



**Welcome
Point**



Getting Started Guide

**Supporting you delivering a great customer
experience using your new Welcome Point.**

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Welcome

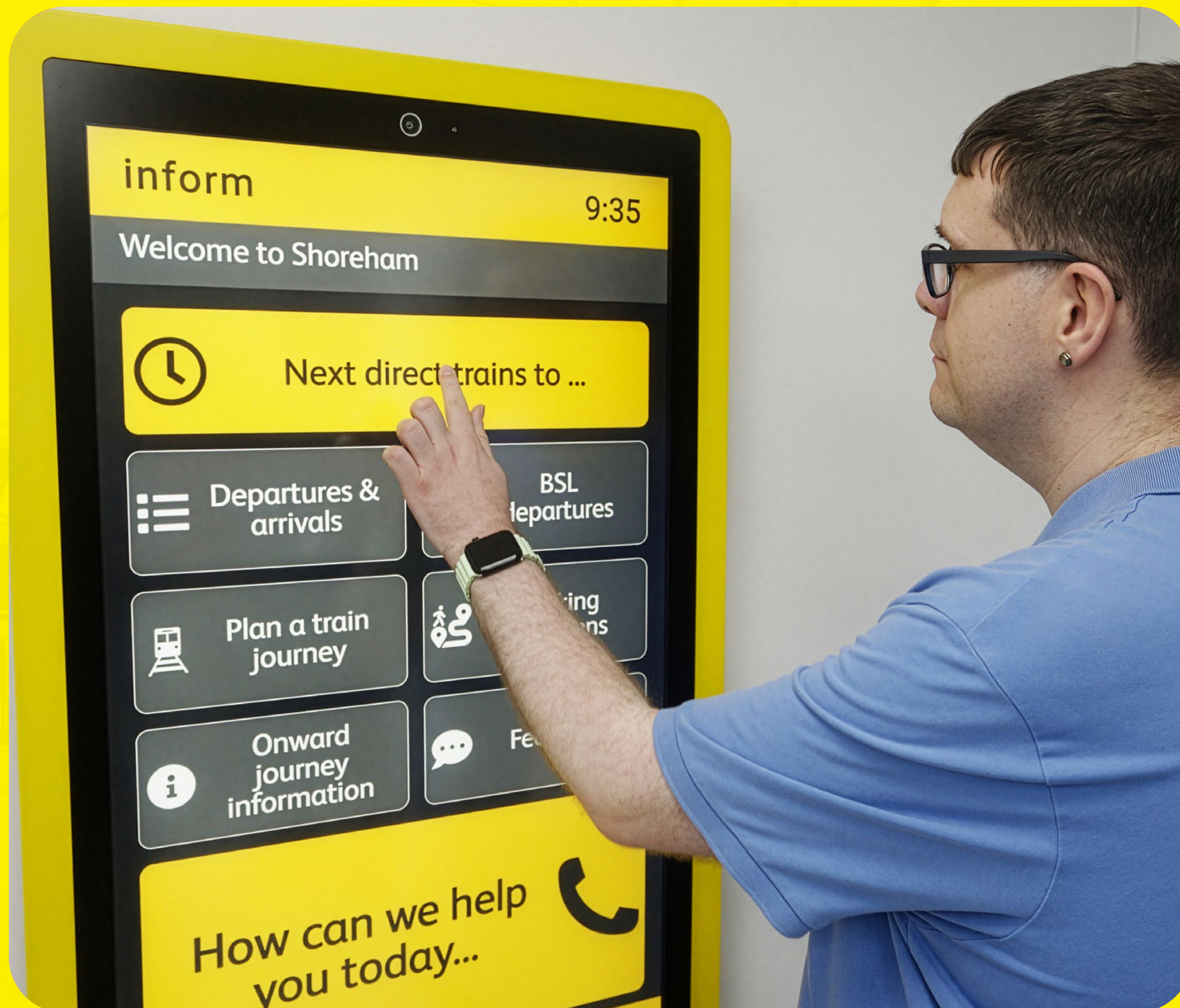


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Welcome Points are a big part of the Department for Transport’s Roadmap to an Accessible Railway. The idea is simple: give customers with disabilities a friendly, easy-to-spot place at the station where they can get information, ask for a hand, and travel with confidence.

We designed them together with train operating companies, accessibility groups, and passenger bodies so they’d be somewhere people can head to the moment they arrive to obtain all the support they need.

This Getting Started Guide, and the videos that go with it, provides everything you need to ensure all customers get a warm welcome. It also explains how to look after your Welcome Point so its always ready. These resources have been co-created with older and disabled customers so that their lived experiences can help us deliver the best service possible.



