

Help with getting around

If you have Parkinson's, you might have some concerns about how this will affect your ability to get out and about.

But having Parkinson's doesn't have to stop you from getting around – it just sometimes involves more planning. This information sheet explains more about the transport and travel schemes that you might be able to apply for to help.

This information sheet covers:

- the Blue Badge Scheme
- driving issues
- Motability
- the National Key Scheme for disabled toilets
- transport
- travel and holiday information

The Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme is to help those with severe mobility problems, people who are registered blind or people with severe disabilities in both arms, to park in a vehicle (as a driver or passenger) close to shops, public buildings or other places they want to visit.

The badge has a section showing the wheelchair symbol, which you must be able to read from the outside of the vehicle. The badge will include your photograph, but this doesn't need to be seen from outside the vehicle.

With a Blue Badge on display, a vehicle driven by a disabled person, or with a disabled person as a passenger, can be parked:

- without charge or time limit at on-street parking meters and in Pay and Display bays (unless signs show a time limit for badge holders)
- without time limit in streets where you'd usually only be able to wait for limited periods
- for a maximum of three hours in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or without any time limit in Scotland, where there are parking restrictions shown by yellow lines

This is providing that the disabled person leaves the vehicle, and:

- in England and Wales, a special parking disc is also displayed showing the time of arrival, if the vehicle is parked on yellow lines or in a reserved parking place for badge holders that has a time limit

- the vehicle is not parked in a bus lane or cycle lane during the lane's hours of operation
- the vehicle is not parked where there is a ban on loading or unloading
- all other parking regulations are observed

You should not be wheel clamped if you display a current Blue Badge, but the police may remove the vehicle if it is causing an obstruction.

If the disabled person is not, or has not, been in the vehicle, it is an offence to display a Blue Badge – unless the driver is on the way to collect a disabled person or has just dropped them off.

The Blue Badge Scheme applies throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, except for four areas in Central London – the City of London, Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and part of Camden. These boroughs do have some parking concessions for Blue Badge holders, so contact them to find out more.

People who qualify for the Blue Badge Scheme must be aged over three and must:

- be getting the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, or
- be getting War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement, or
- drive regularly, and have a severe disability in both arms that makes it difficult to use some or all types of parking meter, or
- be registered blind, or
- have a 'permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking'.

You can get an application form from your local authority. If they want to, local authorities can charge up to £2 (or £20 in Scotland) to give you a badge. A badge will last for up to three years.

If your local authority refuses to issue you with a Blue Badge you have no formal right of appeal. However, many authorities have an internal review procedure. Alternatively, your councillor or a disability group or advice agency might help change

their mind. You only have a formal right of appeal (to the Secretary of State for Transport) if you have been denied a Blue Badge on the grounds of misuse.

Blue Badge holders who visit certain countries that give parking concessions for their own disabled citizens can also have these concessions by displaying their Blue Badge. You can get full details of concessions and the particular countries from the Department for Transport. The European Commission has produced a booklet *Information on using your Blue Badge in the European Union* – this is only available to download from:

www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/bluebadge

Driving issues

If you use a car to get around, and want to know more about driving when you have Parkinson's, read our booklet *Driving and Parkinson's*. It has information on key issues including:

- your legal obligation as a driver
- insurance
- exemption from road tax
- mobility assessment centres

Motability

Motability is a charity that helps people make the most of the allowances they get from the Government for transport. It helps people with disabilities use their higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement to buy or hire a car.

Motability has two types of scheme – a hiring scheme and a hire purchase scheme. Under the hire purchase scheme, you can buy an electric wheelchair or a good used car, as well as a new car.

If you get higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement, you can apply for help from Motability.

To find out more about Motability call **0845 456 4566** or visit **www.motability.co.uk**

National Key Scheme for disabled toilets

Disabled people can get a key by writing to RADAR with their name and address and a written declaration that they have a disability (this means you don't have to pay VAT on the key). A key will be issued costing £3.50 (if you don't qualify for free VAT, then the key will cost £4.20).

You can get a guide on where to find disabled toilets throughout the UK for £16.99 (including UK delivery). Contact RADAR on **020 7250 3222** or visit the website at **www.radar.org.uk**

Buses and other local transport

Under the Equality Act, the Government can make bus companies ensure that disabled people can get on and off buses safely 'without too much difficulty' and also travel 'in safety and reasonable comfort'. Bus companies do not have to make all buses accessible, only those brought into service after 2000.

Outside London, local authorities are in charge of public transport. Passenger transport authorities publish guides for disabled travellers covering all types of transport, which should include buses and any metro or tram systems. There should be an enquiry number available locally

To find out about public transport in London, including disabled access, you can visit the Transport for London website at **www.tfl.gov.uk** or call its Customer Service Centre on **0845 330 9880**. You can also order their Tube access guide on this number.

Rail travel

If you need to make special arrangements to travel by rail because of your Parkinson's (or any other condition), call National Rail Enquiries on **0845 7484 950** or textphone **0845 6050 600**.

You might be able to get a disabled person's railcard, which will give you and an adult travelling with you one-third off the price of a rail ticket. You can get an application form from mainline stations or from Disabled Persons Railcard office call **0845 605 0525** or textphone: **0845 601 0132** or visit **www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk**

To qualify you must be any of the following:

- registered as having a visual impairment
- registered deaf or use a hearing aid
- have epilepsy, and be disabled by repeated attacks even though you receive drug treatment, or the DVLA have said you are not allowed to drive
- receiving Attendance Allowance
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (at either the higher or lower rate of the mobility component or the highest rate or middle rate of the care component)
- receiving Severe Disablement Allowance
- receiving War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- receiving War or Service Disablement Pension for 80% or more disability
- buying or leasing a vehicle through the Motability scheme

The Railcard currently costs £20 and is valid for 12 months (or £54 valid for three years).

