



Making Rail Accessible: Helping Older and Disabled Passengers

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Introduction

This leaflet provides an overview of the assistance available to passengers on Chiltern Railways (CRCL).

At Chiltern Railways, we are committed to providing a safe, reliable, and accessible service. Our Accessible Travel Policy is available on our website or by contacting our Customer Services Team.

This **Making Rail Accessible** leaflet will provide you with details on:

- **How to Get Assistance** – Step-by-step guide on booking help, Turn Up and Go services, and what to do at staffed and unstaffed stations.
- **What to Expect During Travel** – Information on accessibility at stations, onboard services, seating, and mobility aid policies.
- **Disruptions & Emergency Support** – Guidance on alternative transport, dealing with delays, and emergency procedures.
- **Where to Find More Information** – Contact details for assistance, customer service, and accessing the leaflet in different formats.

Assistance: What is available and how to obtain it

For immediate travel

- We provide assistance at staffed stations during operating hours.
- Unbooked assistance (Turn Up and Go) is available, but booking in advance is recommended.
- If assistance is required at an unstaffed station, passengers can use Help Points or call our assistance number.
- We recommend people arrive at least 20 minutes before their train's departure time.

Booking Assistance

- Assistance can be pre-booked up to 2 hours before travel.
- Booking options:
 - **Chiltern Railways Assist Team (03456 005 165, Option 3, then Option 3)** available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except 25th and 26th December.
 - **National Rail Passenger Assist (0800 022 3720)**- except on 25th and 26th December.
 - **Passenger Assistance by Transreport app (available on iOS and Android)**

- **Online** - [Make a request for assistance on the Passenger Assistance website](#)
- When purchasing tickets over the phone (03456 005 165 selecting option 1 then option 2) assistance can be arranged at the same time as purchase from 07:00 – 22:00, 7 days a week (except 25 & 26 December).
- If you are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired, dial **0870 240 9598** (which connects you to the Relay Assist service). If you are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can now use SignLive to connect to us via an interpreter. You can access SignLive via the app or a web browser. Visit www.signlive.co.uk/login for more information.

We may run a reduced timetable on Boxing Day and do not serve all our stations, however you are able to book assistance up to 22:00 on 24th December or check our website for more details on these services.

Levels of Assistance we provide

- Help with journey planning.
- Assistance with boarding and alighting trains.
- Explaining what services and facilities are available on the train and at the station.
- Support with wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility aids.
- Help with luggage (up to three items per passenger).
- Guidance through stations, to platforms, and to onward transport.
- Purchasing travel tickets.
- Making seat reservations on other train operators' services.

Our staff are trained to support passengers with both visible and hidden disabilities. However, we cannot provide continuous assistance throughout your journey or offer personal care, such as help with eating, taking medication, or using the toilet. If you require this level of support, we recommend travelling with a companion. For safety reasons, our staff cannot lift you from a wheelchair into a train seat, but they can assist you in making the transfer.

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

Before you travel

Information about train services, station accessibility, and ticketing is available via:

- Phone: 03456 005 165 (option 3 and option 3) open 24/7
- Website: www.chilternrailways.co.uk- purchasing ticket and obtaining travel information.
- Staffed Ticket Offices: location and opening hours - www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations
- National Rail Enquiries Website www.nationalrail.co.uk.

Our staff will be able to provide information on our facilities and services, which can also be found via the following links to our website:

- Station facilities, accessibility information, train facilities, staff availability, and disabled parking spaces: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations
- Use of wheelchairs and mobility scooters and other mobility aids: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information
- How to purchase a ticket and discounts available: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information
- Temporary reductions in accessibility (including of toilet facilities): [Chiltern Railways JourneyCheck - Train times and live real time delay/cancellation/disruption information.](#)
- Train times and routes: www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/download-our-timetable
- Details of delays, disruption and emergencies (including emergency or temporary timetables): www.chilternrailways.co.uk/live-train-times

At the station

- All staffed stations have clearly marked Meeting Points for assistance.
- Portable ramps are available at staffed stations.
- Train Managers provide assistance at unstaffed stations north of Banbury.
- If a station is inaccessible, we will arrange alternative transport at no extra cost.

Assistance at Staffed Stations

Whether you have pre-booked assistance or not, we recommend arriving at the station at least 20 minutes before departure to allow staff time to arrange assistance at your destination or interchange station.

If booked in advance through Passenger Assist, we can help carry your luggage on or off the train and to a connecting service, taxi rank, or other vehicle, free of charge. You can also bring one additional small item at no extra cost if you can carry it independently.

At accessible staffed stations, we have portable ramps for wheelchairs and mobility devices, but some larger devices may not fit on our trains. For more details, visit: [Chiltern Railways Assisted Travel Information](#).

Assistance at unstaffed stations

If you need assistance at a Chiltern Railways station, you can use the Help Points located on all platforms. These provide access to live service updates, assistance with boarding or alighting, and allow you to report accessibility issues or station faults.

To use a Help Point:

- Press the assistance button for non-emergency support (e.g., requesting a ramp or checking train times).
- Press the emergency button only for urgent safety concerns.
- Stay near the Help Point while assistance is being arranged or inform the operator where you will be.

