

**Forward**

**Midlothian**

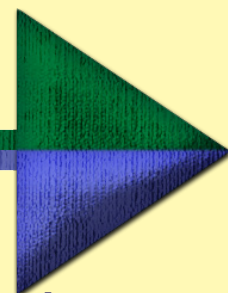
**Disabled People**

[www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk)

**Forward**

**Mid**

**Equality - Diversity - Inclusion**



## Midlothian Transport Guide 2018

Your guide to transport in Midlothian has been produced by Forward Mid - Midlothian's Disability Equality Forum (promoting the equal rights of disabled people in Midlothian) and the Midlothian Council Travel Team.

Transport can be such an essential component in determining the day to day quality of people's lives. Whether it be a trip to see a good friend, getting along to a local group or club or attending an appointment at the hospital or GP surgery, getting there efficiently and safely can be so important. Suitable transport can be a contributor to overall good health and well-being. Every person's needs differ so Forward Mid has tried to collate as much information as possible from individual companies and their services. It's not easy to find all the correct information in one place.

What we've done is bring together all the various transport options and choices that are available across Midlothian.

Forward Mid hope that having a copy of this newsletter to hand can allow older people and disabled people in Midlothian to have a much better understanding of the transport choices available to them, and to use them well!

Please continue reading and see what's available!

If you know of some transport option that's available that we haven't included here, please get in touch and let us know.

**Wishing you safe, happy and rewarding, travelling!**

Iain Tait and Karl Vanters



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# Accessible Transport for Disabled People in Midlothian

Public transport services in Midlothian are operated by buses that are considerably easier to use than in the past. Legislation required all single-decker buses to be low-floor and fully accessible by standard wheelchairs by 2015, double-deckers by 2017 and coaches by 2020. Lothian Buses has been 100% low-floor since 2009, several years before the target date set by the law. A standard wheelchair must not exceed 700mm wide by 1500mm long. Smaller vehicles, such as those operated by HcL and LCTS, mostly have special access facilities such as lifts.

Midlothian Council helps to fund Dial-a-Ride, a special door-to-door service for people who have mobility restrictions. This includes those who cannot physically manage to board a standard bus vehicle, as well as those who live too far from a standard bus service to reach it comfortably. Dial-a-Ride services are operated by HcL. For Dial-a-Ride bookings and enquiries Tel: ☎ 0131 447 9949



Dial-a-Bus offers once-a-week trips to selected shopping centres from most towns and villages. An easy-to-board bus calls at your door, and brings you back after your shopping trip. You can have a carer with you. There is a flat rate fare for these trips. Dial-a-Bus services are operated by HcL. See page 10 for journey details. For Dial-a-Bus bookings and enquiries Tel: ☎ 0131 447 1718

Midlothian Council also supports Lothian Community Transport Services [LCTS] which provides five community bus routes R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5 [shown on page 7]. If you are a non-profit making voluntary or community group and need to arrange transport, LCTS can hire you a minibus for 15 passengers. All vehicles can take wheelchair users, although the number of other passengers falls as space is created for a wheelchair. Vehicles can be with-driver or self-drive. For LCTS vehicle bookings and community bus network enquiries, contact LCTS on 0131 663 0176.

## Wheelchairs on Public Transport

### Before you Travel!

The majority of wheelchair users will be able to travel on public transport. Wheelchairs that cannot fit on public transport include:

- If your chair is more than 700mm wide by 1500mm length. A normal chair is approx 660mm wide by 1065mm length when you are in it;
- If your chair is very heavy and chair and passenger exceed 220 kilograms. As public
- Transport do not carry scales it is the wheelchair user's responsibility to know the combined weight. Scales can be found in most hospitals;
- If you need to travel with your legs fully extended or the backrest reclined;
- If you use a scooter that is difficult to manoeuvre and may be unstable in a vehicle.

### You must ensure that your wheelchair is in a safe condition to travel.

This means, for example, making sure that it is correctly maintained, that the tyres are properly inflated, that you have not overloaded the back of the chair with bags (this can cause the chair to tip over backwards on a ramp).

