



# Disabled Travellers' Guide

## Introduction

Welcome to the *AA disabled travellers' guide*. It is packed with information and ideas to help make getting about easier – at home and abroad. This year, for the first time, the guide has been extended to include issues of interest to older drivers and travellers, in addition to those specifically of interest to disabled travellers.



## F O R E W O R D

Mobility is necessary for most of the activities in which we engage. For people with disabilities, travel by car is the easiest way to get about. It enables you to carry mobility aids and any special equipment, as well as shopping, friends and colleagues, and materials for work. Thanks to the Blue Badge Scheme, parking close to your destination is usually possible.

For very many years, the AA has done much to assist travellers with disabilities. The *AA Disabled Travellers' Guide* summarises these services, and offers more general advice on travel, both by car and by other means.

This year the guide has been extended to cover topics of interest to older travellers, and particularly to older drivers. With the ageing population there are more and more elderly people in the United Kingdom, and many of them are



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## F O R E W O R D



fit, active and mobile. A few issues such as driver licensing are managed purely on the basis of calendar age, but fitness to drive and the ease with which you can travel depend on your individual situation. As we age, aches develop and eyesight may deteriorate, and it may be that some of the provisions for travellers with disabilities become more relevant.

The Disability Discrimination Act is ensuring that more and more buildings and services are easy for people with disabilities to use, and these improvements are helping everybody. For older drivers who are beginning to worry about their fitness to drive, the Forum of Mobility Centres can provide assessment of your ability and advice on what you need to do to continue to drive safely. The accessibility of buses and trains is improving as new vehicles come into service. The problems caused by disability and ageing cannot be totally eliminated, but a great deal is being done to mitigate their impact on mobility.

I am sure that this guide, and the organisations such as TRIPSCOPE that it identifies, will help you find the best way to make any particular journey, and keep you mobile with the least possible difficulty.

Dr Christopher G B Mitchell

*Independent Consultant*



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## DRIVING A CAR

# Driving a car – Getting started

### **ASSESSMENT CENTRES**

Being able to drive a motor car is seen by many disabled people as the most important skill that they can acquire or re-acquire. Some young disabled people reaching the age when they can obtain a driving licence, and newly disabled people who previously drove, are often eager to have the independence that having a car and driving brings. Similarly, many older people want to maintain their ability to drive safely as long as possible.

Before going to the expense of obtaining a car, however, disabled people should take advice on what sort of adaptations might be necessary and whether specialist tuition or retraining should be undertaken, possibly in an adapted vehicle. The introduction of new technology and increased awareness of the needs of disabled drivers now make this possible for people with a wider range

of mobility problems. The Department for Transport has a range of factsheets for disabled and older motorists available at [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

There is also a network of regional assessment centres across the country offering advice and guidance on driving for disabled and elderly people. The centres can assist with advice on transferring into a vehicle and on loading a wheelchair into a vehicle.

The Forum of Mobility Centres is the umbrella body that accredits and oversees the regional centres. The Forum ensures that the centres have the necessary staff, expertise and



## D R I V I N G   A   C A R



equipment to meet the highest standards. The centres themselves offer a range of different services, and the Forum can advise which centres are geographically convenient and offer the most appropriate services for an individual.

Email: [mobilitycentre@alwpct.nhs.uk](mailto:mobilitycentre@alwpct.nhs.uk), [www.mobility-centre.co.uk](http://www.mobility-centre.co.uk)

There are set charges for assessments carried out on behalf of the DVLA and Motability, and the centres charge for other services which they provide:

- giving tuition to novice drivers, people returning to driving after a break and those changing to a different method of car control
- advising older drivers who are concerned about their ability to continue to drive safely
- supplying and fitting car adaptations for drivers and passengers with disabilities
- advice on selection and use of wheelchairs and scooters
- providing accommodation for people attending for assessments and for those who are taking a residential driving course.

Assessment centres are located across the country, full contact details for which are given in the 'Useful contacts' section at the back of this guide.

### **DRIVING LICENCES**

Disabled people wishing to apply for a driving licence must use the standard application form that is available from most post offices. In the health section of that form, details of any disability must be clearly stated. This is a legal requirement and if the Driver Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) thinks it necessary, it will be followed by a request for a medical report. The Medical Adviser to the DVLA will consider this report before making a recommendation about the issue of a licence. The DVLA Drivers' Medical Group can be contacted on 0870 600 0301. For more general enquiries on driving licences, the DVLA Customer Service Line is 0870 240 0009, textphone 01792 782787, [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)



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In Northern Ireland further help can be obtained from the DVLNI on 02870 341469, text phone 02870 341380, [www.dvlni.gov.uk](http://www.dvlni.gov.uk)

When you reach the age of 70, a Group 1 (car) driver's licence will require renewal. Age itself is not considered a reason to refuse anyone a driving licence. However, it is accepted that with age, people can develop medical conditions which may affect their ability to drive safely. For that reason Group 1 licences expire on the holder's 70th birthday. Provided the driver meets the required medical standard – the same one applied to all Group 1 applicants – the licence will be renewed for three years after which the process is repeated. No medical report is required (unless a condition is declared that warrants further investigation) and no practical test of skills is required. The DVLA sends out renewal reminders 56 days before a licence is due to expire. Vocational licences (to drive buses, large lorries, etc) are valid until the holder's 45th birthday and must be renewed at 5-yearly intervals until the 65th birthday, when renewal is annual.

A leaflet *Advice to Older Drivers* is available from MAVIS (Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service). See the 'Useful contacts' section for details.

### **EPILEPSY**

Even a minor seizure can affect your ability to drive and can put your own safety, and that of others, at risk. Once their seizures are under control, anyone in the UK with epilepsy can apply, or reapply, for a driving licence, provided that either they have been free from any epileptic attack for a year, or in the previous three years have only had sleep epilepsy. In addition, the DVLA must be satisfied that as a driver, you are not likely to be a source of danger to other people on the road. For further help and information, the British Epilepsy Association has a helpline on 0808 800 5050, fax 0808 800 5555, [www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)





## **OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

People prone to sudden attacks of giddiness and/or fainting, or certain other medical conditions that would impair their ability to drive, could be refused a licence. The DVLA must be satisfied that the condition is under medical control. They must be sure that all legal requirements are satisfied, and that the driver is not a danger to other road users. For more information, refer to the DVLA website [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

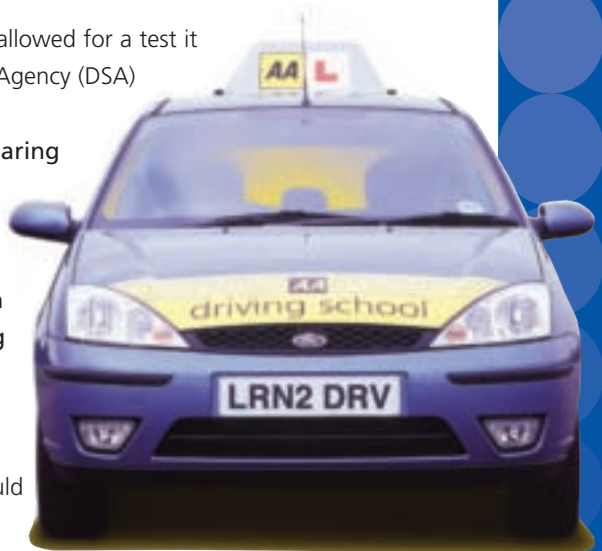
## **LEARNING TO DRIVE**

Driving is a possibility for most disabled people, given the range and diversity of adaptations now available. Conversions are available to allow a driver to drive from a wheelchair, and specialist equipment will aid steering and braking with a minimum of strength or dexterity. Disabled drivers must take the same driving test and demonstrate the same level of competence as any other motorist, although the conditions of the test can be varied to make allowances for particular difficulties.

To make sure that enough time is allowed for a test it would help the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) to know if the candidate:

- is deaf or has severe hearing difficulties
- is in any way restricted in their movements
- has any disability which may affect their driving
- is dyslexic, or has reading difficulties.

If any of the above apply, this should be stated on the application form.





