

# Economic Benefits of Accessible Transport

Full Report, November 2025

This report is part of a series of research conducted by the National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat) since its launch as an Evidence Centre in early 2023. Whilst this is a standalone report, we would recommend it is considered alongside other ncat research published from late 2024. As ncat progresses further, reports and insights will also be published on our website [www.ncat.uk](http://www.ncat.uk)

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‘ncat (2025). ‘Economic Benefits of Accessible Transport. Available at [www.ncat.uk](http://www.ncat.uk)

## Highlights

This document outlines the key barriers in developing business cases for accessibility related projects and recommendations for the transport sector to facilitate public investment in such schemes.

The ncat research ‘Economic Benefits of Accessible Transport’ was based on a desktop review of the funding lifecycle and appraisal guidance as well as stakeholder engagement with a variety of authorities, transport organisations and disabled people organisation to identify the key gaps, barriers and challenges faced by transport authorities and transport organisations when developing business cases for accessibility related schemes to justify public investment.

Five recommendations were formulated to overcome the identified challenges and further checked and challenged through a follow-up workshop with stakeholders:

1. Embed accessibility in organisational culture through leadership, team diversity, general disability awareness training, and targeted business case development training
2. Strengthen policies, strategies, action plans and create funding mechanisms that prioritise transport accessibility
3. Increase collection and sharing of data regarding accessible transport
4. Strengthen appraisal of accessibility in business cases through consideration of lived experiences and better assessment of accessibility benefits
5. Ensure updated Green Book and other guidance documents support authorities and transport organisations develop strong accessibility related business cases and facilitate their access to funding

These recommendations are further detailed describing when and how they apply to public sector transport organisations and government agencies.

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# 1 Why did we do this work?

The recent ncat research *Understanding and identifying barriers to accessing transport* published in December 2024 found out that disabled people do not think transport is accessible and most do not think this will change in the next 10 years (ncat, 2024). The research confirmed that 79% of disabled people travel less often, 84% experience longer journey times due to transport barriers and 75% said that transport barriers cause them stress when travelling.

As such, there is more to be done by the transport sector to reduce the accessibility gap.

One of the issues faced by accessibility related schemes in transport is the lack of investment. Indeed, the previous ncat research *Working together for accessible transport* published in November 2024 found that accessibility improvements are seen to be too expensive, and it can be difficult to justify the investment (ncat, 2024). In particular, the research concluded that the economic benefits of investing in transport accessibility or social value are not always understood.

The process to get investment for accessibility improvements can be long and includes the following stages among others: the optioneering stage, the prioritisation of options, the development of the business cases which details the scheme costs and benefits expected with the improvements, the scrutinising phase and finally the decision to award funding. In addition, the policies, strategies and action plans related to accessibility impact prioritisation and investment of schemes and projects.

Consequently, this research project was set up to review the systemic approach to funding for transport accessibility related improvements in the public sector in order to:

- Improve understanding of the challenges and barriers in gaining funding, what they are, who experience them, and at which stage they arise.
- Provide recommendations to facilitate investment into accessible transport solutions, and which stakeholders would be responsible for change.

Two limitations were faced during the project:

- We tried to get access to transport business cases across an entire funding programme to identify best practice within the appraisal undertaken to determine the relative success of schemes with a major accessibility component compared to other transportation schemes. We did not get access to this information from stakeholders engaged in the project and were only able to locate a small number of business cases for transport schemes with a major accessibility component online.

- Our analysis focused primarily on the English context, acknowledging that funding processes and systemic approaches differ in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. Stakeholder engagement outside England was minimal, with only one organisation consulted beyond the English context, limiting our ability to capture perspectives from stakeholders in other regions.

## **2 What did we do, how did we do it, and who did we work with?**

The project methodology was organised in two major stages, the discovery phase and the recommendation phase.

### **Discovery phase**

Three main tasks were conducted during the discovery phase:

- Desktop review of the funding lifecycle and appraisal guidance
- Stakeholder engagement
- Conclusions

#### **Desktop review of the funding lifecycle and appraisal guidance**

The desktop review looked at government guidance documents including:

- HM Treasury 2022 Green Book Guidance, which is the overarching guidance on public sector appraisal.
- Department for Transport's (DfT) Transport Business Guidance, which provides guidance for public transport decision-makers and stakeholders to prepare and evaluate business cases for transport investment. This guidance follows the 2022 Green Book and its core business case process.



- DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) and Value for Money (VfM) framework.
- Green Book Review 2025: Findings and Actions.

In January 2025, the Chancellor initiated a review of the HM Treasury's Green Book, due to long-standing concerns that the Green Book's guidance on public sector investment appraisal might unintentionally disadvantage certain regions, particularly those outside London and the South East. Outcomes of the review were published in June 2025 by the HM Treasury with the resulting updates to the Green Book, supplementary guidance documents, and training materials expected in early 2026.

In England, organisations seeking public funding for transport schemes are required to prepare business cases following DfT's Transport Business Guidance. As such, the guidance documents mentioned above have been reviewed to understand how they apply to accessibility related schemes specifically and identify the gaps and challenges related to appraising accessibility in business cases.

This research was also supplemented by a review of additional governmental policy papers and reports as well as a charity-authored publication and a series of academic papers to support and deepen the analysis.

### **Stakeholder engagement**

We conducted semi-structured one-to-one interviews with organisations who are involved in economic appraisal and business case development from different perspectives, including those who develop and scrutinise business cases. We interviewed 9 organisations, whose types and numbers are listed in Table 1

**Table 1 - Organisations interviewed**

<b>Type of organisations</b>	<b>Number of organisations interviewed</b>	<b>Number of interviewees</b>
Public sector transport organisations	4	10
National government agencies	2	5
Other transport organisations	2	2
Disabled people organisation (Royal National Institute of Blind People)	1	1

When possible, we aimed to interview both employees with accessibility and business case expertise when these remits were separated at the organisation level.

To facilitate the interviews, we developed three interview guides for:

- Sub-national transport authorities and transport organisations.
- National government agencies.
- Disabled people organisations.

This was so that responses were easily compared and collated to identify similarities and differences in organisations' challenges, approaches and suggestions for change. The interview guides were structured to cover the following topics, with specific questions tailored to the types of organisations:

- Overall process and specificities, capability and challenges associated with developing or scrutinising accessibility related business cases.
- Deep dive into the methodology, in particular to appraise accessibility improvements and quantify associated benefits.
- Views on the changes that could unlock access to funding for accessibility related schemes.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings from both the desktop and the stakeholder engagement, we created a series of conclusions on the key barriers that public sector organisations face when creating business cases for investment in accessibility related schemes.