Concessionary fare schemes

Your local authority will have a concessionary fare scheme for older and disabled people. Each nation in the UK sets the minimum amount of help that should be available to pay for travel. Who qualifies as a disabled person for this also varies between each country in the UK.

In England, if you have reached pension credit qualifying age* or are disabled, you can get free off-peak local bus travel anywhere in England.

In Wales, if you are aged 60 or over or are disabled, you can travel for free on local buses any time of day.

In Scotland, if you are aged 60 or over or are disabled, a National Entitlement Card allows you to use national and local buses for free any time of day.

In Northern Ireland, you can travel free if you are aged 60 or over, are registered blind or are a War Disablement pensioner and for half price if you are other listed disabling conditions.

Some local authorities may offer more than the minimum to its residents. For instance, in London, the Freedom Pass lets older people use off-peak London buses, tubes, trains and trams free of charge, and disabled people can travel free on these at any time.

If you're 60 or over, you can also get half-price coach fares on long distance journeys across England and Wales, and into Scotland. The scheme includes scheduled coach services run by National Express and by some smaller companies. Many companies also offer reduced fares for disabled people. You can get more details from the coach companies.

*Until April 2010, the qualifying age for Pension Credit was 60. Between April 2010 and April 2020, the qualifying age will increase to 66.

Central London Congestion Charge

Not all drivers have to pay the Congestion Charge. Some groups of drivers, passengers and types of vehicles don't have to pay or they get a discount. These include residents who live within the Congestion Charge zone, disabled people, taxis, London licensed minicabs, coaches and minibuses, and some 'alternative fuel' vehicles.

If you have a Blue Badge, you don't have to pay the charge. You have to apply to the Congestion Charging office and pay an initial £10 administration fee. You can use this temporarily on any vehicle, including minicabs. Vehicles with an exempt 'Disabled' class tax disc automatically don't have to pay (this only applies to vehicles registered at the DVLA, Swansea).

Transport for London will send you an information pack and registration form (www.tfl.gov.uk or call its Customer Service Centre on **0845 330 9880**).

Durham has a similar congestion charging scheme, and other authorities are thinking about doing the same. It varies whether disabled people have to pay, as the planned national exemption scheme has not yet started.

Travel and holiday information

RADAR and Tourism for All publish *Open Britain 2011*. This is available to order from our distributor for £10, including postage and packaging.

You can also visit RADAR's website at www.radar.org.uk

Tourism For All gives information on all aspects of travel for disabled people. Call **0845 124 9971** or visit the website at www.tourismforall.org.uk

Accessible accommodation, attractions and destinations worldwide can be found at www.access-able.com. For further information email information@access-able.com

Cruises

You can get a free fact sheet on cruising for the disabled from the Passenger Shipping Association. Call **020 7436 2449** or visit the website at www.the-psa.co.uk

More information and support

We have information sheets on other benefits you may be entitled to. You can download these from our website at parkinsons.org.uk or see the back page of this sheet for details of how to order these for free.

Our helpline

For more help and information on rights and benefits, you can contact our dedicated employment and benefits adviser on the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email hello@parkinsons.org.uk

Information and support workers

Our UK-wide network of information and support workers can also provide details about benefits and help you with the application process. You can find your local information and support worker online at parkinsons.org.uk/isw or call our helpline for details.



Help with getting around

If you have comments or suggestions about this information sheet, we'd love to hear from you. This will help us ensure that we are providing as good a service as possible.

We'd be very grateful if you could complete this form and return it to [Information Resources Team, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ](#). Or you can email us at publications@parkinsons.org.uk. Thanks!

Please tick...

- I have Parkinson's. When were you diagnosed?
- I'm family/a friend/a carer of someone with Parkinson's
- I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's

Where did you get this information sheet from?

- GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse
- Information and support worker
- Parkinson's UK local group or event
- Sharward Services
- Our website
- Other

We're the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.

Can you help?

At Parkinson's UK, we are totally dependent on donations from individuals and organisations to fund the work that we do. There are many ways that you can help us to support people with Parkinson's. If you would like to get involved, please contact our Supporter Services team on **020 7932 1303** or visit our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/support**. Thank you.

Parkinson's UK

Free* confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

Text Relay **18001 0808 800 0303**

(for textphone users only)

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

*calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks.

How to order our resources

01473 212115

resources@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk/publications

We make every effort to make sure that our services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate information. We hope that this will add to any professional advice you receive and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your health and social care team if you are worried about any aspect of living with Parkinson's.

This information sheet is supported by the Santander Foundation and we are grateful for their generous gift. Our supporters don't have any input into the content of our publications.

Last updated June 2011. Next update available June 2012.

WB10

© Parkinson's UK, July 2011. Parkinson's UK is the operating name of the Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom. A charity registered in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554).



How useful have you found the information sheet? (1 is not useful, 4 is very useful) 1 2 3 4

Have you found the publication easy to read/use? Yes No

What aspects did you find most helpful?

Were you looking for any information that wasn't covered?

Do you have any other comments?

If you would like to become a member of Parkinson's UK, or are interested in joining our Information Review Group, please complete the details below and we'll be in touch.

Membership Information Review Group (who give us feedback on new and updated resources)

Name

Address

Telephone Email