

Making Rail Accessible

April 2025



**Easy
Read**

Great Northern

GN

GATWICK EXPRESS

SOUTHERN

ThamesLink/

WE'RE WITH YOU

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Introduction



Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) runs:

- Southern Railway.
- Gatwick Express.
- Thameslink.
- Great Northern Railway.



We want to make sure everyone can use our trains and stations.



This leaflet will tell you:

- How we help older and disabled people to use our railways.
- How you can get help to use our railways, if you need.



Before you travel



Booking assisted travel

Assisted travel is where our staff help you to get on and off the train and to get around the stations.



You can book your assisted travel beforehand.



We will help you to travel from any of our stations when trains are running.



We are part of a national system called '**Passenger Assist**'.

Passenger Assist sends information to all the stations you are going to, so the staff are ready to help you.



Our staff can:

- Book assisted travel for you for your whole journey.



- Tell you about the stations you are going to and help to make any arrangements.



If you contact our Assisted Travel Team by phone, most calls are answered within 2 minutes.



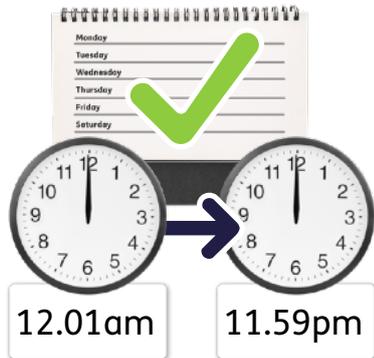
If you book assisted travel online, we aim to deal with it within 2 hours.



When you have booked assisted travel, we will send you an email, or a letter if you have asked for one, to confirm the details.



You can now book assisted travel up to 2 hours before your journey.



You can contact our Assisted Travel Team any day except Christmas Day from 12.01am to 11.59pm.



Southern/Gatwick Express

- Phone: 0800 138 1016
- Text: 0800 138 1018



Thameslink/Great Northern

- Phone: 0800 058 2844
- Text: 0800 138 1018

If you haven't booked beforehand



Most of our disabled customers are happy to travel without booking beforehand.



If the station has staff, they will help you.



If the station has no staff, you can speak to someone by using the Help Point emergency button.



They will help you to travel to where you want to go.



If a station is not accessible

If the station you want to travel from is not **accessible** to you, we will provide some other transport at no extra cost.



Accessible is when a place is easy to get into or around, or when something is easy to use.



Rail replacement buses

A rail replacement bus is a bus that we may use if the train is not able to run.



Many rail replacement buses are not able to take mobility scooters.



We may be able to keep your scooter at the station, for you to pick up later.

Each stage of your journey



We understand that you need good and easy information when you plan your journey.



Our Assisted Travel Team can give you:

- Advice about how you can get support during your journey.



- Information about:
 - Making sure you get a seat.



- Travelling with a baby.



- A card that explains what support you need.



- A guide to help you communicate.



- Support that is right for you.



- Information about what is available at each station.



- Advice about booking seats with other train companies.



- Advice if you use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter.



Our Assisted Travel Team can also tell you:

- What is available on the trains.



- If there are staff at each station.



- The times of trains.



- How to buy tickets.



- How to get support and information while you are on your journey.



- How to make a complaint.

Websites

There is information about how accessible stations are on these websites:



- National Rail Enquiries:
www.nationalrail.co.uk



- Southern:
www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/station-information



- Thameslink:
www.thameslinkrailway.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/station-information



- Great Northern:
www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/station-information



- Gatwick Express:
www.gatwickexpress.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/station-information

At the station



We have 239 stations, but your train may also stop at a station run by a different company.

We work with the other companies so that you get all the help you need.

At larger stations



At larger stations there are information points with a counter that is accessible for everyone.



There are leaflets and information screens that are accessible for everyone.

At stations with staff



There is a meeting point where you can meet the staff who are going to help you.



The Assisted Travel Team will tell you where the meeting point is.

If you haven't booked assisted travel, ask any member of staff to help you.

Get there early



You should try to get to the station 20 minutes before the train leaves. This gives us enough time to arrange for someone to help you get off at the other end.

