

Making rail accessible

Helping older and
disabled passengers



NORTHERN

Go do your thing

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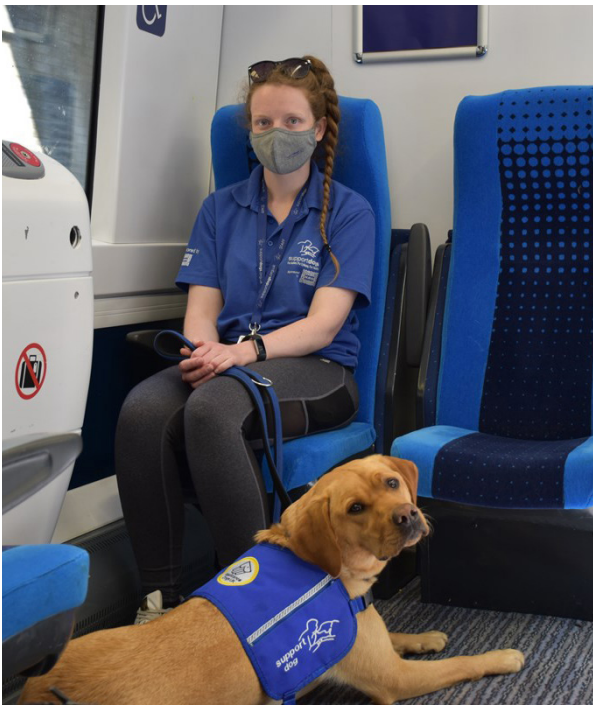
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Introduction

We are committed to supporting everyone in the communities we serve, including:

- older and disabled people;
- families with pushchairs and small children; and
- those who need more time to get on and off the train; so that all our passengers can use the railways confidently.

We do our best to provide rail services which are accessible to everyone, so that you can travel with the knowledge that extra support is available at each stage of your journey, when you need it.

This leaflet is a practical guide to travelling with us. It explains what we do to assist older and disabled passengers, as well as the standards of service you can expect from us. It also tells you how to find details of the assistance we offer, our facilities and the information you may need to plan your journey, as well as our commitment to investigate and respond to assistance that does not go to plan.

We are committed to making sure all our passengers can travel with confidence. This includes offering:

- assistance at our stations, on our trains, and when you are making connections;
- alternative accessible transport when our stations or trains are not accessible;
- passenger information, which is clear, consistent and up to date;
- appropriate compensation if things don't go to plan;
- a range of discounts to reduce the cost of travel for disabled passengers travelling with a companion.



Assistance: What is available and how to get it



We will provide you with assistance at our stations during the hours that trains are scheduled to call at that station. Many of our stations are staffed and all of our trains have conductors. When staff are available, they will always do their best to support you and provide the assistance that you need. Most of our services are two - and three - carriage trains, so when a train arrives at a station which is not staffed, the conductor will be easy to identify on the platform, and they will exit the train at every station their service calls at.

Passenger Assist

We use a system called Passenger Assist to book assistance at stations for passengers during their journey and to reserve seats and wheelchair spaces on trains when reservations are available.

We use the same systems for booking assistance as other train companies and station operators. This means that we can book assistance for your whole rail journey through a single point of contact, even when part of the journey is with other train operators or when our services call at stations not managed by us.

To book assistance for your journey, please contact our Assisted Travel Support team using the contact details below. Our team are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week when trains are running.

Phone: **0800 138 5560** (free, including from mobiles)

Text Relay: **18001 0800 138 5560**

WhatsApp: **07779 914800** (available 06:00 – 23:00)

Email: **assistance@northernrailway.co.uk**

Online: **help.northernrailway.co.uk/s/article/Assisted-Travel-1**

We will send you a booking confirmation by email if you have provided your details, or by post if you would prefer.

We aim to answer your call within 30 seconds and to respond to email and online requests within two working hours. We regularly monitor our performance against these targets.

