep and the platform gaps are too big

Dietary requirements: 

There are very limited **vegetarian** food options

# There were however some panellists who felt the current rail network does meet their needs

Age: 

Young persons rail cards make train travel an affordable option

Lifestyle: 

Busy commuters can use the train as a portable office – tables, sockets, wifi

Health: 

Large departure boards with orange text can help those visually impaired

*“The train also allows greater use of my free time. In the laptop age, the train is like a portable office for me which saves time driving but also the train time can be used productively. Unlike airports, you don’t need to spend two hours at each end going through layers of security and bag checking”*  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)

# The panel also identified general ways in which needs were not currently being met

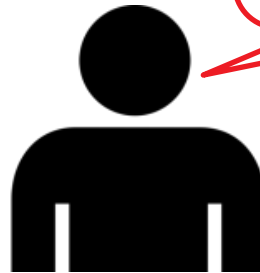
Lack of security  
on night services

Lack of cleanliness  
in trains

Poor temperature  
control in carriages

Delays

*The general  
shortfalls of  
current rail  
network are...*



Expensive  
tickets

Noisy

No on board  
entertainment

Insufficient  
parking  
availability

Poor customer  
service

transport**focus** 

# Other forms of transport have impressed the panel for succeeding where rail has not

## ← Plane travel →



*"I did break my foot last year and was on crutches and using a wheelchair and we were flying to Barcelona, we flew with Monarch and they were very good I was met at the airport and took straight through customs and onto the plane with no hold ups our luggage was taken and dealt with separately so it was all stress free."*

*(Leisure, Birmingham, 51-60)*

*"However, when I travel with an airline, from start to finish the experience couldn't be more different to train travel.*

*The staff in the airport are on hand to help, at the boarding gate families with children, disabled passengers etc are boarded first. This helps enormously, makes you feel less stressed and calm"*

*(Business, Manchester, 51-60)*

## Ferry travel

*"Brittany Ferries service for disabled travellers would be hard to beat. I've used them several times, as I love holidaying in Brittany. When you book your ticket and let them know you're a wheelie, you're sent a card to put on your car dashboard which gets you ushered to the front of the boarding queue. You're then shown to a parking spot next to the very roomy onboard lift, accompanied by a member of staff who takes you up to the passenger deck."*

*(Leisure, Glasgow, 51-60)*

## Coach travel

*"I have found in the past that bus operators, such as National Express, will take your luggage from you and stow it away in the hold, which does make things considerably easier"*

*(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

# So what can HS2 learn?

- Fundamentally HS2 must get the basic essentials right before they add on the frills.
- The current rail network isn't accessible for all, and some avoid train travel where at all possible.
- HS2 must consider the extensive range of requirements that passengers have relating to their different physical and mental needs
- A large part of catering to these needs, is having visible staff that are on hand to deal with any difficulties that passengers face.
- The needs of passengers must be heard. HS2 must be seen to be adapting to the needs of those who are at the heart of the service

*"Last time I was at physio I conducted a straw poll of all the wheelies in the department, around 25 people, and I was the only one who had used the train at all in the past 20 years. The typical response was "Are you joking? Why on earth would I want to put myself through that?"  
(Leisure, Glasgow, 51-60)*

# Discussion: Task 54

This week we would like you to think about how well it caters to the needs of a specific group; older passengers i.e. 65+

- How well do you think the current rail network meets the needs of older passengers? In what ways are they met / not met?

- Please think about both older passengers who do have mobility difficulties and those who do not?

- What could HS2 learn from this to meet their needs to a better standard?

Whilst answering this question, please think about yourself (if you are 65+) or alternatively, ask friends and family who are in this age bracket.

If you see any interesting examples of how the needs of older passengers have/haven't been catered for within transport/buildings/public spaces, please feel free to take a photo! Would be great to see some examples!