What is a Welcome Point?

In this section, we will cover:

- What a **Welcome Point** is and what it does.
- Why Welcome Points are being rolled out.
- The different types of **Welcome Point**.



[Watch the video](#)

Introducing Welcome Points

Welcome Points help customers speak to a member of staff with assistance and information buttons connecting them to staff.

They include an information screen featuring technology that will give customers a variety of information, including:

- Train arrivals / departures.
- Rail journey planning.
- Onward journey information.
- Local area maps.
- Passenger Assist information.
- Station facility details.

They are designed specifically with older and disabled customers in mind, and so have several accessibility features, such as:

- British Sign Language (BSL) departure boards.
- Braille labels and tactile buttons.
- The ability to move higher on-screen functions down to within reach of a wheelchair user.

Rolling out Welcome Points

Welcome Points are being delivered as part of the Department for Transport's Roadmap to an Accessible Railway, an extensive plan of accessibility improvements being undertaken nationwide.

Welcome Points were designed in partnership with train operating companies, accessibility groups and passenger bodies. They are being delivered following a successful trial in 2025.

Welcome Points are intended to provide a focal point in stations that customers can easily recognise as a place to go for assistance and information when they arrive. Some customers want easy access to information that they can self-serve. Others need extra support but might find it difficult to locate a member of staff in a busy station environment. Welcome Points help everyone looking for assistance and help you to continue to deliver a great customer experience.

Rolling out Welcome Points

There are three different Welcome Point units, but they all have very similar features to ensure a consistent experience for customers. The reason there are different models is to suit different station environments.



Wall Mounted Large Screen 43"

These wall mounted units are suitable for use in most stations.



Wall Mounted Smaller Screen 22"

These wall mounted units are designed for stations where space is more constrained.



Mobile Unit

These movable units are designed are provided at stations where wall mounting wasn't possible (for example due to heritage reasons).

Passenger Assist

Your station may be using your Welcome Point as the meeting point for Passenger Assist. Check this locally to confirm. Even if you're not, customers might still use the Welcome Point to make themselves known if they're unable to locate a member of staff to make themselves known to.

If you're contacted regarding Passenger Assist and the customer has pre-booked, you can check the details of the booking using the PA Staff Toolkit in the usual way. You can mark them as "checked in" so that you remember where they are.

For customers who haven't pre-booked and are instead using the Turn Up And Go service, information can be found on the Welcome Point – particularly useful for those who haven't used the service before. Remember to log their journey in the Passenger Assist toolkit so that their destination is aware.

In all cases, remember to complete the mandated handover protocol. Some stations do this by telephone and some via the Staff Mobile App.

Please check locally to determine the correct process for your station.

Disruption

All customers have a greater need for information during service disruption, but people with accessibility needs are often more affected.

During disruption, customers may become more anxious as the service becomes busier and more unpredictable.

Your Welcome Point can provide access to information such as live arrivals / departures in accessible formats such as British Sign Language (BSL) and audio. For this reason, you could direct customers to the Welcome Point using the public address system if they need further support.

During disruption, you may notice additional calls for assistance being made using your Welcome Point, so it's especially important to ensure these are answered so that customers can get the support they need.

How can I help you?

In this section, we will cover:

- What questions customers might ask and how to answer them.
- Some disability awareness tips.
- Information about how Welcome Points interact with the Passenger Assist service.



Watch the video



Questions from Customers

Customers can use Welcome Points to self-serve answers to many questions, but they can also use the assistance or information buttons to contact a member of staff.

Here are some examples of enquiries you might receive.

Is there somewhere I can get a coffee here?

My train has been cancelled, what should I do now?

How do I get to Bradford Interchange?

I'd like to check in for my Passenger Assist.

From where do I catch the rail replacement bus?

Are there any engineering works this weekend?

I've noticed someone acting suspiciously.

Is there an accessible toilet available?

I can't find my Mum.

Is my railcard valid on the 08:30 train?

Where is the nearest ATM?

Summary

As you'll see through this section, everyone's needs will be different, and you should therefore never assume what support people need.

Sometimes you will know in advance, for example if you're supporting a regular customer or if someone has pre-booked Passenger Assist. But remember that someone's needs can change based on many factors and so might be different from one day to another.

The easiest way you can understand what someone needs is to ask them, **"How can I help you?"**. Taking a couple of minutes to listen:

- Can reduce someone's anxiety.
- Ensure they get all the help they need.
- Ensure you can provide appropriate assistance safely.

Remember to communicate directly with a disabled person rather than speaking to their travelling companion, unless directed otherwise.



