

Independent Gatwick Accessibility Panel (IGAP)

19th January 2023 – Destinations Ops Boardroom (8th Floor)

Attendees

IGAP

Ann Frye (Chair)
Ross Hovey (Online)
Charlotte McMillan (Online)
Robert Morgan (Online)
Sophie Grand (Online)
Geraldine Lundy
Neil Betteridge
Kamran Mallick
Sue Sharp

GAL

Anna-Ruth Cockerham
Pete Coombes
Dave Burling (for item 2)
Zelia Pequeno (for item 1)

PAG

Claire Booth

Wilson James (Service Provider)

Liz Boadella-Burton
Gary Oakes

Other

Emily Kilby (CAA)
Sophia Untersteggaber (CAA)
WeWalk (for item 1)
RNIB (for item 1)

Apologies

Tom Holroyd (Wilson James)
Libby Herbert (IGAP)
Daniel Cadey (IGAP)
Sophia Warner (IGAP)

Minutes

1. WeWalk – Sighted Guide App Trial

WeWalk and the RNIB present their sighted guide app to the panel. The team has substantial lived experience of sight loss and has produced other products to improve long canes and make blind and partially sighted people safer. The app will bring autonomy to passengers who could choose to forgo the traditional assistance service. The app will be trialled at London Gatwick over the next few months, in the initial phases with volunteers and staff rather than passengers.

The panel discussed options for passengers who would want their hand free and not to hold their phone and a cane at the same time, availability of the service, and how people will find out about the app.

GAL will bring further updates on the trial as it progresses.



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2. Next Generation Security

Following a request at the previous meeting of the panel, the Next Generation Security Lead, Dave Burling, presented on the project to install Next Generation Security technology and the changes for passengers in security. This is a regulated change which will see the introduction of body scanners and new scanning equipment which can remove the liquids restrictions in hand luggage.

The panel discussed how easy the body scanners will be for some disabled passengers to use and how medical equipment. GAL has looked to reduce any issues here in the technology chosen but private or hand searches will always be available where this is a concern for passengers.

The panel also discussed how the change will be communicated with passengers and what type of training security teams will receive to support neurodivergent passengers struggling with a change in process or the sensory environment. While all the lanes change over, passengers will be informed of the existing security regulations and staff will be on hand where passengers are using the new lanes. Training for security teams on challenges like this will also be covered in the airport-wide training programme (referenced later in the meeting). Finally, the panel discuss some changes that will be trialled to the repack areas and seating to improve the accessibility of this area.

3. Autonomous Wheelchairs Trial

GAL introduces a planned trial of autonomous wheelchairs, looking to prove that the chairs can navigate the airport effectively and comfortably for passengers aiming to give assisted passengers more choice. The initial phase of the trial for the upcoming quarter is with 1-2 empty vehicles, then with staff in them to test some routes. No passengers will be involved in this phase until the technical trial has completed.

The panel discusses what the chairs can do, whether other passengers will interfere with them, the comfort of the equipment, and what type of passengers would use the service. GAL will update the panel of the progress of the trial at a future meeting.

4. Updates from GAL and WJ

Accessibility Strategy

GAL introduces the suggested performance indicators for the Second Decade of Change (GAL's Sustainability Strategy) and the Accessibility Strategy.



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Disability Equality and Awareness Training Module

GAL updates on progress with the training module discussed in the last session. Updates to the module are ongoing and most of IGAP's feedback has been incorporated from the last meeting. GAL are now moving on to looking at the role-specific modules and what bitesize content can be pulled out for the Airport Community App for colleagues to use in the moment with passengers. Additionally, quotes have been sought to produce a video for the module with disabled passengers.

Members asked what the plans were for other training and how disabled people will be involved. GAL will be looking at options to build on the online training with additional training opportunities like workshops supported by disabled people and disability organisations.

Departure Lounge Projects

GAL updates the panel on the projects in the departure lounges in both terminals and the panel agrees to organise a terminal visit focusing on the departure lounges for the next meeting.

Look and Feel Guidance

GAL introduces the new guidance on look and feel which will be given to project teams to inform design decisions and support the airport's brand. The panel agrees to provide feedback on these guidelines outside of the meeting.

Special Assistance Service Performance

Wilson James discusses the performance of the Special Assistance service over the last quarter. Forecasted passenger numbers have been very similar to actual numbers over the last year and performance around ECAC (waiting times for assistance) has been meeting targets as well.

The team also discussed the new approach to tracking feedback over the next year. The panel welcomed this work.

5. Mobility Aid Carriage and Non-Standard Mobility Aids

The panel discusses the challenges with the carriage of mobility equipment, especially non-standard mobility equipment like e-scooters which people may use. Not all of this equipment (especially non-standard equipment) is safe for travel. Additionally, there is a lack of awareness within equipment suppliers about what equipment is safe for travel.



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The panel discusses whether this is an issue that the Department for Transport or CAA could pick up. Additionally, the opportunity to train suppliers on what is and is not safe for travel was discussed.

6. Special Assistance Service Level Agreements

GAL introduces the proposed service level agreements which will be part of the new Special Assistance service provider contract. These are based on the previous observations made by the panel and looking at exceeding regulatory requirements and improving the passenger experience.

7. Any Other Business

The panel discusses options to get insights from disabilities not well represented on the panel and fee arrangements for members. The panel also discusses different options for GAL to engage with members outside of the meetings.

Meeting ended at 16:00.

