

Agenda - Bristol Airport Accessibility Forum (BRSAF)

Wednesday 04 March 2026 – Hampton Hotel, North Side Rd, Bristol BS48 3AQ

11:00 A.M.

Attendees:	
Jerry Angrave – Meeting Chair	Scott Deacon-Church - Head of Terminal Operations, BRS
Martyn Collings - Operational Support Manager, BRS	Jo Chase - Project Manager (Buildings), BRS
Mark Armstrong - General Manager ABM, BRS	Gordon Richardson MBE - Chair Bristol Polio Fellowship
Peter Bungay - Guide Dogs For The Blind	Lisa Dicker - Bristol Dementia Action Alliance
Juste Bunikyte - Senior Ops Manager ABM, BRS	Libby Herbert - Colostomy UK
Steve Ewens - Bristol Sight Loss Council	Liz Kelly - Bridging The Gap (Autism Support)
Ros Gray - Breakthrough T1D (Diabetes Charity)	Chris Wild – Head of Airside Operations, BRS
Verena Fuller - Customer Relations Manager	Jade Morehouse – Head of Ground Transportation
Apologies:	
Andy Wright - Forum Chair	Gaynor Thompson - Spinal Injuries Association
Jill Patch – Airport Consultative Committee	

Agenda:

- **11:00 - Welcome & Introductions**

Martyn welcomed all attendees to the meeting, which was hosted at the Hampton by Hilton Hotel at Bristol Airport. He explained that the day would follow a different format and agenda to include an airside tour. The forum was encouraged to provide honest feedback after the tour and to follow up afterward if they felt anything had been missed. Martyn then handed over to Jerry, who chaired the meeting in Andy’s absence. Jerry began with introductions around the room, and all attendees confirmed they had received the slides prior to the meeting.

- **11:15 - Airport Business Overview (SDC/MC)**

Martyn began the meeting with an Accessibility Update, noting that the recent CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) assessment was very positive. Inspectors were impressed with the changes made and initial feedback, subject to the final report being produced, identified no major findings. The final report will be published in June, accompanied by an annual rating. There were some observations for improvement including

enhancements to car park signage around the drop off and waiting zones, upgrades to designated points and website updates, which have now all been actioned. Bristol Airport have also increased designated seating throughout the site, including at every gate, baggage claim hall, car hire area, and in Silver Zone.

Martyn then highlighted that performance with ABM has been very strong over the past six months, with investments made in equipment, including minibuses with lifts and the refurbishment of Ambi-lifts.

Continuous Improvement was then touched on, and Martyn highlighted how the Accessibility Forum is a vital part of this.

Martyn then went on to discuss the food offering in the assisted waiting area. Previous feedback from the forum was taken on board, and the decision was made to move forward with Soul + Grain.

Martyn ran through the Customer Feedback summary mentioning that more detailed information can be shared with the forum if requested. Complaints are decreasing while compliments are increasing. Jerry asked about the trends behind complaints, and Martyn explained that during the Christmas period for arrivals, customers felt they were only partially assisted. Improvements are being implemented in response. Scott then discussed the NPS (Net Promoter Score), which began in May 2025, noting that current scores are in a good place and align with the trends in complaints and compliments. He continued by explaining the transition of ownership has been completed. Priorities for 2026 include the Terminal Transformation, meeting the Business Plan, and the planning application for 15mppa (million passengers per annum), which will be submitted in the coming weeks. Deliverables for the year were outlined, and Scott confirmed that more details on the Customer Strategy will be shared at the next Accessibility Forum. An accessibility strategy roadmap through 2030 is being developed and will be shared once ready.

Scott also presented the 2026 Passenger Forecast, showing the highest peak in August at 1.25 million passengers. Chris noted the growth from easyjet, with the addition of an aircraft allowing one to be kept as an operational spare at BRS (Bristol Airport).

Jade then joined the meeting to discuss and get feedback on a challenge in the PTI (Public Transport Interchange). The challenge lies in the queueing system for passengers travelling back to Silver Zone car park. The current arrangement consists of a single "snake" queue, alongside a separate assisted travel lane intended for passengers who require additional support. This lane allows those passengers to board the bus first. The challenge arises because some passengers are using the assisted travel lane incorrectly. As it is visibly shorter, it can appear quicker, which encourages others to join it even if they do not require assistance. This misuse delays passengers who genuinely need assisted travel support and can create tension or conflict for drivers managing boarding. It was noted that a key factor in introducing the assisted travel lane was to help drivers quickly identify passengers requiring priority or supported boarding. Jade confirmed that signage is in place to indicate that the lane is for assisted travel and uses the same recognised icons displayed throughout the airport journey. Jade confirmed that the signage is a pop-up banner and is clearly visible. However, it was acknowledged that it is difficult to determine who genuinely needs to use the assisted travel lane, as the system relies largely on passenger honesty. The impact on passengers who

genuinely require assistance was noted as a key concern. Potential mitigations and feedback were discussed, including having a dedicated staff member to oversee the lane and adjusting the layout to reduce visibility of the shorter queue to discourage incorrect use. The use of wristbands to identify assisted travel passengers was also suggested, though concerns were raised that this could negatively label or draw unwanted attention.