When you are booking assistance, our Passenger Assist team check the station accessibility information with your individual journey in mind, and make sure there is enough time for you to make any connections. You can find this information on our website at northernrailway.co.uk/stations. If you would prefer a hard copy of this station information or would like it in a different format, such as large print, we can send this to you by post. Please contact our customer services centre by phoning 0800 200 6060 or emailing enquiries@northernrailway.co.uk to ask for a hard copy.

If the station you want to travel from is not accessible to you, we will provide alternative transport at no extra cost to the nearest or most convenient station so that you can continue your journey. For example, if there is only access by steps to some or all platforms, we will arrange accessible road transport (such as a taxi) for you to the nearest station that is suitable for your journey and accessible to you. Please contact our Assisted Travel Support team, who will discuss your needs with you and arrange the assistance needed for your journey.

Assistance and support are available at each stage of your journey. Our service includes the following:

Before you travel

- Assistance with planning your journey.
- Explaining the accessibility of our network and the facilities available at the station and on the train.
- Making seat reservations on services run by other train companies.
- Helping you buy tickets, including Advance tickets, for your journey at the same time as booking assistance.

At the station

- Assistance with getting on and off the train at every station (including with wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility aids).
- Support with luggage at larger, staffed stations.
- Assistance through the station and to your platform at larger, staffed stations.
- Assistance to and from connecting train services and onward transport such as bus, tram, and taxi services within the local station area.

Training

We know that staff training plays an important part in providing a railway service which is accessible for everyone. This is why we are working hard to make sure our staff have the necessary skills and understanding to be able to assist passengers who have a range of accessibility needs, including visible and hidden disabilities.



What to expect: Our commitment to passengers at every stage of the journey

Before you travel

We understand that it is important to have accurate information available when you are planning your journey so that you know what to expect at our stations and on our trains.

You can find station information, including about accessibility and facilities (such as parking and staff availability), on our website at [northernrailway.co.uk/stations](https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/stations). You can also find information about the accessibility of our trains and other useful information at www.northernrailway.co.uk/accessibility-hub. Staff in our Assisted Travel Support Team are happy to help you plan your journey. If you would like to receive station information by post, including in an alternative format such as large print, they can send this to you.

On our mobile app and website, you can find live train times and information about any current or future changes or delays to our services which may affect your journey.





How to buy tickets

There are a number of ways that you can buy tickets before or on the day of travel.

Online

Our website, northernrailway.co.uk, offers a range of tickets and ways to help you plan your journey.

You can buy your tickets then download them on your smartphone or on our free Northern app. If you prefer, you can get your tickets sent to you by First Class post (please allow five days for delivery). You can also collect your prepaid tickets from ticket machines at some stations.

On your mobile or on our app

You can buy your tickets on your smartphone anytime, anywhere on our free mobile app. Buy your tickets securely on our app, then just show your smartphone to the conductor on the train.

Ticket machines at stations

Ticket machines are available at most of our stations. You can buy a range of tickets from our machines using a credit card, debit card or cash. You can use your tickets straight away, but please check your journey times and individual ticket restrictions when buying tickets to make sure that they are valid for your planned train.

Station ticket offices

You can buy the full range of tickets from staffed stations. Our ticket offices will accept all major credit cards, debit cards, cash and Northern Rail Travel vouchers.



On trains

At stations where there is no ticket office or ticket machine, or when the ticket office is closed, you can buy tickets from the conductor on the train.

We understand that disabilities are not always visible. If you are concerned about buying tickets, please speak to our station staff or contact our customer experience centre for advice.

If you are not able to buy a ticket before your journey because our facilities are not accessible or available, you can buy your ticket during the journey or at the station you are travelling to without having to pay a penalty. You will still be able to enjoy any reduction which you are entitled to, including using your Disabled Persons Railcard.

Just like all other train operators, we take part in the following schemes that offer discounted fares.

Discounts and Railcards

If you are blind or partially sighted

If you are blind or partially sighted and travelling with a companion and you do not have a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime or Day tickets apply to both of you.

- Anytime Single or Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Return – 50% discount

There are no discounts if you are travelling alone and you do not have a railcard.