## **Recommendation phase**

Three main tasks were conducted during the recommendation phase:

- Draft recommendations
- Follow up engagement to check and challenge draft recommendations
- Reporting

### **Draft recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the discovery phase, we drafted recommendations broken down per theme and ownership.

### **Follow up engagement**

We presented our findings, conclusions and draft recommendations during a workshop with stakeholders engaged during the discovery phase. 10 people from nine organisations attended the workshop.

Discussions were held and feedback sought throughout the workshop with more time dedicated to review the draft recommendations.

## **Reporting**

Feedback collected during the follow up workshop were used to finalise our recommendations and develop this report.

# **3 What did we find?**

This section provides a summary of the main findings across the two main tasks of the project.

## **Task 1: What did we find from the desktop review of the funding lifecycle and appraisal guidance?**

**Finding 1: There aren't any current dedicated funds for accessibility related improvements, resulting in conflicting priorities between transport schemes and objectives**

The UK Government's *Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People (ITS)*, first published in 2018 and last updated in November 2020 to give a summary of progress, sets out a vision for disabled people to travel "easily, confidently and without extra cost" by 2030 (DfT, 2018). The Government reiterated its commitment to improved accessibility in its response to the March 2025 Transport Committee's *Access denied: rights versus reality in disabled people's access to transport* (Transport Committee, 2025) report, stating that "Addressing accessibility failings is central to the Government's mission to break down barriers to opportunity and unlock growth" (DfT, 2025). However, there are currently no binding, fully funded programmes or mandated frameworks with enforceable deadlines for accessibility. There is no direct statutory requirement for the government to provide

funding specifically for accessibility schemes, allowing accessibility funding to be reduced during tight spending reviews. However, there is a statutory duty on employers, service providers, and public authorities to make reasonable adjustments to avoid discrimination against disabled people as per the Equality Act 2010.

Dedicated funding has been secured in the past, for example the Transport Research and Innovation Grant programme awarded funding to innovative start-ups developing accessible green transport solutions (2023) or the Access for All programme. The Access for All programme launched in 2006 to improve accessibility at railway stations in England, Scotland and Wales. This funding aimed to address the issues faced by disabled passengers and passengers facing mobility restraints, such as heavy luggage or pushchairs when using railway stations. Since its launch, more than £500m has been invested to deliver accessible routes, including step free access at over 200 stations. However, this dedicated rail focussed fund was only extended until 2024.

While there has been ring-fenced funding for railway station accessibility schemes through the Access for All fund, after 2024 the future of such dedicated funding is unclear, and in much of the wider UK transport sector ring-fenced funding for accessibility schemes is absent or very limited. Instead, accessibility related transport schemes are (or will be) captured under the following funding streams:

- Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP) – supporting more frequent, reliable, affordable, and passenger-focused local bus networks.
- Active Travel Fund – supporting local authorities in developing walking and cycling infrastructure across England

- Local Transport Grant (LTG) – funds given to local authorities in England to maintain and improve local transport infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and public transport networks.
- Local Transport Fund / Grant – reallocated HS2 funding for North & Midlands to invest in local transport projects
- Integrated Transport Block – capital funding for small transport improvements
- Transport for City Regions (TCR Settlements) – succeeds and builds upon the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) fund due to end in 2027. The TCR programme will cover the period 2027-2032.

Government ministers operate within constrained transport budgets and must prioritise between multiple competing project types, including for example active travel, road, rail, and accessibility schemes, when allocating funding. If accessibility isn't a clear policy priority, projects that reduce congestion or boost the economy are usually favoured instead. This is further emphasised within the Transport Committee's *Access denied: rights versus reality in disabled people's access to transport* report which states that accessibility schemes are often delayed or discarded when deemed to be "in conflict with other policy goals, technical requirements or cost pressures", even if accessibility schemes have life-changing impacts (Transport Committee, 2025). Because of this, large-scale infrastructure projects are perceived as more visible and appealing than accessibility upgrades.

In the *Access denied: rights versus reality in disabled people's access to transport: Government Response*, the Government confirmed that accessibility will be "incorporated as a key area of focus" within the

upcoming *Integrated National Transport Strategy (INTS)* with the delivery of accessibility outcomes to be “based upon a clear action plan and milestones” (DfT, 2025).

## **Finding 2: Elements of the Treasury’s Five Case Model creates challenges for accessibility schemes seeking funding**

The HM Treasury’s Five Case Model is the UK Government’s standard framework for developing and assessing business cases for public sector projects and programmes. It ensures that decisions about spending public money are strategic, economically and commercially viable, financially affordable, and deliverable.

The Five Case Model sets out five dimensions (cases) that together form a complete and compelling business case. These are:

- Strategic Dimension
- Economic Dimension
- Financial Dimension
- Commercial Dimension
- Management Dimension

However, certain elements of the business case structure may inadvertently create challenges for accessibility schemes seeking funding. These challenges are explored in Table 2

**Table 2 - Accessibility within the Five Case Model**

Dimension	Purpose	Challenges for accessibility schemes
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Strategic	<p>Outlines how the project aligns with national, regional and local policy ambitions, as well as highlighting how the proposed scheme addresses key problems identified within the study area.</p>	<p>The lack of accessibility data on disabled people's transport experiences prevents problem identification. Without sufficient data, the problem may not be formally recognised during the early stages of project development, leading to no proposal of accessibility-focused solutions.</p> <p>Transport accessibility measures such as step-free access typically have a strong rationale in terms of social inclusion, equality, and compliance with reasonable adjustment obligations. However, while regulations establish minimum standards, the wider strategic dimension for enhanced accessibility can be undervalued if decision-makers do not prioritise these objectives.</p>
Economic	<p>Sets out the option that delivers best public Value for Money (VfM), including wider social and environmental effects. This is quantified using a monetised economic appraisal.</p>	<p>Standard monetised appraisal methods don't express the benefits of accessibility in monetary terms such as greater independence, equity or improved quality of life. Consequently, accessibility focused projects often result in low or poor VfM.</p> <p>The WELLBY (Wellbeing-Adjusted Life Year) method was adopted by HM</p>



Treasury when publishing the Green Book Supplementary Guidance on Wellbeing in 2021. The method proposes a way to measure and value improvements in wellbeing. In parallel, one of the findings of DfT's *Review of TAG Impacts through a wellbeing lens* report (DfT, 2024) is that the wellbeing impact of transport provision is materially different across people (including for people with disabilities) recommending increasing segmentation in the analysis of transport improvements, specifically to capture and quantify these benefits to people. As such, there may be an opportunity to further adapt or augment the WELLBY method, and segment the results so as to reveal impacts on disabled people.

