

HOW TO 06

Getting About

Carers Information Service

This factsheet looks at financial and practical support available for carers and the people they support to get out and about. Please note that any organisations listed are included for information only and listing does not mean recommendation.

This factsheet is part of **How To... A Guide for Carers in Croydon**. You can download the full series of factsheets from our website www.carersinfo.org.uk. You can also call us on 020 8649 9339, option 1, or visit the Carers Support Centre.

Financial help

Many of the following discounts only apply to people living in a Greater London borough. If the person you care for lives outside Croydon, ask their council which public transport discount schemes are available.

60+ London Oyster Photocard

0343 222 1234

www.tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/adult-discounts-and-concessions/60-london-oyster

Free travel on bus, tube, tram, Docklands Light Railway (DLR), London Overground and most National Rail services in London for people aged 60 and over who live in a London borough. Passengers are not eligible for this card if they are eligible for an older or disabled person's Freedom Pass.

Bus and Tram Discount Scheme

0343 222 1234

www.tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/adult-discounts-and-concessions/bus-and-tram-discount

Half-price adult fares on buses and trams (both Oyster pay as you go and weekly/monthly passes) for London residents aged 18-60 who receive Income Support or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), have been getting Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)

for at least 13 weeks or have been getting Universal Credit for at least 13 weeks and earn less than the earnings threshold set by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

Coachcards

08717 818 178

www.nationalexpress.com

The Disabled Coachcard (for people who are registered disabled), Senior Coachcard (for people aged 60 plus) and the Young Persons Coachcard (for young people aged 16-26) give cardholders a third off coach travel for a year with National Express across the UK. Cards cost £10 each.

Congestion Charge

0343 222 2222

www.tfl.gov.uk

Blue Badge holders don't have to pay the congestion charge on up to two vehicles once they have completed a registration form and paid a one-off £10 fee. You can apply for an exemption on a Blue Badge holder's behalf. If you have to drive the person you care for into central London for hospital treatment, you can ask for a Congestion Charge refund - speak to the hospital to apply.

Disabled Persons Railcard

0345 605 0525

disability@atoc.org

www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

The Disabled Persons Railcard is available to disabled adults and children. It gives the cardholder and a friend/carer a third off standard and first class rail fares throughout Great Britain. Cards cost £20 for a year or £54 for three years. Applications can be made online or by post.

Discounts for people who do not hold a Disabled Persons Railcard

Blind or visually impaired people travelling with a companion are entitled to at least a third off most rail fares throughout the UK. This discount only applies to adult fares and does not apply to people travelling alone. Blind or visually impaired people can also buy an additional adult season ticket for a companion to travel with them on National Rail services at no extra cost.

People who need to stay in their wheelchair during a journey are entitled to at least a third off most rail fares throughout the UK. A companion will also be entitled to the discount. This applies to adult and child fares.

All the above discounted tickets can



be purchased from staffed National Rail station ticket offices. For passengers with a visual impairment, evidence of visual impairment will be required when booking and whilst travelling. Evidence from a recognised institution will be accepted, such as the local council, the adult social care team, The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) or St Dunstons. For more information visit www.nationalrail.co.uk or call 0345 748 4950.

Driving Lessons

The Family Fund's Driving Ambitions grant (01904 621 115; www.familyfund.org.uk) supports disabled young people to start driving lessons. Applicants must have no driving experience and have never taken driving lessons previously. Grants can contribute towards the cost of the provisional licence, theory test, learning materials and the first taster lesson.

Customers of the Motability Scheme (0300 456 4566; www.motability.co.uk) aged 16-25 can receive a contribution for up to 40 hours of driving lesson tuition. Applicants must be in full-time education or training, and they or their parents must receive a means-tested benefit. Eligible benefits include Income Support, income-related Jobseekers Allowance, Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit), Housing Benefit, income-related ESA, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit.

Whilst there is not a specific carers' grant for driving lessons, you may be able to apply for a grant from a general fund. See our *Grant-Giving Organisations* factsheet for more details.