To get these discounts you need a document which confirms your disability, issued by a recognised institution (for example, a government department, local authority, Guide Dog Ownership certification or Royal National Institute of Blind People).

- Season tickets – if you travel with a companion, you can get one adult season ticket to cover two people. This means that two people travelling together can travel for the price of one. A different companion can travel with you on different days.

If you stay in your wheelchair for a rail journey

If you stay in your wheelchair for the full journey and you do not have a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime or Day tickets will apply.

- Anytime Single or Return – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Single – 34% discount
- Anytime Day Return – 50% discount

The same discount will apply for one person travelling with you.

Disabled Persons Railcard

The Disabled Persons Railcard is a type of discount card for tickets which allows those living with disabilities to save up to one-third of the cost of rail travel in the UK. An adult travelling with the cardholder will get a 34% reduction on their tickets.

There are no time restrictions on the Disabled Persons Railcard, so you can use it to get a discount on tickets at any time of the day. To find out if you are eligible, and for more information on how to apply for a Disabled Persons Railcard, visit disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk or contact our Rail Delivery Group using the contact details below.

Email: disability@raildeliverygroup.com

Phone: **0345 605 0525**

Textphone: **0345 601 0132** (for people with hearing difficulties)

Disabled Persons Railcard discounts are available on tickets bought from our conductors, ticket machines, ticket offices, website and mobile app.

There are messages on our website which tell passengers when they are buying tickets that assistance is available for their journey. We make sure that our contact centre and ticket office staff offer our assistance service to passengers who have a Disabled Persons Railcard.

Senior Railcard

A Senior Railcard is available to anyone over the age of 60 and allows you to save up to one-third of the cost of rail travel in the UK. You can buy these online, over the phone or at any station ticket office. Please note that when buying a Senior Railcard, you will need your passport or UK driving licence as proof of age.

To find out if you are eligible and for more information on how to apply for a Senior Railcard, visit <https://www.senior-railcard.co.uk> or use the contact details below.

Email: **railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk**

Phone: **0345 300 0250**

There may be other railcards which are suitable for you. Please visit [railcard.co.uk](https://www.railcard.co.uk) to find more information.

Wheelchairs

All of our trains can take passengers using a wheelchair in the clearly marked spaces on board, as long as they fit within the following measurements.

Width: 70cm Length: 120cm Weight: 300kg (including the user)

If your wheelchair does not fit within these measurements, please contact our Assisted Travel Support Team who will be able to offer advice.

Our mobility scooter permit scheme

We know how important mobility scooters are for some of our passengers, so we are happy to accept certain types on many of our trains.

We can accept mobility scooters on our trains at over 160 'mobility scooter friendly' stations. For full details, please see our mobility scooter policy on our website at northernrailway.co.uk/mobilityscooter or contact our customer experience centre.

Stations vary across our network. On our scooter friendly platforms, our boarding ramps are safe for our passengers and staff to use, and the platforms are wide enough for a mobility scooter to turn around safely even when the ramps are extended.



At the station

Across our network of 476 stations, the facilities may vary. Many of our stations are always staffed. However, others are staffed for part of the day, and some have no station-based staff at all.

At larger stations, such as Leeds and Manchester Victoria, there are clear signs showing where to find the dedicated information points that are located on the station concourse. The information points generally have counters of different heights, with information screens and leaflets positioned so that they can be accessed by everyone.

There are clearly marked meeting points at many staffed stations to help passengers who have booked assistance to find our staff, where there are not, please approach the station ticket office. We recommend that you arrive at the station 20 minutes before your train departs to allow time for this.

If you have not booked assistance when you arrive at a station but feel you may need support, please speak to a member of staff or, at an unstaffed station, please make your way to the platform and attract the attention of the conductor when the train arrives. Our conductors are trained to look out for passengers who may need assistance when their train arrives at a station.

When you have boarded a train, our station staff will speak to the conductor and, if necessary, staff at the station you are travelling to, to make sure assistance is available to help you get off the train.