Financial	Identifies the affordability and funding sources of the preferred option.	<p>Accessibility related projects may face challenges if they are perceived as having high upfront capital costs, raising concerns about affordability.</p> <p>Furthermore, if accessibility schemes rely heavily on specific, often smaller, ring-fenced funding sources (such as the Access for All fund), this may be insufficient for the scale of the project.</p>
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These affordability concerns can undermine the Financial Dimension, making it harder to justify investment and secure funding.

Commercial	Sets out the commercial viability of the proposal, including the procurement strategy, risk allocation, and details of contract management.	Accessibility-related improvements can involve innovative technologies such as navigation apps or bespoke solutions that increase procurement complexity due to potential limited supplier competition, lack of standardised specifications, and the need for custom integration with existing transport systems. This can result in longer procurement timescales, higher costs and increased risk of non-compliance with public sector procurement rules, making it harder to demonstrate commercial viability within the business case.
Management	Outlines that robust arrangements are in place for the delivery, risk management, and monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.	Accessibility projects, particularly those involving complex or expensive upgrades or retrofitting of existing infrastructure, may be perceived as carrying higher delivery risks such as cost overruns, planning delays or stakeholder opposition. This means that these schemes may face increased scrutiny during assurance processes or require more robust risk management strategies.

In addition, limited organisational resources and gaps in accessibility-related monitoring and evaluation frameworks may increase management barriers.

**Finding 3: Getting public sector funding for the implementation of a new scheme is a long, slow, and structured process.**

A transport project is subject to the following stages in order to receive funding approval and allocation:

- Early-stage option development and concept design
- Preparation of Business Cases using the Five Case Model
  - Including an economic appraisal to determine VfM
- Approval and assurance processes
- Decision-making and funding allocation

The business case is developed in three main stages:

1. **Strategic Outline Case (SOC)** – the early stage
  - Defines the need for the project and longlist of options
  - Gains initial approval to develop the project further
2. **Outline Business Case (OBC)** – the detailed stage
  - Narrows options to a preferred one
  - Provides more detailed cost, benefit, and delivery plans
3. **Full Business Case (FBC)** – the final stage
  - Confirms the chosen option is still best value

- Provides final costs, contracts, and delivery arrangements for approval

For a typical transport project, it can take between two to four years to get from initial proposal to full funding under the HM Treasury Five Case Model. Major rail or highway projects can take five to 10 years before funding and construction begin.

The Five Case Model is intentionally rigorous to ensure accountability in the best use of public funds. While the Green Book guidance recommends proportionality to be applied depending on the size of the project, guidance is unclear on what constitutes a proportionate business case, as acknowledged in the recent Green Book review. As such, the Five Case Model's structured and rigorous approach can be too rigid, slow and resource-intensive, especially for smaller accessibility focused transport projects.

While the above challenges are particularly significant for accessibility focused schemes, they are not unique to them. The same applies to all transport projects, regardless of their focus. Smaller schemes, whether accessibility related or not, often operate on shorter timescales, with the business case and appraisal process scaled back on the grounds of proportionality. This flexibility is recognised within existing guidance, allowing less complex projects to adopt a streamlined approach that still meets the necessary standards of public investment.

**Finding 4: The lack of data collected on accessibility challenges is undermining the understanding of inaccessibility impacts and associated decision-making process**

There is limited comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data collection on the experiences and needs of disabled travellers as highlighted in the *Access denied: rights versus reality in disabled*

*people's access to transport* (Transport Committee, 2025). In the *Review of Transport Statistics* report (Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), 2022), it was found that official transport statistics have historically failed to capture key indicators such as the number of people unable to travel due to inaccessibility, the frequency and nature of assistance failures, or real-time data on infrastructure outages like lift breakdowns. This data gap means that many accessibility issues remain invisible in planning and appraisal processes, undermining the ability of decision-makers to accurately assess the scale of the problem and allocate resources accordingly.

While some general datasets exist, they are rarely disaggregated by disability type and severity, or intersectional factors such as age, gender or income. This lack of granularity means that the specific barriers faced by different groups of disabled people are often obscured, making it difficult to identify target solutions. Without robust and disaggregated data, accessibility challenges are often excluded from the problem identification stage of transport projects, leading to solutions that fail to address the needs of disabled users. This absence can treat accessibility as an optional add-on rather than a core requirement.

The lack of qualitative data makes it difficult to build a strong business case for accessibility improvements, which is essential for making the case for investment.

#### **Finding 5: Existing appraisal methods typically undervalue accessibility benefits**

DfT's TAG provides the methodology for carrying out an economic appraisal of a transport scheme to assess their VfM. The results are expressed as a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR), representing the ratio of the

scheme's benefits to its costs. This process is reported in the Economic Dimension of the business case.

TAG Unit A4.1 (Social Impact Appraisal) defines accessibility as the range of opportunities and choices all people have in connecting with employment, services, and social networks. It recommends assessing impacts on public transport availability and physical access but does not provide robust methods for valuing improvements in life satisfaction, independence, or inclusion. These are typically captured qualitatively in the Appraisal Summary Table (AST) under categories like journey quality and accessibility but are often overlooked in decision-making. The lack of robust methods can explain why decision-makers don't recognise such impacts as much as monetised benefits.

TAG Unit A4.2 (Distributional Impact Appraisal) focuses on distributional impacts, assessing how benefits and adverse effects are spread across different social groups. While this guidance encourages consideration of equity (and disabled people specifically as a protected characteristic in the Equalities Act 2010), it only covers a narrow range of impacts and permitted analysis required, rather than lived experience or capability-based outcomes. As a result, the appraisal may miss key impacts on disabled people, carers, and others facing mobility barriers.

As indicated above, a challenge for accessibility schemes lies in how their benefits are quantified and valued within the TAG framework. Many accessibility interventions can be monetised using existing tools, for example, through journey time savings, improved journey quality or through stated preference values. Despite this, these benefits are not always fully captured or consistently applied in practice. Additionally, other accessibility impacts (such as severance, step free accessibility,

perceived safety) are qualitatively considered, and therefore often undervalued in appraisal.

Traditional appraisals typically group people into broad categories such as commuters or business users and do not disaggregate disabled people within the core appraisal. Their specific needs and experiences are only considered later in the process through distributional impact assessments, which limits the visibility and valuation of accessibility benefits. This disconnect between available methods and their practical application suggests a need for clearer guidance and wider awareness of existing tools (such as Transport for London's Ambience Benefits Calculator and the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH)).