If you have a powered chair you must ensure that the battery is secure.

If your chair has adjustable kerb climbers you should check that they are set so that they do not catch on the ramp.

The transport operator has the right to refuse to let you travel if he believes that your wheelchair is not in a safe condition.

Class 2 scooters can now travel on Edinburgh Trams with the correct certificate - see the tram section.

## National Entitlement Card

The Scotland National Entitlement Card also known as a bus pass gives those aged 60+ and disabled people free bus travel throughout Scotland.

Application forms are available at all Midlothian libraries. There are different forms for those 60+ years of age, disabled persons and Young Scots – make sure you pick up the appropriate form for your circumstances. Completed forms with relevant proofs and a colour passport-style photo must be taken by the applicant in person to any Midlothian Library for processing. The verification process requires the librarian to confirm that the photo submitted is a true likeness of the applicant. If the application form is handed in by anyone other than the applicant, it will be rejected.

Your bus pass is printed in Hull, England, and sent by second class Royal Mail from there direct to your home address. On the front of your card will be your name and 16-digit card number, your photo and the oakleaf logo of Midlothian Council.

The expiry date is shown on cards issued to the disabled and this will continue. Expiry dates used to be printed on cards for those 60+ years old.

However, once you have proved you are 60 or over, you will never fall out of eligibility [you won't be 59 again] and so cards for the over 60s issued during the past couple of years no longer have an expiry date. The bus pass is not transferable and can only be used by the cardholder.



Various symbols can appear on the lower right side of the card. The symbols most likely to be seen on a Midlothian card are:-



“C” in orange stands for **“Concessionary Travel”**

“+1” with the “1” in black, and the “+” in orange superimposed on the “1” stands for **“plus one”** and tells the bus driver that you are entitled to have a companion travel free with you on your bus journey



An “eye” symbol in black indicates that the cardholder is blind or partially sighted and is entitled to the additional travel concessions of the Scottish Blind Scheme in addition to free bus travel.



- Free train travel within Scotland and across the border as far as Berwick-upon-Tweed in the east or Carlisle in the west;
- Free travel on Edinburgh Trams & on the Glasgow Subway;
- Free travel on most ferries within Scotland such as the Clyde and Hebridean services.

### Local buses that accept this card:

<b>Borders buses Ltd</b>	<b>Tel: 01896 754 350</b>	<b><a href="http://www.bordersbuses.co.uk">www.bordersbuses.co.uk</a></b>
<b>East Coast Buses</b>	<b>Tel: 0131 555 6363</b>	<b><a href="http://eastcoastbuses.co.uk">eastcoastbuses.co.uk</a></b>
<b>LCTS</b>	<b>Tel: 0131 663 0176</b>	<b><a href="http://www.lcts.org.uk">www.lcts.org.uk</a></b>
<b>Lothian Buses</b>	<b>Tel: 0131 555 6363</b>	<b><a href="http://lothianbuses.co.uk">lothianbuses.co.uk</a></b>
<b>Prentice Coaches</b>	<b>Tel: 01620 822620</b>	<b><a href="http://www.prentice.info">www.prentice.info</a></b>
<b>Stagecoach</b>	<b>Tel: 0300 111 0001</b>	<b><a href="http://www.stagecoachbus.com">www.stagecoachbus.com</a></b>

Long distance coach services within Scotland also accept this card. Some coach companies offer seat reservation but charge for this. The seat reservation cost is not included in the concession, but may well be worth paying if you need to travel on a



particular journey and cannot wait for a later departure if your chosen trip is already full when you arrive to board without a reservation.

