



NORTHERN

# Making Rail Accessible: helping older and disabled passengers



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## Introduction

Northern 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 board or alight, to use the railways confidently.

Northern strives to provide rail services which are accessible to everyone, so that customers can travel with confidence, safe in the knowledge that extra support is available at each stage of their journey, when needed.

This leaflet, 'Making Rail Accessible' provides a practical guide to travelling with Northern, explaining what we do to assist older and disabled customers and the standards of service you can expect.

We will explain how to find details of the assistance available, facilities and information you will need to plan your journey.

Our commitment to assisting all customers, particularly older and disabled people to travel with confidence includes:

- assistance at our stations and our trains, or when making connections
- alternative accessible transport when our stations or trains are inaccessible
- clear, consistent and up-to-date customer information
- a range of discounts to reduce the cost of travel for disabled people and a companion

## Assistance: what is available and how to get it

We will provide assistance at any Northern station accessible to you, during the hours that trains are scheduled to serve that station. Many of our stations are staffed and all of our trains have conductors, so where staff are available, they will always support you and provide assistance that you request, where reasonably practicable. The majority of Northern services are two and three carriage trains, and therefore when a train arrives at an unstaffed station, the conductor is identifiable on the platform.

### Passenger Assist

If you can arrange your travel in advance, we participate in an assistance booking system called Passenger Assist. This is a rail industry-wide system used to book assistance at stations for passengers during their journey and to reserve seats and wheelchair spaces on trains where reservations are available.

We currently recommend that assistance can be booked up to 10pm the day prior to travel, in order that we can make arrangements for the assistance you require.

The ability to travel as and when you wish is important to everyone, so we are working closely with our suppliers and rail industry

partners to reduce the notice period for booking assistance. By April 2021, through improved technology and shared rail industry processes, Northern will reduce the recommended notice period to six hours' notice when booking through Passenger Assist.

To book assistance, please contact our Assisted Travel team who are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week when trains are running:

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

Text Relay: **18001 0800 138 5560**

Email:

**[assistance@northernrailway.co.uk](mailto:assistance@northernrailway.co.uk)**

Online:

**[northernrailway.co.uk/passenger-assistance-request](https://northernrailway.co.uk/passenger-assistance-request)**



We will provide booking confirmation by email, where you have provided your details; or by post if requested.

We aim to answer your call within 30 seconds and to respond to email and online requests within 4 working hours. We monitor our performance against these targets on a regular basis.

Northern work with other train companies and station operators to agreed processes for booking and providing assistance. This means that if your journey involves a change of train onto other operators' services, assistance can be booked through a single point of contact. We can book assistance for your whole rail journey, even where part of the journey is with other train operators or where our services call at stations not managed by us.

When booking assistance, our Passenger Assist team check the station accessibility information, which is also available to view on the Northern website: [northernrailway.co.uk/stations](https://northernrailway.co.uk/stations), to consider your individual journey and to ensure there is sufficient time to make any connections. We can provide station information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

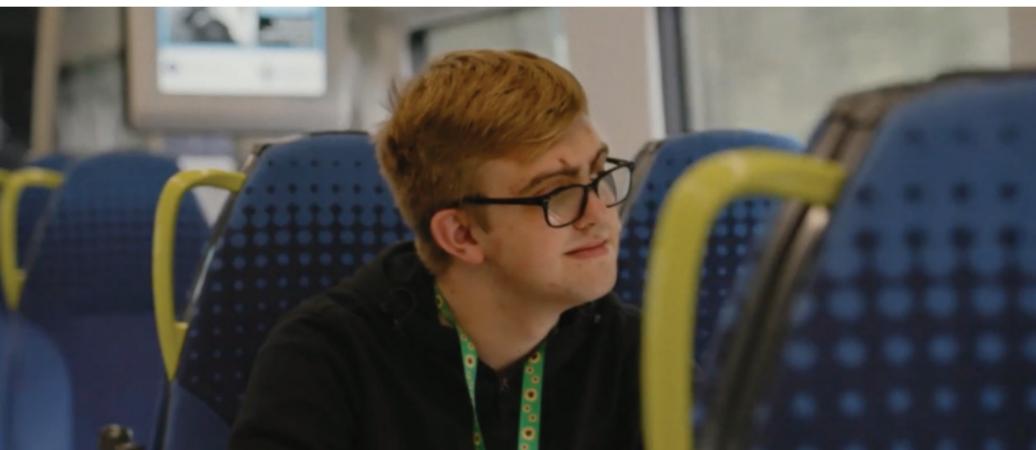
If a station you wish to travel from is inaccessible to you, we will provide alternative transport, at no extra charge, to the nearest or most convenient station