A communications approach was then discussed, and suggestions were made to develop a communications piece to help educate travellers about assisted travel. Jo raised concerns that providing too much information to passengers while they are in the airport may not be effective. She also noted that email communications typically have a low open rate, whereas messaging placed in the specific location tends to achieve greater engagement. The use of social media was suggested as an alternative channel to support passenger education. It was agreed that messaging should reference non-visible disabilities and clearly explain what assisted travel is, with the aim of increasing understanding among passengers. The communications piece was agreed as the main focus for addressing the issue. Social media content suggestions involved having someone tell their story on the impact and why assisted travel service is so important. Ju also suggested creating behind-the-scenes style content for assisted travel, such as a “spend the day with me” feature, to provide greater visibility and understanding of the service. Overall, the preference was for an educational communications piece rather than introducing a specific operational change at this stage.

Jerry returned to the growth plans for 2026 and questioned the growth in assisted travel. Martyn confirmed there has been a 23% increase in the past year in requirement for the service. It was noted that in the airside assisted travel lounge, ground handlers are now based there to avoid other passengers abusing the service. Our growth plans show a continuing increase in the service, although it was highlighted that there was a slight decrease in growth in January 2026 and February; the data is currently being processed.

- **11:40 - ABM Update (MA/JB)**

Ju kicked off with a 2025 summary, highlighting that there was a total of 203,443 passengers assisted out of an overall 10.7 million passengers who travelled through the airport. ECAC was touched on, and as previously mentioned, the positive result of the CAA audit. Jerry questioned whether the pursuit of ECAC scores risks putting customer satisfaction at risk. ECAC is made up of many measures, including customer satisfaction surveys that directly impact the overall rating.

Ju then moved onto Continuous Improvement and highlighted key elements such as Safe 365 audits for managers, team engagement to encourage open forums for feedback and communications, training and developing team members which improves customer insights and ECAC scores, wait times for international arrivals with dedicated marshals based at the pick up point by border force inbound to assess assistance needed for the rest of the passengers journey, and Ambi-lift improvements to ensure a more efficient transfer time from building to aircraft.

Ju updated on recruitment and noted the positive start to 2026, and highlighted being on target for the summer peak, with employees being upskilled from the winter season which has meant less strain and time has gone on recruitment. This also means the quality of employees is much better than previous years. Libby then questioned disability awareness training and how ABM are making sure employees are up to date which was confirmed to be reviewed on an annual basis. Martyn added that disability training is a big focus for the whole site at BRS and confirmed that training support is being developed and will be available for all Business Partners. Disability awareness training is now built into all new contracts and licences, it will be a measured KPI for employees to have disability awareness training and the CAA have recognised we are making improvements in this. A question was made around how to upskill an employee to the next level and having a roadmap for the strategy would be beneficial. A separate session on this was suggested so that employees could be asked what they need more training on. Martyn confirmed the training requirements are different for BRS and ABM staff. Libby noted the importance of having a thread through BRS and Business Partners to ensure cross-over and collaboration.

Ju reassured training will be included in inductions and Jerry suggested that completion of the training could be a condition of obtaining an airport pass. Martyn added that as BRS passes are re-issued every 5 years, which would be too long to wait for training refreshers. Mark reassured the group that significant work is currently underway with employees in this area and encouraged everyone in the forum to provide feedback at any time, rather than waiting for the 6-monthly meeting, to help improvements and build a strong foundation for a great service.