<b>Megabus</b>	<b>Tel: 0900 160 0900</b>	<b>www.megabus.com</b>
<b>National Express</b>	<b>Tel: 0871 781 8178</b>	<b>www.nationalexpress.com</b>
<b>Scottish Citylink</b>	<b>Tel: 0871 266 3333</b>	<b>www.citylink.co.uk</b>

## Renewal of NEC

NEC elderly concessionary cards issued with no expiry date printed on the card are currently valid until 2041. The Midlothian Travel Permits and Passes Team (On behalf of the Travel Team) send out a reminder letter and renewal form to holders of cards for disabled people 6 to 4 weeks before the expiry date. The renewal form plus any supporting written evidence must be presented to any Midlothian library. Photocopies of proofs will be taken and then sent by internal mail to the Travel Permits and Passes Team in Dalkeith. Here the database is updated and an order sent digitally to Hull for a fresh card to be printed and despatched by second class mail to your home address. Blank renewal forms are available in all Midlothian libraries if you mislay the one sent by post.

## Replacement of a Lost or Stolen NEC

You can go to any Midlothian library in person and ask the librarian to order a replacement of a card that has already been issued to you, but is now lost or stolen. Part of the verification process is that the librarian will check that you are the person whose photo image is held in the database. This cannot be done if you do not call at the library personally.

## Changes

An online application process will be introduced nationally across Scotland within the next 12 months. This will add another option – the paper application method described above will continue to be offered for those who are not online.

Travel Team:  
Midlothian Council Travel  
Permits and Passes Team  
2nd Floor, Midlothian House  
Buccleuch Street  
Dalkeith, EH22 1DN  
Tel: ☎ 0131 561 5455 or  
Email: ✉ ptu@midlothian.  
gov.uk .

**Thanks to Midlothian  
Travel Team for this  
information.**



## Bus Users Scotland

If you have experienced problems on a bus and have not had a satisfactory response from the bus company with the dispute then you can ask or help from Bus Users Scotland.

**Bus Users Scotland is part of Bus Users UK - a non-profit organisation which works on behalf of all bus users to ensure that operators meet your needs. Think of us as the voice of passengers.**

Bus Users Scotland works with partners across the country including:

- The Scottish Government;
- Local transport authorities;
- Bus companies.

They aim to increase standards in bus travel and put the needs of bus passengers at the heart of transport policy.

The Scottish economy is hugely reliant on bus services. More than 400 million passenger journeys are made on local buses each year. Buses provide links to remote, rural communities and offer vital access to families, employment, education, health and social facilities.

Along with coach travel, bus services also provide the infrastructure for a flourishing market in tourism - yet they are facing funding cuts that could threaten services and lead to fare increases. The aim of Bus Users Scotland is to offer bus passengers the same protection and safeguards already available to rail passengers.



Bus Users Scotland has a head office in Edinburgh.

**The focus of Bus Users Scotland is in four key areas:**

- Compliance monitoring to check bus services are running where and when they should be;
- Complaints management, to ensure that complaints are handled efficiently and effectively;
- Good practice development: working with bus companies, acting on complaints and sharing best practice;
- Advocacy: working with government, local authorities, special interest groups, Transport Scotland and bus companies to make sure the views and interests of passengers are properly represented.

Bus Users Scotland is part of the Bus Users family, which also has a successful presence in England and Wales. They champion the interests of bus users and campaign to make bus and coach services the best they can possibly be.

Contact Details:

Bus Users Scotland

Hopetoun Gate,

8b McDonald Road,

Edinburgh EH7 4LZ

Tel: 0131 523 1309

[www.bususers.org/scotland/about-us](http://www.bususers.org/scotland/about-us)

**Complaints Call 0300 111 0001**

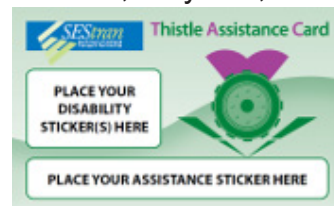
## The SEStran Thistle Card Scheme

The SEStran Thistle Assistance Card is available to help anyone who has difficulty in using public transport because of age, disability or illness. [www.sestran.gov.uk](http://www.sestran.gov.uk)

The SEStran Thistle card is designed to make using public transport easier for older people or those with disabilities or illness. The card, which is supported by a wide variety of voluntary organisations in South East Scotland and by most bus operators, is credit-card sized and comes with a supply of peel-off stickers which advise the driver of your disability and the help you need in an easy-to-read format.

