

## Independent Disability Advisory Group

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023

14.30 – 16.30

Attendees	
	IDAG Member (Chair)
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
	IDAG Member
Shannon Webster	General Management Apprentice, D&I Team
Amy Edgar	Diversity & Inclusion Specialist, D&I Team
New Design for LO line naming	
Bethany Whiteoak	Customer Information Executive, within Customer Info and Design & Partnerships
Jon Hunter	Design lead, within Customer Info and Design & Partnerships
Customer Toilets	
Georgia Smith	Customer Experience Manager, within Customer Insight Strategy and Experience
Jade Matthews	Customer Experience Lead, Customer Insight Strategy and Experience
Simone West	Inclusive Design Advisor, D&I Team
Apologies	
	IDAG Member (Deputy Chair)
	IDAG Member

### Welcome and Minutes of the Last Meeting

- welcomed IDAG members to the meeting.
- gave apologies from and as they couldn't attend. reminded attendees that shared her thoughts via email instead, these were shared with ahead of the meeting.
- Minutes of the last meeting were approved.
- requested update on IDAG visiting Liverpool Street (regarding screens). and r said they could attend Saturday, to find out if Saturday is available then update and

## Slot 1: New Design for LO line naming

### ➤ TfL's Clarifications

- ██████ requested for a member of IDAG to come to next validation, to ensure the colours are accessible, including final validation exercises in different lighting conditions to ensure the colours are suitable. ██████ and ██████ are happy to attend. The team to liaise offline with them to arrange this.
- TfL's aim was to make wayfinding easier.
- thanked ██████ for her very helpful inputs to the EqIA

### ➤ IDAG's Comments

- IDAG pleased with the slides and sees there's been significant improvement.

It was said the proposed pink Overground line could be confused with the Hammersmith and City line, as the hollow line doesn't register as well with people visually impaired. But as the 2 lines unlikely intersect, this shouldn't be a confusion.

- It was mentioned if the shape of the line on the map could be different, as two parallel ones can be confused for a singular one by someone visually impaired or misunderstood as two train lines running parallel instead of one.
- It was mentioned that alongside the colours, there is additional ways to identify different lines (e.g., names of lines). They were recommended to ensure the text-based approach remains the same. It was said that it is ok if some colours clash somewhat, as there is also text to differentiate.
- There was also a recommendation to keep orange Overground roundel, to keep a fundamental frame of reference.
- It was said how thorough and inclusive this project has been and thanked the team for continually involving IDAG in this process. It was said that their hard work has been recognised.

### ➤ TfL Response

- They confirmed the 2 lines of similar colour unlikely intersect, but he will confirm this and send the group a full map image. They said they've avoided two colours intersecting as much as possible.
- They tested different line styles and researched which would be best. They said the overwhelming feedback was that two lines running parallel was best option to avoid confusion as much as possible. They said he can share this research.
- They confirmed maintaining the text-based approach is fundamental. They thanked ██████ for her help with the EQIA for this.
- They confirmed the orange Overground roundel will remain the same.

## **Slot 2: customer toilets**

### **➤ TfL's Clarifications**

- They gave an overview of the process so far, including that they are currently on Phase 1 of a Feasibility study and said the Mayor has committed TfL to review existing the provision of toilets, improve this and maintain toilets in a sustainable way.
- Phase 1 of feasibility study has included defining toilet proposition, and gathering feedback from customers, stakeholders, and staff. They are looking for help to inform their thinking and would like to return to IDAG with an update on this in the future.
- It was asked how many stations had toilets, compared to stations that don't, they said there is 99 stations with toilets, out of approximately 270 stations.
- The scope was clarified they said there's no scope on new facilities. IDAG mentioned people using toilets aren't concerned for who maintains toilets, and for them to consider this.
- There were questions and suggestions regarding the feasibility study. It was mentioned that TfL were happy to have a follow up to discuss these further if not all questions were answered. Some of these included:
  - The objective of the feasibility study
  - how have they assessed the current pinpoints
  - What toilets are they benchmarking against (TfL, National Rail, or a new benchmark)
  - Are TfL using tech providers for toilet layout?
- The Customer Experience team had been pushing for improvements for some time. All had been made free, new infrastructure has been installed and some toilets have been improved or repaired. But there are challenges: poor spread, poor condition, anti-social behaviour, passenger information not being in real time, not all are accessible.
- The Mayor and London Assembly Members are also interested. It was noted later than one Assembly Member, Caroline Russell, had recently published a Good Loo Guide.

