

# getting around

**Travelling** even small distances may be difficult if you, or the person you care for, has **mobility problems**. Cost, accessibility, availability and reliability can all be major concerns.

However, there is a range of local and national schemes, services and financial support, described in this factsheet, which will help ease these difficulties and enable you to plan journeys both within **Brent** and **further afield**.



## Financial support

### DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA) MOBILITY COMPONENT

This state benefit is available to people aged 3 or over and under 65 who have problems or need help with walking, or whose walking is severely restricted, for example because they are both blind and deaf. It can be used to buy or lease a car through the **Motability Scheme** or to pay for cabs, as and when needed, and recipients qualify for the **Blue Badge Scheme** (see below). For information about claiming DLA see the factsheet *Money matters*.

### Using your own transport

**There are a number of schemes that can help disabled people and their carers use cars, by providing finance, adaptations and advice.**

The self help organisation **Mobilise** (01508 489449, textphone 01279 632273, info@mobilise.info, www.mobilise.info) encourages greater independence through mobility. Members can get a range of discounts, including breakdown cover and ferry crossings.

**Motability** (0845 456 4566, textphone: 0845 675 0009, www.motability.co.uk) is a charity that assists disabled people to become more mobile by helping them use the DLA or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement to lease or buy a car or buy a powered wheelchair or scooter. It can also advise on special adaptations.

The scheme applies to drivers and passengers (including children aged 3 or over), so if the person you care for qualifies but doesn't drive, he or she could nominate you (and one other person) to drive.

A driver who receives, or cares for someone who receives, the higher rate mobility component of DLA or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement may be able to claim exemption from **Vehicle Excise Duty** (Road Tax). For an application form contact the Disability and Carer Benefits Directorate (0845 712 3456, textphone 0845 722 44 33) (DLA) or the Veterans Agency (0800 169 2277, textphone 0800 169 3458) (War Pensioners).

The **Blue Badge Scheme** provides parking concessions for people with certain disabilities. These include people with severe walking difficulties who travel as either drivers or passengers (aged 2 or over), those who cannot turn a steering wheel by hand and registered blind people. Contact a One Stop Shop or Older People's Services (020 8937 4864) or download a form from [www.brent.gov.uk/parking.nsf](http://www.brent.gov.uk/parking.nsf).



### CAR INSURANCE

**Mobilise** (01508 489449, textphone 01279 632273) has a list of insurance firms that specialise in vehicle insurance for disabled motorists, including some which also offer wheelchair policies.

### DRIVING LICENCES

It is a legal requirement to notify the DVLA (0870 240 0009, textphone 01792 766366, drivers.dvla@gt.net.gov.uk) of the worsening of any disability or medical condition that affects your ability to drive safely. Leaflet D100 *What you need to know about driving licences*, available in post offices or from [www.dvla.gov.uk/forms.aspx](http://www.dvla.gov.uk/forms.aspx), explains the types of conditions that you should tell them about.

## Taxis

**The London Taxicard scheme gives a discounted rate for people unable to use public transport because of a mobility problem. For details ring 020 7484 2929 or see [www.taxicard.org.uk](http://www.taxicard.org.uk). You should say when making a booking if you need wheelchair access.**

All taxis operated by **Computer Cabs** ([www.computercab.co.uk](http://www.computercab.co.uk)) are wheelchair accessible, have a range of features to help partially sighted and disabled people, and all drivers have undergone disability awareness training. To book an accessible taxi in advance (which is advisable) telephone 020 7763 5001 (Taxicard bookings), 020 7432 1432 (credit card bookings) or 020 7908 0207 (cash bookings). It is also possible to make Taxicard bookings online.

