

A GUIDE FOR USING SOUTHERN TRAINS

For people with a disability

Easy read version - 2011



SOUTHERN

GATWICK EXPRESS

If you need help or information please contact us



By phone

0800 138 1016 for Southern Assisted Travel

08451 27 29 20 for Southern Customer Services

By minicom/textphone

0800 138 1018



By email

myjourney@southernrailway.com

for Southern Assisted Travel

comments@southernrailway.com

for Southern Customer Services

Or visit our website

www.southernrailway.com



Or send us a letter

Southern Customer Services, PO Box 3021, Bristol BS2 2BS

Or contact National Rail Enquiries

08457 48 49 50 or website **www.nationalrail.co.uk**

Welcome to Southern Railway



This booklet is to help passengers with a disability use our services.

If the information you want is not in this booklet, please use the contact information above.

The booklet includes all Southern and Gatwick Express services.

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Help with assisted travel – Booked assistance



When should I ask for help?

If you want to book 'help' try to ring us at least one day before you travel. Please see first page for contact details.



If I have booked help, where do I go when I get to the station?

You must let a member of station staff know you have booked help.



What kind of help can I get?

Our staff are trained to help people with disabilities.



On the phone they can:

- Help find the nearest station without steps or with ramps or lifts.
- Help arrange assistance in advance of travel.
- Arrange help when travelling.
- Offer timetables and travel information.

At the station they can:

- Meet you at an agreed point when you get to the station.
- Help you to buy a ticket and other things for your journey.
- Show you where to go at the station.
- Help you to get on the train and to find a seat.
- Help you with stairs and ramps.
- Help you to change trains during the journey.
- Carry light luggage.
- Tell you where to find your nearest station without steps or one which has a lift.
- Arrange another kind of transport for you if you can't use steps.
- Let the other stations know you are coming so that someone can help you.



Station staff will help you if you have booked assistance.

Staff may not be able to wait with you until the train comes but they will take you somewhere you can wait and come back when the train arrives.

Sometimes there are other people who need help but the staff will get to you as soon as possible.

You should not have to wait longer than 5 minutes for the help if you have booked.

If travel arrangements are changed, we will tell you and make sure help is rearranged.

The National Rail website has a map of each station with some pictures. You can see the station and facilities before you arrive. This is called stations made easy. Go to www.nationalrail.co.uk to find this.



Help with assisted travel - Unbooked assistance



What happens if I can't book help?

If you can't let us know before you travel, you must tell a member of staff at the station that you need help.

If they can't help at that station, they will arrange for you to go to a station where they can help you.

If there is not a member of staff at the station, you can phone us on **0800 138 1016** or use the help point at the station and we will send help.



When should I arrive at the station?

Whether you have booked help or not, get to the station at least 20 minutes before the train is due.



Go to the platform ready for the train 5 minutes before it leaves.



Accessibility

You can get all the information about the accessibility of the stations and trains by phoning: **0800 138 1016** (freephone) or textphone/minicom **0800 138 1018**.



Travelling with a wheelchair or scooter

- You can take your wheelchair and some scooters on the train but there are weight and size restrictions.
- Wheelchairs and scooters must not be more than 700mm wide and 1200mm long. They must not weigh more than 300kg.
- If the wheelchair or scooter is too heavy or too large, station staff may not let you on the train. Check before you travel.
- There is a gap between the platform and the train. A ramp is used to go across the gap. You must not use the ramp on your own.
- You must be able to steer the mobility scooter up the short steep ramp, as we cannot do this for you.
- The speed limit at all stations is 3 miles per hour.
- Some stations have their own wheelchairs and staff can help you get from the station to the train. Check before you travel.
- Station wheelchairs can only be used at the station and not for the rest of your journey.





Station and train accessibility

Ticket machines are low so wheelchair users can use them. Many ticket desks are also low.

If there are any changes to the stations, like the lift being out of order, we will let you know:

- by putting up a poster at the station.
- by adding information on the website.
- by advising when you phone us for help for your journey.



All ticket barriers have a wide gate that is left open when the ticket barrier is unstaffed.



All ticket offices have hearing loops. Many also have lower counters to help people using wheelchairs.

Many stations have toilets.

Some stations have accessible toilets.
We plan to put them on more of our stations.

Some accessible toilets are locked. You can use RADAR (key scheme) for some but must ask station staff to open others.



If you can't use the steps at a station, we will arrange other transport to a station without steps. You must talk to us about this before you travel and have a ticket to travel.

Sometimes we are doing repairs at the station but staff will help you if you have booked. Transport to the nearest accessible station will be provided.

Onboard trains

Most trains have good access for people with disabilities e.g.

- Double sliding doors.
- Wide aisles.
- Announcements on a screen about stations on the journey.



Dogs who help you are welcome on the trains.

Mobility scooters cannot be accepted onto our class 442 trains (pictured) unless they fold down.



Priority seats



Priority seats are for people with additional needs who need to sit down.

They are clearly marked in each carriage.

They are usually near the exit doors.

Can I book (reserve) a seat on the train?

You can't book a seat on a Southern train.



Places are provided for you if you use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter. There is a picture of a wheelchair user on the outside of the train to show where these places are.

If part of your journey includes a train run by another train company and they book seats on their trains, we can do this for you.



Staff will help you find a seat on the train but cannot make a non-disabled person give their seat up for you should they refuse to.

Repairs to the track or station

During repairs to the rail track we sometimes use a bus in place of the train for part of the journey (usually this is at the weekend or Bank Holidays).