### **➤ IDAG's Comments**

- There was extensive discussion on obtaining customer feedback and the best practice for the conduct of feasibility studies. TfL responded that the objective is to identify how TfL can increase and improve provision, and where & how.
- It was suggested that TfL have customer interviews to learn more about customer's experiences in more detail (including asking how long they have been looking for a toilet, and would they have done the journey if they'd known this ahead of time)

- The Great British toilet map is not always reliable, TfL's clarification about location needs to be clearer, and they recommend better wording would help this and that they are happy to follow up on the questions asked in more detail if requested.
- They asked what the most common type of complaints are.
- Overall, they were pleased with the progress of this, and acknowledge that the surveys have improved. IDAG are very supportive of these improvements.
- It was asked if there's any scope about the size of toilets and the tension between that and numbers within standard facilities? And it was mentioned a concern regarding the size of cubicles, as for example people may need to bring their luggage into the toilets with them, especially at interchange stations for National Rail services.
- It was recommended they have accessible info, including what to do if you do and don't have a RADAR key.
- They recommend TfL look at Members recommended looking at [accessible.co.uk](https://www.accessible.co.uk), [accessible.co.uk](https://www.accessible.co.uk), [socialability.app](https://socialability.app) and [evansguide.com](https://www.evansguide.com) for ideas on the sorts of info that people want. Having somewhere on the website people can get way more info than just where would be helpful.
- Regarding feedback, it was recommended TfL avoid survivor bias (feedback from people already using the network, not with people who don't use it)
- It was suggested TfL point map toilets on a graph of London to identify large gaps.
- IDAG support [REDACTED] email comments and agree.
- They encourage TfL to find on-site specific solutions (situation specifics need to be explored)
- It was asked if the team are doing an EQIA.
- It was recommended that alongside installing new toilets, that TfL maximise already existing toilets, such as advertising them with live information.
- They recommend TfL speak to Disability Rights UK to identify the particular areas anti-social behaviour and vandalism is happening to best avoid impacts on those who need the facilities most and avoid a negative impact on wanting to travel in the future.
- They said that being limited to a TfL kept key would have potential implications on people who need immediate access and don't have time to flag down staff to gain access (e.g., those with IBS or Crohn's disease)
- They recommended TfL look at patterns of anti-social behaviour (including drug use and facilities damaged) as this will affect the amount of time taken for the facility to be restored and cost. And investigate what is reducing/increasing this (E.g., is there less antisocial behaviour when staff are visible?)
- They stressed that signage is key (such as if a RADAR key toilet is locked, TfL could provide some information of how to access it, e.g., a phone number to call/text to allow them to obtain access). It was stressed that staff training and empathy are important but staff-free access is better - hence having a RADAR key is good, but these are very easily available (e.g. on Amazon) and can be abused. It was concluded that on balance it is better to accept some

abuse for the benefit to others. By doing this, it would likely reduce the people who really need to toilet being penalised for poor usage of facilities by others.

- It was suggested that having toilets at termini and interchange stations was an obvious priority, and to fill in gaps in the network, but different factors need to be weighted in the decision making. It was suggested to liaise with the Step Free Team with whom IDAG had had lengthy discussion about weighting (during a similar selection process).