Task 54, posted 31/07/2015

# The current rail network is considered largely not to meet the needs of older passengers

Whilst it was acknowledged that a lot of improvement has happened over time, it was agreed that the rail network still does not sufficiently meet the needs of older passengers (65+)

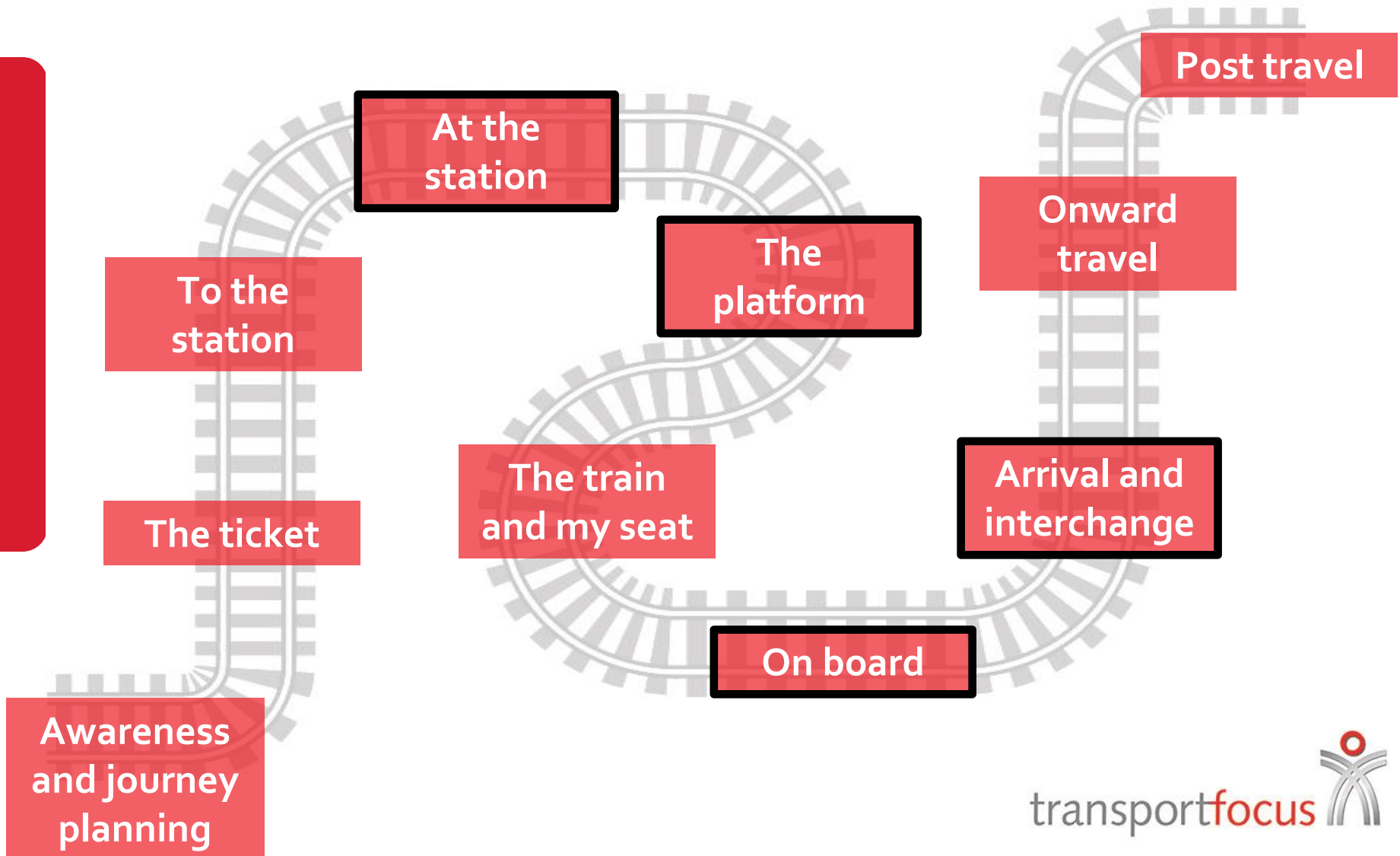
From their own experiences, and the experiences of friends/family, the main areas that were identified as danger areas were:

- Signs
- Staff
- Accessibility
- Announcements
- Seating comfort

*“Television is telling us all the time that the over 65s are the fastest growing demographic age group in the UK, so it stands to reason that it would be a good idea to improve the standard of the service being offered”  
(Leisure, Manchester, 61-70)*



# Stages of the journey where older passengers needs are not being met were identified





# The station was identified as a key stage where older passenger needs are not met

## At the station

Technology in the station needs to be more user friendly

Wearable tickets would be more user friendly to avoid dropping or losing paper ones

Information boards can be difficult to see for those with poor eyesight

Travellators would help older passengers with luggage

Turnstiles for toilets are a hazard for older passengers

There's not enough visible staffing

# Boarding and alighting the train were highlighted as key danger points

Platform steps are hazardous

Announcements are not clear enough for those hard of hearing

Staff on the platform should be looking out for those who may need help

**The platform**

**Arrival and interchange**

Platforms are busy, crowded places that can be unsafe for vulnerable passengers

The platform gap is dangerous to cross

# Many suggested that improvements could be made for older passengers on board

Seating needs to be sufficient. Elderly passengers cannot be expected to stand

There are not enough visible staff on the train to help stow away luggage

Vulnerable passengers are not able to easily call for assistance on board

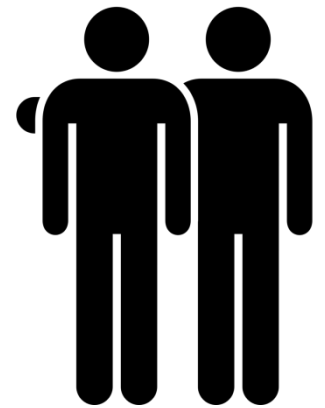
Leg space is not sufficient, especially for those with joint problems

Aisles are too narrow for some elderly people to navigate

On board

# The main factor that was seen as the most fundamental area in need of improvement was visible and helpful staffing

- Some elderly passengers have had to request assistance around 7 days in advance. Even then, it did not always materialise.
- Many suggested a 'Travel Buddy' system
  - This could be either openly available or pre booked
- Assistance MUST be available for the entire journey
  - arriving at the station, boarding the train, stowing luggage, alighting the train and helping organise onwards travel.
- Regardless of how this would be organised, staff must be helpful, kind and most importantly respectful.



# In order to provide a better, more suitable service for older passengers, HS2 should...

- Take into account the varying needs older passengers may have – hearing, sight, mobility...
- Help vulnerable passengers whilst respecting their needs for independence
- Provide step-free access at all stages of the journey
- Build aisles within the trains that have passing spaces to avoid congestion and collision
- Provide separate 'older friendly' carriages that are quieter, mobility friendly and assisted.
- Airport assistance is a great model for catering to older passengers – An extremely personal, catered service from beginning to end

*"I think it's vital that any service for the elderly avoids being patronising and honours their independence. One size doesn't fit all and an individually tailored buddying service would most certainly have saved my poor mum and the rest of us a lot of worry and stress."  
(Business, London, 51-60)*



# Discussion: Task 55

The whole HS2 railway will be controlled from one facility often referred to as HS2's 'Brain'. This is the hub from which they will monitor and control the entire HS2 system; from tunnel ventilation to train movements to passenger information.

Please take a look at the attached document from HS2 that talks about this centre, what it will do and the type of environment it could be.

In the past you have talked about how important it is for HS2 to treat staff well and reward them sufficiently. Many HS2 staff will be working in this 'Brain' and HS2 believe it is important for the hub to be a positive environment to work in.