to enable you to continue your journey. For example, if there is only access via steps to some or all platforms, we will arrange alternative accessible road transport (such as a taxi) for you to the nearest suitable alternative station that is accessible to you. Please contact our Passenger Assist team, who will discuss your needs in order to arrange appropriate assistance.

Assistance and support are available at each stage of your journey, if and when you need it. This includes:

### **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 operated by other train companies
- Providing the opportunity to purchase tickets, including Advance fares, for your journey at the same time as booking assistance.



## At the station

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

## Training

We know that staff training plays an important part in delivering a railway which is accessible for everyone, so we work hard to provide Northern colleagues with the skills and understanding they need to assist customers with a range of accessibility requirements including visible and non-visible disabilities.



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

### Before you travel

We understand it is important to have accurate, helpful information available when planning your journey so you know what to expect at our stations and on trains and can travel with confidence.

Station information, including the accessibility of the station and the facilities available such as parking and staff availability can be found on the Northern website: [northernrailway.co.uk/stations](https://northernrailway.co.uk/stations). Similarly, information relating to the accessibility of our trains and other useful information can be found on our website: [northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel). Our Customer Experience Centre are happy to discuss journey planning with you, and provide station information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

Our Mobile App and website show live train times, and both provide information regarding any current or future significant changes or delays to Northern services.

## **How to buy tickets**

We have a range of options available for buying tickets ahead of travel or on the day, including:

### **Online**

Our website [northernrailway.co.uk](http://northernrailway.co.uk) offers a range of tickets and journey planning tools.

You can receive your tickets on a smartphone via the Northern app, by First Class post (please allow five days for delivery); or collect your pre-paid tickets from ticket machines at stations.

### **On mobile/app**

You can buy your ticket on your smartphone anytime, anywhere with the free Northern mobile app. Buy tickets securely on our app and collect your tickets within 15 minutes from station ticket machines or if you've selected the new m-ticket delivery option, just show your smart phone to the conductor on the train.

### **Ticket Machines at stations**

Ticket machines are available at most Northern stations. You can buy a range of tickets for immediate use and accept most credit/ debit cards as well as cash. Please check your journey times and individual ticket restrictions when purchasing your ticket to be sure that it is valid for your planned train.



## Station ticket offices

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

## On trains

At stations where no ticket office or ticket machines are provided, or the ticket office is closed; tickets can be purchase from the conductor on the train.

We understand that disabilities are not always visible and if you are concerned about purchasing tickets, please contact station staff where available or our Customer Experience Centre for advice.

If you are unable to buy a ticket before your journey, because our facilities are inaccessible or unavailable, you can do so without penalty during the journey or at the destination station and enjoy any reduction to which you are entitled, such as using a Disabled Persons Railcard.

Along with all other train operators, we participate in several schemes offering discounted fares, which are detailed below.

## Discounts and Railcards

### If you are visually impaired

If you are a visually impaired person travelling with a companion and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets apply for both of you:

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

No concession applies if you are travelling alone and you do not hold a railcard.

To obtain these discounts a document confirming your disability, issued by a recognised institution (for example Government Department, Local Authority, Guide Dog Ownership certification or RNIB) is required.

- Season tickets – you can be issued with one adult season ticket to cover two persons; the two travelling for the price of one. A different companion may travel with you on different days.

## If you remain in your wheelchair for a rail journey

If you remain in your wheelchair throughout the journey and you do not hold a railcard, the following discounts on Anytime/Day tickets will apply:

- Anytime Single/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 that allows those living with disabilities to save up to 1/3 on rail travel. An adult travelling with the cardholder will also qualify for 34% reduction.

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. Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a railcard can be found at:

Website: [disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](https://disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)

Email: [disability@raildeliverygroup.com](mailto:disability@raildeliverygroup.com)

Call: **0345 605 0525**

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

Disabled Persons Railcard discounts are available on tickets sold by our Conductors, ticket machines, ticket offices and website and mobile app.

