



Thames Valley

OLDER DRIVERS FORUM



Managing without a car?
...it may be easier than you think

Visit www.olderdriversforum.com

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Thames Valley
**OLDER
DRIVERS
FORUM**

We are a not-for-profit organisation made up of experts in road safety from across Thames

Valley – with representatives from the emergency services, charities, local authorities and business. All specialising in keeping older people on the road, safer for longer.

We do not perform any legal function and do not have the authority to remove driving licences. We are merely here to assist you, or the older person in your life, to stay mobile for as long as possible.

Talking about retiring from driving can be an emotionally charged topic – especially when for some, it means fear or loss of independence.

But while hanging up their car keys can be a major milestone for an older person – it does not signal the end of a busy and fulfilling life.

For more local information and advice then visit our website at www.olderdriversforum.com.

For national advice visit www.olderdrivers.org.uk.



“I’m afraid it comes to all of us at some time - I am now an older driver. Although I have years of experience and feel completely confident at the wheel, my sight, hearing, reaction- time and judgement of speed and distance aren’t as sharp as they once were.

The Older Drivers Forum is about keeping people like me, mature motorists, on the road. With practical and informative advice, they want us driving longer but more safely. Can I repeat that? They don’t want us off the road, they want us on the road but more safely. Why not see how they can help you?” Bruce Parker



The aim of this leaflet is to help you get around without your car.

It includes information on:

- Transport services which are available the Thames Valley¹
- Help available towards the cost of travel
- Other useful information and advice

We have tried to offer as many alternatives as possible, to give you the opportunity to choose the travel option which best suits your need. Deciding to stop driving doesn't have to mean losing your independence.

¹ Please check all information is correct with the provider prior to making any booking

Transport services



Public bus and train services

Find details of what bus and train routes are available in your area and the times these operate.

For further information please see:

www.buckscc.gov.uk/travelineinfo

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.westberks.gov.uk

www.reading.gov.uk

www.rbwm.gov.uk

www.slough.gov.uk

Select website and go to transport sections.

Alternatively you can use Traveline to plan your journey at www.traveline.info. Or call: **0871 200 22 33** *calls cost 12p per minute plus your phone company's access charge



Taxi share & Car share schemes

In areas where bus services have been withdrawn, a number of services have been introduced using taxis or private hire cars.

These operate to a timetable but you must register with the service and book your seat in advance. Concessionary passes (see Travel Concessions section) are accepted for free travel, in a similar way to travel by bus. Some services use wheelchair-accessible taxis.

Additionally see the section on 'Useful Local Contacts' for details of schemes in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire



Taxis

Taxis provide a cost effective alternative to using your own car and can often be found to be cheaper than owning and running your own vehicle.

- Many taxis can be hailed at side of the road.
- Pre-booked taxis are a lot cheaper and often have fixed rates for certain journeys.
- Most taxi companies allow you to setup an account with them.

Details of taxi companies are available in the telephone book or via the Internet. A list of taxi companies in the Thames Valley that operate wheelchair accessible vehicles can be found at:

www.accessiblecountryside.org.uk/buckinghamshire-taxis

www.accessiblecountryside.org.uk/berkshire-taxis

www.accessiblecountryside.org.uk/oxfordshire-taxis



Voluntary car schemes

A number of voluntary organisations in the Thames Valley area use volunteers in their own cars to provide transport to those who need it.

Many of these schemes are Good Neighbour groups who primarily provide transport to hospital and medical appointments, although some may also provide social journeys. Passengers will generally be asked to contribute towards the cost of this transport. Rates will vary between organisations. Individual schemes will also have their own criteria for who can use their service.

Buckinghamshire

www.communityimpactbucks.org.uk or call **0800 085 8480**

Milton Keynes

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk

Search for community transport or call **01908 252266**

Berkshire

www.westberks.gov.uk/communitytransport

www.sloughcommunitytransport.com or contact **01753 691 131**

Oxfordshire Oxfordshire Travel Advice Line (OxTAIL)

Search for “Oxtail Oxfordshire Travel”
or call **01865 323738**

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk Search for community transport.

Regional Services

www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

For hospital appointments within the Thames Valley visit www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/get-help/getting-out-and-about/community-transport



Dial-a-Ride, Readibus & Octobus

These services provide door to door transport using specially adapted minibuses.

Dial a Ride

Dial a Ride is for people who find it difficult or impossible to use public transport because they are frail or disabled.

Dial a Ride operates in The Chilterns, Wycombe District and South Bucks Districts (excluding London). Residents will need to register to use these services.

For more information call **01494 766123**.

Readibus

Readibus is similar to Dial a Ride but is also available to people whose travel needs are not met by local bus services in Reading, West Berkshire and south Oxfordshire.

In Berkshire, Readibus is available by calling **(0118) 931 0000**

Octobus

Octobus is a service available in Oxford City Centre, West Oxford and the Vale of the White Horse. Octobus by calling **01865 876176**

Fares are similar to bus fares and if you have a concessionary pass (see Travel Concessions section) you can travel at half fare. These services are popular so it is best to book several days in advance.

