

**17 Finkle Street, Kendal Cumbria, LA9 4AB
Helpline 030 300 300 03**

HELP WITH TRANSPORT

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**Last reviewed October 2024
Next review due September 2025**

Disabled Parking/Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme is managed in South Lakeland by Westmorland & Furness Council Social Services. It is designed for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as drivers or passengers to access goods, services and other facilities by allowing them to park close to their destinations in designated bays or on yellow lines for up to 3 hours unless a loading/unloading ban is in place.

You may be eligible to apply for a badge if:

- You receive the Higher Mobility Rate of Disability Living Allowance, or score more than 8 points under “moving around” for the Personal Independence Payment, or receive the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement, or have received a lump sum benefit within tariff levels 1-8 of the Armed Forces & Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme, or
- You are registered blind or severely sight impaired with the local authority, or
- You use a motor vehicle supplied for disabled people by a Government Health Department, or
- You have a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking, or
- You have a very severe upper limb disability and regularly drive a vehicle but cannot turn a steering wheel by hand.

How to apply

You may apply

- on line at www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge or
- by downloading and returning a completed copy of the Blue Badge form available at: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk> by post
- by collecting a copy of the form from your local library
- phoning: **Westmorland & Furness Council** for an application form or any information or advice regarding this scheme on **0300 373 3300**, or

Help is available at Age UK South Lakeland please phone 030 300 300 03 for advice

The Blue Badge Scheme is a Department for Transport national scheme run by local councils and operates throughout the UK for on-street parking concessions. The concessions provided under the scheme do not apply to off-street car parks or privately owned roads. The rules in these locations vary and you should always check the rules in public car parks.

The government website:

www.gov.uk/where-registered-disabled-drivers-can-park

has the facility to direct you to the relevant authority website to check for disabled parking in a given postcode area. The format of each local authority website to which you are directed will vary – if the information is not obvious, try a search for “Parking” or “Blue Badge.”

Transport to Medical Appointments

NHS Patient Transport

If you are unable to use public transport due to a medical reason, you may be eligible for NHS patient transport to hospital appointments or after discharge from hospital. Ask your GP surgery or hospital consultancy team for more information.

Since April 2011 in South Cumbria (South Lakes and Furness), the new national eligibility criteria came into operation to assess patients for their eligibility to access Patient Transport Services (PTS):

- Where the medical condition of the patient is such that they require the skills or support of PTS staff on/after the journey
- Where it would be detrimental to the patient's condition or recovery if they were to travel by other means.
- Where the patient's medical condition impacts on their mobility to such an extent that they would be unable to access healthcare
- As a recognised parent or guardian where children are being conveyed.

Booking Patient Transport Services:

To book hospital transport you or someone on your behalf will ring a call centre to make the booking. The call handler will then ask a few questions about your general health and mobility to see if you might be eligible for NHS transport.

If you are making the booking yourself, you will need your NHS number. If you don't know it, you can ask your GP surgery or a health professional who is treating you and they will be able to provide it.

Patients who book their own PTS will be taken through the criteria over the phone by the call centre.

All Cumbria bookings can be made at the North West Ambulance Service call centre on: **0800 032 32 40**

Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme

If you are not eligible for hospital transport, you may get help with travel costs from the NHS. People who receive means-tested benefits or have a low income may be eligible if they are travelling for NHS treatment under the care of a consultant or have been referred by a GP or dentist for diagnostic services or treatment. Unfortunately, this only covers patients and necessary travel companions, not those who are visiting people in hospital.

You should be able to submit your claim and be *reimbursed* in cash on the day of your appointment. Always raise any questions about your journey with the hospital before you travel. You are expected to use the cheapest means of transport at the time you need to travel, bearing in mind the journey you need to make, your age, medical condition and any other relevant factors.

Generally, the amount paid will be based on the *least expensive* means of travel – usually public transport. If you feel you need to use a taxi for all or part of the journey, it is a good idea to make enquiries well before the appointment. If you would find it difficult to pay for the transport and then claim the money back, you can ask for *payment in advance*. You can make a *backdated claim* up to three months after your appointment, as long as you can prove you were eligible to claim at the time. Call the **NHS Help with Health Costs number 0300 330 1343** for more information.

How to apply

If you receive a means-tested benefit such as Pension Credit Guaranteed Credit, you should take proof of your entitlement – for example, a letter from the Pension Service – to show when you go for your appointment.

If you have a low income (with savings under £16,000) and do not receive any means-tested benefits, you should complete form HC1. Apply by downloading and printing the form or ordering a copy to be posted from <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-low-income-scheme> or ring 0300 330 1343 to get an HC1 and pre-paid return envelope.