#### ➤ **TfL Response**

- TfL previously focused on London Underground toilets previously, but this will be Pan-TfL.
- They want to move quickly with this, to make improvements as soon as possible.
- They are engaging with stakeholders on this, to identify what the gaps are and what an acceptable gap between stations with a toilet is.
- This will need an ongoing budgetary commitment with a rolling programme over years. As the work to implement the implementation is not funded, hence the need for a rolling programme. The rolling programme needs to include maintenance.
- Regarding benchmarking, TfL have been in contact with National Rail to understand their lessons learnt and to understand toilet facilities at interchange rail operator station (e.g., Victoria) as TfL sites aren't as busy as National Rail and therefore monitored/staffed unlike National Rail toilets.
- They will work with inclusive design advisors on British Standards, and TfL engineers are working on best practice guidance.
- This is unlikely to have a return on investment, but this is a basic facility to meet customer needs.
- It is hoped there will be a link between toilet facility and increased ridership, which could bring a return on investment.
- All support and guidance is gratefully appreciated, and they are happy to arrange follow up on any further questions (including the Feasibility study).
- Most complaints are about state of existing facilities, unreliability of toilets, and lack of compassion from staff. They don't seem to get questions about where there aren't toilets, although it was mentioned you maybe wouldn't complain about something you can't see/doesn't exist.
- There will be a staff and workforce EQIA, but they are not sure when yet.
- They mentioned RADAR keys are easy to obtain (even for non-required people, via third party sellers) and as a result, they're no longer sufficient in providing controlled access.

#### **comments (shared via email prior to the meeting)**

##### ➤ **Clarification**

Non-TfL Managed toilets are out of scope. The quality, management and provision is out of scope, of course. But surely not information provision? The public is using TFL

channels to plan journeys don't care which operators manage the facilities. Would just like reassurance that there will be consistency in the provision of information across TfL/non-TfL stations as the project develop (accepted that the accuracy might not be as practicable to achieve).

## ➤ **SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS**

### - **Feasibility study**

Feasibility study is hugely welcomed and extremely reassuring to read recognition for how "toilets provision is of significant and increasing interest to stakeholders" - yes it is! We're a bit obsessed with the idea that 'step-free access = accessibility', when, in fact, a key blocker for using public transport is staffing and toilet provision. A 2022 report by Age UK found that "9 in 10 Londoners have considered toilet provision before making a journey to a particular place." So, this project is fantastic! (PLEASE DO THUMBS UP AND BIG GRIN)

### - **Progress slides**

- Slide 9: The TfL public toilets information page straight away signposts to the Great British Toilet Map. A great project in ethos but it's a third party so it's not official. I would never rely on a third party for something so important, so there's a trust issue with TfL signposting here. I've found so many mistakes on there that I wouldn't ever use it.
- Slide 10: I'm uncomfortable with the reference to how TFL Go provides the "precise location" of toilets. All I can see is "outside gate".
  - This isn't a precise location, it's a reference to whether you need a ticket to travel or can use it walking past the station. This won't help anyone find the toilet, particularly if they are time poor when travelling or need to find the toilet QUICKLY!
  - Also, I assume this phrase to mean 'before the gateline' but this isn't plain English and I checked with a disabled Londoner for reassurance the first time I saw it. Is it actually outside a gate? Many passengers, including older and neurodivergent people, may find this really confusing.

### - **Discussion point slides**

- Prioritisation - Geographical location.
  - I'd like to ask for a 'big tick' next to "Stations in locations where other nearby stations do not have facilities" please!
  - Also, consider locations which are going to **pull** disabled, older and pregnant people to them such as hospitals.
- Opening hours - can we get some clarification on 'anti-social behaviour' and perhaps advise on a review of the policy (mentioned on Slide 11)?
  - To what extent, within policy, is there a conscious or implied prioritisation of 'minimising ASB' over 'access to toilets'? AND what is the goal - to frustrate access to spaces (such as Accessible WCs)

which allow people to commit ASB **or** to close toilets which have been vandalised and unsafe to use until they have been cleaned/fixed? It's easy to think you're prioritising the latter but in my experience, operations folk tend to be fixated on ASB and forget the harm they are causing to public health and turning away customers because of blocking toilet access.