This means that the specific needs and experiences of disabled people are often overlooked at the appraisal stage, limiting the valuation of accessibility benefits for with mobility challenges.

Accessibility improvements can create four main types of benefits:

1. **More travel and revenue** – disabled people can use public transport more easily
2. **Better journey experience and time savings** – trips become smoother and less stressful
3. **Improved quality of life** – people can reach more jobs, services, and opportunities
4. **Increased economic activity** – more people participating in work and education leads to higher productivity, more spending and growth

All of the above can be monetised and expressed in monetary terms. However, the methods used to appraise the lived experience or social value of accessibility improvements are not routinely or frequently

applied in transport appraisal. As a result, quality of life benefits, although measurable, are often omitted or underrepresented in business cases, limiting their influence on funding decisions. This gap highlights the need for clearer guidance and standardised methods to ensure these benefits are systematically captured and valued.

The concept of *The Purple Pound* (Scope, 2023), the estimated £274 billion annual spending power of disabled people and their households in the UK, underscore the case for investment in accessible transport. Accessibility improvements, such as step-free access and better wayfinding, not only enhance independence and quality of life but also unlock suppressed demand. By enabling more disabled people to travel confidently and frequently, transport networks can tap into the purple pound, increasing fare revenue and stimulating spending in local economies. This is supported by *A Hidden Market: The Purchasing Power of Working-Age Adults with Disabilities* research (Yin et al., 2018) who noted the significant but often overlooked economic power of disabled people. The authors suggest decreasing social isolation through better access to transport could increase local discretionary spending. Furthermore, *The Transport Accessibility Gap* (Motability Foundation, 2022) suggest that closing the accessibility gap (the difference in the total number of trips taken by disabled people compared to the number of trips taken by non-disabled people) would deliver benefits to the value of £72.4bn to the UK economy each year.

Recognising this economic potential strengthens the strategic and economic case for accessibility schemes, especially when traditional appraisal methods undervalue non-monetised benefits. Incorporating the impact of the purple pound (in terms of increased patronage and revenue if accessibility barriers are removed) into business case



development may help shift perceptions of accessibility from a compliance cost to a growth opportunity.

While TAG Units A4.1 and A4.2 provide a framework for considering social and distributional impacts, they do not fully capture the transformational potential of accessibility improvements. Without reform to appraisal methods, such as giving consideration to monetised accessibility appraisal much earlier in the process, and including a greater number and variety of accessibility appraisal techniques and stronger policy commitments, accessibility will continue to be marginalised in transport investment decisions.

The exclusion of accessibility in decision making is further shown in **Table 3** which illustrates how different types of impacts are treated within DfT's VfM framework. The table is categorised into four levels. Accessibility benefits are typically captured within non-monetised or indicative impacts. The broader social value of accessibility benefits is underrepresented within this framework.

**Table 3 – Typical impacts of a transport proposal**

Impact Level	Included In	Impacts
Level 1: Established Monetised Impacts	Initial, adjusted, and indicative metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journey time savings</li> <li>• Reliability (appears in both Level 1 and Level 2)</li> <li>• Vehicle operating costs</li> <li>• Accidents</li> <li>• Physical activity</li> <li>• Journey quality</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Greenhouse gases</li> <li>• Indirect tax</li> </ul>
Level 2: Evolving Monetised Impacts	Adjusted metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistic clustering (refers to productivity gains from businesses being close together)</li> <li>• Output in imperfectly competitive markets</li> <li>• Labour supply</li> <li>• Reliability</li> </ul>
Level 3: Indicative Monetised Impacts	Indicative metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-assessed evolving impacts under land-use change</li> <li>• Moves to more/less productive jobs</li> <li>• Dynamic clustering (involves changes over time due to land-use shifts)</li> <li>• Other welfare impacts (may include wellbeing, inclusion, and accessibility)</li> </ul>

Non-monetised Impacts	Considered after metrics using switching values approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Severance</li> <li>• Townscape</li> <li>• Historic environment</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Water environment</li> <li>• Option and non-use values</li> </ul>
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As outlined above, the specific needs and experiences of disabled people are not disaggregated within each impact level identified in **Table 3**.

### **Finding 6: Accessibility schemes score poorly in terms of VfM**

As highlighted in the previous finding, accessibility benefits are often undervalued because current appraisal methods focus on monetised impacts. This means accessibility schemes often score poorly in terms of VfM assessments despite delivering significant social benefits.

VfM means using public money in the best possible way to meet specific goals. It looks at:

- Benefits and costs that can be measured in monetary terms, expressed as a BCR
- Benefits and costs that can't easily be measured in money such as social or environmental impacts like landscape, historic environment and water environment
- Risks and uncertainties that might affect the results

The DfT's VfM framework sets out three levels of impacts of a transport proposal:

1. **Level 1 – Established:** Where the method for estimating the impact and the monetary value is tried-and-tested
2. **Level 2 – Evolving:** Where some evidence exists to support the estimation of a monetary value but is less widely accepted and researched
3. **Level 3 – Indicative:** Where monetary valuation methods are not considered widely accepted and researched to be definitive, with a high degree of uncertainty in terms of the magnitude of the impact

The initial BCR only includes benefits like time savings, vehicle costs, accidents, pollution, and tax effects. The adjusted BCR adds in wider effects such as labour supply impacts, reliability, and agglomeration.

An ‘indicative BCR’ is also used to show wider and less tangible benefits such as environmental and distributional non-monetised impacts, as well as land value and amenity impacts that can be monetised, so that these are given more importance when judging VfM. As of November 2024, these indicative monetised impacts can now be included into the BCR calculation.

The 2025 Green Book Review found that decision-making has relied too heavily on BCRs (HM Treasury, 2025). This focus on easily measured, money-based benefits has meant that wider social and environmental outcomes are often undervalued. As a result, projects with hard-to-measure benefits like accessibility or community improvements can lose out to those with higher BCRs and VfM assessment.

The above is supported in academic literature on the methodologies used to assess accessibility schemes. It is reported in the *Economic benefits of improved accessibility to transport systems and the role of transport in fostering tourism for all* research (Rebstock, 2017) and *The*

*Benefits of Improving Access to the United Kingdom Rail Network via the Access for All Programme* research (Duckenfield, 2017) that there are significant limitations in the ability to quantify a range of social benefits associated with accessibility improvements. The value of qualitative benefits is emphasised by both authors.