- **12:00 - Airport Development Update (JC)**

Jo started presenting on the Terminal Transformation plans and updated on the Soul & Grain and Tortilla re-designs and relocations, Northside Road, new assisted travel lounge and new airside smoking area. Jo also noted the new 'Bristol' sign and that a canopy will be installed by the end of 2026 to cover the forecourt walk between the terminal and PTI. CAPEX (Capital Expenditure) headlines were then noted and included updates on baggage handling capability increasing, route accessibility for colleagues, opening an additional lane in Aviation House, re-branding the long-stay car park to mid-stay, and the new Starbucks to replace Ritazza unit which will improve accessibility needs with more tables and chairs. The assisted travel lounge was then discussed. Jo noted that it is currently located where the construction area doors open, and as a result, the lounge will be relocating again to a temporary space. This new lounge will be nearly twice the size of the previous permanent lounge. Jo reassured the group that it will remain approximately the same distance from duty free, with toilets conveniently located nearby, ensuring minimal impact on the passenger journey. Jo added that the sensory room will be rebuilt. Lisa then raised concerns about the current lack of signage and awareness of the room, suggesting that a dedicated logo could help make passengers aware of its availability. Ju confirmed that a booking system is being developed, which will further improve passenger awareness, but also noted that the sensory room is already heavily used on a daily basis.

Jo confirmed that design teams are coming together and more information will be available in April.

The conversation then turned to new concessions and Jo confirmed that the first set of tenders have been issued, with an inclusivity statement included in the tender packs.

A furniture strategy to change designs around the airport is underway, and samples will be tested out in Lulsgate House. The new design includes wooden slat seating, which raised concerns regarding accessibility. Libby noted feedback from other airports indicating that this kind of seating was considered uncomfortable from an accessibility perspective. Jo reassured the group that there will be a mixture of seating options, including transitional seating designed for shorter stays. It was also noted that providing a variety of seating will help accommodate the different needs of passengers.

- **12:45 - Comfort Break & Refreshments**

- **13:30 - Terminal inspection**

During the airside tour, several points of feedback were gathered. The current assisted travel lounge was noted to feel positively like a train station, reflecting the consistent noise levels of the terminal. High-visibility jackets were highlighted as particularly useful for assisted travellers to identify staff they can approach with questions.

On the sunflower route, it was noted that the sunflower icons could have greater impact if placed higher, as they are currently located only on the floor.

Feedback regarding the toilets included suggestions to add signage displaying the word “toilets” in addition to the symbols outside. Inside the toilets, several accessibility challenges were highlighted. The disabled sign on the toilet door is silver and reflective, which can be difficult for those with limited vision. The indicator showing when the toilet is engaged is very small, presenting a similar challenge. The door design may be difficult for passengers carrying luggage due to limited space, and there are insufficient hooks with currently only one inside. It was suggested to add two hooks, one high and one low, to accommodate wheelchair users.

Additional observations included the sink, where water splashes when the combined tap and dryer are used; a lip at the front of the sink was suggested to prevent this. Mirrors were noted to be positioned in a way that could be problematic for passengers with a stoma bag, and there is no space in front of the mirror for wheelchair users. Soap dispensers could pose a challenge for left-handed users and also hook on the door was highlighted as essential for the baby feeding room. On the walk back to Hampton, litter was raised on the forecourt when leaving the terminal, and a lack of nearby bins identified as an issue.

- **14:30 – AOB**

Once the forum was back in the meeting room. Jerry encouraged everyone to highlight positive and negative feedback from the Airside tour.

Positive feedback

- Assisted lounge felt consistent with other forms of transport.
- High-visibility jackets were great to know who can assist and helped reduce anxiety.
- Pre-check-in desks allowed passengers to avoid explaining medical needs such as needing to keep luggage close by.
- Ground handlers present before boarding to help and can avoid unwanted attention at main gates.

Negative feedback

- Some members of the group shared feedback that elements of the security search process could feel challenging for neurodivergent passengers.
Update: The Security Manager has proactively reached out to gather further insight so that the team can better understand how to enhance the experience and implement meaningful improvements.
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- Feedback was also received regarding an interaction where a security team member did not demonstrate the expected level of empathy, particularly in relation to medical device considerations. It was noted that many members of the security team were polite and supportive, though one interaction fell short of expectations.
Update: While this related to a single individual, a full review was undertaken to understand the root cause, and appropriate corrective actions have now been completed to support continued service improvement.
- Wheelchair users can have difficulties carrying bags through security. Also, pushing manual chairs over carpets is challenging. Suggestion to stick to tiled floors. Martyn agreed to check this in future development.
- Toilet shelving is positioned too close to the toilet; opening medication in this space could result in items falling and becoming unusable.
- To enable the feeding room to be used as a dual purpose space, a small shelf as a clean hygienic space to change medical equipment could be added.

Once all feedback was shared, the forum wrapped up and Martyn agreed to reschedule the next Accessibility forum in October, so it falls outside of school holidays.

****End of meeting****

Actions

- Deep dive session to be scheduled on disability awareness to help support the BRS strategy.

- Next forum meeting to be rescheduled.