At unstaffed stations, it is recommended to use the Help Point at least 20 minutes before your train departs to allow time for arrangements. However, as staff may need to travel to you and services tend to be less frequent, this may not be suitable for time-sensitive journeys. In such cases, you can check the “Welcome To...” posters at the station for the nearest staffed station.

If a Help Point is not working, you can contact Customer Relations on 03456 005 165 (open 06:00 – 22:00).

For services north of Banbury, Train Managers are on board to assist with boarding and alighting at unstaffed or part-staffed stations. Wait at the Meeting Point/Help Point for assistance.

Whether you have pre-booked assistance or not, staff will contact your destination or interchange station before you board to confirm assistance will be available when you arrive. After you board, they will call back to confirm your location on the train, arrival time, and the type of assistance required. On services with a Train Manager, they will help you alight at unstaffed or partially-staffed stations.

For stations south of Banbury, where trains do not have Train Managers, we will arrange alternative accessible transport to the nearest staffed station or your destination, if needed.

Travel Safe Officers

From April 1 2025, Chiltern Railways will introduce Travel Safe Officers (TSOs) to enhance passenger safety by patrolling stations and trains. They will:

- Deter anti-social behaviour and offer reassurance.
- Assist with directions and boarding/alighting trains.
- Relay passenger feedback to Chiltern Railways.

TSOs cannot provide personal care (e.g. eating, medication, or toileting), so passengers needing such assistance should travel with a companion.

Inaccessible stations

Not all of our stations are accessible to wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility. In these circumstances, we will provide alternative transport such as a taxi – at no extra cost to you – to take you to the nearest accessible station. We will send a member of staff to assist you where it's practical to do so.

On the train

Our staff on board are committed to ensuring that your journey will be as comfortable and stress-free as possible.

Seats on trains

We do not provide seat reservations on any of our routes. Priority seating (which has extra legroom and moveable armrests as well as being situated near the doors) is available on all of our trains. Wheelchair spaces are available on all of our trains, and our on-board staff will assist in ensuring these dedicated spaces give wheelchair users first priority. Accessible toilets can be found in the same carriages.

Some of our services operate as a driver-only service, in this instance the station staff will assist you in locating an appropriate seat. If you are with companions and/or family members, we will do our best to seat them close to your seat. In particular, we will aim to ensure that family groups, especially those requiring adult supervision, are located in close proximity.

Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are welcome on all of our trains, free of charge, and can travel in any part of the train.

Wheelchairs, Scooters and Mobility Aids

Wheelchairs and mobility scooters can be carried in the designated spaces on our trains if they meet the requirements set out below:

Wheelchair Dimensions:

- Max width: 700mm
- Max length: 1200mm
- Max weight (including passenger): 300kg

Mobility Scooter Criteria:

- **3-wheeled scooters** or those with a triangular footprint:
 - Max length: 1200mm, Max width: 700mm
 - Max speed: 4mph
 - Max weight (including user): 300kg
 - Free-wheeling facility for power failure
 - Sealed batteries
 - Can negotiate gradients of 8 degrees or more or fold down to hand luggage size
- **4-wheeled scooters:**
 - Max length: 1120mm, Max width: 560mm
 - Max speed: 4mph
 - Max weight (including user): 300kg
 - Free-wheeling facility for power failure
 - Sealed batteries
 - Can negotiate gradients of 8 degrees or more or fold down to hand luggage size

If your wheelchair or mobility scooter exceeds the above dimensions, we will unfortunately be unable to accommodate you on our services. **Please note**, we will also be unable to arrange alternative transport due to the size restrictions for taxi and bus being the same.

Some powered mobility scooters are only meant for road use and cannot be used on trains, so if you have not travelled before or recently changed your scooter, please check the dimensions with us (as above) to ensure it is okay to use on our trains.

Some of our stations have floor vinyls showing the accepted dimensions for wheelchairs and mobility scooters on Chiltern Railways trains. Please position your wheelchair or mobility scooter on to ensure it will fit. If you are connecting onto another train operators service, their size restrictions may differ. Our Passenger Assistance booking team will be able to assist you with this.

Additional Information:

- Wheelchairs are available at some stations for passengers who need assistance walking to the platform.
- At London Marylebone, mobility assistance buggies are available.
- Staff cannot lift passengers from wheelchairs into seats, but can assist with transfers.
- Passengers can remain in their mobility scooters if they meet the size criteria or fold them down if they choose to transfer to a seat.

- In line with industry standards, including other Train Operating Companies and Network Rail, E-scooters and E-bikes are not recognised mobility aids and therefore cannot be used on our stations or trains.

Aural and visual information

- Most trains have automated announcements for the final destination, calling pattern, and next stop.
- If the system fails or during delays/changes, staff will make clear, concise announcements where possible. At unstaffed stations please use the help points provided and we will be able to provide you with assistance.
- On-board staff aim to announce:
 - 5 minutes before departure and again 1–2 minutes before.
 - 2 minutes before arriving at each station.
 - During unscheduled stops and delays of 2+ minutes, with reasons provided if known.
- Driver-only services: Speak to station staff before boarding if you have special requirements. At unstaffed stations, please use the Help Point to make contact.
- If you have a hearing impairment, inform staff for alternative arrangements.
- Trains have public address systems and visual displays, meeting PRM-TSI 2014 accessibility standards.