When purchasing a ticket on our website, there are prominent messages in place to advise customers that assistance is available for their journey. We continue to ensure that our contact centre and ticket office staff offer our assistance service to customers who mention they have a Disabled Persons Railcard.

## Senior Railcard

Available to anyone over the age of 60, a Senior Railcard provides the opportunity to save up to 1/3 on rail travel in the UK. Senior Railcards can be purchased online, over the phone or at any station ticket office with your passport or UK driving licence as proof of age.

Further details of eligibility criteria and how to apply for a railcard can be found at:

Website: [senior-railcard.co.uk](https://senior-railcard.co.uk)

Email: [railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk](mailto:railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk)

Call: **0345 300 0250**

There may be other Railcards which are suitable for you. Please visit [railcard.co.uk](https://railcard.co.uk) for further information.



## Wheelchairs

All Northern trains can accommodate customers using a wheelchair, in the clearly designated spaces on board, providing they fit within the following dimensions:

Width: **700mm**

Length: **1,200mm**

Weight: **300kg** (including the user)

If your wheelchair exceeds the above dimensions, please contact our Passenger Assist team who will be able to offer advice.



## **Our Northern Mobility Scooter Permit scheme**

We know how important mobility scooters are for some of our customers, so we are happy to accommodate folding and Class 2 mobility scooters on our trains.

We can accept mobility scooters on board our trains as part of a scheme at 'mobility scooter friendly' stations for journeys on 20 specified routes and over 100 stations. For full details please see our Mobility Scooter Policy on our website: [northernrailway.co.uk/mobilityscooter](https://northernrailway.co.uk/mobilityscooter), pick up a leaflet from a staffed station or contact our Customer Experience Centre.

Stations vary considerably across our network. The gradient of the boarding ramp between platform and train at many stations presents a risk for customers and staff, while others have narrow platforms which means there is insufficient space to safely turn mobility scooters when the ramp between platform and train is extended. We need to take this into consideration, however Northern are committed to expanding our 'mobility scooter friendly stations' throughout 2020 and beyond.

## At the station

Northern manages 479 stations, and the facilities at these stations vary considerably across the network. Many of our stations are staffed, while some have staff presence for part of the day and the remainder have no station-based staff.

At larger stations, such as Leeds and Manchester Victoria, dedicated information points are located on the station concourse, with clear signage to their location within the station. The information points have variable height counters with information screens and leaflets positioned so that they can be accessed by everyone.

The meeting point at staffed stations is at the ticket office, this will be clearly identified, to help customers who have booked assistance to locate and meet our staff. We recommend you arrive at the station 20 minutes prior to the departure of your train. At staffed stations the meeting point is marked as ticket office.

If you have not booked assistance when you arrive at a station, please speak with a member of staff or at an unstaffed station, please proceed to the platform and attract the attention of the Conductor when the train arrives. Our conductors are trained to look for customers who may need assistance when arriving at a station.

When you have boarded a train, our station staff will communicate with the Conductor and destination station staff, where appropriate, to ensure you are provided with assistance to get off the train.

When a Northern train arrives at a station, our staff will ensure that customers who have booked through Passenger Assist are assisted off the train as soon as possible. At terminating stations, we aim to provide assistance to alight within five minutes of the train's arrival into the station.

When booking assistance, if your journey involves a station which does not have staff available at the time you are travelling, our Passenger Assist team will take this into account, together with the type of assistance you require and the overall accessibility of the station to ensure you can complete your journey. If our Passenger Assist team believes there is any risk of you not being provided with sufficient assistance at a particular station, they will discuss options with you and provide an alternative journey plan, assistance or transport to get you to your destination.

## Assistance with luggage

We recognise that luggage can be difficult to manage in the station environment for many disabled and older people. If you need your luggage carried, please tell us when you book assistance so we can ensure that station staff, where available, are ready to assist. Assistance can be given in taking customers and their luggage from train to station entrances (and vice versa) and when transferring between trains; wherever reasonably practicable.

Our staff must be able to lift luggage items safely, so please bear in mind the limits set out in the National Rail Conditions of Travel, which state that you may bring with you up to two large items and one small item.

## Step-Free Stations Map

Our step free station map is available through our website [northernrailway.co.uk/stepfreeaccess](https://northernrailway.co.uk/stepfreeaccess) or using the QR code



Alternatively, our customer experience team can help with any queries you may have.