**Finding 7: It is hard to learn from previous business cases due to lack of transparency**

Business cases form the basis of UK public spending decisions. They underpin allocation and approval of large amounts of public expenditure and are essential for ensuring this expenditure demonstrates VfM.

To increase transparency around how public money is spent, it is important that the public and other stakeholders can easily access and review business cases for all projects and programmes. Prior to June 2025, there was no requirement for the UK Government to make business cases publicly available once they have received HM Treasury approval.

This results in poor transparency of government business cases with very few openly available for review, limiting learning from previous work and hindering best practice. Greater transparency of approved accessibility related business cases would provide a clearer evidence base for the estimates of benefits and costs that are used in appraisals.

To address this challenge, all projects and programmes on the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP) are now required to publish a business case within four months of receiving HM Treasury approval, as of 11 June 2025. While this should help local and regional authorities to develop their knowledge and learn from previous examples, as it only covers major projects, it will still leave a gap on the

smaller projects. As accessibility related projects are often smaller in nature, the lack of transparency will remain.

Greater transparency will also enable better evaluation of transport schemes. DfT uses monitoring and evaluation to collect evidence about the effectiveness of its transport interventions in achieving their intended outcomes, using ‘meta-evaluation’ analysis to review and learn from past and current activities. While these reviews provide detailed progress of the change in outcomes over time in terms of travel times and reliability, travel demand, and impacts of the economy, performance metrics regarding improving accessibility for disabled people are often absent, with limited baseline indicators or post scheme opening data gathered to capture actual versus observed change. Integrating robust accessibility metrics into evaluation frameworks will help develop more targeted transport interventions.

### **Finding 8: Forthcoming Green Book updated could support accessibility schemes if followed through**

As discussed above, the HM Treasury’s Green Book is critically important to the UK government’s decision-making process. It serves as the official guidance for how public sector bodies should appraise and evaluate policies, programmes, and projects that involve public spending.

Although the aim of the review was to help identify and rectify regional inequalities in public sector investment decisions, the benefits of the proposed improvements will be more widespread. Seven key findings were reported in the review along with corresponding actions. Some have implications for accessibility related investment decisions, as set out in **Table 4**.

**Table 4 – Implications of the Green Book Review findings for accessibility related investment decisions**

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Implication for accessible transport</b>
Overly long and complicated guidance	Updated Green Book to be published in 2026. This will make clear the level of detail that is proportionate for business cases at different levels of cost and complexity.	May result in more consistent valuation of accessibility benefits.
Insufficient emphasis on place-based business cases	<p>A place-based business case focuses on the specific needs, challenges and opportunities of a particular geographic area or community.</p> <p>It is proposed that place-based business cases will now be based on robust analysis and research that may include social cost-benefit analysis and analytical techniques not currently set out in the Green Book.</p>	By tailoring business cases to local contexts using broader analytical tools such as spatial analysis, gaps in accessible transport can be identified, as well as the diverse needs arising from specific communities.
Ineffectiveness at assessing transformational change	Updates to the assessment of transformational change, including an independent review of the Social Time Preference Rate (STPR) to better reflect projects with very long-term benefits.	This update could capture the long-term benefits of investment in accessible transport.
Inadequate capacity and capability across the public sector	The National Wealth Fund (NWF) is to provide early-stage development support to local and regional governments who often rely on	Improvements to training, knowledge and skills could help build strong, more successful accessibility related

	consultants to develop robust business cases. Reforming the Better Business Case training programme.	business cases developed in-house by local and regional authorities.
Continued over-emphasis on BCR in decision making	Greater clarity is to be provided on the role of the BCR in appraisal which will make clear that HM Treasury does not endorse the use of arbitrary 'BCR thresholds'. Encourages appraisal of non-monetisable social benefits.	This will benefit accessibility related schemes that often have substantial benefits that are difficult to quantify. Improved recognition of social benefits could justify investments in accessibility-related schemes with modest BCRs.
Poor transparency of government business cases	Business cases for major projects and programmes are to be published by the government.	This will provide scheme promoters with best practice and guidance when developing accessibility related business cases.

## Task 2: What did we find from engaging with stakeholders?

### **Finding 1: There isn't enough expertise and dedicated resource in organisations to develop accessibility related business cases.**

In interviews, stakeholders mentioned that some organisations lack the internal expertise, staff resource, structure, and coordination needed to develop strong accessibility related business cases. This challenge is heightened by fragmented internal processes, where responsibility for business case development often sits within mode-specific teams rather



than in a dedicated business case team. As a result, approaches to assessing benefits of accessibility improvements can vary widely across projects and modes. Stakeholders reported that institutional knowledge around accessibility can be limited, with learnings from previous projects not shared across teams. This means accessibility is often treated inconsistently, and teams are not equipped to embed it from the outset. Stakeholders also reported a lack of training specifically focused on appraising accessibility in business cases, which is likely explained by the absence of a standardised approach to this area. As one stakeholder reflected:

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***“In terms of training for appraisal of accessibility, I don't think I've ever had any [...] I'm not aware of any specific learning.”***

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The issue is exacerbated by limited training and expertise in understanding and applying accessibility principles across projects, as well as developing accessibility related business cases. While some organisations offer disability awareness training, it is often generic and fails to equip staff with the skills to understand the nuances of different disabilities. In addition, these gaps in expertise and training also have significant implications for stakeholder engagement. As explored in Finding 6, teams lacking dedicated resource and clear guidance often struggle to engage disabled people effectively and consistently throughout the business case process. As a result, lived experience is inconsistently reflected in business cases, and teams may struggle to build a compelling rationale for accessibility-focused schemes. One

stakeholder noted that increasing workforce diversity, particularly by including disabled professionals, could help improve this understanding.

Staff also face challenges in planning for diverse and sometimes conflicting accessibility needs. Project leads often lack the tools or confidence to prioritise between requirements such as physical access, sensory needs, and cognitive accessibility. This can lead to a narrow focus on visible features like ramps, while broader needs are overlooked, perhaps reducing the effectiveness of interventions and making it harder to demonstrate benefits for a wide range of users.

**Finding 2: Lack of leadership commitment and dedicated policies often hold back the prioritisation of accessibility related schemes`**

Five stakeholders reported that accessibility is not prioritised within organisations unless there is strong leadership commitment and clear organisational policies in place. In some cases, accessibility schemes and features can be removed during project development due to budget constraints. As one stakeholder explained:

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***“One scheme was designed to be accessible  
but then finance issues meant accessible  
features were cut from the original design.”***

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This is particularly evident when accessibility objectives overlap with other priorities, such as rural access or journey time savings, which can dilute the clarity of business case narratives and weaken the strategic rationale for investment.