We aim to help you get off the train within five minutes of it arriving into the station.

When you are booking assistance, our Assisted Travel Support team will consider:

- whether your journey involves a station which does not have staff available at the time you are travelling;
- the type of assistance you need; and
- the overall accessibility of the station;

to make sure you can complete your journey.

If our team believe there is any risk of you not being given the assistance you need at a particular station, they will discuss different options with you. They will then be able to offer alternative plans for your journey, assistance or transport to get you to your destination.



Assistance with luggage

We understand that luggage can be difficult to manage in stations for many disabled and older people. If you need help with your luggage, please tell us when you book assistance so we can make sure that station staff are available. When possible, we can take passengers and their luggage from the train to station entrances (and vice versa) and to connecting trains. Please note, this service is only available at stations where staff are present.

Our staff must be able to lift luggage safely. Please keep to the limits set out in the National Rail Conditions of Travel, which state that you can travel with up to two large items and one small item of luggage.

Step-free stations map

To help our passengers plan their journey, we have produced a map showing all the stations our trains call at. Our map shows the level of step-free access that is available at each station. You can find this map on our website at: <https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/network-map>

Station accessibility information

Please see our website at [northernrailway.co.uk/stations](https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/stations) for information on whether the following services and facilities are available at stations operated by us.

- Platform accessibility and how access is provided (including lifts, ramps and steps)
- Disabled parking
- Accessible set-down and pick-up points
- Ticket office opening hours
- Meeting points for assistance
- Staffing hours and assistance availability
- Accessible ticket machines
- Customer information systems
- Help points
- Accessible toilets (including National Key toilets)

- Induction loops
- Tactile paving
- Station wheelchairs
- Accessible, waterproof waiting facilities
- Catering facilities
- Secure Stations Scheme Accreditation
(an accredited station is a safe and secure environment for staff and passengers)

We are making accessibility improvements through our Accessibility for All programme at many of our stations.



On the train

An overview of each type of train, including general accessibility and scheduled service routes, is available on our website, [northernrailway.co.uk/trains](https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/trains).

All of our trains offer:

- two wheelchair spaces;
- at least one accessible toilet;
- a boarding ramp;
- designated priority seating;
- spoken information;
- visual information; and
- a conductor who can offer assistance during your journey on every train.

All our trains are fitted with public address systems. Our conductors are trained to make clear announcements when giving information, for example, details of the next station. Conductors will make these announcements on all services that do not have recorded announcements.

Seats on trains

We do not offer seat reservations on any of our services, and our Assisted Travel Support team will make this clear when booking assistance for you. However, our conductors will do their best to assist older and disabled passengers to find a seat.

Priority seating, which has extra legroom and is situated near the doors, is available on all of our trains. Priority seats are clearly labelled, and other passengers are expected to give up their seat if it is needed by an older, pregnant or disabled person.

Wheelchair spaces are also available on all of our trains, and our conductors do their best to make sure these dedicated spaces are kept clear and that wheelchair users are given priority for this space.

We also take part in a priority seating card scheme. As part of this scheme, you can get a card which you can use to let our staff and other passengers know that you need a seat on board the train. These cards are available from our Assisted Travel Support Team.

Assistance dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome on all of our trains. They can travel free of charge and in any part of the train. Our conductors will be happy to make sure that you are travelling in the most suitable seating to make the journey comfortable for both you and your dog.

Ramps

We offer portable ramps so that passengers with reduced mobility can safely move on and off our trains. These are specifically designed to fit the train you are travelling on and are available at our staffed stations and on board all our trains.

Ramps are available to all passengers who need assistance. If you have not booked assistance in advance but find that you need a ramp to support you with your journey, please speak to a member of station staff or the conductor and they will arrange for the ramp to be put in place.



If things do not go as planned

We do everything we can to avoid delays or cancellations, but sometimes they still happen.

We promise that if your train is delayed, we will give you as much information as we can about what is happening.

If you have booked assistance in advance and there has been significant disruption to your journey (for example, because of severe weather), we will contact you and help you find other options for your journey if this is possible.