Help getting on and off the train



When our staff help you to get on the train, they will contact the station where you are getting off to tell them what help you need.



It might take us up to 5 minutes to help you off the train.

Station staff

Our station staff will be able to help you with:



- Tickets.



- Getting on and off the train.



- Getting around the station.



- Luggage.



- Finding your next train, bus or taxi.



At stations with no staff

You can get help by:

- Speaking to our staff at the Help Point.
- Phoning or texting a freephone number which will be on a poster.



You should try to get to the station 20 minutes before the train leaves and contact our staff at the Help Point. This gives us time to arrange some help.



We will make sure you get to where you want to go.



Many of our trains have a member of staff on board who can help people get on and off.

Many trains have ramps on board.



Mobile Support Team

Some of our stations don't have any staff. But we want to try and make sure there is still someone available to help you.



At these stations, if you contact us 20 minutes before you need to leave we will send someone to help you to get on the train.



Usually, this will mean a member of staff travelling from another station to meet you.



You can contact the mobile support team:

- At the Help Point.
- By phone for free: 0808 168 1238
- By text: 07970 511 077



Our Mobile Support Team is close by. They will come and help you.



We are making this service available at 41 more stations over the next few months.

You can find out more about this at the following websites:



- Southern:
www.southernrailway.com/mobileassistanceteam



- Thameslink:
www.thameslinkrailway.com/mobileassistanceteam



- Great Northern:
www.greatnorthernrail.com/mobileassistanceteam



- Gatwick Express:
www.gatwickexpress.com/mobileassistanceteam

Stations that are not accessible

Some stations are not accessible.
They might have:



- No way of getting to the platforms other than steps.



- A lift that is broken.



In this case we will pay for a taxi to take you to the next accessible station.



You can find out if a station is accessible or not on our websites or on the National Rail website:

[www.nationalrail.co.uk/
stations_destinations](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations)

Tickets



You can buy tickets:

- Online.



- At ticket offices.



- From ticket machines.



- From staff on trains.

If you can't buy your ticket before you travel, you can buy it from staff on the train or when you get to the end of your journey.



Money off

There is money off the price of a ticket for disabled people.



Discounts are available for blind and visually impaired customers who travel with a companion.



Our ticket office staff can help you with buying this discounted ticket.

Disabled Persons Railcard



If you get a Disabled Persons Railcard you will get a third off the price of your ticket and the ticket of the person who is travelling with you.

You can get more information about this railcard by:



- Website: www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk



- Email: disability@raildeliverygroup.com



- Telephone: **0345 605 0525**



- Textphone: **0345 601 0132**



If you stay in your wheelchair the whole journey

You can get money off the price of your ticket if you stay in your wheelchair for the whole journey.



Senior Railcard

If you are over 60 you can buy a Senior Railcard.

This gives you a third off the price of most tickets.



Ticket machines

There are ticket machines at all our stations.

You can get money off tickets with your Disabled Persons Railcard from these ticket machines.

Ticket gates



There are ticket gates at many stations.

There is always a wide ticket gate which is more accessible.



Usually there will be a member of staff at the wide ticket gate to help you.



If there isn't a member of staff, the wide ticket gate will be left open.



When you buy your ticket beforehand

We will tell you about anything that isn't accessible when you buy your ticket.



We will not sell you a ticket that you cannot use.



If your journey takes you onto a train run by a different company, we will check that it is accessible.

Wheelchairs, power chairs and mobility scooters



All our trains and boarding ramps are able to take wheelchairs, powerchairs and scooters.



Your chair or scooter should be no bigger than 700mm wide and 1200mm long.



It should be no heavier than 300kg, when you are on it.



Scooters must be able to turn round in 1500mm.



Tell the person you buy the ticket from that you have a wheelchair or scooter.



They will check this is okay with any other railway companies that you plan to use for your journey.

Help with luggage



We will help disabled and older people with their luggage where we can. This will be free.

You may take 2 items of luggage and 1 piece of hand luggage.

23kg



Each bag must not weigh more than 23kg.

On our trains



On our trains we provide:

- **Priority Seating.**

Priority Seating is where other people should let a disabled, pregnant or older person have the seat.



