



Mike Bell
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Thomas Pocklington Trust

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Andrew Haines
Chief Executive
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28 April 2023

Dear Mr Bell,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Thomas Pocklington Trust about improving accessibility for blind and partially-sighted passengers at our stations.

I know our team at Bristol Temple Meads enjoyed working with you and Bristol Sight Loss Council on the audio guide pilot. Whilst this project was designed specifically for passengers during the ongoing station refurbishment, the clear benefits it delivered for passengers has inspired and challenged us to consider how we can better support blind people and those who are partially sighted to navigate our stations with much more independence and confidence.

We don't plan currently to replicate the Bristol project at other stations (but it is being retained there whilst the refurbishment works are ongoing), but instead we're rolling out 'Goodmaps' app technology. This is an active navigational tool that locates a passenger via their smart phone, by comparing the location and surroundings to pre-recorded station mapping. Then, via a visual and audio map, the app talks a customer through the route across a station. Manchester Piccadilly, Liverpool Lime Street, Birmingham New Street and London Euston all now have this technology available.

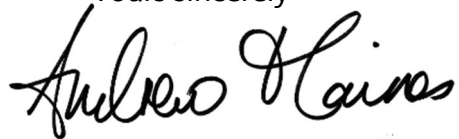
I know your representatives visited our stations in Manchester and Liverpool and were keen to see the technology rolled out at all our stations. Paddington will shortly join the above stations (we expect by the end of July), with managed stations across our Eastern region (Kings Cross, Leeds and Liverpool Street) benefitting from this technology by March 2024.

Funding has yet to be allocated to the remaining stations (Reading, Bristol Temple Meads, Edinburgh Waverley, Glasgow Central, and those in Southern region), but early discussions are underway to explore options to deliver this technology there as well.

In the coming weeks we'll start promotional activity to help strengthen awareness of these schemes and we would be delighted if Pocklington Trust could support this. I've copied in Natasha Marsay – our access & inclusion manager – who will follow up with you to make the arrangements for how you can get involved and to talk you through how this technology works.

I hope this demonstrates that our commitment to accessibility is well-developed and understood across our business and thank you to you and your colleagues for the support and counsel you have given us to help achieve our aims.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Haines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Haines
Chief Executive

cc: Natasha Marsay, Access & Inclusion Manager