One stakeholder noted that the prevalence of minimum viable product (MVP) mindsets, where projects focus on delivering only the most basic

requirements, means accessibility considerations are introduced late in the process, if at all, reducing opportunities for meaningful co-design and engagement, which could help strengthen the business cases.

Without strong leadership and clear organisational policy, the responsibility for identifying and addressing accessibility issues may fall to disabled people themselves. Stakeholders described how problems in implemented schemes are frequently only resolved after individuals raise concerns or petition for change. This reactive approach reflects not only a lack of high-level oversight but also a potential systematic bias in appraisal and decision-making, where accessibility is not embedded as a core criterion from the outset but instead treated as an afterthought once gaps are exposed. Retrofitting is usually significantly more expensive than designing an inclusive solution from the outset, resulting in poor affordability of retrofitting projects.

**Finding 3: Limited and outdated evidence and data on the economic and social benefits of accessibility related improvements make it difficult to justify investment.**

Five stakeholders highlighted that one of the biggest barriers to justifying investment in accessibility related improvements is the lack of reliable, up-to-date evidence. Across organisations, there is limited baseline data related to accessibility infrastructure and its use, and disaggregated data for disabled populations is often unavailable or too small to be statistically meaningful. As one stakeholder explained:

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***“For accessibility, we don’t have the baseline data for usage, so it’s harder to quantify benefits.”***

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Another stakeholder added:

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***“There are good general data sources out there [but] we would want them to be disaggregated into disabled population. It’s such a small percentage that then [...] it might not be robust enough data.”***

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This makes it difficult to quantify benefits, track improvements, or demonstrate the wider impact of schemes once delivered.

As a result, business cases tend to rely heavily on qualitative evidence, which can be powerful but is often seen as less robust when compared to other transport investments. Two stakeholders said that while economic valuations like the “Purple Pound” are still referenced, this may be seen as outdated or too abstract to truly influence decision-making. Without more accurate, localised data, the benefits of accessibility can remain underrepresented in business cases.

Two stakeholders suggested that these gaps may be closely linked to a lack of monitoring and evaluation. Accessibility scheme outcomes are rarely tracked over time, and most transport projects do not include specific objectives or performance indicators for inclusion. Without clear ownership or long-term oversight, schemes are not assessed. This limits the ability to build a strong strategic case based on previous projects and findings. It is also worth recognising that evaluating accessibility can be inherently challenging because it forms part of a wider system. One stakeholder gave the example of a rail station where accessibility improvements may appear successful, but if first- and last-mile

connections to the station remain inaccessible, the evaluation could be misleading.

**Finding 4: There is an overemphasis of the importance of the BCR and VfM in funding decisions and under reliance on wider social value.**

Five stakeholders highlighted that funding decisions for transport schemes are often dominated by BCR and VfM metrics, which can disadvantage accessibility related business cases. As one stakeholder put it:

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***“It's the first thing people look for in a business case, isn't it? The BCR. So even if it's something that we're not meant to be focusing on, if that's going to continue to be the trend.”***

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These schemes frequently struggle to compete with traditional transport projects that offer clearer monetised returns, even when they deliver significant social benefits to a wide range of users. The current appraisal system places heavy weight on affordability, which means that interventions aimed at improving accessibility are often deprioritised or diluted during decision-making. Existing appraisal tools used in business case development are often unclear or poorly suited to accessibility-focused schemes, especially when retrofitting infrastructure. Without a consistent approach, some stakeholders noted that they have been left to develop their own methods for capturing benefits of accessibility schemes. Many stakeholders called for clearer, more robust frameworks

that better capture the benefits of accessible transport and support stronger business case development.

While there is broad recognition of the social value that accessibility improvements can bring, such as increased independence, reduced isolation, better access to employment, and improved journey confidence, stakeholders noted that these outcomes are rarely captured in a consistent way in business cases. Existing methodologies do not provide clear guidance on how to value non-monetised benefits, and there is no standard approach for integrating them into formal appraisal outputs. As a result, these impacts are often described qualitatively or supported by anecdotal evidence, which limits their influence on investment decisions.

The lack of robust tools for valuing social outcomes makes it difficult to build strong business cases for accessibility. In the absence of clear guidance, some stakeholders have developed their own bespoke methods to capture these benefits, highlighting the need for a consistent, sector-wide framework. As one stakeholder explained:

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***“There are elements of how you can improve accessibility that just wouldn’t be picked up by [business case appraisal], so things like tactile paving... the costs are still picked up, but the benefits aren’t. So, you’re a sort of disadvantage there.”***

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Stakeholders described how customer testimonials and legal claims are sometimes used to highlight need, but these are not sufficient to meet

formal appraisal requirements. Without a recognised framework for assessing social value, teams are left to interpret impact on a project-by-project basis.

This imbalance between BCR and VfM metrics and social outcomes reflects a broader gap in how accessibility is understood and prioritised within transport planning. Three stakeholders called for clearer guidance and more inclusive appraisal methods that recognise the full value of accessibility improvements.

**Finding 5: The funding process for accessibility schemes is slow, uncertain, and expensive, discouraging organisations from starting business case development.**

The process of securing public sector funding for accessibility related transport schemes was seen as slow, uncertain, and expensive. As one stakeholder explained in order to begin the business case process:

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***“We have to have some relative confidence of success.”***

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Two stakeholders suggested that this lack of early confidence can discourage organisations from even starting the development of business cases. Teams are reluctant to commit time and resources upfront when outcomes are unclear. One stakeholder emphasised that this is rarely about proposals being rejected; rather, organisations typically only develop business cases when they know funding is available or have been invited to do so. Without dedicated funding streams or clear signals of financial support, many schemes never progress beyond the idea stage.

Funding decisions are often subject to intense scrutiny, with some schemes delayed or stalled due to doubts about economic justification, even when they meet departmental requirements and demonstrate clear customer benefits. In sectors like rail, stakeholders noted that shifting political priorities can further complicate approvals, making accessibility proposals vulnerable to being deprioritised.

The cost of developing compliant business cases was seen as another major barrier by one stakeholder. Meeting strict criteria set by funding authorities demands significant time, technical expertise, and financial investment. In some cases, the expense of preparing a business case is disproportionate to the scale of the proposed intervention.