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For the Theory Test there are special arrangements for candidates with special needs. These include:

- being able to listen to the test read in English or one of 20 other languages through a headset
- being able to watch the test being signed in British Sign Language
- for people with dyslexia, applying to have the standard time of 40 minutes doubled
- for people with light-sensitive epilepsy, special arrangements can be made. The actual arrangements will depend on their exact needs, but may involve using a flicker-free screen like those used on laptop computers
- arrangements have also been made to enable candidates who are colour blind to take the test.

In the Practical Test, no matter what the disability, all candidates must take the same driving test. There is, however, more time allowed for the test. This is to allow the examiner to enquire about a candidate's disability and any vehicle adaptations fitted. Non-English speakers or deaf people are allowed to take an interpreter who must not be an instructor. The interpreter must be at least 16 years of age or older. The DSA can be contacted on 0115 901 2500, [www.dsa.gov.uk](http://www.dsa.gov.uk)

**AA DRIVING SCHOOL 0800 607080**  
**[www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)**

AA Driving School is the only national driving school exclusively to use fully qualified instructors. It has more than 1,700 instructors nationwide who use a fleet of predominantly manual vehicles, although automatic vehicles are available in some parts of the UK. These are not adapted for individual needs. Tuition takes place in a dual-controlled Ford Focus. Please ring the number above or visit the AA website for further information.



## **CHOOSING A CAR AND ADAPTIONS**

The choice of which motor vehicle to have is an important one for every motorist and will depend on his or her own personal needs and circumstances. These include: price; manufacturer; availability; style (saloon, hatchback, estate, MPV, 4x4) and transmission type.

For the disabled motorist there are added considerations which will influence the choice of make and model. These may include: the width of the doors to allow room for pulling a wheelchair in, or for swinging legs in; the height of the sill on a boot or a hatch and the position and design of switchgear and controls for the fitting of adaptations.



Members of the Forum of Mobility Centres will be able to advise on such choices – apart from the matter of inconvenience, a wrong choice could be an extremely expensive one. Similarly the choice of the type and manufacturer of adaptations is a crucial one. The range is now wide and varied, and new technology is increasing the options all the time. Accredited assessment centres spend a lot of time evaluating new developments and are the best people to give an independent view of their suitability for individuals.

Ricability produces a variety of free booklets: *Ins and outs of choosing a car*, *Wheelchair accessible vehicles*, *Car controls*, *People lifters* and *Getting a wheelchair into a car*. Telephone 0207 427 2460 or go to [www.ricability.org.uk](http://www.ricability.org.uk)

The Mobility and Inclusion unit of the Department for Transport also has a useful website containing information on applying for a driving licence, driving assessments, vehicle adaptations and the Blue Badge parking scheme. [www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk](http://www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk)



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### **VAT**

Vehicles that are adapted for purchase by disabled wheelchair or stretcher users can qualify for zero-rated VAT. To qualify for the zero rate of VAT a vehicle when newly purchased must:

- be supplied to a disabled person who normally uses a wheelchair or stretcher to be mobile
- be for the personal or domestic use of the disabled wheelchair/stretcher user
- seat no more than 12 people
- be substantially and permanently adapted to suit the particular driving/travel requirements of the disabled wheelchair/stretcher user.

Costs of repairing and maintaining a vehicle that complies with the new requirements are also zero-rated, provided the work relates to a vehicle, or an adaptation to a vehicle, that was eligible for zero-rating when it was bought or supplied and the owner can produce a declaration of eligibility. Full details of the dispensation can be found in Customs and Excise notice 701/59 March 2002. See [www.hmce.gov.uk](http://www.hmce.gov.uk) or call the National Advice Service on 0845 010 9000.

### **VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY**

Recipients of the Higher Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement can apply for exemption from vehicle excise duty (road or motor tax). The vehicle must be registered in their name or that of a nominee, and this will be the name on the tax exemption certificate (DLA404 or WP442). It can be the vehicle that either they drive themselves or have driven for them. The vehicle must be used solely by, or for the purposes of, the disabled person named. If the vehicle is sold, or the entitlement ends, the exempt licence must be returned to the DVLA.

Leaflet V188 (*Exemption from vehicle excise duty for disabled people*), deals with the subject in detail and can be obtained from some post offices, the



DVLA, the DVLNI in Northern Ireland, or from MAVIS (Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service) on 01344 661 000, email: [mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

## **MOTOR INSURANCE**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires that insurance companies do not treat disabled people less favourably because of their disability. Premium loading – that is adding costs to allow for particular circumstances – is only allowed where the insurer can prove that there is actuarial or statistical data or other relevant information to show that a disabled person does carry an additional risk. Where there appears to have been discrimination against a disabled motorist in relation to the issue of insurance, or indeed on any other matter, advice may be sought from the Disability Rights Commission on 08457 622633 or via [www.drc.gov.uk](http://www.drc.gov.uk)

A leaflet, *Motor Insurance for the Disabled Driver*, is available from MAVIS.

Obtaining a quote from a number of different insurers, or using a broker who will look at a number of different options, should ensure that insurance is obtained at a reasonable cost.

## **AA INSURANCE 0800 917 4883**

**[www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)**

AA Insurance Services uses a panel of leading UK insurance companies through which it can find the lowest quote for you in a minute. Please ring the number above or visit the AA website.

*Automobile Association Insurance Services Limited is an independent intermediary and a member of the General Insurance Standards Council. This will be superseded by the Financial Services Authority from 14 January 2005.*



## D R I V I N G   A   C A R

### **SEATBELTS**

Everyone in a moving motor vehicle is required by law to wear a seatbelt when they are fitted. This applies to disabled people, with some exceptions. Merely feeling uncomfortable when wearing a seatbelt is not accepted as justification for exemption. If it is considered that a person should not wear a seatbelt for medical reasons, a doctor should be consulted. If the medical opinion is that an exemption should be made, a doctor or consultant can issue a certificate, copies of which are supplied by the Department of Health.

A leaflet, *Seatbelts and the Law*, is available from MAVIS.

### **MOTABILITY**

The Motability schemes are the means by which the majority of disabled people acquire a motor vehicle in this country. There are three ways of obtaining a vehicle through Motability (which can be used to obtain wheelchairs and pavement scooters as well). Motability can be contacted for an information pack on 0845 456 4566, [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)

Motability is open to people in receipt of the DLA Higher Mobility Component and to people in receipt of the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement. They must have the allowance guaranteed for at least the period of the agreement, plus eight weeks processing time. The scheme is only available through Motability accredited dealers. The three schemes are:

#### **CONTRACT HIRE**

Contract hire, or leasing, is the most popular of the Motability schemes. A non-refundable advance payment or deposit is required. The amount depends on the make and model of the vehicle, and varies from nothing to possibly several thousand pounds. The period of the lease is three years, during which time the DLA Mobility Component allowance is used to pay the lease.

## DRIVING A CAR



All servicing is free and replacement tyres are included, as is membership of a breakdown assistance scheme. Vehicle insurance is also included in the scheme. Business use is not automatically allowed, although the insurers will allow it subject to certain conditions. Although servicing is free, it is the responsibility of the person leasing the vehicle to ensure that servicing and any damage repairs are carried out. An average mileage allowance of 15,000 miles per year over the term of the lease is made, and any excess is charged at an agreed rate per mile at the end of the term. The dealer can also require payment for the repair of any damage deemed to be more than fair wear and tear.

### **NEW CAR HIRE PURCHASE**

Hire purchase of a new car requires surrender of all or part of the DLA Mobility Component for the term of the agreement, which will be between two and five years. Breakdown assistance is not part of this option.

### **USED CAR HIRE PURCHASE**

Used car purchase has the same conditions as new car hire purchase. A used car must be purchased from an accredited Motability dealership, be less than five years old and have done less than 60,000 miles.

### **NEW AND USED CAR PURCHASE**

A deposit is required for both schemes, which is calculated as the difference between the actual cost of the vehicle and the amount of money accruing from the surrender of the DLA for the term of the agreement. Any additional costs, such as adaptations, will have to be borne by the purchaser, as will the cost of servicing, maintenance and appropriate insurance and breakdown cover.





## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

# AA products and services

### **AA BREAKDOWN COVER 0800 224 357**

With AA breakdown cover you can choose the type and level of cover that suits you. AA Personal Membership covers the member and not the car, which means you are automatically covered in any car as a driver or passenger. You may prefer to opt for our Vehicle Based Membership, which covers the car regardless of who drives it. We also offer preferential rates for Blue Badge holders, so if you want more for your money there's never been a better time to join. Simply call us now on the number above or visit us online at [www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)  
*Terms and conditions apply.*

If you are already a member and wish to renew your membership, or if you have any other queries about your AA membership or your level of cover, please call us on 0870 5444 444.

### **SMS TEXT MESSAGING FOR BREAKDOWN CALLS 07900 444 999**

The AA has an SMS text messaging service for members who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech impediment which means they are unable to communicate via the telephone. They can contact us if their car breaks down by sending a text message from their mobile phone. We will text back to get the information we need to locate the vehicle and deploy a patrol or garage agent to them as quickly as possible.

*Note: All mobile phones with the ability to send a text message can be used. This service is reliant on the network service provider delivering the message and the AA cannot be held responsible for delays in receiving messages. Neither can the AA accept any responsibility for any costs incurred when sending a message to us.*



## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



### **AA DISABILITY HELPLINE 0800 262 050**

Breaking down at the roadside or at home can sometimes present particular problems for disabled members. Knowing a little more about a member's circumstances may enable us to respond in a more practical and helpful way. That is why we encourage members to let us know about their requirements by ringing the number above, which is equipped to deal with calls from deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired members who use a textphone. We will place a 'flag' on the membership record to remind us when you call to ask what your specific requirements are so that, if you break down, we will be able to help you in the most appropriate way. The disability helpline can also deal with any other travel enquiries you may have and can take requests for information in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, audio cassette or CD-rom.

### **www.theAA.com**

The Automobile Association's website acts as a focal point for our wide range of products, services and advice. The AA believes access by everyone regardless of disability is essential and we are continually improving our site to meet this goal.

The site contains:

#### **ROUTES AND TRAFFIC**

Our Route Planner functionality is highly popular with visitors both from home and abroad and now provides street level details for routes within the UK, not forgetting our European route information. The AA is well-known in Great Britain for its traffic information which is updated online every 10 minutes.

#### **PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

In addition to being the largest breakdown organisation in the UK, with over 100 products and services, the AA has lots more to offer. From motoring-related products like car insurance, car history checks, driving lessons and tyres, to financial services such as competitive loans and savings accounts.



## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The website also caters for leisure activities and contains information on accommodation and eating out. For those interested in trips abroad we offer European Breakdown Cover for those taking their cars. Travel Insurance and our online Bookshop also provide a variety of overseas and UK guides and maps to suit your needs.

### ADVICE AND INFORMATION

With the AA's unrivalled passion for assisting motorists, we recently launched the online Car Buyer's Guide, offering comprehensive AA car test reports, price guides and valuations.

We also offer more general advice from whether you'll need spare bulbs and a warning triangle if driving in Spain, to the top ten causes of breakdowns, car security and legal advice.

### NEWS

For the latest on major motoring stories and top driving issues, be sure to visit our News section, which also includes links to the AA's Motoring Trust. The AA Trust champions causes such as child safety on behalf of the motorist, and you can find recent reports and articles within the Trust's website.

[www.AAtrust.com](http://www.AAtrust.com)

In addition the AA Newsroom, available for everyone, is a central source of news releases.





# On the road

## **TOILETS**

For many disabled people the most worrying feature of a long journey by road is knowing where there are suitable toilet and rest facilities. With the implementation of the access provisions of the DDA from October 2004, all roadside services such as restaurants, bars and service stations will generally have had to make their facilities accessible, with ramped access where necessary and accessible toilets where toilets are provided.

In addition, a national scheme for accessible public toilets has existed for some time. Administered by the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), the National Key Scheme (NKS) provides disabled people with a standard key that allows them to use adapted (wheelchair accessible) toilets throughout the UK. Keys can be obtained from RADAR by calling 020 7250 3222, [www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)

In continental Europe similar schemes are being developed, the best known being the 'Locus' scheme administered by CBF-Darmstadt in Germany – for further details see the 'Travelling abroad' section.

## **MOTORWAY SERVICES**

All motorway services are required to provide full access to all their facilities, including toilets, rest rooms, restaurants and shops.

Occasionally, at some locations, the facilities are split between the two sides of the motorway, with no access between them. This is a decreasing feature, but where there is doubt, check with the company that provides the services at the particular location.



## **SERVICECALL**

Many general service stations, as well as an increasing number of shops and banks, are using the ServiceCall system. This comprises a radio transmitter that alerts staff when assistance is required by means of a receiver in the premises. Details can be obtained from Autochair Ltd on 0800 214045, [www.autochair.co.uk](http://www.autochair.co.uk)

## **ON THE MOTORWAY**

A breakdown or other emergency while driving on a motorway can be a frightening experience, particularly for a lone disabled person. The first priority is to use the vehicle's hazard warning lights, and get the vehicle on to the hard shoulder. Wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people who have difficulty in walking are strongly advised not to leave their vehicle, because of the 'pull-effect' of passing traffic.

The best way to summon assistance is with a mobile phone. They are now relatively inexpensive, and can be obtained at special rates, especially if an emergency-only rental plan is chosen. Special rates may be obtained from disabled drivers' organisations such as the DDA, DDMC and DMF. If you do not possess a mobile phone, 'HELP' pennants and signs are available at reasonable cost from the disabled drivers' organisations.



*Note:* For a disabled motorist travelling alone and unable to make contact via a mobile phone, letting someone know at the destination the estimated time of arrival and the exact route being used can enable the emergency services to locate the motorist more easily if that is necessary.

All motorway breakdowns are given top priority to ensure the driver's exposure to risk is kept to a minimum.

## **PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, all emergency motorway phones have an inductive coupler for use with the T-switch on hearing aids, as do most recent models of mobile phones. For profoundly deaf people or people without access to such phones or hearing aids, using a standard motorway phone, repeating twice the name, car registration number, disability and the nature of the emergency will enable the operator to deal with the call.

An alternative is to use a mobile phone with a text messaging facility to access the AA's SMS breakdown messaging service. AA members can text to 07900 444 999 advising they have broken down and the AA will text back to get all the information it needs to get a patrol to them as quickly as possible.

## **PARKING**

Disabled motorists in the UK have the Blue Badge to assist with parking which is accepted in all member states of the EU, and some other European countries. (Orange badges are no longer valid.)

The local authority where the disabled motorist is resident is responsible for issuing the Blue Badge and can supply a detailed booklet about qualification, together with the application form. Particular arrangements apply in parts of Central London – see page 21. Qualification for a Blue Badge and the assessment of individuals are likely to change in 2006. A leaflet on the Blue Badge Scheme is available from MAVIS.



## O N T H E R O A D

Disabled drivers going to continental Europe should take note that the local regulations covering the use of the badge vary quite widely in the different member states. The overriding principle on the use of such badges anywhere is that it is a concession to disabled motorists, to assist them with their mobility problems; it is not a right. Their use does not permit a disabled driver to park in such a way that he or she causes danger to other road users, or obstructs the free passage of the highway. (See the 'Travelling abroad' section for more information.)

### **RIVER CROSSINGS: TOLL BRIDGES, TUNNELS AND FERRIES**

At a number of river crossings around the UK motorists are charged for use of the tunnel, bridge or ferry provided. As these are all operated by private companies or individual local authorities, the concessions available to disabled users vary considerably. A list of the main toll crossings, with contacts for information, is in the 'Useful contacts' section. A leaflet on toll concessions for disabled people is also available from MAVIS.

### **UK FERRY SERVICES**

Disabled motorists using domestic ferry services between the British mainland, Northern Ireland and islands around the UK coast, should refer to the information on travelling by ferry in the 'Travelling abroad' section, since the advice and information is similarly applicable to travel by UK ferry.