- ....so my plea is: please don't give credence to flawed 'anti-ASB practices' within this particular project!
- I'm not sure I understand the ask on Slide 13. Is this prioritising which toilets are improved or added to because on opening hours? I'm not sure prioritising toilet provision based on opening hours / security arrangements offers anything - particularly if anti-ASB practices are fundamentally flawed. Where passengers need to travel (with their bladders in tow) should be the priority - we shouldn't make decisions on providing new or better standard toilets around subjective opinions on security perceptions, which may change overnight.
- Customer information -
  - Access to toilet - eg radar key, request only etc - this will help journey planning (i.e. bring my key or leave extra time to hunt for staff!)
  - Dimensions of accessible WC - something a wheelchair user friend of mine in London needs, to assess whether she will be able to transfer with her PA's support.
  - Is the baby change in the Accessible WC or not. This is key information for disabled parents.
  - In all information provisions channels, a presumption for a category of toilet of "Changing Places" not just male/female, accessible and baby change. I know there's hardly any TfL ones yet but it will improve visibility / awareness among staff/customers and hopefully numbers will increase once TfL introduces toilet design guidance.
- Others prioritisation factors:
  - I would also explore whether it's worth prioritising new/improved toilets at stations which don't have a 'complete set', eg there are standard WCs but not an Accessible WC. Was the latter originally not provided because of lack of funds, lack of space etc - has something changed since which means it can be done?
  - NEVER use footfall as an indicator. It's a flawed business case practice. The reason for low footfall may be precise *because of* a lack of facilities such as toilets.

## - **Challenges**

- Slide 15 - A huge issue is unpredictability and reliability of information. For example, locking toilets, without sharing this information in real-time, is an awful thing to happen with cruel consequences for passengers. A humiliating accident may mean a disabled or older customer never uses public transport again.

## - **Forward Thinking**

- TFL Go (or tool for real-time information in force) should be as informative as the TfL website to enable access to key information on the go. It's just not fair to make someone go on TFL website and scroll through a 16-page PDF table for key toilet access information. There may be many fields, but they're all necessary!
- Also, could toilet access be a search criteria for journey planning in TfL Go? Like 'step free' mode. This would be so helpful so many people, including older people and pregnant customers.

## AOB

### ➤ Away day:

- ██████ has discussed the agenda with ██████
- ██████ asked if there was anything anyone wanted adding to the agenda.
- It was mentioned that an update/feedback on TfL funding would be useful as this would underpin IDAGs remarks and suggestions for the agenda and future work.

### ➤ Timesheets:

- It was discussed the most useful ways of completing time sheets and decided that when possible IDAG members will submit their time sheets by each period, which would help with budgeting.
- ██████ will share the periodic calendar, although she is open to ideas to make the timesheet process easier.
- It was mentioned there was a year when they received the dates for the internal periods and the payroll cut off, which would help.
- For submitting, it was said even if IDAG members submit a ballpark figure for the month if they haven't had time to do a timesheet, and then send timesheet after when they've completed it.
- It was mentioned if being paid an annual amount was possible. But it was decided this would be possibly unfair to the members that do more work and therefore get paid more.
- It was requested if a calendar invite can get sent to remind IDAG to submit at the end of each period ██████ agreed to do this.

➤ ██████ thanked ██████ for her response re Kentish Town escalator replacement.

➤ ██████ asked if any members had inspected the new information screens at Liverpool Street. ██████ had tried but had been foiled by a broken lift. ██████ would go in two days' time if they are still operating then. ██████ will check when they will still be operating and will email.

➤ The Press Release on e-scooters went out but without an IDAG input. ██████ has asked the Press Office for more notice if they want quotes from IDAG.

## **Action Tracker**

➤ No update