Disabled Persons Freedom Pass

020 8726 7100
travel.service@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/adult-care/getting-around/disabled-person-freedom-pass
Free travel on trains (after 9.30am on weekdays, all day on weekends/bank holidays), trams, tube and DLR in Greater London, and on buses throughout England. Cardholders must have an eligible disability.

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme

0300 330 1343 (Low Income Scheme helpline)
www.nhs.uk
If you or the person you care for are referred to hospital or other NHS premises by a health professional for NHS treatment or a diagnostic test, you may be able to claim back travel costs. To be eligible, you must be on a low income or receive certain income-related benefits. If accompanying the person you care for to their appointment, you may be able to claim back travel costs if their health professional says it is medically necessary for them to travel with a carer.

London Taxicard Scheme

020 8726 7100
travel.service@croydon.gov.uk
www.croydon.gov.uk/adult-care/taxi-card
Reduced fares in black cabs for Croydon residents who are registered blind, or have severe mobility problems and are unable to use public transport. The Taxicard holder pays a minimum contribution, and Croydon Council will pay the rest up to a maximum amount. If the total fare is above this amount, the Taxicard holder must pay the rest of the fare. Check with the Travel Service for current limits. The council will contribute more for trips made at night or at weekends. The concession is limited to a certain number of trips per year and bookings must be made in advance.

Older Persons Freedom Pass

0300 330 1433
info@freedompass.org
www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/services/freedom-pass/older-persons-freedom-pass
Free travel on trains (after 9.30am), trams, tube and DLR in Greater London, and off-peak local buses (after 9.30am) throughout England. You must live in London and meet specific age criteria to be eligible. The age criteria rises in line with the state pension age for women.

Senior Railcard

0345 3000 250
railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk
www.senior-railcard.co.uk
A third off most rail fares throughout the UK for people aged 60 and over. Costs £30 for one year or £70 for three years.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

0300 123 1073
www.hmrc.gov.uk
People with a long-term illness or disability will not have to pay VAT on the lease or purchase of a Motability vehicle or on vehicles that are designed or substantially adapted to enable them to enter and drive, or enter and be carried in, the vehicle.

Vehicle Tax

0300 123 4321 (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency)
www.gov.uk
You are exempt from paying vehicle tax if you receive:

- Higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- Enhanced rate mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP).
- War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.
- Armed Forces Independence Payment.

The vehicle must be registered to the disabled person or their nominated driver. If you are the nominated driver, you can only drive the car to meet the needs of the disabled person; you cannot drive it for your own personal use. The exemption can be claimed when applying for vehicle tax.

If you receive standard rate Personal Independence Payment (PIP), you can claim a 50% reduction in your vehicle tax. For more information on how to apply, contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).



Using a car

Blue Badges

020 8726 7100 (Croydon Travel Services)
0844 463 0213 (National Blue Badge)
travel.service@croydon.gov.uk
(Croydon Travel Services)
bluebadge@northgate-is.com
(National Blue Badge)
www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge

Provides parking concessions, such as parking on single or double yellow lines (up to three hours), in disabled bays, or free parking in 'pay and display' bays, to disabled people who qualify. You may be eligible if you:

- Have a permanent and substantial disability that means you cannot walk or have very considerable difficulty walking.
- Receive certain mobility benefits.
- Are registered blind.

You can also apply for a child with a health condition if they meet the criteria.

Croydon Council has the full eligibility criteria: www.croydon.gov.uk/adult-care/blue-badges.

The Department of Transport has announced plans to change the Blue Badges criteria to allow people with less visible conditions such as a mental health problem or autism to apply. This change has not yet come into force.

There is a £10 application fee for Blue Badges. To apply, contact Croydon Travel Services (020 8726 7100) or visit www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge.

Blue Badge holders must display their badge correctly when using parking concessions. If you care for a disabled person with a Blue Badge, the Blue Badge can only be used if:

- The Blue Badge holder is the driver or a passenger in the car.
- The Blue Badge holder is being dropped off or collected, and the driver needs to park where the person is being collected or dropped off.

The Companion Badge can be used by Blue Badge holders in Croydon as an alternative to the Blue Badge, which can be vulnerable to theft. It costs £30, and is only valid in Croydon.