### **TOURIST ATTRACTIONS – PLACES TO VISIT**

In line with all other public places, places of interest such as stately homes, museums and theme parks are now required to make their attractions accessible. The National Trust and English Heritage, along with the National Trust for Scotland, Historic Scotland and Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments), have produced detailed guides setting out where access is (and is not) possible for disabled visitors. Contact details for these organisations are given in the 'Useful contacts' section.



# In London

## **PARKING**

The Blue Badge parking concession can be used in London, as in other parts of the UK. However, four local authorities in central London have separate regulations. These are the City of London, the City of Westminster, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the southern part of Camden. Here, disabled residents are issued with special parking permits, and disabled visitors to the area are restricted as to where and when they can park. The Association of London Government Transport has a map of the areas concerned, with designated disabled parking bays clearly marked, including details of all the regulations, times and special restrictions laid out in a form. Tel 0207 934 9999, [www.alg.gov.uk](http://www.alg.gov.uk)

## **RED ROUTES**

Red routes are priority routes into central London where no parking or stopping is allowed, except at designated times. Vehicles can stop for the length of time it takes to pick up or drop off a disabled person, and there are marked spaces for disabled parking. Enforcement and penalties for parking infringements are stricter on red routes than on normal routes. (More red routes to improve traffic flow are likely to follow in other parts of the country, notably the West Midlands.)

## **CONGESTION CHARGING**

A congestion charge, currently £5, must be paid by vehicles that enter central London between 7am and 6.30pm on weekdays (excluding public holidays). Blue Badge holders can register for a 100% discount on congestion charging. For initial registration a £10 one-off payment is required. No charge is made for renewals within 90 days of the previous discount expiry date. For details and an application form, see [www.cclondon.com](http://www.cclondon.com), telephone 0845 900 1234, textphone 0207 6499123 or fax 0207 649 9121.



## OTHER REGIONS

# Other regions – charges for parking and road use

### **M6 TOLL ROAD**

Disabled people, or organisations that transport disabled people, can apply for a mobility exemption pass for use on the M6 toll road. This allows free passage of the nominated vehicle only. Applications must be made to Midland Expressway, telephone 0870 850 6262 or download an application form on [www.m6toll.co.uk](http://www.m6toll.co.uk)

### **CONGESTION CHARGING IN EDINBURGH**

The proposed scheme for Edinburgh is due to be introduced in 2006. It will provide exemptions for Blue Badge holders and vehicles used for the transport of disabled people. At the time of going to press, no further details were available. Refer to <http://iti.tiedinburgh.co.uk> for updated information.





# Accommodation

Access to buildings was implemented under part 4 of the DDA in October 2004. As a result, restaurants and hotels should now be more accessible to disabled people.

Holiday Care is a charity that specialises in information about access to serviced accommodation (see 'Useful contacts' section). It can assist with details of hotels, bed-and-breakfast accommodation and guesthouses that can accommodate disabled people. RADAR also produces a comprehensive guide for disabled people and their carers who want to stay in guest accommodation in Britain and Ireland.

## **AA HOTEL BOOKING SERVICE**

**[www.theAA.com/hotels](http://www.theAA.com/hotels)**

Booking a place to stay can be a time-consuming process. You can search quickly and easily online for a place that best suits your needs.

Whatever your preference we have the place for you. From a cosy farm cottage to a smart city centre hotel – we have them all. Simply visit [www.theAA.com/hotels](http://www.theAA.com/hotels) to search from around 8,000 quality rated hotels and B&Bs in Great Britain and Ireland.

## **AA ACCESSIBLE HOTEL OF THE YEAR**

This award, first made in 2001, recognised hotels, guest accommodation and B&Bs which, ahead of implementation of the DDA access regulations in October 2004, made considerable efforts to provide equal access and facilities for disabled people.

Facilities for disabled guests, such as suitable parking close to the entrance, step-free entrances, adequate manoeuvring space for wheelchairs in a bedroom





## A C C O M M O D A T I O N

or bathroom, and availability of visual or vibrating fire alarms in bedrooms were examined. AA inspectors working undercover checked the list of finalists, and selected the top hotels and guest accommodation, where they felt an independent disabled traveller would have an enjoyable experience.

Note: The facilities of AA inspected hotels are classified using a system of stars, ranking from one to five stars, supplemented with a quality percentage rating which reflects the inspectors' views of overall quality of service. Diamond ratings provide a similar classification for guest accommodation and B&Bs. The coveted rosettes are awarded by AA inspectors as an indication of the quality of food served by restaurants and hotels, and work on a scale from one to five rosettes.



### AA ACCESSIBLE HOTELS OF THE YEAR 2001-2004

#### 2004

De Vere Daresbury Park

★★★★★

75%

Chester Road

Daresbury

Warrington WA4 4BB

tel: 01925 267331

fax: 01925 265615

e-mail: [reservations.daresbury@devere-hotels.com](mailto:reservations.daresbury@devere-hotels.com)

## A C C O M M O D A T I O N

**2003**

Castle House



Castle Street

Hereford HR1 2NW

tel: 01432 356321

fax: 01432 365909

e-mail: info@castlehse.co.uk

**2002**

Old Government House Hotel



72%



Ann's Place

St Peter Port

Guernsey GY1 4AZ

tel: 01481 724921

fax: 01481 724429

e-mail: ogh@guernsey.net

**2001**

De Vere White's Hotel



72%



De Havilland Way

Horwich

Greater Manchester BL6 6SF

tel: 01204 667788

fax: 01204 673721

e-mail: whites@devere-hotels.com

**HIGHLY COMMENDED****2001-2004****2004**

Huntingdon Marriott Hotel



71%

Kingfisher Way

Hinchingsbrooke Business Park

Huntingdon

Cambridgeshire PE29 6FL

tel: 01480 446000

fax: 01480 451111

e-mail:

reservations.huntingdon@whitbread.com

**Meudon Hotel**

78%

Mawnan Smith

Cornwall TR11 5HT

tel: 01326 250541

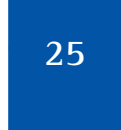
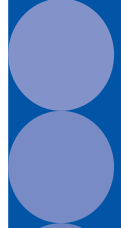
fax: 01326 250543

e-mail: wecare@meudon.co.uk

**2003**

Huntingdon Marriott Hotel

See details above





## A C C O M M O D A T I O N

### Novotel London Tower Bridge

★★★

72%

10 Pepys Street

London EC3N 2NR

tel: 0207 2656000

fax: 0207 2656060

e-mail: H3107@accor-hotels.com

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### 2002

#### The Bentley Hotel & Leisure Club

★★★

73%

Newark Road

South Hykeham

Lincoln LN6 9NH

tel: 01522 878000

fax: 01522 878001

e-mail: info@thebentleyhotel.uk.com

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#### Best Western Ufford Park Hotel

