InformationNOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

Wheelchairs, mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs

Manual wheelchairs, mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can make it easier for you to get out and about. There are different vehicles available to choose from.

Wheelchairs

Wheelchairs vary from simple manual versions to specialised chairs for posture and powered chairs for indoor and outdoor use.

A posture and mobility assessment may be recommended to work out which type of wheelchair will meet your needs. The service providing your wheelchair will review your chair as your needs change.

How to get a wheelchair

Your GP, physiotherapist of occupational therapist can refer you for a wheelchair assessment to the **NHS Disabled Services Centre**.

Buying a wheelchair

If you decide to buy a wheelchair it's a good idea to think about:

- your size shape and posture
- any pressure relief needs
- how, when and where the chair will be used
- your home and local environment for accessibility
- do you need extra support such as hand, foot, neck and chin supports?

It can be cheaper to buy second hand equipment or you may be able to get help from a local charity.

Read more about local help and support to buy or borrow equipment aids and adaptations on InformationNOW

Borrow or rent a wheelchair

British Red cross have a mobility aids and equipment service that can loan equipment for a cost. Equipment and aids include:

- child, adult and heavy duty wheelchairs costing £22 per week
- wheelchair accessories
- commodes and toilet aids costing £11 per week and one off charge of £5 for the pot

They have a delivery service available or can be collected at their Newcastle address. You can find out more on their Wheelchair Hire page here

Read more about local help and support to buy or borrow equipment aids and adaptations on InformationNOW

Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs

Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs are a useful way of getting out and about and enabling you to do what you enjoy.

There are lots of different types of scooter and wheelchair available to choose from in the UK. All scooters and powered wheelchairs are given a classification by the Department of Transport. They fall into 2 different types of group of mobility scooter:

- **Class 2** with a top speed of 4mph to be used only on the pavement. Recipients under 14 years are restricted to Class 2 products only.
- **Class 3** with a top speed of 8mph that can be used on the road. You must **register your class 3 scooter with the DVLA** and be over 14 years of age.

Most scooters and wheelchairs cost less to lease per week than you mobility allowance, so the remainder of your allowance is paid directly to you.

A Mobility Scooter is not classed as a road vehicle therefore there is no legal requirement currently to:

- insure the vehicle, although this is recommended
- pay road tax
- prove competence, e.g. health assessment, eye test. However, you should be able to read a car's registration number from a distance of 12.3 metres (40 feet).
- take a driving test or undergo training

A class 3 scooter must have several features in order for it to be road worthy. You can read about them on **Gov.UK**.

Read more about local help and support to buy or borrow equipment aids and adaptations on InformationNOW

Using mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs safely

When out and about using a mobility scooter you usually drive alongside others on pavements and in public spaces. It is useful to be aware of mobility scooter good practice and precautions that you should take to protect your safety and the safety of others.

Driving on the road

You must follow the **Highway Code**.

Only class 3 scooters and powered wheelchairs may be driven on roads.

Maximum speed is 8mph and you can't drive on bus lanes, cycle lanes or motorways. You should also avoid using dual carriageways with a speed limit of over 50mph and use an amber flashing light for visibility.

Driving on the pavement

Maximum speed of 4mph.

You aren't allowed to use cycle lanes and all normal parking restrictions apply to mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs.

Choosing a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair

There are a number of dealers that work with Motability to provide suitable products. It's a good idea to visit a dealer or ask them to bring you a few options.

Things to think about include:

- ease of getting on and off. Think about your leg movements and whether you need a seat that swivels to help you
- how far you want to travel and the battery life before it needs recharging
- carrying your product in a car and whether parts need to be dismantled to get it in your car
- weight and size including the battery pack
- the turning circle when you are out and about – how easy is it to manoeuvre into the toilet or a cafe?
- road and pavement surfaces, the suspension and the smoothness of your ride
- recharging the battery, storage and sockets
- how easy you find it to transfer from one item to another – is a scooter or a powered wheelchair best for you?

The MND Association has worked with three wheelchair manufacturers to create wheelchairs that are suitable for someone with motor neurone disease (MND). They can be enabled for communication devices and dual control.