## Voluntary transport schemes

**A number of charities provide advice and practical support for people who have problems using public transport.**

**Dial a Ride** (0845 9991 999 or 020 7394 5800) provides a door to door transport service for people with a permanent or long-term disability or health problem who are unable, or virtually unable to use conventional public transport. Anyone who receives the DLA higher rate mobility component,

a War Pension mobility supplement or higher rate Attendance Allowance, who is registered blind, or who is a member of the Taxicard scheme is automatically eligible. Other people with mobility problems can apply. There is a small charge for both users and their carers. The service, which is wheelchair accessible, operates from around 8am to 11pm. Bookings are normally made the day before, but same day booking is possible. Telephone for a registration form or download a form from [www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround/1187.aspx](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround/1187.aspx).

The **Brent Community Car Scheme** (020 8965 6439), part of Brent Community Transport, provides a door to door transport service for disabled people who cannot use public transport. The service aims to operate between 8am and midnight, seven days a week, but as it is run by volunteer drivers, these hours may vary. Trips can be booked to any part of mainland Britain. Most journeys are in minibuses; some car travel may be available at weekends. Wheelchairs can be carried. Carers may travel free of charge with the people they care for. Bookings should preferably be made two days in advance, although it is possible to book the day before. Current charges are £1.65 per trip (one-way), plus 55p/mile.

## Public transport

### ACCESSIBILITY

The **Travel Assistance Scheme** (020 7027 5822, [enquire@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:enquire@tfl.gov.uk)) operated by Transport for London, offers advice on planning a journey using an accessible route. It can also provide someone to go with you for the first few times you use a low floor bus, accessible tube route or overground train service. The service is free, and is available Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm.

All London **buses** (apart from two heritage route buses, which are also covered by accessible buses), are wheelchair accessible. There is no limit on the number of assistance dogs the driver can allow on the bus, as long as there is space.

**900 buses** include a lift at the rear and can accommodate up to four people in wheelchairs. Each visits a number of local shopping centres, and many service town centres. The **972** operates on Thursdays between Neasden and Edgware Station. The route includes Neasden Shopping Centre and Brent Cross. A timetable is available from [www.busmap.org](http://www.busmap.org).

**Transport for London** (020 7222 1234, textphone 020 7918 3015, [travelinfo@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:travelinfo@tfl.gov.uk)) publishes *Access to the Underground*, giving details of steps, lifts, escalators and toilet facilities on the tube and the Docklands Light Railway. It also produces a number of useful free leaflets and tapes, including large

print tube maps, a tactile diagram of the central underground, a talking underground map and *The tube access guide*, which shows accessible stations. The access guide and large print tube maps can be downloaded from [www.tfl.gov.uk/Tube/maps](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/Tube/maps)

All **Docklands Light Railway** (020 7363 9700, textphone 020 7093 0999, [cservice@dlr.co.uk](mailto:cservice@dlr.co.uk), [www.tfl.gov.uk/dlr](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/dlr)) stations have lifts, escalators and/or ramps; all platforms are level with the trains and every train has a designated wheelchair bay.

Full information about **accessibility issues** on London Transport is available at [www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround) (click on 'Transport accessibility').

Station staff at **rail stations** can usually help people with special needs. For details see [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) (click on 'Disabled assistance') or telephone 08457 48 49 50.

**National Express** ([www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)) can provide help for passengers with special needs, including booking front seats, helping with changes and loading luggage. For details contact the Disabled Persons Travel Helpline (0121 423 8479, textphone 0121 455 0086, [dpth@nationalexpress.com](mailto:dpth@nationalexpress.com)).

### TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

The **Freedom Pass** gives free travel on London's underground, buses, Docklands Light Railway, Tramlink and National Rail Service within Zones 1 to 6 (there are some exceptions, and some time restrictions) and discounts on Thames riverboat services. It is available to all Londoners aged 60 or over, and to disabled people who satisfy one of a number of assessment criteria. For further information see [www.freedompass.org](http://www.freedompass.org).

Application forms for older people are available from post offices. Disabled people should contact the One Stop Shop (020 8937 1200).

**Wheelchair users** travel free on public transport in London.

People aged 60 or over and certain groups of disabled people automatically qualify for reduced ('routesixty') fares on **National Express** services (contact 08705 808080 or see [www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)).