**Finding 6: Inconsistency in the timing and depth of engagement with disabled people leads to variability in how lived experience is incorporated into business case.**

Eight stakeholders noted that there are barriers regarding how and when disabled people are engaged in the development of transport business cases. Many described a pattern where engagement happens too late in the process, often after key decisions have already been made. This means that disabled people are not involved in shaping the initial scope or direction of a project, which limits the influence their lived experience can have on the design and appraisal of transport schemes. Instead of being part of the early thinking, their input is often sought only at the consultation stage, when options are already fixed and opportunities for meaningful change and codesign are limited.

This late or inconsistent engagement can also affect the depth and quality of disabled people involvement in business case development. Stakeholders described using a range of approaches to engage disabled people, reflecting a recognition of the value of lived experience in



shaping transport planning. While some engagement takes the form of one-off focus groups, others are exploring more creative and sustained methods such as ‘mystery shopping’ exercises and advisory panels. However, there is still room to strengthen consistency and ensure that feedback is fully integrated into final business cases. Three stakeholders also noted that while they try to engage disabled people frequently through panels and forums, feedback tends to come from a small, recurring group of individuals. This over-reliance can lead to consultation fatigue and may narrow the diversity of perspectives feeding into scheme development. The issue can be compounded when participants are expected to contribute without fair compensation for their time and expertise, which can undermine the depth of engagement. In summary, a number of stakeholders noted that engagement is sometimes treated as a tick-box exercise. As a result, the insights and experiences of disabled people are not always reflected in full business cases, and important accessibility considerations can be missed or deprioritised.

Several potential reasons were given for why this may happen. A lack of clear guidance on engaging disabled people in the business case process seemed to be a key barrier. Without a standard approach, teams are left to decide for themselves when and how to engage, which leads to inconsistency across modes and within organisations. As one stakeholder noted:

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***“[I’m] unsure around the consistency of engagement under business cases as there are large number of schemes across the various teams. Big projects [...] definitely do [engage***

***disabled people]. [But this] varies between teams and officers.”***

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Others pointed to a lack of training and awareness among staff, which means that the value of early and meaningful engagement was not always recognised. Practical constraints were also mentioned - many teams do not have the time, funding, or dedicated staff to support in-depth, inclusive and fully accessible engagement that considers various disabilities.

## **4 What conclusions did we come to?**

Conclusions on key barriers that public sector organisations face when creating business cases for investment in accessibility related schemes:

- **Conclusion 1:** The lack of dedicated policies and funding pots makes it harder to invest in accessibility related improvements. Having to compete with other priorities for the same funding, means more effort and lower possibility of success.
- **Conclusion 2:** Getting public sector funding is a long, structured and complex process, that requires specialist skills. Many authorities don't have enough expertise and dedicated resources to carry out accessibility related business cases.
- **Conclusion 3:** The Government's guidance documents and tools are not fit for purpose to support authorities in creating successful accessibility related business cases. This means staff rely on specialist know-how or their own custom tools to get around this challenge.
- **Conclusion 4:** The overemphasis on the economic case is a key barrier to creating successful business cases for accessibility

related schemes. Poor VfM scores and limited ways to incorporate social benefits are among the biggest challenges.

- **Conclusion 5:** There are gaps in evidence and data on the economic and social benefits of accessibility related improvements. This is heightened by lack of transparency and knowledge sharing within and among authorities of data and best practices.

## 5 What should happen next?

This research found several barriers that authorities face in creating successful accessibility related business cases. Breaking down these barriers does not fall on a single organisation, rather the sector as a whole. Below, we outline a series of recommendations for the sector, clearly indicating whether each applies to public sector transport organisations, or to the Department for Transport (DfT) and wider government.

### What should happen next? Recommendations

**Recommendation 1: Embed accessibility in organisational culture through leadership, team diversity, general disability awareness training, and targeted business case development training**

**Public sector transport organisations to:**

- Consider wider training and upskilling on accessibility and inclusion to the whole organisation staff including leaders.
- Provide targeted training to upskill staff in integrating accessibility into business cases - specifically focusing on how to appraise accessibility impacts and effectively incorporate the lived experiences of disabled people into the development process.

Adopt a 'lead by example' approach where leaders consider inclusivity a core priority and are active in listening, understanding and tackling accessibility barriers.

- Ensure that the number of professionals with accessibility expertise and responsibilities and their remits are appropriate for the size of the organisation.
- Employ professionals with lived experience to embed inclusivity and diversity at the core of the organisation.
- Ensure teams working on business cases have the necessary understanding of accessibility and vice versa.
- Ensure knowledge-sharing across all teams working on accessibility related schemes and business cases.

**DfT/Government to:**

- Develop dedicated training on:
  - appraising accessibility in business cases
  - the best approach to engage and include disabled people's lived experiences into business cases,
  - on the updated Green Book.
- Update training materials, once insights are gathered from adopting the following recommendations.

**Recommendation 2: Strengthen policies, strategies, action plans and create funding mechanisms that prioritise transport accessibility.**

**Public sector transport organisations to:**

- Create stronger policies, strategies and action plans that include a clear focus on improving transport accessibility.
- Ensure Local Transport Plans contain a dedicated accessibility section that sets out the authority's funding priorities and commitments to making transport more inclusive for disabled people.

**DfT/Government to:**

- Establish a binding programme with enforceable mechanisms to compel authorities and operators to invest in accessibility in transport within the upcoming INTS. Such mechanisms could for example be built into local government transport funding settlements, e.g. Local Transport Grants, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements, or Transport for City Regions funding.
- Secure funding for accessibility by adopting one of the following approaches:
  - Ringfencing funding for accessibility-related projects to minimise competition with other priorities, **or**
  - Prioritising accessibility-related schemes for funding, **or**
  - Set conditions that ensure funding is given only to schemes that demonstrate accessibility improvements or inclusivity
- If ringfencing or prioritisation cannot be achieved due to the Government's commitment to consolidating funding pots, accessibility should still be explicitly considered within the consolidated pot.

**Recommendation 3: Increase collection and sharing of data regarding accessible transport**

**Public sector transport organisations to:**

- Openly share evidence and data (in line with data protection regulations) that will support the understanding of the economic and social benefits of accessibility related schemes.
- Openly share successful and unsuccessful business cases (including the engagement undertaken and methods adopted to assess quantitative and qualitative benefits) within organisation and beyond.
- Systematically conduct monitoring and evaluation of accessibility related improvements to increase the availability of data and understanding of the impacts of such improvements.

The Local Government Association or an industry body should consider taking the lead to develop and manage a central resource to facilitate sharing of such information.