Golf & Leisure

★★★★★

72%

Yarmouth Road

Ufford

Woodbridge

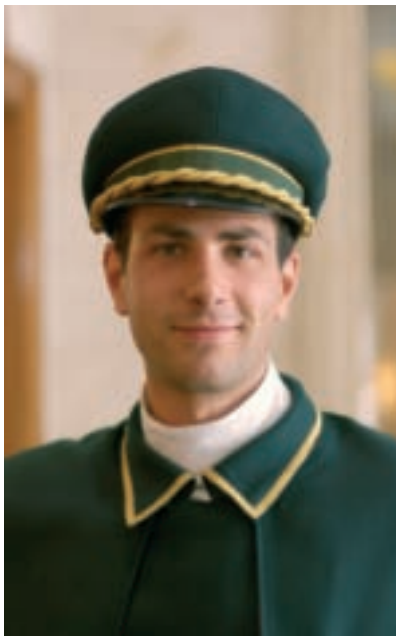
Suffolk IP12 1QW

tel: 01394 383555

fax: 01394 383582

e-mail: mail@uffordpark.co.uk

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### 2001

#### Huntingdon Marriott Hotel

See details on p25

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#### Double-Gate Farm

◆◆◆◆

Godney

Wells

Somerset BA5 1RX

tel: 01458 832217

fax: 01458 835612

e-mail: doublegatefarm@aol.com

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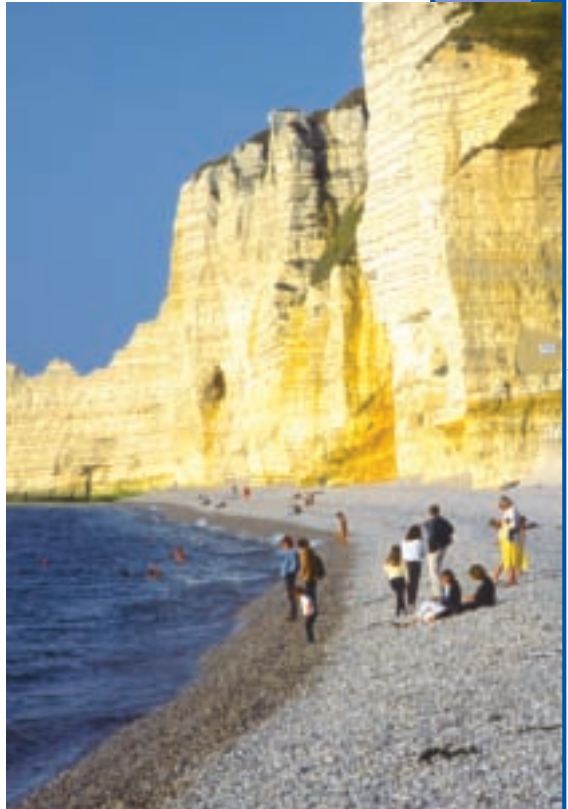


# Travelling abroad

## **TAKING YOUR CAR TO EUROPE**

For disabled people, taking a car abroad can have several advantages over flying or other forms of public transport. It makes carrying essential equipment so much easier, as well as dealing with the problem of ordinary luggage. The route taken can be planned in advance and the stops along the way taken to suit the travellers' requirements; travelling can also be undertaken at a pace that they find comfortable.

The main disadvantage is the strange driving conditions, including in most cases driving on 'the wrong side' of the road. There is also the worry of breaking down and not being able to communicate with local repairers. These worries can be relieved to a certain extent by use of the AA's services that are outlined below.



Careful checks should be made before travelling, including having the vehicle properly serviced and making sure that appropriate insurance cover is in place. Motability leaseholders should inform the Motability insurer and Motability itself of their intention to take the vehicle abroad to ensure that they are adequately insured.



## T R A V E L L I N G   A B R O A D

### **AA EUROPEAN BREAKDOWN COVER 0800 444 500** **[www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)**

AA European Breakdown Cover offers vehicle breakdown assistance across most of Europe with 24-hour access to English speaking telephone assistance. If you break down, incident managers can arrange help to enable you to continue your journey or return home. Depending on the type of cover you choose benefits can include roadside assistance, vehicle recovery to the UK, car hire, alternative travel, emergency accommodation and legal cover. Call us for further information or visit the AA website.

### **AA TRAVEL INSURANCE 0800 085 7247** **[www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)**

We also provide competitive travel insurance, which is flexible to meet your holiday needs. Ask about our Annual multi-trip policies, which provide a number of excellent benefits.

### **AA PUBLISHING 01206 255800** **[www.theAA.com/bookshop](http://www.theAA.com/bookshop)**

As Britain's largest travel publisher, the AA offers a huge range of world travel guides from handy city packs to more in-depth guides as well as super-clear maps and atlases covering the UK and Europe. You can buy these by contacting the AA Travel Bookshop on the order line above or via the AA website.

### **AA EUROPEAN ROUTES** **[www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com)**

European routes are available to map out a detailed route to your destination in continental Europe. Please visit the AA website for more information.

# T R A V E L L I N G   A B R O A D



## **ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS AND EQUIPMENT**

When travelling abroad there are certain items and documents that drivers should have with them; in certain countries these are mandatory. The AA Five Star Europe package includes a comprehensive booklet giving full details.

Most insurance policies issued now do not require a 'green card' to upgrade them for use in Europe, except when driving in non-EU countries. It is advisable for drivers to contact their insurance company to confirm the position with their own policy. In instances where a bail bond is required, insurance providers will give advice on how to arrange this. The vehicle's registration document should also be taken with the vehicle. Where this is not available, or the driver or a passenger does not own the vehicle, including vehicles on a Motability lease, they should be in possession of a vehicle hire certificate (VE103B), obtainable from the DVLA.

A GB nationality sticker should be prominently displayed on the rear of any vehicle driven abroad (some modern number plates include the GB logo), and most countries require drivers to carry a first aid kit, an emergency warning triangle, spare headlight bulbs and a fire extinguisher. Some countries, notably France, require that a headlamp converter be fitted to right-hand drive vehicles, and that the vehicle is fitted with two driving/wing mirrors. Other countries require you to carry reflective jackets in case of breakdown. Refer to the AA website for comprehensive information on European driving and relevant AA products and services.

## **TRAVELLING BY FERRY**

Ferry travel is becoming much more convenient for disabled people. With easy access to seating, and sometimes cabins, accessible toilets and generally more room, travelling by ferry is becoming an increasingly comfortable way of travelling abroad.



## T R A V E L L I N G   A B R O A D

### **UK PORTS**

Despite the improvements that have already been made, it is still advisable before travelling to contact the port which a disabled driver or passenger intends to use. If travelling to the port by car, but using the ferry as a 'walk on' passenger, there may be special arrangements that can be made for parking.

Each port has a website that contains information on access and on the assistance that can be given at the port being used. It will certainly need information in advance about the disabled traveller's needs if it is to give the necessary assistance.

The ferry company will provide the telephone number of their port office or terminal, to enable the traveller to speak directly to the terminal operator.

Where more than one operator uses a single port, the operator with whom the disabled person is travelling should be contacted.

### **EUROPEAN FERRY SERVICES**

As well as the port authorities, drivers and/or passengers with special requirements should advise the ferry company of their needs when booking. In addition to assistance when boarding and alighting from the vessel, it may be necessary to reserve a cabin with accessible facilities, particularly on a longer crossing. The ferry company will normally arrange for a disabled driver or passenger to park their car close to the lift from the car deck of the ferry.

While improved access is being designed into both new ships and older vessels when they are being refurbished, there are still occasions when special help or arrangements will be necessary. On most ferries there are lifts between the car decks and the main passenger accommodation. On other types of craft (such as catamarans) access to the passenger accommodation is usually more complicated.



## T R A V E L L I N G   A B R O A D

**EUROTUNNEL**

The Shuttle has been designed with the specific needs of disabled passengers in mind. There is no need to get out of the car when travelling and all the amenities in the passenger terminal buildings are on the ground floor, making wheelchair access easier. Eurotunnel requests prior notice of a disabled person travelling so that certain safety arrangements can be made (for example, in the event of emergency evacuation being necessary). They also request that disabled travellers arrive at least 45 minutes before departure, as special boarding arrangements exist for disabled customers. Telephone 08705 353535, [www.eurotunnel.com](http://www.eurotunnel.com)

**EUROPEAN MOTORAIL**

Motorail is a train that carries drivers, passengers and their cars. The cars are driven on to the train (usually by Motorail staff) and the driver and passengers travel in normal passenger coaches, usually with sleeping cars or couchettes available – a good way of travelling long distances without having to drive, but still having one's own car at the destination.



## T R A V E L L I N G   A B R O A D

French Motorail is the best known, with trains which travel south from Calais to numerous destinations along the coast of southern France. In addition, Belgian railways operate services to destinations in Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Spanish railways run Motorail services across most long-distance routes within Spain. Other train operators offer similar services, and it is now possible to cover most of continental Europe by this method. However, the rolling stock used for these journeys is not always very accessible. It is essential to contact the train operators themselves at the start of planning such a journey, to ascertain whether they can accommodate a disabled traveller's particular needs.