The SEStran Thistle Card is free and available in Midlothian from:

- Midlothian libraries at Dalkeith, Danderhall, Gorebridge, Lasswade, Loanhead, Mayfield, Newtongrange, Penicuik & Roslin;
- Midlothian Council offices – Fairfield and Midlothian Houses in Dalkeith,
- Rosewell Development Trust;
- Sheriffhall Park and Ride Terminal;
- Midlothian Community Hospital;
- Health Centres at Pathhead and Penicuik;
- Midlothian Voluntary Action, 4-6 White Hart St, Dalkeith.



Please wait for me to sit down

Please talk slowly and clearly

Let me know when we arrive at:

The card is about the size of a standard credit card and comes with a supply of peel-off stickers. You select those that are most appropriate for your circumstances and stick them to the card. Show this to the driver to advise him of your disability and the help you need in an easy-to-read format.

For those with a smartphone, you can now download a Thistle Assistance Card from the Play/App store. You can use the preset messages or create your own message based on your own circumstances to show the bus driver when boarding.

## Lothian Community Transport Services (LCTS)

Lothian Community Transport Service relies on **volunteers** to drive its vehicles and deliver important services within communities in Midlothian.

### Are you:

- Between 21 and 70 and hold a driving licence with D1 entitlement?
- Wanting to broaden your experience and develop skills and able to spare a couple of hours?
- Think you could put something back into the community and are interested in meeting and helping people?

Have you thought about volunteering or doing something worthwhile to help others?

### They offer:

- Out-of-pocket expenses;
- Additional training opportunities;
- An opportunity to enhance the quality of someone's life.



For more information and enquiries contact Lothian Community Transport Services:

LCTS, 6b Newmills Road, Dalkeith EH22 1DU Tel: ☎ 0131 663 0176 or Edinburgh Tel: ☎ 0131 669 9959 Email: ✉ [info@lcts.org.uk](mailto:info@lcts.org.uk) [www.lcts.org.uk/](http://www.lcts.org.uk/)

Lothian Community Transport Services is an independent organisation that provides, promotes and supports high-quality passenger transport services including:

- Accessible minibus hire services to over 230 member organisations;
- High quality training for transport operators;
- Support services for transport providers.

Lothian Community Transport Services minibus hire services operate from bases in Edinburgh and Dalkeith and are available to not-for-profit organisations in Edinburgh, Midlothian and West Lothian. All their minibuses are available for hire on both a “Self-Drive” and “With-Driver” basis and their charges are mostly mileage-based.

Bookings are subject to vehicle and driver availability. Minibuses can only be hired by member organisations and full details are available in their Vehicle Hire Policy. Anyone driving a vehicle in the LCTS fleet must be on the LCTS Register of Approved Drivers.

## Midlothian Community Bus Network

The LCTS minibus, which is wheelchair accessible, will stop at all bus stops on the route. In streets without a bus stop, the minibus stops to pick you up on a hail and ride basis.

### Fares updated April 1st 2018

Adults [16 years and over] [single] ...£1.70;

NEC for over 60s and disabled .....FREE;

NEC Young Scots [16-18 years] [single]...£1.10;

Children [under 16 years].....85p.

Please help the driver by having the exact fare ready. If you use a National Entitlement Card [NEC] for concessionary travel, please have the card ready when boarding.

### People with mobility problems

If you are a wheelchair user, LCTS may be able to arrange for the Community Bus to pick you up at your door. If you require this service, you must let LCTS know by Thursday for the following Monday, or Tuesday for the following Thursday.

