

Transportforall

Accessible transport is our right

Crossrail access briefing

Crossrail will be a new line connecting Maidenhead in the West to Shenfield in the East.

The central section of new build stations from Paddington to Whitechapel will open in late 2018. The full line will open in December 2019.

Crossrail will cost £14.5bn, funded by the Government, the Mayor (through TfL) and the GLA. Crossrail is a wholly owned subsidiary of TfL.

All of the Central sections will have stepfree access. Given the paucity of stepfree stations in Central London, this will bring real benefits to passengers.

In addition, the Mayor has confirmed that all Crossrail stations will be staffed during the hours of service (many now are unstaffed for large parts of the day) – another decision that will be warmly welcomed by passengers, older and disabled passengers in particular.

Seven of the 37 stations are not planned to have stepfree access. Burnham, shown on the map as not having stepfree access, has now received Access for All funding to be stepfree.

The stations which will not have stepfree access are:

- Taplow
- Iver
- Langley
- Hanwell (London borough of Ealing)
- Maryland (London borough of Newham)
- Manor Park (London borough of Newham)
- Seven Kings (London borough of Redbridge)

Costs of access

When in 2008 / 2009 the Crossrail Bill went before Parliament, the question of making the entire line stepfree was discussed and dismissed on the basis of cost, though analysing the costings and benefits in a way we believe is now obsolete – notably not including the benefits of stepfree access to people **without** reduced mobility.

It is unclear whether they factored in an ageing population, the projected growth in usage at these stations; the economic benefits of stepfree access in the context of an ageing population.

Crossrail has admitted that they have not calculated the costs of making Crossrail a stepfree line (email communication, 17th June 2013) – they estimated costs only for Maryland and Manor Park stations at £4.5 million and £12 million respectively.

However, an assessment by an independent access consultant suggests that the figures cited by Crossrail are likely to be an overestimate.

19 – 30 lifts would be needed. Based on an estimate of around £1m per lift, the total cost to Crossrail would be £19 – 30million or 0.1 – 0.2% of their overall budget.

There is precedent for transport providers overestimating the cost of stepfree access. In 2012, Greenford station was made stepfree. Network Rail had initially costed this at £10m but research from Ealing Council found that the project would in fact only cost £2.2m.¹

Benefits of access

Since the House of Lords Select Committee on the Crossrail Bill considered the question of stepfree access, there have been changes which make the case for stepfree access stronger.

- A Steer Davies Gleave report commissioned by the DfT which gives a ‘conservative’ estimate of 2.9 as the benefit – cost ratio of the Access for All programme.
- The changeover from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to PIP (Personal Independence Payments), which will mean that by 2018 428,000 fewer people will qualify for a Motability car or door to door services such as Taxicard. This will mean an influx of disabled people onto public transport.

Present positions on access

Boris Johnson: “Clearly, I would like all of Crossrail’s stations to be fully accessible. However, within the financial settlement agreed with the Treasury there is currently no confirmed funding for stepfree access at some of the stations along the route including Seven Kings. Transport for London is looking for additional opportunities to improve Crossrail accessibility and will continue to make the case to government to provide the necessary investment’. (source: letter to Redbridge councillor, 16th May 2013)

“With Crossrail – I was really disappointed to discover that they weren’t originally planned with proper accessible lifts. They’re going to be added. We’ve decided that in London, a city like ours, we’ve got to do better, particularly on big projects like this!” (Channel 4, 28th July)

¹ <http://www.ealinggazette.co.uk/ealing-news/local-ealing-news/2012/08/24/delight-as-greenford-finally-gets-a-lift-64767-31689027/>

TfL: ‘Seven Kings is one of the priority stations set out in Figure 16 of the Mayor’s Accessibility Implementation Plan. The criteria for allocating funding under Department of Transport’s Access for All programme for the next Control Period (2014-2019) has not yet been established. TfL would support the application for accessibility related investment at Seven Kings, subject to a positive business case including an assessment of the feasibility and cost” (source: letter to Redbridge councillor, 28th May 2013).

Crossrail: ‘Crossrail will continue to support the feasibility work being carried out by other organisations at some of the above locations for the provision of step-free access. Crossrail will also amend its delivery programme where necessary in order to integrate with those schemes should they secure funding.’ (source: FOI request response, 31st May 2013²)

“Network Rail and Transport for London are actively looking for additional opportunities to improve accessibility prior to the start of Crossrail services beyond the committed programme.” (response to press coverage of ASA challenge to truthfulness of access claim)³

Peter Hendy: “We are looking at what further provision is possible, given that we are still five years away from the opening of Crossrail.”

² https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/cy/request/the_cost_of_making_crossrail_sta

³ <http://www.mayorwatch.co.uk/disability-campaigners-refer-crossrail-to-asa-over-accessibility-claims/201325780>