NHS hospitals, some GP practices, pharmacies, dentists and opticians might also have HC1s as they qualify you for help with other NHS costs too. Once you have completed and returned the HC1, you will receive a certificate to show as proof of entitlement for help with full or partial travel costs.

Volunteer Drivers and similar schemes

The Voluntary Social Car Scheme is supported by Cumbria County Council provided by a pool of volunteer co-ordinators and drivers across the county.

The scheme aims to provide transport to members of the community who cannot make their journey by public or private transport. The volunteer drivers will collect you from your home and take you to your chosen destination.

Passengers pay 45p per mile (25p after 20 miles) but if 2 or more people travel then the fare is shared between them. Please give as much notice as possible.

To find your nearest volunteer Co-ordinator, contact Katy on 0333 240 69 65 (option 5 – charged at local rate) or 07788 396194.

Rural Wheels is a Westmorland & Furness Council subsidised scheme for people who do not have access to public transport or local volunteer drivers. Taxi firms/private hire vehicles involved in the scheme will take you to your closest town or to the nearest public transport connection.

The service can be used for a variety of purposes including: shopping, visiting patients in the hospital (not hospital appointments), visiting friends, visits to the doctor, optician, dentist etc.

Rural Wheels uses a 'Smartcard' to pay for travel and a central booking system to plan journeys. Passengers need to apply for the Smartcard and load up a minimum of £5 credit before they are able to use the scheme. The Smartcard is used instead of handing over cash to the transport providers and the 'value' of the card can be topped up at some local post offices, libraries, mobile libraries. Travel under the scheme may be booked up to 2 weeks in advance and must be booked by telephone by 12 noon on the day before the transport is required. Users may be asked to share transport, in which case the mileage rate is reduced.

For more information and for applications, call **01228 226427** or apply online at cumbria.gov.uk/ruralwheels. Once you have received your card, journeys can be booked on this number too.

Rural Wheels may be booked from 9am – 12 noon Monday to Friday and the transport is available from 8:30am – 6pm Monday to Saturday excluding bank holidays.

Ian Robertson - KENDAL TAXIS

07539 744732

Taxi service, covers all Kendal and South Lakeland area, private hire business service and will quote fixed price for any journey, price on request for hospital appointments and shopping trips.

Travel Assist, a not-for-profit social enterprise providing affordable, accessible, community transport, is launching its service in Kendal in 2018.

Travel Assist already operates elsewhere in the North West and provides supported transport for small groups using a fleet of fully accessible minibuses, seating up to 16. They also offer a variety of scheduled trips for those who live independently and would like an outing but are not members of a social group. Travel Assist has a stall on Kendal market on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 9am and 2pm for more information or call them on **01254 773765** to make enquiries or a booking.

Airport Services UK, a registered private hire travel company with 20 vehicles across Carlisle and Kendal. We offer our services to transport residents to appointments, we have vehicles, drivers and passenger assistants, please contact David McKie **01539 724658**

Bus Travel

Bus Passes for Pension Age and Disabled Persons

Westmorland & Furness Council administer the concessionary fares scheme. The age of eligibility for concessionary fares has always been linked to the pensionable age for women. From 6 April 2010, the pensionable age for women began gradually to increase from 60 to 66, up to October 2020, so the age of eligibility for concessionary fares for both men and women will increase in line with these changes. The bus pass provides free bus travel between 09:30 and 23:00 Monday to Friday and all day on weekends and bank holidays on any local bus services anywhere in England. Within Cumbria, card holders pay the full fare outside these hours.

How do I apply?

Visit any one of the County Council's six main libraries (in Kendal, Barrow, Carlisle, Penrith, Whitehaven & Workington.) The library staff will fill in the application form with you and will take your photograph. You will need to provide proof of your age & separate recent proof address, for example a birth certificate, passport or driving licence together with a recent utility/ Council tax bill or bank statement.

The NoWcard pass will remain valid for approximately five years.

If you are unable to visit a library in person, then you can ring for an application form to the **NoWcard Helpline on 0300 123 6737**. However, you will then need to provide a recent passport-sized colour photograph and copies of the relevant proofs of age & address.

People with Disabilities, if qualifying on age grounds, are, of course, at liberty to apply for an ordinary NoWcard. However, you may qualify at any age for a Disabled Person's card if you are blind or partially sighted, profoundly or severely deaf, without speech, with mobility problems (as evidenced by, eg. a disabled person's parking badge/Blue Badge), or refused a driving licence due to disability. More details of the sorts of evidence needed are issued with the Disabled Persons NoWcard application form. Enquiries can be made to the 6 libraries listed above or to the **NoWcard Helpline on 0300 123 6737**.

