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Dear Mayor Johnson,

At present, the majority of the Tube remains out of bounds to disabled Londoners.

There are currently 66 stations out of 270 that are deemed accessible on the London Underground map. The reality is that out of the 66, there are 34 - over half - (designated with a white wheelchair symbol) that are only accessible from the street to the platform but not onto the train.

This means that even when there is a lift to the platform, some disabled people (particularly wheelchair users) are not able to board or disembark from the train because of the step or gap between platform and train.

However, the use of 16 Manual Boarding Ramps (MBR) on the Underground during the Games has opened up parts of London previously out of bounds to wheelchair users.

TfA has had some very positive feedback from wheelchair users who have used the ramps. Below are some of those Londoners:

- Zara Todd lives near Morden station and works in Brixton. She has lived in Morden all her life (she is 27), but has never been able to use the station independently as it is not accessible from the platform to Tube. With the addition of the MBRs at Morden and Stockwell station, Zara can use the Tube to get to work for the first time. Her 90 minute bus commute has become a 40 minute Tube journey.
- Andy Greene, from Islington, used the Underground last week for the first time in 20 years.
- Kevin Hamilton, from Hammersmith, used the Underground for the first time in 17 years.
- Elizabeth Ferris is a medical student who was visiting London for the Games. Since becoming a wheelchair user, she had never used the Tube but was able to travel independently to the Games.

However, some wheelchair users who could benefit hugely if ramps were rolled out are still locked out of using their local station.

Tina Theis has recently moved to London from Manchester. She assumed her nearest accessible station was Dagenham Heathway as it has a wheelchair symbol by it on the Tube map.

Unfortunately, the first time Tina went to use this station, on her way to an Olympic event at Earls Court, she found out that the station was only accessible as far as the platform. (The misleading white symbol rears its head again!) The step and gap onto the train meant it was impossible for her wheelchair to board the train at this station. Tina was unable to make it to the event and missed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a live event at the Olympic Games. If this station had a manual boarding ramp, many wheelchair and scooter users would be able to use this station to access the quickest way to travel across London.

Transport for All wants to see the use of MBRs continued beyond the Olympics and Paralympics. And more than that – we want to see the use of manual boarding ramps rolled out to every suitable station.

The best solution for stations with a step between platform and train is to raise the level of the platform – as TfL has done on a number of Tube stations. Platform humps mean that disabled people need not be dependent on a member of staff. However in the short term, and for stations with a gap (as opposed to a step) between platform and train, manual ramps are a simple, effective way of opening up the Tube to disabled passengers.

We also believe that Londoners deserve a legacy of accessible transport continuing beyond the Games.

### **A cost-effective option**

TfA has also uncovered that the manual ramps are not expensive. Through a Freedom of Information request, we discovered that ramps cost between £265 and £510 each, depending on the exact specification. The fixings cost £280 each. Installation can cost up to £750 per MBR, depending on the quantity involved. Obviously there is also a cost in relation to staff training, but having used the ramps at several stations and spoken to staff, they are extremely easy to use.

The cost of installing the MBRs certainly seems to be a reasonable adjustment to enable wheelchair users to use stations that are currently off limits. Having paid for installation and staff training, it would be ludicrous for TfL to simply remove the ramps from the stations after the Games.

Games time has also seen a rapid response lift maintenance service in place which makes the Underground network a much more viable option. Lifts at step-free stations are frequently out of order, making the station inaccessible.

In light of all of this information; Transport for All would urge the Mayor to ensure that after the Paralympics, TfL:

- Continue to make use of the manual ramps as a short/medium-term solution to access onto the train
- Roll out the introduction of ramps at every suitable Underground station, and platform humps at every suitable station
- Pledge to keep the 'rapid response' to every broken down lift/escalator that has been in operation during the Games.

Once the last medal has been handed out, we will still need to get to work; travel to school; to see friends and family. Access isn't just for the Games: it's for life. Please don't turn back the clock on access to London.

Yours Sincerely

Transport for All