On slides 9-12, there are some initial thoughts on how the hub could be a positive environment for staff. What do you think of these ideas? Do you agree with them? Do you have any other ideas?

Thinking about working environments you have enjoyed/ not enjoyed working in, are there other things that HS2 should be thinking about when designing the hub?

Task 55, posted 07/08/2015

# The majority of the panel really like HS2's ideas for the Control Centre as it puts welfare at the forefront of design



In line with HS2 being **accessible for all** as a train service, the control centre should continue these values within their own working environments.

Whilst there were lots of ideas of what HS2 could do to create a healthy, fun and stimulating environment within the control centre, the overriding feature that was essential for them was it being **as natural as possible**

- Natural lighting
- Natural air
- Plants and greenery
- Organic fruit and veg catering



# The factors that appealed to them the most were natural lighting and clean air which were seen as fundamental to a good working environment

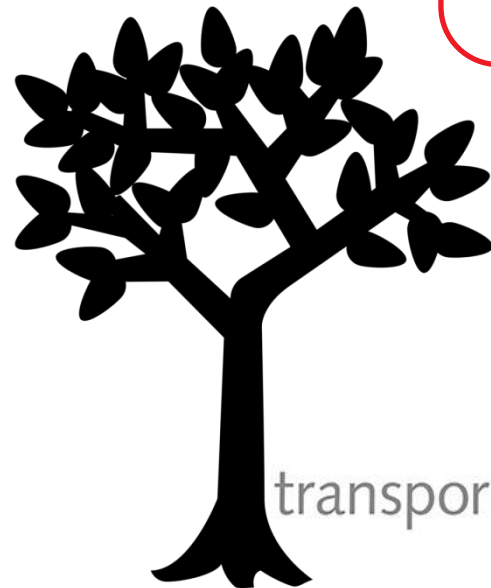
Artificial lighting was a feature of offices that many had negative experiences of:

- A healthy work setting was seen as one that mimicked a natural environment as closely as possible.
- Circadian rhythms were thought to be an ideal way of preventing illness and promoting staff wellbeing

*“incorporate plenty of house plants - there has been a lot of research on which plants maintain a clean environment, remove chemicals etc from a room and give clean air”  
(Business, Leeds, 61-70)*

Other ideas of creating a natural setting were:

- Encouraging staff to go outside
- Having plants/greenery inside
- The construction of outside working/socialising areas
- Green parks and water features surrounding the building





# Other features of the document that the panel liked were the catering, staff support, exercise and ergonomic consideration

The well being of the staff will be influenced by their surroundings



Good food and fitness will help maintain physical and mental health



*"Well-being for all has to be a crucial driver if you are to attract and retain staff to get the best out of them through respect and showing to their customers what Hs2 values are all about. You will be judged by the customers on your values, behaviour and attitudes regardless of how swish the buildings are."  
(Business, 61-70)*

*"As someone with a spinal condition, ergonomics and comfort are extremely important to me."  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 41-50)*

If there has been care invested in these features of the workplace, workers will feel cared for.



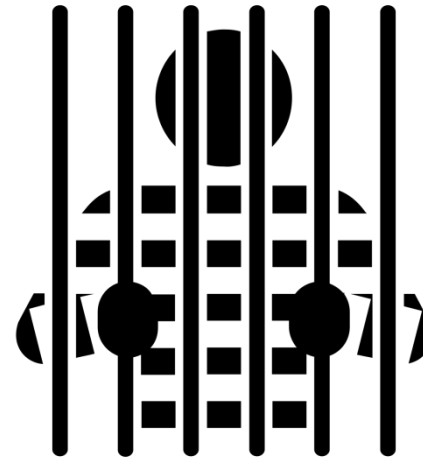
This all builds towards creating a positive company working culture

transport**focus** 

# The factor that they were less sure on was the building itself

Whilst many of the features and ideas HS2 had for the control centre were liked, the building itself was not:

- Panellists likened it to a prison!