A disabled parking bay can be created outside the home of Blue Badge holders who have no available offstreet parking within 100 metres, regular shortages of on-street parking and a vehicle registered at the address. Dropped kerbs can also be created outside the homes of Blue Badge holders to make it easier to access the house.

Breakdown Services

- Green Flag (0845 246 2766, www.greenflag.com) aims to prioritise vulnerable members when dispatching breakdown assistance.
- The AA (0800 262 050 Disability Helpline, www.theaa.com) recommends disabled people register their needs when taking out breakdown cover so appropriate support and vehicles can be dispatched.
- The RAC (0800 029 029, www.rac.co.uk) offers specific breakdown cover for Blue Badge holders (RAC Response).

Disabled Motoring UK

01508 489 449
info@disabledmotoring.org
www.disabledmotoring.org

Provides information and advice for disabled drivers, passengers and Blue Badge holders. Casework service for members helps deal with issues like disputing parking fines.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

0300 790 6806
www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions

Drivers are legally required to inform the DVLA if they have a notifiable medical condition that might affect their driving ability. Notifiable conditions include (but aren't limited to) epilepsy, strokes, other neurological and mental health conditions, physical disabilities and visual impairments. Contact the DVLA for a full list of conditions.

Driving Lessons

Many local driving schools can offer driving lessons to meet disabled people's individual needs. Contact local or national driving schools to find out what they can provide.

The following driving schools provide specialist support:

- BSM (0330 100 7501, www.bsm.co.uk) can offer specially trained instructors and adapted cars.
- QEF Mobility Services (020 8770 1151, www.qef.org.uk) offers driving assessments and lessons for disabled people in a range of adapted vehicles.

Motability

0300 456 4566
www.motability.co.uk
Enables people receiving certain disability benefits such as higher rate mobility Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or enhanced rate mobility Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to exchange their mobility allowance to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair. If the person you care for is eligible, they do not need to be the driver, but the car must be used for their benefit.

QEF Mobility Services

020 8770 1151
mobility@qef.org.uk
www.qef.org.uk
Provides practical advice, assessment and training for disabled people wishing to learn how to drive or return to driving following an accident or illness. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available for hire for wheelchair users with Motor Neurone Disease.



Using public transport

Transport for All

020 7737 2339

www.transportforall.org.uk

Transport helpline for disabled and older users of public transport in London. Provides help and advice on travel including planning journeys, applying for discount cards and support with complaints about transport services.

Transport for London

0343 222 1234

tflaccessibility@tfl.gov.uk

www.tfl.gov.uk

24-hour online travel information and journey planning, including options to plan accessible journeys. Customers do not need to pre-book assistance but can book assistance on the London Overground. Provides a range of accessibility guides including: *Audio Tube Map*, *Step-Free Tube Guide* and *Assisted Transport Services in Greater London*. Also offers a Travel Support Card for people with a hidden disability who might need help during a journey. The card alerts transport staff to the person's support needs, details of regular journeys and emergency contact information.

Travel training

Croydon Council Travel Training Service

020 8604 7578

traveltraining@croydon.gov.uk

Provide an individualised travel training service to young people and adults with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including Bus Days. Bus Days allows disabled people or those who lack confidence to practice travelling on a bus in a safe, secure environment. Carers are also welcome. In Croydon, Bus Days are held every third Thursday of the month, for ten months of the year.

Travel Mentoring Scheme

020 3054 4361

travelmentor@tfl.gov.uk

www.tfl.gov.uk

Advice on planning a journey using an accessible route. They can provide a mentor to come with someone for their first few journeys to help them gain confidence and become an independent traveller.

Buses, trams and Docklands Light Railway (DLR)

In Greater London, all buses, trams and Docklands Light Railway (DLR) trains have step-free access. Wheelchair users travel free on all London buses and trams. Buses have one dedicated wheelchair secure space and trams have two spaces. On buses, wheelchair users have priority over buggies.