**DfT/Government to:**

- Collect and share more national data through the Office for National Statistics about disabled people and their characteristics and needs, their employment, economic potential and their suppressed demand for transport; specifically, update the purple pound based on a government-led research study. Evaluate and share the socio-economic impacts of accessible transport, splitting according to different modal, infrastructure, service or digital improvements.
- Provide a tailored monitoring and evaluation framework for accessibility improvements to encourage systematic monitoring and evaluation activities, including of the socio-economic impacts.

- Set up mechanisms to monitor accessible transport barriers (physical, digital, emotional or contextual) and improvements over time for accountability and continuous progress including customer feedback. Aim to link reduction in barriers with increase in improvements.
- Consider developing more accessible transport related scorecards ensuring the customer experience, the physical infrastructure, the transport services and vehicles, the digital environment and the holistic door-to-door journeys are assessed for their accessibility and inclusivity.
- Set up an open access repository for business cases and approaches to develop them (including the engagement undertaken and methods adopted to assess quantitative and qualitative benefits). Encourage (or enforce) sharing of these.

**Recommendation 4: Strengthen appraisal of accessibility in business cases through consideration of lived experiences and better assessment of accessibility benefits**

**All to:**

- Use the new data collected and shared as per **Recommendation 3** to explicitly link accessibility improvements to wider social and economic outcomes.

**Public sector transport organisations to:**

- Set up engagement practices with disabled people which are systematic, consistent, start early in the business case process and are based on co-production standards and takes into consideration the variety of accessibility needs. Engagement

methods and intensity should be suitable to the scope of the project to avoid fatigue from stakeholders (for instance, deciding between access panel or engagement with a range of disabled people organisations).

**DfT/Government to:**

- Introduce structured methods to capture benefits to quality of life as a result of accessibility improvements.
- Expand appraisal methods to better capture accessibility benefits, considering the entire travel ecosystem including improvements to infrastructure (wayfinding, seating, shelter, and step-free access), services (induction loops in vehicles, travel assistance) and to the digital experience (accessible apps).
- Improve the assessment methodology of the monetised benefits of accessibility based on new data available as per

**Recommendation 3.**

**Recommendation 5: Ensure updated Green Book and other guidance documents support authorities and transport organisations develop strong accessibility related business cases and facilitate their access to funding**

**DfT/Government to:**

- Integrate the methods mentioned in **Recommendation 4** as standard practice into the TAG.
- Strengthen the importance of the strategic narrative and qualitative assessment within the business case.
- Enhance each of the Treasury's Five Cases to ensure specificities of accessibility are catered for.



- Clarify how accessibility outcomes should be weighted alongside other investment objectives and provide guidance on avoiding double counting, recognising that impacts for disabled people are already partially captured in existing appraisal components (e.g., user benefits) and any new technique must include adjustments to prevent overlap.
- Recognise accessibility benefits as material and not merely 'additional' or 'nice to have'.
- Ensure the proportionality approach of the Green Book and TAG is applied by decision-makers and consider simplifying the process leading to funding award for smaller projects.

## 6 Recommendations

Below are recommendations for ncat to drive change and increase access to funding for accessibility related schemes.

ncat recommendation 1 - ncat will use and share these findings to inform future research in conjunction with priorities identified through the voices and experiences of disabled people.

ncat recommendation 2 - ncat will work with partners and stakeholders to make these findings available for them to use to robustly evidence the issues faced by disabled people when accessing transport.

ncat recommendation 3 - ncat will work with policy makers, transport providers and industry to translate these findings to influence future policy and to develop solutions, products and services to reduce the transport accessibility gap. This is particularly important to engage with the Department for Transport on this topic as seen in the 'What should happen next' section of this report, a lot of the changes are expected to be driven by the Government and the guidance, training and data they make available.

ncat recommendation 4 – ncat will consider deepening this research using subject-matter expertise to detail how the recommendations should be implemented breaking down the activities to achieve change.

ncat recommendation 5 – ncat will consider expanding the research to study the specificities of the Welsh, Scottish and North Irish contexts.

ncat recommendation 6 – ncat will consider setting up and managing an up-to-date and varied contact list of organisations and people willing to take part in engagement activities and co-production or co-design panels.

ncat recommendation 7 – ncat will consider enabling, setting up or managing a central resource to facilitate sharing of information between public sector transport organisations.

## **7 About ncat**

The National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat) works as an Evidence Centre developing high quality evidence, best practice, and innovative solutions to inform future disability and transport strategy, policy, and practice by:

- Engaging with disabled people to better understand their experiences and co-design solutions
- Amplifying the voices of disabled people in all decision making
- Collaborating widely with all transport stakeholders
- Demonstrating good practice and impact to influence policy

ncat is delivered by a consortium of organisations that includes Coventry University, Policy Connect, The Research Institute for Disabled Consumers (RiDC), Designability, Connected Places Catapult, and WSP.

ncat is funded by the Motability Foundation, with the aim of providing the evidence base to make transport more accessible.

For more information about ncat and its work please visit [www.ncat.uk](http://www.ncat.uk)

To contact ncat, either about this report or any other query, please email [info@ncat.uk](mailto:info@ncat.uk)



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## 9 Terms used in this report

**Appraisal** – A systematic process used to assess the economic viability, feasibility and impacts of a project.

**Appraisal Summary Table (AST)** – A table that shows the impacts of a project, including social, environmental, and economic effects, typically appended to the business case.

**Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR)** – A metric that compares expected benefits of a project to its total costs. A higher number means better value.

**Business Case** – A document that explains why a project should be funded. It explains the need for the investment, benefits, costs and how the project will be delivered.

**Distributional Impact** – How the effects of a project are spread across different groups of people, like disabled or low-income users.

**HM Treasury** – The UK Government department responsible for managing public money and setting rules for how it should be spent.

**Indicative BCR** – A newer way to include benefits that are hard to measure in monetary terms.

**Inclusive Transport Strategy (ITS)** – A government plan to make transport more accessible for disabled people by 2030.

**Place-based Business Case** – A business case that focuses on the needs and benefits for a specific local area or community.

**Purple Pound** – The spending power of disabled people and their households in the UK, estimated at £274 billion per year.

**Scorecard** - A tool used to measure and track performance across different areas.

**The Five Case Model** - The UK Government's method for checking if a project is a good use of public money. It looks at five dimensions: strategic, economic, financial, commercial, and management.

**The Green Book** – HM Treasury guidance on how to plan and assess public spending.

**The Green Book Review** - A 2025 review of the UK Government's official guidance for public spending decisions.

**Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG)** – UK Government guidance and best practice on how to assess transport projects.

**Value for Money (VfM)** – A way to check if the benefits of a project are worth the cost.