

Accessible Britain Guide

This is a really useful – and free! – downloadable ebook edition of a guidebook on disabled-accessible venues/destinations/attractions throughout the UK.

Download it from here:
www.accessibleguide.co.uk/downloads/Accessible-Britain-eBook-2016.pdf

Airports – free drop-off/pick up for Blue Badge Holders

Aberdeen Airport drop-off: Blue Badge holders are entitled to a 30-minute free period within the main Short Stay car park. Blue Badge holders using the 30-minute free period within the Short Stay car park should present their blue badge card for validation at the Customer Service Office when leaving the car park. The Customer Service office is located on the exit route of the car park.

Edinburgh Airport drop-off: follow signs for ‘paid drop off’ and at the exit, just press the ‘assistance’ button at the barrier and tell the operator you have a blue badge – they will then open the barrier for you.

Edinburgh Airport pick-up: follow signs for ‘multi-storey car park’ and at the entrance, keep in the right-hand lane for ‘paid pick-up’ – park in a designated blue badge space. You then need to take your blue badge and your ticket to the parking office in the ground floor of the multi-storey car park. The attendant there will issue you with a new ticket which will enable you to exit the car park.

Glasgow Airport drop-off and pick-up: Drivers with a blue badge should use the short stay car park (Car Park 2) opposite the terminal building, where they get up to 30 minutes’ free parking for pick-up/drop-off. The disabled/blue badge spaces are on the ground floor, and (like pick-up in Edinburgh Airport) you will need to take your blue badge and your ticket to the parking office in the ground floor of the multi-storey car park. The attendant there will issue you with a new ticket which will enable you to exit the car park.

Airports – mobility assistance

Most airports offer special assistance (eg: wheelchairs; golf carts; expedited immigration/customs clearance; priority boarding; help with luggage etc) for ‘passengers with reduced mobility’ who request it.

Bear in mind that the walk from the check-in counter to the boarding gate (or between gates at a transit stopover) can be really far – and you may already be tired and/or stressed from your journey so far, even if it was just getting to the airport from your home.

Aberdeen

Airport:

<https://www.aberdeenairport.com/aberdeen-airport-guide/special-assistance/>

Edinburgh

Airport:

<http://www.edinburghairport.com/prepare/special-assistance>

Glasgow Airport: <http://www.glasgowairport.com/im-departing/passenger-info/> (click on section named ‘special assistance’)

Also – inform your airline (when booking your trip) that you will need assistance.

Airports – security

Please remember to take all your meds with you, in their original packaging, along with an official letter from your GP stating they are your prescribed meds. If you use a dosette or pill dispenser, do not fill them up until you reach your destination. Although you shouldn’t have any problems within the EU, many countries farther afield actually ban the importation of (or criminalise the possession of) many prescription drugs, including some key Parkinson’s meds.

Blue Badge – use in European Countries

This useful website has information for (most) European countries on the use of (and restrictions pertaining to) blue badges. Each country also has a (printable) parking notice in that country’s national language(s), explaining the blue badge/EU legislation regarding blue badges, which you can display on the dashboard next to your blue badge when you

park. (We find this especially useful in countries which have yet to introduce the latest EU blue badge model (current UK blue badges are the latest model), and parking attendants/wardens are therefore sometimes unaware of the new design.)

See:

http://www.disabledmotorists.eu/en/world_map/europe/europe.htm

Council Tax: 25% Disability Discount

This is a little-known discount, which is intended for people with neurological conditions such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's, which are classified as 'severe mental impairment' and the claimant is therefore 'disregarded' for council tax purposes. Claims can be backdated (theoretically as far back as 1993), as well as from the date of the claim onwards. (This is not to be confused with the Council Tax discount which some disabled people may qualify for, if they have an extra/spare room dedicated to (eg) specific medical or toilet needs, or for a carer to stay over. In this case, the Council Tax would be charged at a lower band rate. You can apply for both discounts if you qualify.)