## LCTS Community Bus Routes

All times approximate		L	C	T	S
<b>R1 Thursdays Only</b>					
1st Journey					
Dalkeith South Street	10.00 hrs				
Dalkeith Jamac Court	10.02 hrs				
Dalkeith Morrisons	10.03 hrs				
Eskbank Lasswade Road	10.06 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Road	10.10 hrs				
Carrington Village	10.17 hrs				
Temple Village	10.24 hrs				
Gorebridge Birkenside	10.29 hrs				
Gorebridge outside Library	10.36 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Toll	10.39 hrs				
Bonnyrigg High Road	10.43 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Co-op	10.47 hrs				
Lasswade High Street	10.50 hrs				
Eskbank Centre	10.53 hrs				
Eskbank Tesco	10.56 hrs				
Dalkeith Morrisons	11.03 hrs				
Dalkeith South Street	11.12 hrs				
<b>R1 Thursdays Only</b>		L	C	T	S
2nd Journey					
Dalkeith South Street	12.40 hrs				
Dalkeith Jamac Court	12.42 hrs				
Dalkeith Morrisons	12.43 hrs				
Eskbank Tesco	12.49 hrs				
Lasswade Centre	12.57 hrs				
Bonnyrigg High Street	13.00 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Co-op	13.01 hrs				
Bonnyrigg High Road	13.03 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Road	13.06 hrs				
Newtonloan Toll	13.10 hrs				
Gorebridge outside Library	13.14 hrs				
Gorebridge Birkenside	13.17 hrs				
Temple Village	13.24 hrs				
Carrington Village	13.29 hrs				
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Road	13.36 hrs				
Eskbank Tesco	13.43 hrs				
Dalkeith Lasswade Road	13.47 hrs				
Dalkeith Morrisons	13.51 hrs				
Dalkeith South Street	13.55 hrs				



## R2 Thursdays Only

L C T S

### 1st Journey

Dalkeith South Street 09.00 hrs  
 Dalkeith Jarnac Court 09.02 hrs  
 Dalkeith Dalhousie Road 09.03 hrs  
 Eskbank Dalhousie Road 09.04 hrs  
 Lothianbridge Kings Gate 09.06 hrs  
 Newtongrange opp Mining Museum 09.10 hrs  
 Greenhall Barleyknowe Crescent 09.12 hrs  
 Gorebridge Wilson Road 09.15 hrs  
 Gorebridge Amprior Road 09.18 hrs  
 Gorebridge Hunter Road 09.21 hrs  
 Gorebridge Gore Avenue 09.22 hrs  
 Gorebridge Outside Library 09.24 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg Cockpen Toll 09.27 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg High Street 09.31 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg Co-op 09.35 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg High Street 09.38 hrs  
 Eskbank Bonnyrigg Road 09.41 hrs  
 Dalkeith Morrisons 09.46 hrs  
 Dalkeith South Street 09.51 hrs

## R2 Thursdays Only

L C T S

### 2nd Journey

Dalkeith South Street 11.20 hrs  
 Dalkeith Jarnac Court 11.22 hrs  
 Dalkeith Morrisons 11.23 hrs  
 Eskbank Bonnyrigg Road 11.25 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg High Street 11.27 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg Co-op 11.32 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg High Street 11.33 hrs  
 Bonnyrigg Cockpen Toll 11.35 hrs  
 Newtonloan Road 11.38 hrs  
 Gorebridge outside Library 11.42 hrs  
 Gorebridge Gore Avenue 11.46 hrs  
 Gorebridge Amprior Road 11.49 hrs  
 Gorebridge Wilson Road 11.51 hrs  
 Greenhall Barleyknowe Crescent 11.52 hrs  
 Newtongrange opp Mining Museum 11.55 hrs  
 Lothianbridge Kings Gate 12.01 hrs  
 Eskbank Dalhousie Road 12.03 hrs  
 Dalkeith Morrisons 12.07 hrs  
 Dalkeith South Street 12.11 hrs

## R3 Thursdays Only

L C T S

### 1st Journey

Dalkeith South Street 14.00 hrs  
 Dalkeith Jarnac Court 14.02 hrs  
 Dalkeith Morrisons 14.03 hrs  
 Eskbank Lasswade Road 14.06 hrs  
 Danderhall Campview Crescent 14.15 hrs  
 Danderhall Forth View Crescent 14.19 hrs  
 Danderhall The Circle 14.21 hrs  
 Danderhall Edmonstone Road 14.23 hrs  
 Newton Village 14.26 hrs  
 Millerhill 14.30 hrs  
 Old Craighall 14.32 hrs  
 Asda, The Jewel 14.40 hrs