Some specialist travel agents in the UK can book foreign rail travel and advise on all aspects of this way of getting around. Railchoice is one such company, telephone 0870 1657300, [www.railchoice.co.uk](http://www.railchoice.co.uk)

### **ACCESSIBLE TOILETS**

CBF-Darmstadt co-ordinates a version of the RADAR key scheme called Locus, covering more than 4,500 toilets in major centres in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. A key and directory are available by telephone on 00 49 6151 81220, [www.cbf-darmstadt.de](http://www.cbf-darmstadt.de)

### **USING THE BLUE BADGE ABROAD**

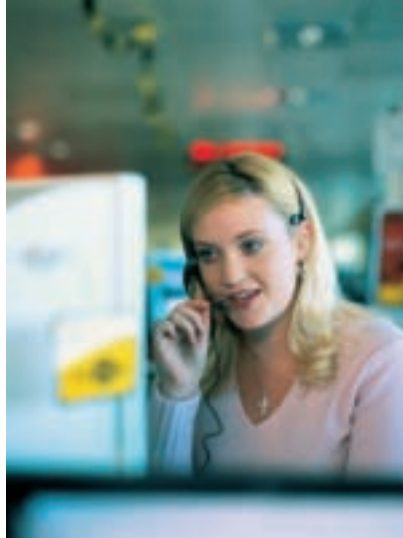


The Blue Badge is valid in all the member states of the European Union, and some other European countries. Although this enables disabled motorists to have parking concessions in the rest of the European Community, as they do in the UK, drivers should be aware that the rules governing these concessions vary from one member country to another. The Mobility and Inclusion Unit of the Department for Transport produces a 'European Parking Card for People with Disabilities'. This states, in the language of the country you are visiting, that you are entitled to park in areas where there are concessions for disabled people. Either telephone 0207 9442914 to request a copy or download from [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

## Travelling without your car

While the car is the preferred transport option for many disabled people, there are occasions when using a car is either not practical or not desirable. The disabled traveller then has to rely on public transport – buses, coaches, trains and aircraft.

The DDA is setting new standards for public transport with the aim of making it all fully accessible, but the timetable set out for full implementation means that it will be a number of years before full accessibility is achieved. Until that time, disabled people planning to travel by public transport need to check carefully the availability and suitability of transport provided. TRIPSCOPE can help with information for disabled people about all the aspects of travel by public transport briefly outlined below. Telephone 08457 585641, [www.tripscope.org.uk](http://www.tripscope.org.uk)



### **GOING BY BUS**

A lot of progress has recently been made in the provision of local bus routes and vehicles with increased access for disabled people. Local authorities are now taking steps to ensure that public transport in their areas comply with the best access standards and can often advise on which routes have accessible services. Many local authorities offer concessionary schemes on local buses for older residents.





## W I T H O U T   Y O U R   C A R

For timetable information, Traveline is a nationwide service which can give information on bus times throughout the country, telephone 0870 608 2608, textphone 0870 241 2216, [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

### **BUS STATIONS**

As with other buildings and public places, bus stations are having to conform to new regulations with regard to access, but it is still necessary for the disabled traveller to check with the appropriate operators that facilities are suitable and that help will be available when required. Changeover times on long-distance coach travel can be quite long and the availability of an accessible toilet and restaurant or cafeteria is very important. Some major bus stations will be able to arrange assistance and escorts, for instance for visually impaired people who need help to find facilities and to locate their onward transport.

### **COACHES**

The DDA regulations require new coaches to have improved access for ambulant people and those with sensory impairments and to have wheelchair access from 2005, but full accessibility will only be required for all coaches from 2020. The vehicles currently used on scheduled coach services have high, steep steps which even ambulant disabled people may find difficult to negotiate. However, wheelchair accessible coaches are beginning to enter service, and it is likely that route-by-route, services will become accessible.

Disabled people with sufficient mobility can use scheduled coach services, but the staff are not allowed to lift or give any other physical assistance with boarding. In addition manual wheelchairs can be carried, but only if folded and if there is sufficient room. However, the conditions of carriage do not allow for the carriage of powered vehicles of any kind, including powered wheelchairs.

### **GOING BY TRAIN**

Rail travel is becoming an increasingly comfortable and accessible means of travel for disabled people. Travel in guards' vans is virtually a thing of the past as

## WITHOUT YOUR CAR

rolling stock is adapted to accommodate wheelchair users. Since 1999 all new rail passenger vehicles have had to be accessible.

Train Operating Companies (TOCs) are required by the terms of their franchises and by a code of practice to provide an accessible service with appropriate assistance. While manual and powered wheelchairs – up to a maximum width of 67cm – can be accommodated on trains, large powered wheelchairs, buggies and scooters are excluded from virtually all passenger rail services because of their size.

Many train companies now produce their own guides for disabled passengers and we recommend they be contacted prior to travel (ideally at least 24 hours beforehand), to establish the facilities available.

### THE RAILCARD

The expense of rail travel can be somewhat offset for disabled people by the discounts available to holders of a Disabled Persons Railcard. Issued by the rail companies, it is available to people with a range of disabilities. Its conditions of issue can be found in the booklet *Rail travel for disabled passengers*, available from railway stations or at [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk) The booklet and the web page include an application form for the card and information for disabled people on all aspects of rail travel.

Similarly, the Senior Railcard gives discounts of approximately one third on most rail journeys for people aged 60 and over. A leaflet *Senior Railcard*, available at stations, explains the conditions and benefits.

### TRAIN STATIONS

Railway stations now have to comply with accessibility standards, and access is being brought up to the necessary standard whenever refurbishment is carried out, including the provision of wheelchair accessible toilets. Ramped underpasses and lifts are being installed at many stations to replace footbridges or 'barrow crossings' across the lines. At most stations portable ramps are





## WITHOUT YOUR CAR

provided for wheelchair users, and some trains carry lightweight portable ramps for use at unstaffed stations.

Disabled travellers should be aware that many smaller stations are either unstaffed or only staffed at peak times. Information about these, and alternative, more accessible stations that can be used, can be obtained when booking assistance from the disabled passengers' assistance telephone line provided by each rail company.

### **ON THE TRAIN**

The assistance line operator puts in place a special booking arrangement to ensure that a disabled passenger gets assistance throughout the train journey. This starts from the arrival at the station with assistance with luggage, a wheelchair if required and, for those who require it, boarding assistance with a ramp. Accessible toilets are being provided on an increasing number of long-distance trains as well as on many regional rail services.

### **VEHICLE HIRE**

There are many occasions when a disabled driver may need to hire a vehicle, for example when a car is off the road following a breakdown or an accident, or following a theft when there is no car at all. For a driver who uses an unadapted vehicle this should not prove to be difficult, although finding a suitable car with automatic transmission at reasonable cost might be. Those who hire out cars with adaptations are much more difficult to find, although a number of the major hire companies may be able to make arrangements for such provision for both UK and overseas use. There are also specialist hirers in some parts of the country.

A possible alternative is a temporary hand control system which can be fitted fairly easily and can be transferred from one vehicle to another. This is not suitable for all disabled drivers. The Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service (MAVIS) can give more detailed advice on adaptations. Email: [mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

## WITHOUT YOUR CAR



When travelling abroad, some countries – particularly North America – have specialist hire companies. Similarly, wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility and medical aids can be hired. Contact Tripscope for more information. Telephone 0845 7585641, [www.tripscope.org.uk](http://www.tripscope.org.uk)

If a group of disabled people is going abroad, it may be financially advantageous and convenient to hire a purpose-built accessible minibus, which might have either a ramp or a hydraulic lift to help with boarding. A number of community transport organisations will allow member groups to take such vehicles abroad, as will some commercial companies that have them available for hire. However, there are special rules relating to the use of minibuses abroad, such as the use of tachometers to regulate driving periods and licensing requirements for drivers. TRIPSCOPE can help with further details.

Many car companies will not automatically hire to people over 70. Some may go over this limit providing you have a clean licence, and perhaps a doctor's letter of good health. Other companies have a limit of 75, but there are some with no age limit at all. Refer to the 'Useful contacts' section for more information.

### **GOING BY AIR**

Airlines make special provision for their disabled passengers, and most have departments dedicated to answering enquiries and making the arrangements for people who have special requirements. Some budget airlines may make a charge for providing assistance.