It is possible to buy a **Disabled Persons Railcard**, which gives disabled people and their carers reduced rail travel. To qualify, the person being cared for must meet one of a list of criteria. Application forms are included in the publication *Rail Travel for Disabled Passengers*, available at any mainline station or [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk).

Discounts are also available to people who do not hold a Disabled Persons Railcard if they are registered

as visually impaired, and travel with a carer, or are wheelchair users who remain in their wheelchair for a rail journey. The carer also gets a discount. To obtain the discount the disabled person must present a document confirming the disability, issued by a recognised institution, when booking a ticket. Season tickets to cover two people – ie two people travel for the price of one – are available for blind and partially sighted people. Contact your local station for details.

Anyone aged 60 or over can buy a **Senior Railcard**, which gives discounts on all rail companies' fares. Forms are available from mainline stations, travel agents and [www.senior-railcard.co.uk](http://www.senior-railcard.co.uk).

**Transport for All** – the accessible transport users' association (020 7737 2339, [contactus@transportforall.com](mailto:contactus@transportforall.com), [www.transportforall.com](http://www.transportforall.com)) – campaigns for a fully accessible public transport system. It provides information and advice on accessible transport for disabled people and acts as an advocate on behalf of individual disabled travellers who experience problems with any aspect of the transport system. Membership is open to all disabled people and to anyone committed to improving accessible transport.

## Transport to hospital

**Some hospitals have a list of volunteer drivers who will collect and return patients for hospital appointments. The reception or appointments office will have further information and advice on booking. See the factsheet *Health issues for hospital contact details*.**

Non-emergency ambulances may take patients to and from hospital where necessary. Depending on the hospital, initial referral is either via the GP or through the hospital.

Anyone receiving Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance is entitled to have reasonable **travel costs** to hospital paid (including car use). People who receive a War Pension or the Working Tax Credit may be entitled to help with fares to hospital. For further details telephone 0800 1692277 (war pension) or 0845 300 3909 (tax credit). It is also possible to receive help on grounds of low income. Most hospitals have a transport desk where you can get further information; also see the booklet *Help with Health Costs* (HC11), available from the Health Literature Line (0800 555 777).

**Remember that other factsheets in this pack may also include information useful to you**



## Transport to lunch clubs and day centres

**Some day centres (both council-run and those run by voluntary organisations) are able to offer transport.**

Details of some are given in the factsheet *Time for yourself*. It is always worth asking if transport can be arranged.

### WHEELCHAIRS

**Brent Wheelchair Service** (020 8438 7292: 8.30am-12.30pm) supplies manual and electric wheelchairs. It is also possible to hire wheelchairs from the Harrow branch of the **British Red Cross** (020 8427 8788). For further details see the *Health care* factsheet.

## Information on access

**If the person you care for has mobility problems and you want to go out together, you may find the following organisations useful.**

**Artsline** (020 7388 2227 – voice and text, [access@artsline.org.uk](mailto:access@artsline.org.uk), [www.artsline.org.uk](http://www.artsline.org.uk)) provides information and advice to disabled people about access to the arts and entertainment in London. Access details on venues are available online at [www.artslineonline.com](http://www.artslineonline.com)

The website **Door to Door: a travel guide for disabled people** ([www.dptac.gov.uk/door-to-door](http://www.dptac.gov.uk/door-to-door)) gives information about transport and advice about travelling, using all forms of transport.

**English Heritage** (0870 333 1181) publishes the free *Access Guide*, which gives details of properties accessible to disabled visitors. It can be ordered by phone or downloaded from [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk) (click on 'Free publications'). It is also available in large print and Braille.

The **National Trust** publishes the *National Trust Access Guide*, which can be downloaded from [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh) (click on 'Information for visitors'). It is also possible to search online for properties that offer facilities for disabled visitors – see [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

**Shape London** (020 7619 6160, textphone 020 7619 6161, [info@shapearts.org.uk](mailto:info@shapearts.org.uk)) runs a ticket scheme service for older and disabled people, which includes a newsletter with details of tickets and access, reduced price tickets and tailored booking.