## Station accessibility information

For information on whether the following accessible services and facilities are available at any station operated by Northern please see our website **[northernrailway.co.uk/stations](https://northernrailway.co.uk/stations)**:

- Level of platform accessibility and how access is provided (e.g. lifts, ramps or 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 (either staffed or audio contact with our Customer Experience Centre)
- Accessible toilets (including National Key toilets)
- Induction Loops
- Tactile paving
- Station Wheelchair availability
- Accessible waterproof waiting facilities
- Catering facilities
- Secure Station Accreditation

We are making accessibility improvements through our Station Investment Fund at a number of our stations, including 25 Inclusive Hub stations which will offer step-free routes between the station entrance and platforms. At other locations we are installing platform 'humps' to reduce the stepping distance at stations with low platforms.

## On the train

An overview of each type of train used on Northern services is available on our website, [northernrailway.co.uk/trains](https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/trains), including information on the general accessibility of each type and details of the routes on which different types of train are scheduled to run.

Following significant investment by Northern in new and refurbished trains, The majority of Northern trains offer:

- Two wheelchair spaces
- At least one Accessible toilet
- A Boarding ramp
- Designated priority seating
- Aural information
- Visual information
- A Conductor to provide assistance during the journey on every train.



All our trains are fitted with public address systems, and our Conductors are trained to make clear and concise announcements giving train information, including details of the next station and will do so on all services that do not have pre-recorded announcements.

Conductors are also trained to take into account the needs of visually impaired, deaf or hearing-impaired people when walking through the train and providing information.

### **Seats on trains**

We currently do not offer seat reservations on any Northern service, and our Passenger Assist team will make this clear when booking assistance for you. However, our conductors will make every effort to assist older and disabled passengers find a seat on-board.

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

Wheelchair spaces are available on all of our trains, and our Conductors assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces are kept clear and wheelchair users are given priority for this space.

We also participate in a priority seating card scheme, which you can use to let our staff and other customers know that you require a seat. These cards are available from our Customer Experience Centre team and at staffed stations.

## **Assistance dogs**

Assistance dogs are welcome on all Northern trains, free of charge, and can travel in any part of the train. Our Conductors will be happy to ensure that you are in the most appropriate seating on board the train, to make the journey comfortable for both you and your dog.

## **Ramps**

Ramps are available on all our trains to facilitate boarding and alighting. The ramps are specifically designed to fit the train you are travelling on, so that customers with reduced mobility can safely move onto and off the trains.

Ramps are available for all customers who require assistance. If you have not booked assistance, please advise a member of station staff where available, or the Conductor who will arrange for the ramp to be put in place.

## If things do not go as planned

We try to do everything we can to avoid them, but sometimes delays or cancellations will happen.

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

If you have booked assistance in advance, where possible we will contact you to make alternative arrangements, particularly if there is significant disruption such as a severe weather event.

When a journey changes, or we experience disruption to services, we will provide information about changes to train times, and alternative travel arrangements, in both aural and visual formats by Public Address announcements and Information Screens displayed at stations and on our trains.

Where possible, for significant changes and disruption during a journey, conductors will pass through the train to check if customers require further support and provide assistance. Staff will always pass through the train to assist older and disabled passengers where a train is being taken terminated before its final destination.

Our Mobile App and website show live train times, and help points are available at many stations providing a link to our Customer Information team who are also be able to assist you in continuing your journey.

## **Alternative transport**

In the event we need to use alternative transport, we aim to use rail replacement buses or coaches which are accessible. We work with regular suppliers for rail replacement transport so that we can request accessible vehicles are provided during periods of disruption. However, this is sometimes more challenging when sourcing vehicles at short notice, particularly as the availability of accessible vehicles can be limited in some geographical areas.

## **If things go wrong**

Customers are at the heart of all that we do, and we work hard to ensure we deliver assistance in the right way for every journey. However, sometimes things go wrong, and we may not be able to provide the level of service that we promised.

Your feedback is important to us. So, if assistance has not been provided in the way you expected, whether you booked in advance or not, please contact our Customer Experience Centre and we will investigate why this happened, and what action we intend to take to ensure it does not happen again.