Wheelchairs, and in some cases pavement scooters, are carried as 'non chargeable' excess baggage and, as most such equipment is now powered by the more transportable dry-cell batteries, there are fewer restrictions or arrangements needed to prepare them for carriage. Some older wheelchairs still have acid batteries but these are now very unusual. They require special packing or may be banned altogether. As with all specific requirements, the travel agent or airline should be given prior notice of what is needed.



## W I T H O U T   Y O U R   C A R

Such requirements may include:

- special diets
- the use of medical oxygen during a flight
- escorting of wheelchair users or sensory impaired people
- special seating arrangements.

These are some of the requirements that can probably be catered for if the airline is aware of them in advance. Passengers requiring extra leg room are advised to check in with such a request at the airport early, as these seats are limited, and those seats near emergency exits that have extra room cannot be used by passengers with mobility problems.

Getting to an airport can be a problem, but public transport services to and from airports are becoming more accessible to disabled people. Some airports have integrated railway stations, and most are well served by buses, coaches and taxis. For those travelling to the airport by car, special parking arrangements can often be made, and discounts are sometimes available for members of one of the disabled drivers' associations.

Terminal buildings are generally wheelchair-accessible but access to the aircraft depends on the equipment available at each airport. All wheelchairs are carried in the hold of the aircraft, the user having to transfer to an aircraft seat. At larger airports, airbridges or jetways provide level or ramped access between the terminal and the aircraft. Elsewhere, wheelchair users may be lifted on to the plane by staff using a carry seat or by a high-lift loading vehicle. Transfer to the aircraft seat is by lifting or by means of a small aircraft aisle wheelchair. It is important to consider at the time of booking, any special transport arrangements that will be required at the destination airport for onward travel to the final destination.



## W I T H O U T   Y O U R   C A R

**GOING SHOPPING – SHOPMOBILITY**

Shopmobility is a scheme operating in over 200 major shopping centres throughout the country. Shopmobilities, typically based in large urban shopping centres, offer a wide selection of mobility aids for hire such as wheelchairs of various types, pavement scooters and walking aids. Some of the units provide escorts to push wheelchairs or 'sighted guides' to assist visually impaired people with shopping.

While each Shopmobility operates independently, most are members of the National Federation of Shopmobilities which publishes a directory of locations and details of the services provided by each member. To find your local Shopmobility centre, go to [www.shopmobilityuk.org.uk](http://www.shopmobilityuk.org.uk) or telephone 08456 442 446.



## USEFUL CONTACTS

# Useful Contacts

For further information about services provided by the AA, contact the appropriate numbers given throughout this book. Other organisations referred to are listed below.

### **TRIPSCOPE 08457 585641**

TRIPSCOPE operates a nationwide travel advice and information service for people with mobility problems. Advice is offered on any aspect of travel, whether it's planning journeys in private or by public transport. This service is available throughout the UK for the price of a local rate telephone call to TRIPSCOPE's Helpline. Requests are also dealt with by letter, textphone, fax and email.

All Helpline staff have personal experience of disability and can discuss travel needs to help reduce pre-travel anxiety and stress en route. Above all, TRIPSCOPE's unique, comprehensive database provides the most accurate information to help disabled people arrange and undertake journeys with confidence. TRIPSCOPE can be contacted on the Helpline number above (a textphone).

### **MEMBERS OF THE FORUM OF MOBILITY CENTRES**

All the centres listed provide a free information service and can give vehicle advice and advice for passengers. Those that provide additional services are indicated as follows:

- 1 Wheelchair/scooter advice
- 2 Driving tuition
- 3 Fitting of adaptations

## U S E F U L C O N T A C T S



**Aylesford – Driving assessment and advice service**, Maidstone Weald Primary Care Trust, Ditton Ward, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NJ, tel 01622 795719, fax 01622 795720, email janice.stannard@nhs.net

**Belfast – Northern Ireland Mobility Centre (2)**, Disability Action, Portside Business Park, 189 Airport Road, Belfast BT3 9ED, tel 02890 297880, minicom 02890 297882, fax 02890 297881, email mobilitycentre@disabilityaction.org

**Birmingham – Regional Driving Assessment Centre (2)**, West Heath Hospital, Rednal Road, Birmingham B38 8HR, tel 0121 627 8228, fax 0121 627 8629

**Bristol – Mobility Service of the Disabled Living Centre (West of England) (1,2)**, The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2QQ, tel/minicom 0117 965 9353, fax 0117 965 3652, email mobserv@dlcbristol.org

**Carshalton – Queen Elizabeth's Foundation Mobility Centre (1,2)**, Damson Way, Fountain Drive, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR, tel 0208 770 1151, fax 0208 770 1211, email info@mobility-qe.org

**Crowthorne – Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service**, 'O' Wing, Macadam Avenue, Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6XD, tel/textphone 01344 661000, fax 01344 661066, email mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk, www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk/mavis.htm

**Derby – Regional Mobility Centre (2,3)**, Kingsway Hospital, Kingsway, Derby DE22 3LZ, tel 01332 371929, fax 01332 382377, www.derbyregionalmobilitycentre.co.uk

**Edinburgh – Scottish Driving Assessment Service** (can provide a mobile driving assessment service), Astley Ainslie Hospital, 133 Grange Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2HL, tel 0131 537 9192, fax 0131 537 9193

**Leeds – William Merritt Disabled Living Centre and Mobility Service (1)**, St Mary's Hospital, Green Hill Road, Armley, Leeds LS12 3QE, tel 0113 305 5288, fax 0113 231 9291, email jane.friend@nhs.net

**Liverpool – Donald Todd Rehabilitation Centre**, University Hospital, Aintree, Liverpool L9 7AL, tel 0151 529 3039, fax 0151 529 3031



## U S E F U L   C O N T A C T S

**Newcastle upon Tyne – Mobility Centre**, Regional Neurological Rehabilitation Centre, Hunters Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4NR, tel 0191 219 5661, fax 0191 219 5665, email [mobilitycentrenewcastle@nap.nhs.uk](mailto:mobilitycentrenewcastle@nap.nhs.uk), [www.nap.nhs.uk/snrs](http://www.nap.nhs.uk/snrs)

**North Wales – Mobility and Driving Assessment Service**, Glan Clwyd Hospital, Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire LL18 5UJ, tel 01745 584858, fax 01745 535042, email [alexbarr@btconnect.com](mailto:alexbarr@btconnect.com)

**Oxford – Mobility Centre (1,2,3)**, Oxford Centre for Enablement, Windmill Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LD, tel 01865 767777, fax 01865 737400, email [adrian.dobson@oxfordmobilitycentre.org](mailto:adrian.dobson@oxfordmobilitycentre.org)

**South Wales – Disabled Drivers Assessment Centre**, Rookwood Hospital, Fairwater Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2YN, tel/fax 02920 555130, email [Sandra@wddac.co.uk](mailto:Sandra@wddac.co.uk)

**Thetford – Kilverstone Mobility Assessment Centre (1,2)**, 2 Napier Place, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3RL, tel 01842 753029, fax 01842 755950, email [mail@kmacmobil.org.uk](mailto:mail@kmacmobil.org.uk)

**Truro – Cornwall Mobility Centre (1,2,3)**, Tehidy House, Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro TR1 3LJ, tel 01872 254920, fax 01872 254921, [www.cornwallmobilitycentre.co.uk](http://www.cornwallmobilitycentre.co.uk)

**Welwyn Garden City – Hertfordshire Action on Disability**, The Woodside Centre, The Commons, Welwyn Garden City AL7 4DD, tel 01707 324581, fax 01707 371297, email [driving@hadnet.co.uk](mailto:driving@hadnet.co.uk)

**Wigan – Wrightington Mobility Centre (2)**, Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan WN6 9EP, tel 01257 256409, fax 01257 256409, email [mobility.centre@alwpct.nhs.uk](mailto:mobility.centre@alwpct.nhs.uk)

### **OTHER ASSESSMENT OR ADVICE CENTRES**

**Bebington – Clatterbridge Driving Assessment Centre for the Disabled**, Wirral Limb Centre, Clatterbridge Hospital, Bebington, Merseyside CH63 4JY, tel 0151 604 7439, fax 0151 604 7438

**Cannock – Mid-Staffordshire Driving Assessment Service**, Cannock Chase Hospital, Cannock WS11 2XY, tel 01543 576424, fax 01543 576555 (part of the Birmingham Regional Driving Assessment Centre, tel 0121 627 8228)

## U S E F U L C O N T A C T S



**Dublin – Motoring Advice, Assessment and Tuition Service (MAATS)**, Blackheath Drive, Clontarf, Dublin 3, tel 00 353 1 833 8241, fax 00 353 1 833 3873

**Shrewsbury – Mobility Information Service**, Unit B1, Greenwood Court, Cartmel Drive, Shrewsbury SY1 3TB, tel 01743 463072, fax 01743 463065, email [mis@nmcuk.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:mis@nmcuk.freereserve.co.uk)

**Torquay – Mobility Freedom**, 20 Fowey Avenue, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7RE, tel 01803 616661 or 01626 353942

### **TOLL BRIDGES AND TUNNELS**

The AA website [www.theAA.com](http://www.theAA.com) gives details of current charges at UK and European tolls. Refer to [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk) for full details of concessions applicable to disabled people in the UK and how to apply, or contact the relevant authority shown below.

