

Heavy rail fleet accessibility compliance: time limited dispensations

The Rail Minister has written to Paul Plummer, Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group, to make clear his dissatisfaction at the need for some operators to retain rail carriages which do not comply with modern rail accessibility standards for some months beyond 1 January 2020.

Train operators in receipt of time-limited dispensations must work to upgrade or replace these vehicles as soon as possible. Consideration of dispensation requests were carried out in consultation with DPTAC, ORR and Transport Focus.

[Heavy rail fleets: 2020 targeted accessibility compliance](#)

Queen's Speech



Legislation in the Queen's Speech will allow us to get Brexit done, leave the EU on 31 January, and forge a bright future for Scotland and the rest of the UK, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said today [19 December 2019].

Mr Jack was speaking after Her Majesty The Queen had delivered a speech which set out the UK Government's ambitious and optimistic legislative agenda for the coming Parliamentary session.

The Scottish Secretary said:

Legislation outlined in the Queen's Speech will mean we can finally get Brexit done, leave the EU on 31 January and forge a bright future for Scotland and the rest of the UK. We will take back control of our fishing waters, introduce a modern, fairer points-based immigration system. We will free our farmers from the bureaucratic Common Agricultural Policy, and move to a system that

works for them. We will put the arguments and uncertainty behind us, agree the Prime Minister's deal, and go on to strike ambitious trade deals around the world.

Today, the Prime Minister has once again made clear his unwavering commitment to strengthening the Union and bringing all parts of our country together. People in Scotland are fed up with constant political wrangling and wasteful debate. That is why we will not support the First Minister's plans for another unwanted referendum on separation.

We will also take steps to improve the environment and keep the UK at the forefront of tackling climate change. The UK Government is bringing world leaders to Glasgow for the COP26 conference next year. It will showcase our advanced renewable sector, give a huge boost to the local economy and have a lasting legacy for our global environment.

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[YJB responds to AssetPlus process evaluation](#)



Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Ieuencid

In response to recommendations made in the [AssetPlus process evaluation](#) report the Youth Justice Board (YJB) published the following documents:

The YJB is exploring publishing AssetPlus data in the future in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Statistics.

Further information

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[Bridgwater tidal barrier progress](#)

The TWA0 is the means through which legal powers can be granted to construct the scheme. It is required due to restrictions on navigation on the River Parrett when the barrier is closed. Putting the scheme into practice could mean implementing changes that would affect people in the local area. Because of this, applications for TWA0s have to follow a set procedure which allows people to give their views on the proposals.

The Environment Agency and Sedgemoor District Council are working together on the project with support from the Somerset Rivers Authority and funding from the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The tidal barrier will be constructed across the River Parrett north of Bridgwater with gates that can be closed to prevent very high water levels travelling upstream and flooding property and infrastructure.

Rachel Burden, Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

Submission of the TWA0 is an exciting milestone for everyone and is the result of a lot of planning and engagement with our partners, stakeholders and community groups. The barrier will better protect at least 11,300 properties and 1,500 businesses from climate change and future flood risk and we are on track to have it operational by 2024.

Cllr Mike Caswell, Sedgemoor District Council's Portfolio holder for Infrastructure and Transport, said:

The submission of the Order is a very important milestone in the achievement of the Bridgwater tidal barrier. The barrier will protect many thousands of residents and hundreds of businesses from the devastating threat of flooding.

Karl Tucker, Chair of the Heart of the South West LEP, said:

The Bridgwater tidal barrier project will not only reduce the risk of flooding in Bridgwater and the surrounding area but it will provide opportunities to further develop the protected land. The £2m Growth Deal funding towards this project is important in supporting the local economy and generating growth in the region.

The TWA0 submission will be available to view at key locations for the next 8 weeks:

- Environment Agency, Rivers House office, Bridgwater
- Bridgwater Town Library, Bridgwater
- Somerset West and Taunton Council offices, Taunton
- South Somerset District Council offices, Yeovil
- [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- BDB Pitmans LLP, London

Members of the public or organisations are invited to make representations on the scheme to Defra (not to the Environment Agency) so these can be considered by the Secretary of State when deciding whether or not to grant the Order. The Minister may decide a public inquiry will be needed before a decision is made.

For more information about the barrier please visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

[Charity Commission opens inquiry into Under Trees School](#)

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into [Under Tree Schools](#) (1117679), to examine concerns that could amount to misconduct and/or mismanagement at the charity.

Under Trees School has charitable objects to relieve poverty and advance education in Aweil County, South Sudan.

Given existing concerns about the financial controls of the charity, the Commission has restricted the use of the charity's bank account.

The Commission first engaged with the charity in January 2019, following an examination of the charity's books and records, when the Commission found the charity could not account for how charitable funds sent to South Sudan had been spent.

Serious concerns about the charity's inadequate financial controls, particularly in relation to conducting due diligence on those receiving funds, and its transmission of funds to Africa were also revealed by this engagement.

The Commission opened an inquiry on 2 December 2019 to examine:

- the governance arrangements within the charity

- whether there has been any loss of charitable assets
- whether there is any ongoing risk to the charity's assets
- whether there has been misconduct and/ or mismanagement within the administration of the charity by its trustees
- the viability of the charity in the future.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were.

Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Ends .