

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 should not stop you from getting around. This information explains more about the transport and travel schemes that you may be able to apply for to make travelling a bit easier.

This information sheet covers:

- the Blue Badge scheme for parking
- the Central London Congestion Charge
- driving issues
- Motability
- the National Key Scheme (accessible public toilets)
- buses and other local transport
- rail travel
- concessionary fare schemes
- travel and holiday information

The Blue Badge scheme

The aim of the Blue Badge scheme is to help people with severe mobility problems, registered blind people and those with severe disabilities in both arms to park close to places they wish to visit. 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 would 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 only if the disabled person leaves the vehicle, and:

- in England and Wales, a special parking clock 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 rules are met

Your car 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.

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

The Blue Badge scheme applies throughout the UK, except for certain London boroughs (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.

Do I qualify for a Blue Badge?

You may qualify for a Blue Badge automatically or through assessment.

To automatically qualify for a Blue Badge you must:

- be getting the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance
- be assessed as having eight points or more under the 'moving around' activity of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment or, in Scotland and Wales, 12 points under the 'planning and following journeys' activity
- be getting War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- have received a lump sum payment from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (within tariff levels 1-8) and have been certified as having a permanent and substantial disability that causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking, **or**
- be registered blind

To qualify subject to further assessment you must:

- have a 'permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking'
- drive a vehicle regularly, have a severe disability in both arms and be unable to operate, or have considerable difficulty in operating, all or some types of parking meter
- in Scotland, be unable to walk or virtually unable to walk because of a temporary but substantial disability which is likely to last for at least 12 months.
- in Scotland, lack an awareness of the danger from traffic, either for a temporary period of at least 12 months or permanently

- in Wales, as a result of a severe cognitive impairment, be unable to follow the route of a journey without the help of someone else, **or**
- in Wales, have a terminal illness that seriously limits your mobility

You can check to see if you are eligible for a Blue Badge and apply for or renew your application online at www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge or you can contact your local authority. Local authorities can charge up to £10 (or £20 in Scotland) to give you a badge. A badge will last for up to three years.

Appealing a decision

If your local authority refuses to issue you with a Blue Badge, you have no formal right of appeal. As many authorities have internal procedures for dealing with reviews, it is worth writing to ask for a review. In Scotland there is a formal review process. If a local authority decides that you do not qualify, you can ask for a review of the decision within 28 days of receiving it.

There is no limit on how many times you can apply for a Blue Badge. If you are unsuccessful on your first attempt and your situation changes, you are free to try again.

Using your Blue Badge abroad

Blue Badge holders visiting European Union countries that provide disabled parking concessions can take advantage of those by displaying their badge. Concessions vary from country to country. Details can be found in the European Commission booklet [Parking card for people with disabilities in the European Union](#). You can find a PDF of this booklet online, using the title as your search term.

Central London Congestion Charge

Blue Badge holders can be exempt from the congestion charge in central London if they apply to the Congestion Charge Office. There is a £10 administration fee. For an application form call **0343 222 2222** or go to www.tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/congestion-charge/discounts-and-exemptions to apply online. This exemption can be used on any two vehicles. Vehicles taxed in the 'Disabled' class are automatically exempt if they are registered at DVLA, Swansea.

Driving issues

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

- your legal obligations as a driver
- insurance
- exemption from vehicle tax
- mobility assessment centres

Find out more: see our information on [Driving and Parkinson's](#).

Motability

The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to exchange a 'qualifying benefit' to lease a car (including cars adapted to carry a driver or passenger seated in their wheelchair), powered wheelchair or mobility scooter. Qualifying benefits include the higher-rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance and the enhanced-rate mobility component of Personal Independence Payment.

To find out more about Motability, call **0300 456 4566** or visit their website www.motability.co.uk

National Key Scheme

If you have a disability, you may find a Radar key helpful. These allow you to unlock more than 9,000 accessible public toilets across the UK. You can purchase a Radar key from Disability Rights UK.