We understand the inconvenience caused when assistance is not delivered, so we will also provide you with appropriate redress for your journey.

## Where to get more information and how to get in touch

Our Accessible Travel Policy complements this leaflet and sets out in detail our policies and approach towards providing assistance for older and disabled customers; and how we meet our regulatory obligations. It is available on our website:

[northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel).

Alternative formats such as audio and large print versions of both this leaflet and our Accessible Travel Policy are available on request, by calling our Customer Experience Centre by phone or Text Relay, and on our website, free of charge. We aim to provide this to you within seven working days.

Information is important, so we will ensure that accessibility information relating to our stations and trains is readily available to you and is kept up-to-date. This is available in an online PDF format, available at: [northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel](https://northernrailway.co.uk/accessibletravel), which is accessible using screen readers or other software with accessibility features (for example, Adobe Reader) and can be easily accessed via personal mobile devices. We can also provide train station information by post on request, including in alternative formats such as large print.

## Contact Us

Our Customer Experience Centre can provide further information regarding our services, including any queries on the day. We would also be grateful to hear your feedback on services, and if you have suggestions or would like to get involved with improving accessibility.

We are available between 0600 and 2300 seven days a week when trains are running. We are closed on Christmas Day.

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

Text Relay: **18001 0800 200 6060**

Email: **[enquiries@northernrailway.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@northernrailway.co.uk)**

Online: **[northernrailway.co.uk/help](https://northernrailway.co.uk/help)**

### How to contact us via Social Media:

Twitter: **[@northernassist](https://twitter.com/northernassist)**

Facebook: **[@northernassist](https://www.facebook.com/northernassist)**

Instagram: **[@northernrailway](https://www.instagram.com/northernrailway)**

We really hope you will not have any reason to complain when you are travelling with us. However, if you do, please speak to someone on the train or the station and they will try to sort out the problem there and then.

If you would rather, you can contact our Customer Experience Centre, or email us at [complaints@northernrailway.co.uk](mailto:complaints@northernrailway.co.uk). Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your complaint. If you're unhappy with the final response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman.

### **Rail Ombudsman**

Phone: **0330 094 0362**

Textphone: **0330 094 0363**

Email: [info@railombudsman.org](mailto:info@railombudsman.org)

By Post:

**FREEPOST – RAIL OMBUDSMAN**

Rolling stock class	No. of Carriages	No. designated wheelchair spaces	Accessible toilets Y/N	Boarding ramp Y/N	No. designated priority seats	Baby changing facilities Y/N	Passenger information (Aural/ Aural and Visual)	Train crew on train	Seat Reservation Y/N	Areas where these trains operate
150	2 or 3	2	Yes	Yes	17/38	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Liverpool, West Yorkshire, North Lincs. South Yorkshire, Derbyshire
155	2	2	Yes	Yes	16	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	York, Leeds, Hull and Scarborough
156	2	2	Yes	Yes	16	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	North East, Cumbrian Coast, Lancs and Cumbria, Merseyside, Cheshire
158	2 or 3	2	Yes	Yes	16/24	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Lancashire, Fylde, North Yorkshire, North East
170	3	2	Yes	Yes	22	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Scarborough - Sheffield, Leeds - Knaresborough, York and Harrogate
195	2 or 3	2	Yes	Yes	14/26	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Manchester - Derbyshire, Sheffield, Liverpool, Leeds and Barrow in Furness, York - Blackpool, Windermere, Chester - Leeds
319	4	2	Yes	Yes	32	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Manchester - Crewe, Liverpool, Blackpool, Liverpool - Wigan, Blackpool, Crewe
323	3	2	Yes	Yes	36	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Manchester - Hadfield, Stoke, Crewe, Liverpool - Crewe
331	3 or 4	2	Yes	Yes	26/38	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Blackpool North - Hazel Grove, Liverpool, Leeds - Skipton, Bradford Forster Square, Doncaster, Ilkley, Bradford Forster Square - Skipton
333	4	2	Yes	Yes	32	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	Skipton - Bradford Forster Square, Leeds - Ilkley
769*	4	2	Yes	Yes	42	Yes	A and V	Driver and conductor	No	TBA
153**	1	1	No	Yes	0	No	Manual Conductor Announcements	Driver and conductor	No	Will be coupled to PRM Compliant rolling stock to strengthen capacity on the network and will not run on their own

