



Living Well North Tyneside

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

Travelling can be an exciting and enriching experience, but for disabled people, it often comes with additional challenges. From navigating transport hubs to ensuring accessible accommodation, planning a trip can sometimes feel overwhelming. However, with the right information and resources, travel can be enjoyable, inclusive, and stress-free. This guide provides key insights to help disabled travellers explore with confidence.

The latest data from the UK Government indicates that 16.1 million people in the UK had a disability in the 2022/23 financial year. On average, disabled people take fewer trips per year than non-disabled people, largely due to issues with accessibility. Ensuring access to travel options that accommodate different needs is essential for enabling more people to explore new destinations.

Understanding Your Rights as a Disabled Traveller

Disabled people have legal rights that ensure fair and equal access to travel. In the UK, the Equality Act 2010 protects against discrimination, and transport providers are required to make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility. When travelling in Europe, the EU Regulation on the Rights of Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility in Air Transport offers similar protections, covering assistance at airports, on planes, and during boarding and disembarking.

Accessible Transport Options

Whether travelling by train, bus, plane, or ferry, it's important to know what assistance is available:

- **Trains:** National Rail services provide Passenger Assist, a service that allows disabled passengers to book assistance for boarding, alighting, and connections. Step-free access is available at many stations, but checking in advance is advised.
- **Buses and Coaches:** Most buses in the UK are now wheelchair accessible, with priority seating and audio-visual announcements. For longer coach journeys, services like National Express offer assistance if booked in advance.
- **Air Travel:** Airlines must provide assistance free of charge, including help at the airport and boarding the plane. Contacting the airline at least 48 hours before departure can ensure a smooth experience.
- **Ferries:** Many ferry operators offer accessible cabins, priority boarding, and wheelchair-friendly facilities, but it's best to check specific requirements ahead of time.

Planning an Accessible Stay

Finding accessible accommodation is crucial for a comfortable trip. Many booking platforms now allow you to filter by accessibility features, such as step-free access, roll-in showers, and accessible public spaces. It's advisable to call ahead and confirm specific needs directly with the hotel or rental provider.

Preparing for a Stress-Free Journey

To make travel smoother, consider these tips:

- **Plan in Advance:** Research transport options, book assistance, and confirm accessibility features before departure.
- **Use Travel Insurance:** Some policies cover mobility aids and medical expenses. Make sure it includes coverage for specific needs.
- **Carry Essential Documents:** Medical information, a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), and proof of disability can be helpful.
- **Seek Local Support:** Many destinations have accessible tourism offices that can provide tailored advice and local services.

Further Resources

For more details on your rights and practical advice for accessible travel, check out the following resources:

- **[Skyscanner's Inclusive Travel Guide](#)** – A detailed breakdown of accessible travel rights in Europe, covering mobility, service animals, and travel insurance.
- **[National Rail Passenger Assist](#)** – Book assistance and check station accessibility.
- **[AccessAble](#)** – Comprehensive accessibility guides for venues across the UK.

By knowing your rights, planning ahead, and using the available resources, travelling as a disabled person can be more accessible and enjoyable. Whether exploring the UK or heading abroad, there are plenty of ways to ensure a safe and fulfilling journey.

Related Links

- [Skyscanner's Inclusive Travel Guide](#)
- [National Rail Passenger Assist](#)
- [AccessAble](#)
- [35 tips & tricks for a stress-free flight from regular flyers, airline stewards and pilots](#)



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