Travel concessions



Regional County Council Concessionary Travel Schemes

There are a number of travel concessions which are available to residents across Thames Valley who meet the required eligibility criteria.

Older Persons Bus Pass

Older residents, using a bus pass, can take advantage of free travel on local buses throughout Thames Valley and the rest of England. Time restrictions apply.

If you were born before 6 April 1950, both men and women are eligible on their 60th birthday for a bus pass. If you were born after 5 April 1950, the eligible age for both men and women is the state pensionable age of a woman.

Disabled Persons Bus Pass or Travel Vouchers

Residents over the age of five who have specific disabilities can take advantage of free travel on local buses throughout Thames Valley and the rest of England. Although time restrictions may apply. Residents can choose to have a disabled persons bus pass or travel vouchers to use on alternative services such as taxis.

You are eligible for Disabled Person's travel concessions if you are aged five years or older and:

- blind or partially sighted, or
- profoundly or severely deaf, or
- without speech, or

- have a disability, or injury, which has a substantial and long-term effect on your ability to walk, or
- have no arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms, or
- have a severe learning disability, including an arrested state of development from birth, or
- have been prevented from holding or would have been refused a driving licence under Part III of the Road Transport Act 1988, under section 92 of the Act (physical fitness) on grounds other than persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol, or
- a member or veteran of the Armed Services who has been seriously injured in service.

Companion Pass

In addition to the disabled persons travel concessions you may also be entitled to a companion pass if your disabilities mean that you are unable to travel unaccompanied.

For more information about any of the above travel concessions please visit [your local council website](#).



Railcards

Senior Railcard

If you are aged 60 or over, you can apply for a Senior Citizen's Railcard providing a discount of up to 1/3 off the price of most first class and standard rail fares.

The card costs approximately £30 and is valid for one year. You can buy a Senior Railcard online, by phone, or at a staffed station ticket office. Discounts available from local library or council office.

For more information Tel: [0345 3000 250](tel:03453000250)

www.senior-railcard.co.uk

or email railcardhelp@railcards-online.co.uk

Disabled Person's Railcard

A Disabled Person's Railcard costs £20 and is valid for one year. It entitles you to a 1/3 off the price of most first and standard class rail fares. If you are accompanied by another adult, they can also travel at the same discounted fare.

Application forms are available online, from rail stations and main post offices. You may also apply for a discount at your local library or council offices. For further information contact the Disabled Person's Railcard Helpline Tel: **0345 605 0525**

Textphone: **0345 601 0132**

Email **disability@atoc.org**

www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk



Discount Coach Card

National Express offer concessionary coach cards for over 60's, and those who are registered disabled, at a cost of approximately £10 plus £1.50 p&p per year.

The concessionary passes entitle the traveller to 1/3 off travel on most National Express services.

Money back if you don't save the cost of the card.

Bookings Tel: **08717 81 81 81** Advice Tel: **0371 781 8181**

www.nationalexpress.com

Other useful advice



Mobility scooters

A mobility scooter may meet some of your mobility needs, particularly for local visits or shopping.

Remember to try and keep walking as much as possible to keep fit, whether with assistance from a walking frame or wheeled trolley if required. Only use a scooter, even if you own one, when you feel you need that assistance.

If you are in receipt of the higher rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance or are a war pensioner, you may be eligible to purchase a Mobility Scooter through the Motability scheme. For advice please contact your local mobility provider.



Shopmobility

You do not have to be registered disabled to use Shopmobility schemes. They provide disabled or frail people with manual or powered wheelchairs and powered scooters so that they can easily get around town to shop or sightsee.

The schemes are either free or have a nominal charge and can be used by anyone either permanently or temporarily disabled.

The National Federation of Shopmobility website contains an online directory of all UK schemes. This can be used to search for schemes in your local area.

Tel: **01933 229644** Email: **shopmobility@bhta.com**



Blue badge scheme

The blue badge belongs to the disabled person who qualifies for it (who may or may not be a car driver).



The badge allows parking concessions for cars carrying people who:

- receive the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance at the higher rate
- receive a War Pensioners Mobility Supplement
- are registered severely sight impaired
- receive a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) award that indicates in the 'moving around' activity of the mobility component that you cannot walk further than 50 metres
- have been both awarded a lump sum benefit at tariffs 1-8 of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, and certified as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking.
- have a severe disability in both arms and cannot turn the steering wheel of a vehicle by hand, even if a turning knob is fitted, and cannot use parking meters

You may be awarded a badge subject to further assessment if you:

- have a permanent and substantial disability
- are unable to walk or considerable difficulty in walking

Evidence of your ability to meet the above criteria will be required.

You do not qualify if...

- You have a psychological disorder, learning or behavioural problems. This will not normally qualify you unless your impairment causes very considerable, and not intermittent, difficulty in walking.
- You have a disabling condition that is only temporary, such as a broken leg.

