

Since its commencement in March 2025, how does its accessibility compare to other operators?

The vessel to France appears to be the same as the vessel previously in operation. Whilst elements needed a refresh in terms of interior design, work had already commenced at the time we visited the vessel. Access through the harbour has not changed and appears in need of a refresh to clarify and highlight walking routes down to the vessel, but that rests with others and not DFDS.

To what extent do you feel the current ferry service meets the accessibility needs of residents and visitors?

I think DFDS are trying hard to learn about the island's needs. Following my approach to engage with DFDS and offer a view on accessibility for islanders living with sight loss, I have found DFDS very willing to engage. That included inviting us to undertake an audit of the vessel, during which they had already started to make adaptations to their boarding areas with freshly painted, clear accessible markings for passengers. I have also received follow-up communications committing to working through our recommendations regarding suggested improvements to accessibility. Many (if not all) of the staff involved previously worked for the former operator and therefore already had a good appreciation of operating the St Malo route.

Are there any specific challenges or barriers you have identified or have been made aware of for passengers with disabilities when using the DFDS service?

During the earlier months, there was a well-publicised issue with the lift, but that was explained through the difficulty encountered in sourcing a spare part. I saw a willingness to engage with us and be responsive to our feedback.

What improvements or adjustments would you recommend to make the ferry service more inclusive and accessible for all users?

We offered detailed feedback to DFDS on areas to improve. This included highlighting hazards on board such as steps, using contrasting colours in bathroom areas and along pathways — all to support passengers with sight loss. We also encouraged the need to collaborate with partners in Jersey and in St Malo so that good practice and areas needing improvement could be addressed regarding embarking and disembarking on the ramps. I have one piece of feedback relating to a negative experience during disembarkation. On that occasion, no priority was given to passengers travelling with disabilities (sight loss), and the cars were parked close together, making access difficult. This feedback is not directly about the vessel or the facilities, but rather about the human interventions in controlling parking and disembarkation.

How well does the DFDS service align with Jersey's broader accessibility goals and standards?

Like other business providers in Jersey, many are working towards making the island more accessible for those living with sight loss. DFDS were receptive to engaging from my initial approach. They have also offered the opportunity to comment on other vessels. From the conversations I have had, DFDS are keen to make their service work for the island, which I feel is positive.

Do you feel the current booking process and customer support adequately cater to individuals with accessibility requirements? If not, what changes would you suggest?

None

Are there any examples of good practice from other transport providers that DFDS could adopt to improve accessibility?

We have already shared examples of good practice with DFDS. We are always on the lookout for good examples to inform accessibility developments on the island. This includes recommendations for safer roads, pedestrian areas, and other forms of tactile interventions seen in other jurisdictions.

Thank you for the opportunity.