Visual Impairments

Visual impairments can vary significantly from person-to-person, with some people having very minor vision loss and others not being able to see anything at all.

Welcome Points including features to support blind and visually impaired people such as braille labels, tactile buttons, and a screen reader (which can be activated by plugging earphones into the socket provided by the arrow buttons).

People with visual impairments may need sighted guidance for you when being met from a Welcome Point.

Hearing Impairments

Hearing impairments can vary significantly from person-to-person, with some people having very minor hearing loss and others not being able to hear anything at all.

When communicating with someone who has a hearing impairment, it is important to make eye contact because some people may lip read. Speak at your normal speed and try to avoid over-enunciating the words.

Some hearing-impaired people use hearing aids or cochlear implants, but it is important to remember that while these devices help improve hearing, they don't always provide the same level of hearing as someone without hearing loss.

Welcome Points include several features to assist people with hearing impairments including an induction loop, captions, and British Sign Language (BSL) departure boards.

If you are finding it difficult to communicate, try moving to a quieter part of the station, using pen and paper, or using simple gestures. If your station has access to BSL interpretation facilities, the customer may indicate that they wish to use these.

Mobility Impairments

There are many different types of mobility impairments, and these can be related to a variety of different disabilities and medical conditions. Some customers may use a mobility aid like a cane, crutches, a wheelchair, or a mobility scooter.

Others might not. The severity of a mobility impairment can also fluctuate due to several factors including the environment, time of day, stress, and fatigue. The level of assistance required by each customer will vary.

A Welcome Point's interactive features are positioned within reach of a wheelchair or mobility scooter user, and the touchscreen can be flipped, moving higher buttons to the bottom when required.



Neurodivergent Conditions



Neurodiversity encompasses the entire population. 'Neuro-typical' is the way of thinking, communicating, processing information and socialising as done by the majority. Any difference to this, is termed 'neurodivergent'.

Neurodivergent conditions is an umbrella term encompassing a wide variety of diagnoses, including but not limited to: Autism, ADHD, OCD, Downs Syndrome, traumatic brain injury, various mental health conditions, such as DID, dementia, etc.

The level of assistance people may require can vary, depending on familiarity of the journey, fatigue, anxiety, etc.

It is important to take away any ambiguity in the situation, for instance removing 'unknowns' in a situation. The customer may not make eye contact as this can be uncomfortable, or even painful, but that doesn't mean that they aren't listening or understanding.

If a customer finds it more difficult to verbally communicate, please use alternative methods such as pen and paper, so they get all the information they need.

Customers with neurodivergent conditions could find rail travel overstimulating. This could be identified by customers appearing distressed, withdrawn or 'stimming'; repeated behaviour, movements and sounds and act as a method of self-soothing, exerting excess energy and re regulating.

Mental Health Conditions

There are many different mental health conditions and each impacts people in different ways when they travel. Nearly 1 in 7 people globally live with a mental health condition, which can disrupt daily life, work, and relationships.

People who have anxiety about travelling may use a Welcome Point to obtain information or assistance to help them travel such as directions, train service updates, information on station facilities, or Passenger Assist.

Some people going through a mental health crisis may appear vacant, distressed, depressed, withdrawn, anxious, erratic, or even violent.

Remember firstly to keep yourself and other customers safe, but if you can, try to understand how you can help and seek support from colleagues if you need it.

If you are concerned about someone, follow your normal procedures to alert the relevant TOC staff and / or BTP.

Medical Conditions

Some people might contact you using the Welcome Pont for assistance because of a health issue or medical condition.

Some people need quick access to food or drink, for example if they are diabetic and need to keep an eye on their blood sugars, or if they need water to take medication safely. You could give them directions to a nearby food outlet or bring them a glass of water.

Some people might need immediate access to a toilet for a variety of reasons, including changing a Stoma. You can help by giving them clear directions to the nearest one or opening an accessible toilet using a RADAR key.

If your station has one, people with more complex needs might contact you for access to your Changing Places facility.

In all these situations, the request could be urgent or embarrassing to explain, so please treat everyone with compassion and assist as quickly as you can. A customer doesn't need to explain why they need access to these facilities for privacy reasons.

Speech & Language Differences

A variety of conditions can affect how someone speaks or processes information.

If you cannot understand someone who has contacted you via a Welcome Point, let them know politely, and then make your way to their location as it is usually easier to communicate face-to-face.

To communicate effectively with someone who has a speech or language difference, try moving to another part of the station to reduce background noise, speak slowly in a normal tone, and give them plenty of time to process information and respond. Always maintain eye contact, avoid finishing their sentences, and use visual aids or gestures if needed. Some people may also use a communication card or tablet-like device to communicate with you.