Legislation requires that, from 1 April 2012, an independent mobility assessment be carried out where it is unsure whether a person qualifies. The issuing authority is not allowed to use medical doctor/consultant reports any longer.

Useful information from the Government web site about getting Blue Badges can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-badge-can-i-get-one.

The Blue Badge scheme is run by the Department for Transport, but badges are issued by local authorities.

The system of issuing Blue Badges changed in 2012. The badge design has changed and badges are produced by a central secure process similar to a driving licence. There may be a small administration fee for the blue badge.

The badge can be used anywhere in the EU.



Other travel tips

Useful information from the Government website about Transport for the disabled can be found by visiting www.gov.uk/transport-disabled

For transport to health appointments speak to the medical centre or hospital to see what support you may be entitled to.

- Ask friends, neighbours, family to take you shopping when they go or for them to do your shopping for you.
- If you are able to use the Internet, on-line shopping is very easy and convenient.
- Use a delivery service via your local farm shops who deliver organic vegetable boxes and companies who deliver fresh or frozen meals.



You don't need a car to keep yourself busy

Activity and day centres are run by a range of different organisations across the voluntary and private sector, as well as by the Health Service and by Adult Services.

Activities include crafts, gardening, games, quizzes and exercises. Many provide regular outings into the community and offer access to college courses.

Luncheon clubs and social clubs

Lunch clubs provide a great way to meet people and have a hot meal in the middle of the day at a reasonable cost. They are run by a variety of organisations including Age Concern. For more information call **0800 328 7154**.

Age UK offer lunch clubs, activities, coffee mornings, for more information contact **0800 055 6112**

‘Contact the Elderly’ have volunteers who host a Sunday afternoon tea party in their own homes providing a lifeline of friendship to people aged over 75 who live alone and have little or no contact with family or friends.

Volunteer drivers transport you to the party to enjoy conversation, companionship and laughter. To join as a member or a volunteer call **0800 716 543** or visit **www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk**.

Day activities in care homes for non residents

The Guide to Residential Care tells you about care homes which run day care activities for non-residents. Search Adult social services in your local government website.



Useful Local Contacts

Buckinghamshire

Age UK offer a number of schemes to assist the Older Generation, contact Age UK - www.ageuk.org.uk/buckinghamshire

Bucks Good Neighbour Scheme Tel: **0300 111 1250**

Community Transport Services
Chilterns Dial-a-Ride Tel: **01494 766123**.

Community Transport Hub provides signposting information, advice and guidance on community transport services for Buckinghamshire. You can contact them on **0800 085 8480** or **01844 348834** 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday or email info@communityimpactbucks.org.uk

Bucks Car Share – Buckscarshare.co.uk
or liftshare.com/uk/community/bucks

Shop mobility – Aylesbury Tel: **01296 336725**

Shop mobility – High Wycombe Tel: **01494 472277**

Shop mobility – Milton Keynes Tel: **01908 398115**

Transport for Doctor and Hospital appointments –
RED CROSS **01908 578326**

Older People services guides – available on
www.chiltern.gov.uk/fiftyplus

Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes Car Share mkparking@milton-keynes.gov.uk
Tel: **0845 230 8855**, use option 3.

Shop mobility – Milton Keynes Tel: **01908 398115**

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk Search for community transport

Berkshire

Age UK in Reading Borough
www.ageuk.org.uk/berkshire
Tel: **0118 959 4242**

Age Concern Slough and Berkshire East – Tel: **01753822890**

Shop mobility West Berkshire – Newbury David Seward
Tel: **01635 523854**

Shop mobility Reading – Sun Mobility Tel: **0118 931 4999**

Shop mobility Bracknell - Tel: **01344 861316**
info@bracknellshopmobility.org

Shop mobility Windsor - Tel: **01753 622330**
www.people2places.org.uk/shopm.8228

Community transport
www.info.westberks.gov.uk/communitytransport
www.sloughcommunitytransport.com
Tel: **01753 691 131**

Help with hospital appointments
www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/get-help/getting-out-and-about/community-transport

Oxfordshire

Age UK www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/travel-hobbies/driving/

Age UK offer a number of schemes to assist the Older Generation, including Good neighbour schemes www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Travel Advice Line (OxTAIL)
Tel: **0345 310 1111** for free impartial advice on a range of transport options for older people or those with a high level of support needs.

CT Online, a community transport search facility that allows you to seek out your local community-run transport service in any area of England

Shop mobility Oxford – Westgate Car Park – Tel: **01865 263 830**

Shop mobility Witney – Tel: **01993 864 787**

Bicester Shop Mobility & Dial-a-Ride Tel: **01869 320132**

Mobility advice from **www.oxfordshire.gov.uk** Search for disability

National/Regional

Mobility scooter users road safety advice **www.365alive.co.uk/cms/content/your-mobility-scooter**

Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
<https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/older/>

University of the 3rd Age - brings people together in their 3rd Age developing their interests **www.u3asites.org.uk/south-east**



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