Mobility Aid Recognition Scheme

020 3054 4361

www.tfl.gov.uk

Scheme to help people who use mobility aids, such as mobility scooters, wheelchairs and mobility walkers, to show that their mobility aid can be used safely on public transport. To use the scheme, contact the Travel Mentoring Service on the above number. If the person's device can be used on London buses, the person will be offered an accompanied journey to check the suitability and size of their mobility aid. If the mobility aid is suited for bus travel, they will be given a Mobility Aid Card to keep and show to bus drivers to prove their device is suited to bus travel.



Coaches

Megabus

0141 332 9644

www.uk.megabus.com/passengers-with-disabilities.aspx

Wheelchair and scooter users who can transfer and climb the few steps onto the bus will be offered assistance from the driver, and the wheelchair or scooter will be stored in the luggage bay. Wheelchair and scooter users who need to remain in their wheelchair during the journey need to book their place by phone at least 36 hours before their journey.

National Express

0371 781 8181 (Disabled

Persons Travel Helpline)

dpth@nationalexpress.com

www.nationalexpress.com

Many coaches are now accessible and have passenger lifts at the front entrance and space for one wheelchair. National Express do not normally reserve specific seats; however with 36 hours' notice they can guarantee a wheelchair space.

Lightweight (20kg or less) manual wheelchairs can be stowed in the luggage hold for customers who can transfer. Mobility scooters that can be dismantled (the heaviest part not exceeding 20kg) can be stowed in the luggage hold but staff cannot assist with dismantling or reassembling.

Assistance from staff needs to be booked 24 hours in advance and can include: providing accessible information, help on and off coaches, a priority front seat, help loading and unloading luggage (not exceeding 23kg) and connection assistance at staffed stations where available.

Victoria Coach Station

020 7027 2520

www.tfl.gov.uk

Free mobility assistance available, but needs to be booked at least 24 hours in advance.

Travelling by rail

Disabled people's right to travel by train is protected by the train company's Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP). Each train company must produce a DPPP and copies can be requested from the train company.

Assistance can be provided with boarding the train, during the journey and exiting the train. You can also be guided off the platform to the arrival or interchange station, as well as being assisted with onward travel arrangements. Assistance is free and available to people who need assistance due to disability, temporary impairment or old age. You do not need a Disabled Persons Railcard.

To request travel assistance, contact the rail company you are starting your journey with at least 24 hours before travelling. To check which company you are travelling with, contact National Rail Enquiries (see contact details below). London Overground offers a 'turn up and go' service, which means you do not need to pre-book assistance.

National Rail Enquiries

03457 484 950

www.nationalrail.co.uk

Stations Made Easy gives full accessibility information, as well as maps and details of staffing hours, of all stations. To use Stations Made Easy, enter the name of the station that you are interested in then click on the Stations Made Easy logo next to the station address.

Travelling by tube

If you need assistance to travel, you do not need to book in advance. Staff can assist you at each stage of your journey, including getting onto the platform, boarding the train, finding your seat and calling ahead to your destination or interchange station for a member of staff to meet and assist you there.

Accessible tube maps include details of stations with step-free access, information on gaps between the platform and the train, and stations accessible by escalator. Audio and large print versions are also available.

If you arrive at a station and the lift is unavailable, staff will help you to plan an alternative journey to your destination. If there isn't a suitable alternative route, a member of staff will book a taxi (at Transport for London's cost) to take you to your destination or an accessible station from where you can continue your journey.

Door-to-door transport

Croydon Accessible Transport

020 8665 0861

www.croydonaccessibletransport.org.uk

Provides low-cost minibuses, multipurpose vehicles and wheelchair accessible vehicles for hire for non-profit organisations within the London Borough of Croydon. Can provide drivers/volunteers if needed. Explorers' Club provides low-cost day trips for disabled Croydon residents or residents aged over 60. (A £10 membership fee is required.)

Croydon Neighbourhood Care

020 8662 1000

www.cnca.org.uk

Supports local neighbourhood care associations and provides services and advice for isolated, vulnerable and frail people in Croydon. Some groups offer transport, so check with your local association.