*"I love all the idea, they are great! But I did not like the look of it, it looked very similar to a prison"*  
(Business, London, 18-30)

The outside should be as inspiring as the inside!

# The panel also had LOTS of ideas of their own for creating a great work environment...

- **Gym**

Classes, pools, equipment



- **Private resting areas**

To refresh and have a break



- **Doctor/Dentist**

Staff MOT, healthcare to fit working hours



- **Shopping store**

To help manage daily life



- **Lectures**

Encourage learning



- **Post office**

To help manage daily life



- **Childcare**

Help manage family and work



- **Parks**

Promoting healthy living



- **Charity work**

Promoting team work



# Essentially the ideal HS2 'Brain' should...

- Be a place where staff are well catered for regardless of age, gender, weight, ethnicity, contract type, job role, health, or any other personal characteristics

*"I know I for one obsess over my workspace. It's my sanctuary, my cave. As such, I believe if you want to excel at your work, then your workspace itself must also excel, that keeps you inspired, creative and prolific"*  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)

- have facilities that are open for the same hours that staff are working- including those on a night shift

*"I think its not just creating the spaces but creating the right kind of positive working culture where people feel listened to, engaged and passionate about work."*  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)

- show staff that they play an essential role in the company. Cross department integration should be encouraged.

# Discussion: Task 56

Many of you have spoken in the past about bottlenecking and crowding within train stations. This week we would like you to think about one aspect of this.

Train stations such as Euston and Kings Cross have large departure boards in the concourse that passengers congregate around, often leading to congestion. If HS2 did not have one large central departure board, how would this make you feel?

What would they need to put in place instead, to make sure you could still find the information that you need?

Please think about how information is conveyed when you're using other forms of transport.

Feel free to include pictures, drawings, photos or anything else you think would help us understand your thoughts.

Task 56, posted 14/08/2015

# Whilst removing a main departure board was generally thought to reduce station congestion, there was concern that taking it away would be confusing and unnatural

- Some thought that it was an **intuitive part of travel** to enter a station and head for a main departure board.

*"most people look for a central hub where they can find out information. It would be the first thing I look for when I arrive at a station. It might cause more issues if this wasn't there or obvious."  
(Business, 31-40)*

- However others felt that it would be **more useful to have multiple areas where this information could be held** to reduced crowding and sudden rushes of people

*"More often than not you find yourself having to battle through the masses that have congregated ... But the fun really begins when a platform number is announced as then it just becomes a survival of the fittest!"  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)*

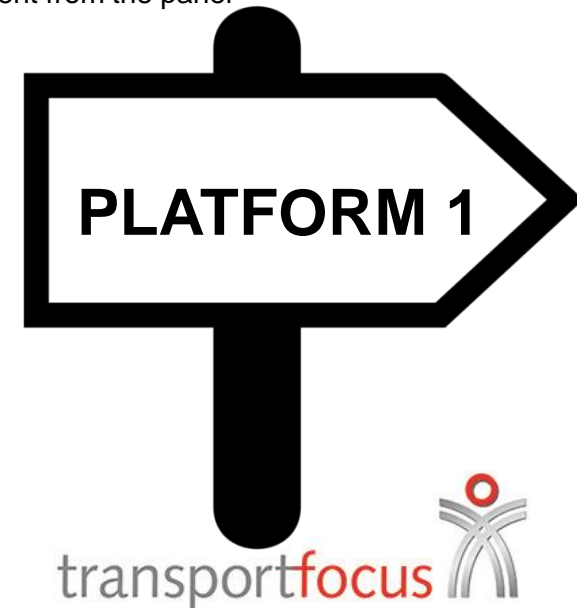
- There were multiple ideas of where and how this information could be presented

# Those who were in favour of keeping a single departure board felt that it would take a lot of time before it would begin to feel natural not looking for a central hub

- Many felt that an instinctive part of travelling by train is to look for a central information place and by removing it, more chaos could be created.
- People may not know where to look for information
- Crowds would start forming around areas where staff are
- However, some did think that whilst it would be better to keep a central departure board; there are benefits of putting up multiple smaller information points.