Clifton Bridge (B3124 Bristol), tel 0117 973 2122

Dartford Bridge and Dartford Tunnel (M25, east London), tel 01322 221603

Dunham Bridge (A57 Lincoln–Worksop), tel 01777 228222

Erskine Bridge (near Glasgow), tel 0131 2447270

Forth Road Bridge (near Edinburgh), tel 0131 319 1699

Humber Bridge (near Hull), tel 01482 647161

Isle of Skye Bridge, tel 01599 534880

Itchen Bridge (A3025 Woolston–Southampton), tel 02380 431040

Mersey Tunnel (Liverpool), tel 0151 236 8602

Severn Crossings, tel 01454 635000

Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry (near Plymouth), tel 01752 812233

Tay Bridge (Dundee), tel 01382 221881

Tyne Tunnel (North Shields), tel 0191 262 4451

Whitchurch Bridge (B471 Pangbourne–Whitchurch), tel 0118 984 3126

Whitney on Wye bridge (B4350 Whitney–Hay-on-Wye) tel 0870 1226 236



## U S E F U L   C O N T A C T S

### **OTHER USEFUL ORGANISATIONS**

**Access and Mobility – Transport for London**, Windsor House, 42-50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL, tel 0207 222 1234, textphone 0207 9183015, email govinfo@tfl.gov.uk, www.londontransport.co.uk

**Association of Local Government Transport, Environment Unit**, New Zealand House, 80 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4TG, tel 0207 747 4767

**Autochair Ltd**, Milford Lane, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1DX, tel 0800 214045, fax 01629 814725, www.autochair.co.uk

**Blue Badge Scheme**, bluebadge@dft.gsi.gov.uk

**Cadw (Welsh Historic Monuments)**, Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ, tel 0292 050 0200, fax 0290 826375, www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

**CBF-Darmstadt (key for accessible toilets in Europe)**, Pallaswiesenstrasse 123a, Darmstadt, Germany, tel 0049 6151 81 22 0, fax 00-49-6151 81 22 81, www.cbf-darmstadt.de

**Department for Transport, Mobility & Inclusion Unit**, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR, tel 0207 944 8300, textphone 0207 944 3277, fax 0207 944 9622

**Disability Rights Commission**, Freepost, MID 02164, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9BR, tel 08457 622633, textphone 08547 622644, fax 08457 778878, www.drc.gov.uk

**Disabled Drivers Association**, Ashwellthorpe, Norfolk NR16 1EX, tel 0870 7703333, fax 01508 488173, www.dda.org.uk

**Disabled Drivers Motoring Club**, Cottingham Way, Thrapston, Northamptonshire NN14 4PL, tel 01832 734724, fax 01832 733816, www.ddmc.org.uk

**Disabled Motorists Federation**, 145 Knoulberry Road, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 UN, tel/fax 0191 416 3172, email jkillick221@compuserve.com

**Driving Standards Agency**, 56 Talbot Street, Nottingham NG1 5GU, tel 0115 901 2500, fax 0115 9012510, www.dsa.gov.uk

## U S E F U L C O N T A C T S



**DVLA**, Swansea SA99 1TU, tel 0870 240 0009, textphone 01792 782787, [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

**Drivers Medical Unit DVLA**, tel 0870 600 0301

**DVLNI**, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine BT 51 3TB, tel 02870 341469, textphone 02870 341380, fax 02870 341398, [www.dvlni.gov.uk](http://www.dvlni.gov.uk)

**English Heritage**, Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon SN2 2YP, tel 0870 3331181, fax 01793 414926, [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

**Epilepsy Action**, New Anstey House, Gateway Drive, Yeadon, Leeds LS19 7XY, Helpline tel 0808 800 5050, fax 0808 800 5555, [www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

**Historic Scotland**, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh EH9 1SH, tel 0131 668 8600, fax 0131 668 8669, [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)

**Holiday Care**, 7th floor, Sunley House, 4 Bedford Park, Croydon CR0 2AP, tel 0845 1249971, textphone 0845 124 9976, fax 0845 1249972, [www.holidaycare.org.uk](http://www.holidaycare.org.uk)

**MAGIC (Mobility and General Information Centre)**, Unit 2, Wintersells Road, Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7LF, tel 0800 240241, textphone 0800 1693048, [www.fordmagic.co.uk](http://www.fordmagic.co.uk)

**Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service**, 'O' Wing, Macadam Avenue, Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6XD, tel/textphone 01344 661000, fax 01344 661066, email [mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk), [www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk/mavis.htm](http://www.mobility-unit.dft.gov.uk/mavis.htm)

**Mobility and Inclusion Unit**, [miu@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:miu@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

**Motability**, City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB, tel 0845 4564566 or 01279 635 666, textphone 01279 632273, fax 0207 928 1818, [www.motability.co.uk](http://www.motability.co.uk)

**National Federation of Shopmobilities**, Enham Place, Enham Alamein, Andover SP11 6JS, tel 08456 442 446, fax 08456 444442, [www.shopmobilityuk.org.uk](http://www.shopmobilityuk.org.uk)

**National Trust**, P O Box 39, Bromley, Kent BR1 3XL, tel 0870 458 4000, fax 0208 4666824, textphone 0870 2403207, [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)



## USEFUL CONTACTS

**National Trust For Scotland**, 28 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4ET, tel 0131 243 9300, fax 0131 243 9301, [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)

**RADAR**, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC 1V 8AF, tel 0207 250 3222, textphone 0207 250 4119, fax 0207 250 0212, [www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)

**Railchoice**, 15 Colman House, Empire Square, High Street, London SE20 7EX, tel 0870 165 7300, fax 0208 659 7466, [www.railchoice.co.uk](http://www.railchoice.co.uk)

**Ricability**, 30 Angel Gate, City Road, London EC 1V 2PT, tel 0207 427 2460, textphone 0207 427 2469, fax 0207 427 2468, [www.ricability.org.uk](http://www.ricability.org.uk)

**RNIB**, 105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE, tel 0845 7669999, fax 0207 3882034, [www.rnib.co.uk](http://www.rnib.co.uk)

**RNID**, 19-23 Folkestone Street, London EC1Y 8SL, tel 0808 8080123, textphone 0808 8089000, fax 0207 2968199, [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)

**Traveline**, tel 0870 608 2608, [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

**TRIPSCOPE**, The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Bristol BS16 2QQ, Helpline tel/textphone 08457 585641, fax 0117 939 7736, [www.tripscope.org.uk](http://www.tripscope.org.uk)

### **COMPANIES THAT WILL HIRE CARS TO OLDER DRIVERS**

NAME	TELEPHONE	TOP AGE LIMIT
Alamo	0870 400 4595	No top age limit
Avis	0870 606 0100	No top age limit
Budget	0870 153 9170	70
Europcar	0870 607 5000	74
Hertz	0870 844 8844	No top age limit
National	0870 400 4552	75
Sixt	01246 220111	75
TLS Vehicle Rental	0800 407070	No top age limit