Read more about local help and support to buy or borrow equipment aids and adaptations on InformationNOW

Help and support services

Motability has information, a product catalogue and a list of dealers in Newcastle and the North East

Newcastle Shopmobility is a scheme where you can hire a mobility scooter or powered wheelchair to move around Newcastle, based at Eldon Gardens.

British Red Cross is a charity where you can hire a wheelchairs

DLD Wheelchair Rental offer a range of services including: hire and rental, alternatives to stair lifts and other mobility aids.

RiDC (Research Institute for Disabled Consumers) has an online **mobility scooter database** which can tell you which scooters can go on public transport

Ross Care are an NHS wheelchair approved repair service. They have centres across the UK. As an approved repairer for the NHS they provide a free repair service, should your NHS wheelchair develop a fault.

Grants and benefit support

You can get a Motability car or vehicle if you've been awarded certain benefits. Such as: the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), the enhanced rate mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), the higher rate mobility component of Child Disability Payment, Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP) or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement.

Independence at Home provide small grants for people who have a physical disability, learning disability or long term illness and are in financial need. They provide small grants that include:

- Mobility and Travel Equipment
- Special Disability Equipment

You can't apply directly to this scheme. A professional health, social care or advice service worker can help you to apply for a grant.

The Family Fund Mobility Support programme could support you if you're on a low income, have a disabled or seriously ill child under three, and would benefit from access to a car for their needs. The programme grants you a lease car that can support your child's mobility needs until the age of three, when you can apply for a Motability scheme vehicle.

Family Fund's Your Opportunity grant is for people with a disability aged 18 to 24. The grant can support young adults with specialist wheelchairs that cant be provided by NHS or local authority, sports wheelchairs, lightweight wheelchair, wheelchair maintenance, accessible transport costs for hobbies and activities.

Read more about local help and support to buy or borrow equipment aids and adaptations on InformationNOW

You can get benefits advice from a local independent service. They can help guide you through the application process and explain how some benefits may impact upon another. Services in Newcastle include:

- **Citizens Advice Newcastle (CAN)**.
- **Newcastle Welfare Rights Service** have **self help material** on their website
- **Search Newcastle** give benefits advice to older people in the West of Newcastle
- **Disability North** give disability related benefit advice, help with appeals and representation at tribunals

Search for Benefits advice organisations

Location:
Postcode:
Search

Want to drive?

North East Drive Mobility can assess your needs. They can help you regain or retain your confidence as a driver or passenger.

Where to get benefits advice

Last updated: March 6, 2025

Useful Organisations

RIDC (Research Institute for Disabled Consumers)

Email: mail@ridc.org.uk

Website: www.ridc.org.uk

Telephone: 0207 427 2460

Address: Unit 10 Blenheim Court, N7 9NY

Newcastle Shopmobility

Email: shopmobility@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-adults/getting-out-and-about/shopmobility

Telephone: 0191 261 6176

Address: Eldon Garden Shopping Centre, NE1 7RA

Motability

Website: www.motability.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 456 4566

WheelchairSteve World

Website: https://wheelchairsteveworld.wordpress.com/

DLD Wheelchair Rental

Email: info@dldwheelchairrental.co.uk

Website: www.dldwheelchairrental.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 261 0007

Address: 9 - 18 Byker Bridge, NE1 2NS

North East Drive Mobility

Email: northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk

Website: https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/north-east-drive-mobility-independent-assessment-advice-service-walkergate-park/

Telephone: (0191) 287 5090

Address: Walkergate Park Hospital, NE6 4QD

NHS Disablement Services Centre

Telephone: 0191 223 1184

Address: Wheelchair Services Disablement Services Centre , NE7 7AF

North East and Cumbria Hubs Mobility Advice Service

Email: TransportHub@cntw.nhs.uk

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk/nedm

Telephone: 07816 129 405

Address: Walkergate Park Hospital, NE6 4 UD

Independence at Home

Email: iah@independenceathome.org.uk

Website: https://independenceathome.org.uk/

Related Articles

Nexus TaxiCard Scheme – Accessible Transport

Public transport

Taxis

Concessionary travel

Motability: car scheme for disabled people.

Shopmobility

Help with shopping and prescriptions

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)