To order, call **0203 687 0790** or visit www.disabilityrightsuk.org and order via the online shop.

Alternatively, you can write to Disability Rights UK, giving your name and address and a written declaration of your disability (this means you do not have to pay VAT on the key). Enclose a cheque or postal order for £4.50 (or £5.40 if you do not qualify for a VAT exemption) made payable to Disability Rights UK. A list is available of National Key Scheme toilets in your area in return for a donation of £3.50 with every purchase of the key. The address to write to is:

Disability Rights UK
Plexal, 14 East Bay Lane
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
London E20 3BS

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 and 'without too much difficulty' and also travel 'in safety and reasonable comfort'.

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 **0343 222 1234**. You can also order their Tube access guide on this number.

Outside London, local authorities are in charge of public transport. Contact your local authority to find out more about disabled public transport access in your area.

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 Enquires on **03457 48 49 50** or textphone **0345 60 50 600**.

You may be able to get a Disabled Person's Railcard, which gives you and a companion one-third off the cost of most train journeys. The card costs £20 for one year or £54 for three years. You can get details by visiting www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk or by ringing **0345 605 0525** (textphone **0345 601 0132**). Check the claim form or website for a full list of the disabilities covered by the scheme.

If you are in Northern Ireland, you can apply for the similar Half Fare Smartpass. Contact Translink on **0845 600 0049** or pick up an application form from Translink bus and rail stations, Social Security Offices, Health and Social Care Trusts, or Driver and Vehicle Licensing NI.

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 that should be available to help pay for travel. Who qualifies as a disabled person for this help 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.
- In Wales, if you are aged 60 or over or are disabled, you can travel for free on local buses at 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 at 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 have a listed disabling condition.
- * The qualifying age for Pension Credit will rise to 65 for both men and women by November 2018 and will then rise in line with State Pension age to reach 66 by 2020. You can check the qualifying age at the time you want to claim using the online calculator at www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

Some local authorities may offer more than the minimum to residents. For instance, in London, the Freedom Pass lets older and disabled people use London buses, tubes, trains and trams free of charge (time restrictions apply in some cases) – see www.tfl.gov.uk for more information. Contact your local authority to find out more about what they can offer you.

If you're 60 or over, you may be able to get discounted coach travel. For example, National Express has a Senior Coachcard that costs £12.50 (+£2.50 p&p) and gives a third off standard fares for a year. Many companies also offer reduced fares for disabled people. You can get more details from the coach companies.

Travel and holiday information

If you are planning to go on holiday or need to travel abroad, you may find our information on *International travel and Parkinson's* useful. It covers issues such as:

- preparing medication before travel
- accessibility when flying and on other forms of transport
- getting medical treatment abroad
- travel insurance and your rights

Find out more: see our information on [International travel and Parkinson's](#)

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

You can also use the online directory of accessible accommodation and travel at www.openbritain.net

More information and support

Parkinson's nurses

Parkinson's nurses provide expert advice and support to people with Parkinson's and those who care for them. They can also make contact with other health and social care professionals to make sure your needs are met.

The role of the Parkinson's nurse varies. Each will offer different services, aiming to meet local needs. Some nurses are based in the community, whereas others are based in hospital settings.

Many Parkinson's nurses are independent prescribers. This means they can prescribe and make adjustments to medication, so someone with Parkinson's doesn't always need to see their specialist for changes to or queries about their Parkinson's drugs.

Parkinson's nurses may not be available in every area, but your GP or specialist can give you more details on local services.

You can find out more at parkinsons.org.uk/nurses

Information and support from Parkinson's UK

You can call our free confidential helpline for general support and information. Call **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email hello@parkinsons.org.uk.

We run a peer support service if you'd like to talk on the phone with someone affected by Parkinson's who has faced similar issues to you. The service is free and confidential – ring the helpline to talk to someone about being matched with a volunteer.