A speech and language difference doesn't necessarily mean the person cannot understand you or process the information you're giving them.

Older People

As people get older, they could be affected by any of the disabilities and health conditions we've discussed in this guide, but there are also some more specific things we can do to assist them.

Some people might feel less confident using technology and therefore might call for assistance via the Welcome Point rather than using the self-help features it has. If they're open to it, you could show them how to use the Welcome Point ready for their next journey, helping to increase their confidence and independence.

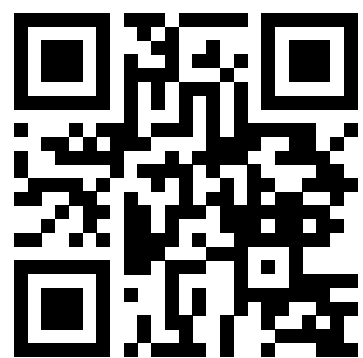
Older people are much more likely to be affected by conditions like Dementia. This might make them appear lost or confused. Communicate in a calm and reassuring manner and try to find out details about their onward journey.

If you are concerned about someone, follow your normal procedures to alert the relevant TOC staff and / or BTP.

Looking after your Welcome Point

In this section, we will cover:

- Cleaning and general care.
- Basic troubleshooting for minor faults.
- How to seek assistance for complex faults.



Watch the video



Cleaning

To keep it looking great, you should clean your Welcome Point regularly.

Units with a large screen

To clean the touchscreen, wipe it gently with a slightly damp microfiber cloth, and then dry it immediately with a dry microfiber cloth.

For more stubborn marks, dampen a soft cloth with mild soap and warm water, wipe the screen gently, and then dry the screen immediately with a dry microfibre cloth.

To clean the powder coated surfaces, do not use abrasive cleaning products. Use a soft brush, sponge, or cloth to apply a water-based mild detergent, then rinse cleaned areas with clean water.

Units with a smaller screen and mobile units

Use 'Krystal Klear' Glass Cleaner (or similar), for the screen and glass surfaces applied using a soft (preferably lint free) microfibre cloth.

Safety

Welcome Points are water resistant and built to high standards. If you notice any damage which causes you concern, report it immediately.

If you have a mobile unit, ensure that its cable doesn't cause a trip hazard by keeping it well out of the way. Additionally, if it might be possible for someone to conceal something behind it, ensure it forms part of your usual security patrols.

When moving a mobile unit, ensure the top sign is folded down, wear safety shoes, and seek assistance from a colleague if you need to. Move the unit over a flat surface at a manageable speed and when you reach your destination, ensure you apply the brakes.

Accessibility

Welcome Points are designed with accessibility in mind, and the location of your unit(s) was determined through a thorough site survey which included several accessibility considerations such as sight lines, the floor surface, the lighting conditions, etc. Now its installed, there are some simple things that you can do to ensure it can be used by everyone at all times.

To ensure plenty of manoeuvring space in front of the Welcome Point for people using wheelchairs and mobility scooters, imagine a 150cm x 150cm square in front it. This area should be kept clear at all times. Additionally, the approach route to the Welcome Point should have a clear width of 180cm.

Always keep an eye on the Welcome Point when you can. This will help you identify customers who may need help.

Stations are changing all the time as they are improved for customers. If you know about a forthcoming change at your station, consider how the accessibility of the Welcome Point might be impacted by this and speak to a manager if you have any concerns.

Faults

It is important that Welcome Points remain available so that customers can use them when they need information or assistance. If you notice a fault with your Welcome Point, you need to contact the support team so that this can be investigated and resolved quickly.

You'll need to use the contact details provided when the unit was installed. You might find these on a sticker on the unit, or in the manuals.

Remember that only authorised maintenance personnel should disconnect or reconnect the internal components. Work on the electrical system must only be carried out by qualified staff who are aware of the risk involved with the task.



What next?

Welcome Points are being rolled out at stations across the country so customers will start to get used to using them as a source of information when they arrive. Customers will also start to use them as part of the Passenger Assist service. We will support their uptake with marketing and other activities

We want to continuously improve Welcome Points as we roll them out, so if you have any feedback, please share it with us. Your operator's Accessibility Team will be able to pass it on.

As a reminder, Welcome Points are there to support you in delivering a great customer experience. They help customers self-serve common queries and connect those needing additional support directly to you. We hope that the information in this Getting Started Guide has been useful and we look forward to seeing the success of the Welcome Point at your station.

Video Modules



Scan to watch the accompanying videos for this guide



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