When a journey changes, or there is disruption to our services, we will offer information about changes to train times and other options for travel to support passengers who have hearing or visual difficulties. This information will be given by public address announcements and information screens displayed at stations and on our trains.

If there are significant changes and disruptions to a journey, conductors will walk through the train to check if passengers need extra support and to offer assistance if this is possible. Staff will always walk through the train to assist older and disabled passengers when a train has had to stop unexpectedly before it has reached its planned destination.

You can see live train times and information about delays and cancellations on our mobile app and website.

Help points are available at many stations. At these points, you can be directed to our customer information team who will help you to continue your journey.

Our Assisted Travel Support team are available for any support you may require during your journey.

Alternative transport

If we need to use alternative transport, we do our best to use rail replacement buses or coaches which are accessible to older and disabled passengers. We try to work with the same suppliers of rail replacement transport.

This means we can ask that accessible vehicles are provided when there has been disruption to our rail services. However, this cannot be guaranteed when vehicles are needed at short notice, especially in locations where there is limited availability of accessible vehicles.

If things go wrong

Our passengers are at the heart of all that we do and we work hard to make sure that the assistance we offer is right for every journey. However, sometimes things go wrong, and we may not be able to provide the standard of service that we promised.

Your feedback is important to us. If you are not happy with the assistance we provided, please contact our Assisted Travel Support team by phoning **0800 200 6060**, via WhatsApp on **07779 914800** (available 06:00 – 23:00) or by visiting our website **www.northernrailway.co.uk/help/contact**.

You can do this whether you booked assistance in advance or not. We will look into what happened and what we can do to improve our service. We treat each report on a case-by-case basis and will always respond to you – with responses taking no more than 20 working days whenever possible.

We understand that not getting the assistance you need for a journey is an inconvenience. If this happens, we will offer you suitable compensation for your journey. If you are not happy with the final response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman using the contact details in the next section.



Where to get more information and how to get in touch

You can find more details about how we help older and disabled passengers and how we meet our legal responsibilities in our full Accessible Travel Policy. This is available on our website at:
www.northernrailway.co.uk/accessibility-hub.

You can ask for this leaflet and our accessible travel policy in other formats (such as audio and large print) by contacting our Assisted Travel Support team by using the contact details at the bottom of this page. We will do our best to send this to you within seven working days. On the website you will also find Easy Read and BSL versions of our policy: **<https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/accessibility-hub/before-you-travel>**.

We make sure that information about the accessibility of our stations and trains is kept up to date. This information is available in an online PDF format from **northernrailway.co.uk/accessibility-hub**. It can be accessed on your mobile device and used with screen readers or other software with accessibility features (for example, Adobe Reader). We can also provide train station information by post (including in alternative formats such as large print). Please contact our customer services centre by phoning **0800 200 6060** or emailing **enquiries@northernrailway.co.uk** to ask for this information in a different format.

Contact us

Please contact our customer experience centre for more information about our services and advice for your journey on the day of travel.

Phone: **0800 200 6060** (free, including from mobiles)

Text Relay: **18001 0800 200 6060**

WhatsApp: **07779 914800** (available 06:00 – 23:00)

Email: **enquiries@northernrailway.co.uk**

Online: **northernrailway.co.uk/help**

How to contact us on social media:



X: @northernassist



Facebook: @northernassist



Instagram: @northernrailway

This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week (except Christmas Day) when trains are running.

We would be grateful to hear your feedback on our services and any suggestions for improving accessibility.

We hope that you will not have any reason to complain when you are travelling with us. However, if you do, you can speak to a member of staff on the train or at the station and they will try to sort out the problem there and then.

If you would prefer, you can contact our customer experience centre or email us at **complaints@northernrailway.co.uk**. We will then do our best to settle your complaint. If you are not happy with the final response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman using the contact details below.

Phone: **0330 094 0362**

Textphone: **0330 094 0363**

Email: **info@railombudsman.org**

By post: **Freepost – Rail Ombudsman**

northernrailway.co.uk/accessibility



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