Companion travel

People holding a Disabled Person's NoWcard may be eligible for free bus travel for a companion if they are unable to travel alone. Eligibility criteria include being registered sight impaired, being profoundly deaf, medically certified as being unable to walk short distances unaided or to carry a small shopping bag. The list is not exhaustive. Each case is considered on its own merits. Not all local authorities offer companion cards or are willing to pay for companions from other areas. This is a discretionary concession which the county council has decided to offer. Companions are only able to travel for free at the same time as the pass holder within the county's boundary.

Lost Bus Passes

A charge of £10.00 will be made to replace a lost NoWcard, unless it has been reported stolen and the police have supplied a Crime Record Number. Payment can be made at the libraries previously listed or can be taken over the telephone if using a credit/debit card on 01228 226720.

National Express Senior Coachcard

Over 60 Reduced Fares

If you're 60 or over and purchase a Senior Coachcard, you qualify for 1/3 off standard fares on National Express long distance coach services at any time. Other discount offers may be available from time to time, and the card is valid for one year.

How to apply for a Senior Coachcard

Senior Coachcards are available from any local National Express Coach Station and some Post Offices, as well as through agencies. You can complete an application online and pay £10 for the card plus £2 post and packing or find the list online of 2000 agencies where the Senior Coachcard is sold.

<http://www.nationalexpress.com/Offers/coachcards/senior-coachcard.aspx>

For more information, call **08717 81 81 81** (enhanced call charges apply) 7days per week between 8am and 10pm.

Rail Travel

Senior Rail Card

Anyone 60 years or over can save 1/3 on Standard and First Class rail fares throughout Great Britain for 12 whole months. The card costs £30 per annum or £70 for three consecutive years.

The card can be used almost anytime during the week, weekends and Public Holidays. The only restriction is morning peak period services, Monday to Friday (not including Public Holidays), when journeys are made wholly within the London and South East area.

Application forms are available from ticket offices at staffed stations, by telephone, from designated travel agents or online via www.railcard.co.uk. You will need to produce proof of age if applying in person— for example, a birth certificate, valid passport or valid driving licence.

To buy your Railcard by telephone, call **0345 3000 250** between 7am and 10pm any day except Christmas Day. If you are buying by telephone and do not have any of the forms of identification listed above, the telesales staff may be able to verify your details using information from the electoral roll.

If you are buying your Railcard online, you will need a valid passport number or a valid UK driving licence to prove your identity and a debit or credit card for payment.

Renewals: A Senior Railcard can be renewed within one month of expiry. Online renewals are available even if the original purchase was by another method.

If your card is lost or damaged, you will have to pay £5 replacement fee. If the card is stolen, you will have to provide a Crime Record Number issued by the Police for a free replacement.

Disabled Persons Railcard

If you have a disability that makes travelling by train difficult you may qualify for the Disabled Persons Railcard. The Railcard allows you - and one adult travelling with you - to get 1/3 off most rail fares throughout Great Britain.

A one-year card is £20. A three-year Railcard is also available for £54.

You must provide proof that you qualify for a Railcard. You might qualify if you: are registered as having epilepsy, a visual impairment; registered deaf or use a hearing aid (NHS or privately prescribed); or are in receipt of a disability-related benefit including PIP, Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance. *New applications cannot be made on line.*

You can use your Railcard at any time. Some tickets are subject to availability and may have time restrictions, so to avoid any confusion please check before booking.

To apply for a Disabled Persons Railcard, ask for an application form from a staffed ticket office or contact:

Rail Travel Made Easy
PO Box 11631
Laurencekirk
AB30 9AA

For more information:

www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk

phone **0845 605 0525**

textphone/minicom **0845 601 0132**

Renewing your Disabled Persons Railcard

You can renew your Railcard up to one month in advance of its expiry date, providing there is no break in continuity. You can do this online, by phone or by post (see details above).

Allow at least 10 working days for your renewed Railcard to reach you. They may ask you for current evidence of your entitlement to a Railcard – should this happen, your renewal may take longer to process.

Assistance when travelling by Rail

Rail companies can provide you with assistance using their services. If you need help, they recommend that you book it at least 24 hours in advance of travel.

Booking in advance enables train companies to check the accessibility of the stations you will be using, help you plan the journey best suited to your needs, and, if necessary, arrange alternative transport to the nearest accessible station.

The 24-hour notice period also gives time, where possible, to relocate staff to assist you. This is important if you are going to travel at a time when a station is usually unstaffed.

To plan your journey and arrange assistance with the train company with whom you will be travelling please contact National Rail Enquiries on:

Phone: **03457 48 49 50**

Textphone: **0345 60 50 600**

There is also an online Assisted Travel booking form available if you consent to your personal and journey information being retained on the Passenger Assist database for 2 years and shared with all Train Operating Companies and Network Rail for the purpose of arranging and carrying out assistance on your behalf. To book assistance online go to the Disabled Persons Railcard website and select "Passenger Assist Book online now" button from the front page.

<https://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/>