Example of central departure boards sent from the panel



# These multiple departure boards/information hubs could help passengers utilise other station facilities

Information boards could be spread around the station

- Shops



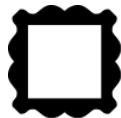
- Restaurants



- Toilets



- Walls



- Cafes



*"I also think that smart voice activated devices installed throughout the station, whether it be outside the toilets, sandwich shops, waiting rooms etc....could be utilised where you would simply state your destination and you would be told details of the next train , platform, delays etc.."*  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)



# Some systems have managed to create a flowing structure without a central board

- Airport departure boards

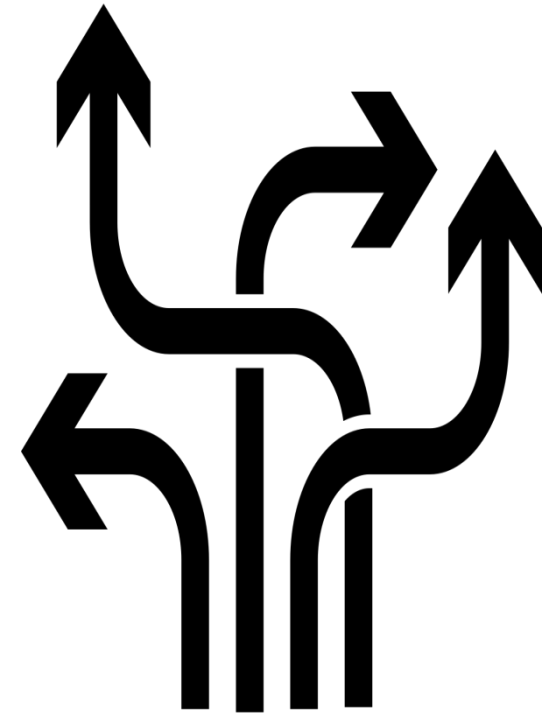
*"I like the airport style signage as they tend to have viewing points at a variety of different areas of the departure lounge. That way, you don't get that hideous 'banking up' that you get at train stations."*  
(Business, London, 51-60)

- Train Station – miniature boards

*" I have many a time stepped out of the station just to grab a coffee at one of the shops just outside the main entrance. Whilst in there I have been able to relax, enjoy a cuppa as well as keep an eye on the departure board as they have a series of screens "*  
(Business, Birmingham, 31-40)

- Platform markings in other countries

*" I think there needs to be more information and organisation of platforms...to ensure that there's a good flow of people. In Germany you know that if you wait at say platform 5.J your seat will be in the carriage (or near)where you board"*  
(Leisure, Nottingham, 31-40)



# The panel were very creative in how they envisaged a new information system to be

- As well as information boards in Shops, Restaurants, Toilets, Walls and Cafes, there could be....

- An app with departure information

- *It was however recognized that this kind of technology may not be suitable for all e.g. those less tech-savvy*

- Touch screens around the station to find information for your journey



- A text messaging service with the passengers journey details

- Braille and audio facilities for those with site/hearing difficulties

- Tickets with departure information on them

- A check in service that would tell the passenger everything they need to know



And even more imaginatively ...

## ...There could also be

- Holograms of people that could direct passengers
- 2d projections (similar to those in Kings Cross)
- Information projections onto walls and floors
- Voice activated information screens that give details of requested journeys

Alongside all of these ideas, the station **MUST** have helpful staff who could advise passengers should they not be able to find the information they need



# Discussion: Task 57

Thinking about you personally, do you need staff to be available on every journey, or are there some journeys where you need help more/ less than others?