Dial a Ride

0343 222 7777 (Bookings)

dar.reservations@tfl.gov.uk

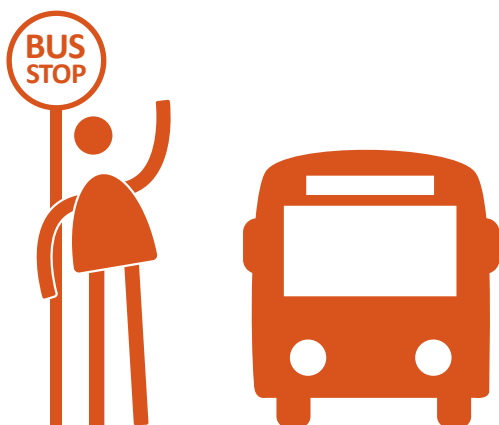
www.tfl.gov.uk

Provides free door-to-door minibus service for disabled people who cannot use public transport. You are automatically eligible if you are:

- A Taxicard member.
- Receiving higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance.
- Receiving standard or enhanced mobility rate of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP).
- Registered blind or partially sighted.
- Aged 85 or over.
- Receiving higher rate Attendance Allowance.
- Receiving War Pension Mobility Supplement.

If not automatically eligible, you can still apply using the application form.

The service can be used for things such as shopping, visiting family and friends or travelling to leisure activities. It cannot be used for travel to hospital appointments, work, council day centres or school. The service can be busy so you may wish to book a day in advance. If travelling with the person you care for, you can ride for free, provided you are both travelling to and from the same address.





Horizon Care and Welfare Association

020 8665 0921

horizoncareandwelfare@hotmail.com

Provides free wheelchair accessible transport for disabled people and their carers. This service must be booked in advance. It is open to all but preference is given to black and minority ethnic (BME) users.

Taxis and private hire vehicles (minicabs)

All black cabs must be accessible to wheelchair users, and drivers must allow wheelchair users and people with assistance dogs to travel. Private hire vehicles do not necessarily have to be wheelchair accessible, so check with the operator before travelling. Cabwise, run by Transport for London, has a search directory for wheelchair accessible minicabs: www.tfl.gov.uk/forms/12389.aspx

Air travel



When travelling by air, a person with a disability which affects their mobility (or an older person, or someone with a temporary injury such as a broken leg) has the right to:

- Help at arrival, including terminal entrances and car parks.
- Help with check-in.
- Help with moving through the airport, including to the toilets.

You must let the airline know assistance is needed at least 48 hours in advance. For more information on travelling by air, see our *Leisure and Holidays* factsheet.

Hospital transport

The following listings refer to Croydon University Hospital. Please check with the relevant hospital.

Hospital Car Parking

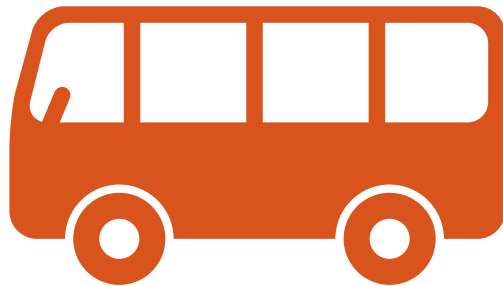
www.croydonhealthservices.nhs.uk/visitor-guide

Blue Badge holders can park for free at as long as they park in a disabled parking bay. However, if these bays are not available, or if you are not a Blue Badge holder, usual car parking rates apply. If the person you care for is likely to be in hospital long-term, speak to the nurse in charge of the ward for a weekly permit (currently £10). Find the latest information on charges online.

Hospital Transport Services

0333 240 4086

With a minimum of 24 hours' notice, transport to and from hospital can be arranged for those assessed as eligible. Assistance must be booked by the patient directly, or by a carer on behalf of a patient who is unable to make the phone call themselves. Ask the health professional arranging your appointment for more information.



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Every effort has been made to ensure the contents of this factsheet are correct, but the Carers Information Service cannot accept responsibility for information that is inaccurate or for the quality of the services listed. All the *How To... A Guide for Carers in Croydon* factsheets are available at www.carersinfo.org.uk to download, where they will be regularly updated.

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Written by Amy Deakin
Communications and Publications Officer at the Carers Information Service

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Information
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