Our helpline can also put you in touch with one of our Parkinson's local advisers, who give one-to-one information and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's. They can also provide links to local groups and services.

We also have a self-management programme for people with Parkinson's, partners and carers. It is an opportunity to reflect on life with the condition, learn about self-management and think about the future. To find out if there is a group near you, visit parkinsons.org.uk/selfmanagement

Our website parkinsons.org.uk has a lot of information about Parkinson's and everyday life with the condition. You can also find details of your local support team and your nearest local group meeting at parkinsons.org.uk/localtoyou

Visit parkinsons.org.uk/forum to chat to other people with similar experiences on our online discussion forum.

Thank you

Thank you to Disability Rights UK for updating this information sheet. Disability Rights UK also have a wide range of online factsheets relating to disability-related issues including Access to Work, education, the Blue Badge scheme, independent living and disabled facilities grants.

Visit their website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

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 **0800 138 6593** or visit our website at parkinsons.org.uk/donate. Thank you.

Our information

All of our most up-to-date information is available at parkinsons.org.uk/information-support. If you'd prefer to read one of our printed leaflets or booklets, find out how to place an order at parkinsons.org.uk/ordering-resources or by calling **0300 123 3689**.

We make every effort to ensure that our services provide current, unbiased and accurate information. We hope that this will add to any professional advice you receive and 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.

If you'd like to find out more about how we put our information together, including references and the sources of evidence we use, please contact us at publications@parkinsons.org.uk

Help with getting around (WB10/2018)

Do you have any feedback about this information? Your comments will help us ensure our resources are as useful and easy to understand as possible. Please return to [Information Content team, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ](#), or email publications@parkinsons.org.uk. Thank you!

1. Please choose the option that best fits you.

- I have Parkinson's and was diagnosed in I care for someone with Parkinson's
 I have a friend or family member with Parkinson's I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's
 Other (please specify)
-

2. Where did you get this information from?

- GP Specialist Parkinson's nurse Parkinson's UK local group Parkinson's UK local adviser
 Ordered directly from us Call to the helpline
 Other (please specify)
-

3. Has it answered all your questions?

- Yes, completely Yes, mostly Not sure Partly Not at all

4. How easy was it to understand?

- Very easy Easy Not sure Quite difficult Very difficult

5. Has it helped you manage your condition better, or make choices that have improved your life in some way?

- It helped a lot It helped a little No change It didn't help It made things worse

6. What is your ethnic background?*

- Asian or Asian British Black or Black British Chinese Mixed White British White other
 Other (please specify)
-

*We ask about your ethnicity to ensure our information is reaching a broad range of people. However, this question is optional.

Want to hear more from us?

- I would like a response to my feedback I would like to be a member of Parkinson's UK
 I'm interested in joining the Information review group, to offer feedback on Parkinson's UK information

If you've answered yes to any of these options, please complete your details below.

Name

Address

Email

Telephone

How would you prefer us to contact you? Email Post Phone

We will not pass on your details to any other organisation or third party. To find out more, read our privacy policy at parkinsons.org.uk/termsandconditions

Every hour, two people in the UK are told they have Parkinson's – a brain condition that turns lives upside down, leaving a future full of uncertainty.

Parkinson's UK is here to make sure people have whatever they need to take back control – from information to inspiration.

We want everyone to get the best health and social care. So we bring professionals together to drive improvements that enable people to live life to the full.

Ultimately, we want to end Parkinson's. That's why we inspire and support the international research community to develop life-changing treatments, faster. And we won't stop until we find a cure.

Together we can bring forward the day when no one fears Parkinson's.

Parkinson's UK

Free confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–7pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

NGT Relay **18001 0808 800 0303** (for use with smart phones, tablets, PCs and other devices).

For more information see www.ngts.org.uk

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

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Please check our website for the most up-to-date versions of all our information.

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