Full details here:

<http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/reclaim/2016/09/lived-with-someone-with-alzheimers-parkinsons-or-a-similar-illness-you-may-be-able-to-reclaim-1000s-in-council-tax>

Dartford Bridge/Tunnel Toll Exemption

If your vehicle is registered with the DVLA as being exempt from road tax due to your disability, then you are automatically exempt from paying the Dartford Crossing tolls on the M25. You don't need to do anything. (NB: Motability vehicles are automatically registered with the DVLA as being road tax-exempt.)

Details here: <https://www.gov.uk/dartford-crossing-fees-exemptions-penalties>

Driving Licence

Once you have been diagnosed with Parkinson's, although

you do not have to give up driving, you are legally obliged to inform the DVLA of your condition. You will need to fill in a form and DVLA will then contact your GP and/or Parkinson's specialist. Normally – assuming they give the go-ahead – you will then be issued with a new licence (free of charge) valid for three years. Just before this expires, the DVLA will contact you regarding renewal of your licence.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions>

and: <https://www.gov.uk/parkinsons-disease-and-driving>

Emergency Contact Document

This handy document contains personal and emergency contact details, stating “I have Parkinson's disease. Please allow me time. In case of an emergency contact...” in any one of up to 25 languages.

Details here: <http://epda.eu.com/latest/resources/pd-doc/>

Evening Classes

Many councils throughout Scotland offer their evening classes free of charge to disabled people in receipt of DLA or PIP. Classes on offer range from foreign languages to creative writing, drama, computing, life skills and arts & crafts. Search for ‘adult education’ on your local council's website.

Ferries to mainland Europe

If you alert the ferry company when booking your trip that you have mobility issues, you will be accorded priority boarding and disembarkation as well as a parking space next to the lift in the ferry. If required, they will also arrange for a wheelchair to be made available for you.

<https://www.dfdseaways.co.uk/customer-service/passengers-with-reduced-mobility>

<http://www.poferries.com/en/dover-calais/travelling-with-us/accessibility>

Hotel Bathrooms

If you have mobility or balance issues, be sure to request a walk-in shower when booking hotel rooms (as many hotel bathrooms only have ‘over bath’ showers).

Larger/international hotel chains usually have disabled accessible rooms available, which often have ‘wet room’-style bathrooms.

M6 Toll Mobility Exemption Pass

One of the worst parts of driving to the south of England from Scotland is navigating the inevitable traffic jams on the M6 around Birmingham. These can be avoided by taking the M6 Toll motorway – and if you are in receipt of either the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance; Attendance Allowance; the enhanced rate of the mobility component of the Personal Independence Allowance or the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement, you can apply for an M6 Toll Mobility Exemption Pass. The Pass is issued free of charge.

See [here](https://www.m6toll.co.uk/pricing/exemptions/) for details:
<https://www.m6toll.co.uk/pricing/exemptions/>

Parkinson's Passport

The Parkinson's Passport is an information booklet about your medications and treatment which you can carry with you when you are out and about or travelling abroad. Especially useful if/when you run out of medication(s) when you are away from home, as it saves you having to remember all the drug names and strengths/doses.

See: <http://epda.eu.com/latest/resources/parkinsons-passport/>

Prescription Medication

My local chemist does not hold stock of one of my Parkinson's meds (= Pramipexole), so they have to order it in each time I submit my repeat prescription each month. On at least three occasions however, I have gone along to pick up my meds a few days later, only to be told that the wholesaler has none in stock or there are other supply issues. There then followed a mad panic, ‘phoning around all the chemists in a 10-mile radius, desperately trying to locate stock of the drug. I have since found a solution, thanks to my GP: he wrote out an extra month's prescription for Pramipexole, so now I always have a 4-week buffer supply at home.

Secondly – be sure to check the details on meds boxes. I recently picked up a month's supply of all my meds just prior to leaving on a 3-week holiday and decided to check the details on all the boxes (which is something I have never done before). I discovered that instead of dispensing Pramipexole **2.62mg**, they had actually supplied me with Pramipexole **0.26mg** – less than 10% of the strength I need. Fortunately, they actually had the right strength of the drug in stock (for once) and were able to swap the boxes over.

Road Tax Exemption

If you are disabled, you can apply to the DVLA for an exemption from paying road tax for your car. (If you get a Motability car, it will automatically be registered with the DVLA as being road tax exempt.)

See: <https://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-tax-exemption-disability>