Most of the buses we provide are accessible. If you can't use the bus because it doesn't accept wheelchairs, we will arrange for you to travel on a different route or transport.

If you have to cancel your journey because of repairs to the track, we will give you your money back.

You can find out if repair work is planned for your journey by phoning Customer Services or from posters at the station or by visiting our website www.southernrailway.com or www.nationalrail.co.uk or ask staff.



Health and safety



All Southern Railway staff have been trained to help people with disabilities.

Some staff have special training to help people with disabilities to use the ramps.

Wheelchairs are brought off the train backwards, for the safety of you and other people.



Don't put heavy bags on the back of wheelchairs and scooters because they can tip you backwards on the ramp. Staff will help you to carry light bags.

Staff cannot help you with personal care during or after your journey e.g. toilet, eating or medication.



There are CCTV (cameras) on the station platforms and on the trains.

If you have to leave the train between stations because of an emergency, staff or the emergency services will help you.

Lost property

Phone Customer Services (see first page for details).

Bullying

If you feel threatened on the train or at the station:

- Tell a member of staff.
- Phone British Transport Police on **0800 405040** to report a crime.

Tickets and discounts (cheaper travel)

Buying a ticket

If you buy a ticket from a ticket office or on-line at least 2 days before you travel, it can be cheaper.

You can buy a ticket:

- On the internet with a debit or credit card.
- At a station.
- From a self-service ticket machine at the station.

If you buy a ticket on the website, you can get money off with a valid railcard.

You put your name and address on the website and we post the tickets or you can pick them up from the station.

You should buy a ticket before you get on the train.

Some people with disabilities may not be able to use the machines or the ticket office.

The staff checking the tickets on the train or at stations will understand if you are disabled and haven't been able to use the ticket machine or access the ticket office and will sell you a ticket on the train.

When you buy a ticket, you are allowed to travel between the stations on that journey.

The rules are on www.nationalrail.co.uk



Cheaper tickets

If you buy a ticket in advance of travel it is often cheaper.

You can get a cheaper ticket if you have one of the following railcards:-

- Senior.
- Family and Friends.
- Network.
- Disabled Persons (DPRC).
- 16-25.

Disabled Persons Railcard

You can apply for a Disabled Persons Railcard that gives you and an adult friend travelling with you money off most rail fares in Great Britain.

'Rail Travel Made Easy' leaflets are at most stations.

There is an application form in the back of the leaflet or you can call **0845 605 0525** or textphone **0845 601 0132** or email **disability@atoc.org** for help.



Other discounts for wheelchair users or visually impaired passengers

You can get a cheaper fare for you and an adult who is helping with your journey if you:

- Remain in your wheelchair for your journey.
- Have a visual impairment (problems with sight) and are travelling with a friend.

You must show documents to prove that you have a visual impairment when you buy your tickets e.g. Social Services, Local Authority, RNIB or St. Dunstan's.



Travel in London

To save money in the London area, you can use an electronic plastic card called an Oyster Card to pay for travel and to use the trains. This is only available around London.

You must touch the yellow card reader at the start and end of your journey.



Luggage



You must tell us that you have luggage when you phone to book help.

Staff will help you with light luggage.

They cannot help with heavy bags.

Staff cannot carry luggage out of the station.

There are rules about the size and type of luggage you can take on the train.

Check before you travel if you are worried about your luggage.

Waiting areas



All stations have seats under cover on the platforms or a waiting room.

Most waiting areas have no steps to the platform.



Parking at the station

Many stations have car parks.

Most car parks have blue badge parking.

Blue badge holders are not charged for parking in station car parks.

Make sure the badge can be seen and remember to set the time correctly.





Help points



Many stations have Help Points.

You can use the Help Points to speak to somebody for information and help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

They have a hearing loop that helps people to hear staff.

You can use the Help Points in an emergency – staff will contact the emergency services for you.

CCTV (camera) is linked to the Help Points.

Some stations have a yellow information point but this will only give a recorded message about train times, you cannot talk to somebody.





Signs and information

All stations have accessible information screens and signs.

Different colours are used to make it clearer.

Most stations announce the information regularly.



What happens if the train doesn't have a conductor?

In the London area some trains only have a driver and not a conductor.

The driver will make announcements to help passengers. Tell the staff on the platform if you have a problem.



Getting food at the station and on the train



Most stations have drinks and snacks you can buy.

Some trains have a food and drinks trolley that travels through the train.

You need to check if your train has one, before you travel.



Is there anything you want to say about your journey?

We want to make journeys better for people with disabilities.

If you have anything you want to say please complete the feedback form at the station, tell station staff or phone Customer Services.

Do you have an idea to make travel better? Please let Customer Services know.



Accessibility Manager

Southern Railway has a full time accessibility manager who can be contacted by emailing access@southernrailway.com or phoning Customer Services (see first page for contact details)



Southern Railway

We run trains in South London, between London and the South Coast, through East and West Sussex and parts of Kent. We also run the Gatwick Express service travelling between Gatwick Airport and London Victoria throughout the day.

We have:

- Over 4000 employees.
- Over 300 new and updated trains.
- Over 2000 train services per day.
- Over 185,000 passengers every day.
- Over 10,000 passengers who book help with their journey each year.
- 157 stations of which 113 have been assessed and received an award for being safe.

We are part of the Govia group and other rail companies in the same group are Southeastern and London Midland.

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