Thinking about the whole passenger journey, what would you need to be in place/ to happen in order for you to not need any help – at any stage? This could be technology, information, easy access, etc.

Task 57, posted 21/08/2015

Whilst most people see themselves as self sufficient passengers who can do the majority, if not the entire journey unaided, a good staff presence is still essential

- Planning, booking and undertaking a journey is largely considered to be something that can be done without need for assistance.

### **But what about when things go wrong?**

- Trains breaking down, delays on the line, anti social passengers, getting lost... Even when staff cannot immediately resolve a situation, their presence alone is enough to create reassurance.

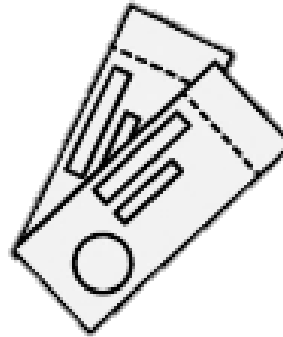
*"The skills of a good train guard are a mix between social worker, diplomat, travel guide, policeman and bouncer, all of these skills are called upon daily in supporting passengers"  
(Business, Liverpool, 41-50)*



# Many see themselves as seasoned travellers who can help themselves and those around them

What do passengers feel they can do without staff?

- Book and collect tickets
- Find the platform
- Locate their seat
- Plan onwards travel



*"I don't feel like I need staff to be available and at the moment where they are, they are often a hindrance - as they'll usually be checking your ticket for the second or third time. As others have mentioned the only time I really need to rely on people is where technology can't do the job"*  
(Business, Manchester, 18-30)

These passengers would prefer to have as little interaction with staff as possible along their journey. They find some interactions, such as ticket inspections, invasive and annoying.

However staff presence is all part of great customer service and making the passenger feel relaxed and happy.

# Staff are seen as most essential in two main situations

## 1. When something has gone wrong with the journey

- Staff are required to provide solutions to travel issues
- Staff can provide information on travel updates

## 2. When other passengers are perceived as a threat

- Staff can provide reassurance to those travelling at night or alone
- The threat of being observed by staff is perceived to positively impact the behaviour of anti social passengers

*"I often avoid travelling alone during late hours just because I don't feel particularly safe. With recent reports stating that British Transport Police have received an increased rise in some crime amongst railways, I feel it very important to have trained staff on-board for a point of safety."  
(Commuter, London, 18-30)*

Many actively avoid travelling at night or alone on trains as they feel so vulnerable;

- Crime statistics and news articles on this topic confirm their fears  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28874345>

# There are a number of facilities and changes that would need to happen in order for passengers to become more self sufficient



- A fully functioning app to assist throughout the whole journey
- E-orders for food
- Vending machines
- Screens with journey information on each seat
- E-tickets which helps locate seat and food preferences



- A call button for when problems arise
- Text service for queries
- CCTV surveillance
- Interactive information boards
- Step free access platforms for wheelchairs and suitcases
- Luggage check-in system



# However, one glove does not fit all.

Elderly passengers, those with children or passengers with disabilities (mental and physical), do require assistance and they must be able to **access this help easily** during a HS2 journey



However, changes must also be made so that these people do not have to be **reliant** on the help of staff.



*"A short journey such as Kilmarnock to Ayr or Glasgow, all I really require is ramp access at either end, which I have to book in advance. Fully accessible stations and level-entry (and preferably with wider doors) trains would negate my need to book assistance in advance...**I long for the day when I can just turn up and get on a train, like everyone else.**"*

*(Leisure, Glasgow, 51-60)*



# In a nutshell...

Many of the panel think of themselves as self sufficient passengers and would like HS2 to give them the opportunity to become more so. Some staff interactions are seen as a hindrance rather than helpful...



...but removing or reducing staff presence would make passengers feel less comfortable to travel and reduce passenger satisfaction with the customer service.



# HS2 Online Community

## Monthly Report