We offer a Video Relay Service in partnership with SignLive to support deaf and hard of hearing customers whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). This free service allows customers to video call a BSL interpreter who will relay the conversation with our team. For more information, visit: [Chiltern Railways Assisted Travel Information](#).

Assistance on arrival

When a train terminates at one of our stations, our Passenger Assist service will help you to alight from the train as soon as possible and in any event within five minutes of the train's arrival time. At all other stations, assistance will be provided safely and efficiently.

If things do not go as planned

During service disruption, we will do our best to ensure you can continue your journey and are not left stranded.

If your original arrangements are no longer valid, we will re-book any required assistance through Passenger Assist.

In cases of platform changes, our staff will assist you in reaching the revised platform, if accessible. If not, we will arrange alternative transport, such as an accessible taxi, at no extra cost.

For rail replacement services, we will aim to provide accessible buses. If none are available, we will arrange a suitable accessible vehicle.

At times when our facilities or services are disrupted, we will give you notice on our Mobile App, website, and other communication channels such as social media. When you begin to search on our mobile app or website for a journey, there will be a “banner” with headline information which will expand when you click on this. If the disruption means your original arrangements are no longer valid, we will do our best to make contact with you and re-book any required assistance through Passenger Assist.

Our staff are trained to anticipate your needs, especially if you have cognitive or sensory impairments. They will communicate news of any service disruption and provision of alternative transport to you via the Customer Information Systems or, where possible, in person.

The provision of Help Points at all of our stations provides a link to our Customer Information Team (except 25 December) who will also be able to assist you in continuing your journey.

Emergency procedures

In an emergency, our staff will supervise evacuation and identify the safest routes, including alternatives if needed.

If you have a disability and there is no accessible evacuation route, you will be moved to a pre-identified place of safety with a staff member until emergency services arrive.

Wheelchair users will only be evacuated where there are safety concerns, otherwise, you will be moved to a safer part of the train or station until the train can reach the nearest station.

Our staff will accompany you at all times and collaborate with emergency services for expert assistance.

Redress and compensation

When assistance has been booked but has not been provided due to a failure of the assistance service, we will provide you with appropriate redress. In these instances, the form and value may be determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account the circumstances of each case.

We will be happy to assist you with your claim and more details of the claim process can be found on www.chilternrailways.co.uk/compensation.

We will coordinate a response to your complaint so if you travelled with multiple train companies, we will provide you with a full explanation in response, including why it happened and what mitigating actions we intend to take as a result.

We will also always comply with the Consumer Rights Act 2015. In line with the National Rail Conditions of Travel, we will consider all additional compensation claims for any losses or

extra costs caused by a service failure. (For example, the cost of a new plane ticket if you miss a flight). This will not affect your legal rights to make claims under the Consumer Act 2015, although you must not seek to recover the same money twice for example both under our claims process and the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

Where to get more information and how to get in touch

Our Customer Relations Team is available from 08:00 – 20:00 7 days a week (excluding Christmas Day) and can be contacted by phone on **03456 005 156** (option 3 and option 4) or via our website www.chilternrailways.co.uk/contact-us .

Large Print or Easy Read versions of this leaflet

Contact our team on **03456 005 156** (option 3 and option 4) and they will send it to you within seven days.

Our Accessible Travel Policy

This document sets out in more detail our commitments and standards of service provision, as well as relevant policies and practices, with regards to disabled people using the rail network. It is available both online www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information and in Large Print and Easy Read formats available from our team on **0345 600 5156** (option 3 and option 4).

Stations and trains accessibility information

Available from our website at www.chilternrailways.co.uk/routes-and-destinations and www.chilternrailways.co.uk/before-you-travel/Assisted-Travel-Information

Getting in touch

Day of travel queries or issues:

03456 005 156 (option 3 and option 4) between 08:00 – 20:00 7 days a week (excluding Christmas Day)

Assisted travel service opening hours and contact details:

03456 005 156 (option 3 and option 3) - 24 hours a day, except Christmas Day.
0800 022 3720 for the National Passenger Assist booking number

Text Phone or minicom:

0845 60 50 600

Provide feedback or make a complaint:

Customer Services (Mon-Fri 08:00 – 20:00)
Email: customer.service@chilternrailways.co.uk
Customer Services
Banbury ICC
Merton Street
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 4RN
Phone: **03456 005 165**
Fax: **01926 729 914**

The Rail Ombudsman
Email: info@railombudsman.org
1st Floor
Premier House
Argyle Way
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 2AD
Phone: **0330 094 0362**

How to contact us via Social Media:

Twitter: @chilternrailway
Facebook: @chilternrailway
WhatsApp: **0203 856 2007**

To get involved in the Chiltern Railways Accessibility Group:

We currently have 12 members and review the members in the group on an annual basis. If you would like to be part of our Accessibility Group or join the waiting list to join when positions become available, please email: accessibility@chilternrailways.co.uk