- Accessible spaces for your wheelchair with a button that you can use to call for help.



- Information which you can either see or hear.



- Ramps.



- Accessible toilets.

Assistance dogs



Assistance dogs are welcome on our trains free of charge.



We also provide water for assistance dogs at stations that have staff.



We support the National Rail 'Assistance dog under a seat' card, which you can get for free from: www.nationalrail.co.uk/

If things don't go as planned



Things don't always go as planned.



If something happens we will tell you by:

- Announcements at stations and on our trains.
- Information on screens at stations and on our trains.

**CANCELLED
DELAYED**



Our staff will also tell you the latest information.



We will put information on our website and our **app**.

An **app** is a computer programme that you can download onto your phone, tablet or computer.

You can check if things like lifts are working on our websites:



- Southern:
www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/service-updates



- Thameslink:
www.thameslinkrailway.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/service-updates



- Great Northern:
www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/service-updates



- Gatwick Express:
www.gatwickexpress.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/service-updates



If you have booked Passenger Assist, we will try to contact you to help you get to where you are going.

Replacement buses



If things don't go as planned we will often provide rail replacement buses.



These buses will usually be accessible.



If you can't use the bus, our staff will help to find another way to get you to where you need to go.

Contact us



Please contact us if you:

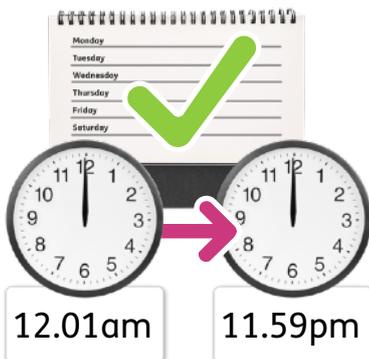
- Need more information.



- Want to tell us something about our service.



- Are unhappy with anything.



Our telephone lines will be answered 24 hours a day, every day, except Christmas Day.



Southern/Gatwick Express

- Phone: 03451 272920
- Text: 0800 138 1018
- Email:
comments@southernrailway.com

ThamesLink /

Great Northern



Thameslink/Great Northern

- Phone: 0345 026 4700
- Text: 0800 138 1018
- Email:
customerservices@thameslinkrailway.com
customerservices@greatnorthernrail.com

Assisted travel



Our Assisted Travel Team will:

- Give you information.
- Book tickets for your journey.
- Arrange any help you need.



Our assisted travel phone lines are open 24 hours a day except Christmas Day.



Southern/Gatwick Express

- Phone: 0800 138 1016
- Text: 0800 138 1018

ThamesLink/



Thameslink/Great Northern

- Phone: 0800 058 2844
- Text: 0800 138 1018



National Freephone Passenger Assist

Phone: 0800 022 3720

Text: 60083



Textphone or minicom: 0845 60 50 600



Website:

[www.nationalrail.co.uk/
stations_destinations/plan-
assistance.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/plan-assistance.aspx)

Twitter



- Southern:
[@SouthernRailUK](https://twitter.com/SouthernRailUK)



- Gatwick Express:
[@GatwickExpress](https://twitter.com/GatwickExpress)



- Thameslink:
[@TLRailUK](https://twitter.com/TLRailUK)



- Great Northern:
[@GNRailUK](https://twitter.com/GNRailUK)



Post

- Govia Thameslink Railway
PO Box 10240
Ashby-De-La-Zouch
LE65 9EB

If you are unhappy



If you are still unhappy after making a complaint to us, you can contact the Rail Ombudsman. The Rail Ombudsman is independent and deals with complaints about railway companies.



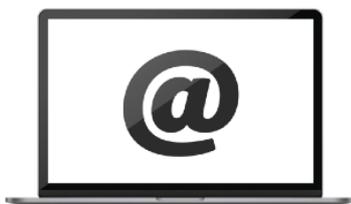
- Website: www.railombudsman.org



- Phone: 0330 094 0362



- Textphone: 0330 094 0363



- Email: info@railombudsman.org



- Post:
FREEPOST -
RAIL OMBUDSMAN