## R3 Thursdays Only

L C T S

### 2nd Journey

Asda, The Jewel 16.00 hrs  
 Old Craighall 16.08 hrs  
 Millerhill 16.10 hrs  
 Newton Village 16.14 hrs  
 Danderhall Edmonstone Road 16.17 hrs  
 Danderhall The Circle 16.19 hrs  
 Danderhall Forth View Crescent 16.21 hrs  
 Danderhall Campview Crescent 16.25 hrs  
 Eskbank Lasswade Road 16.34 hrs  
 Dalkeith Morrisons 16.38 hrs  
 Dalkeith South Street 16.40 hrs



#### R4 Mondays Only

1st Journey

	L	C	T	S
Dalkeith South Street	09.05 hrs			
Dalkeith Jamac Court	09.07 hrs			
Eskbank Lasswade Road	09.11 hrs			
Lasswade Village Laird & Dog	09.15 hrs			
Loanhead Mavisbank	09.20 hrs			
Loanhead Burghlee Crescent	09.25 hrs			
Loanhead The Loan	09.27 hrs			
Loanhead Park Avenue	09.31 hrs			
Loanhead Dalum Loan	09.34 hrs			
Loanhead Gaynor Avenue	09.36 hrs			
Straiton Retail Park	09.38 hrs			
Straiton Sainsbury's	09.42 hrs			
Straiton Asda	09.45 hrs			
	09.50 hrs			

#### R4 Mondays Only

2nd Journey

	L	C	T	S
Straiton Asda	11.25 hrs			
Straiton Sainsbury's	11.30 hrs			
Straiton Retail Park	11.35 hrs			
Loanhead Library	11.38 hrs			
Loanhead Gaynor Avenue	11.41 hrs			
Loanhead Dalum Loan	11.43 hrs			
Loanhead Park Avenue	11.46 hrs			
Loanhead The Loan	11.50 hrs			
Loanhead Burghlee Crescent	11.52 hrs			
Loanhead Mavisbank	11.55 hrs			
Loanhead The Loan	12.00 hrs			
Straiton Clerk Street	12.02 hrs			
Straiton Retail Park	12.05 hrs			
Straiton Sainsbury's	12.07 hrs			

The route R4 changes to route R5 to return to Dalkeith; See below.

#### R5 Mondays Only

1st Journey

	L	C	T	S
Straiton Asda	09.55 hrs			
Loanhead The loan	10.00 hrs			
Village Laird & Dog	10.04 hrs			
Bonnyrigg High street	10.07 hrs			
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Road	10.10 hrs			
Carrington Village	10.17 hrs			
Temple Village	10.22 hrs			
Gorebridge Birkenside	10.29 hrs			
Gorebridge Hunter Square	10.31 hrs			
Gorebridge Wilson Road	10.32 hrs			
Greenhall Barleyknowe Lane	10.35 hrs			
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Lane	10.38 hrs			
Newtonloan Toll	10.40 hrs			
Bonnyrigg High Street	10.44 hrs			
Lasswade Laird & Dog	10.47 hrs			
Loanhead Clerk Street	10.50 hrs			
Straiton Retail Park	10.55 hrs			
Straiton Asda	10.58 hrs			
Straiton Sainsbury's	11.03 hrs			
	11.08 hrs			

#### R5 Mondays Only

2nd Journey

	L	C	T	S
Straiton Sainsbury's	12.45 hrs			
Straiton Retail Park	12.55 hrs			
Straiton Asda	12.50 hrs			
Loanhead Clerk Street	12.58 hrs			
Lasswade Laird & Dog	13.02 hrs			
Bonnyrigg High Street	13.05 hrs			
Bonnyrigg Cockpen Road	13.08 hrs			
Newtonloan Toll	13.12 hrs			
Gorebridge Barleyknowe Lane	13.16 hrs			
Gorebridge Wilson Road	13.17 hrs			
Gorebridge Amprior Road	13.20 hrs			
Gorebridge Hunter Square	13.21 hrs			
Temple Village	13.23 hrs			
Bonnyrigg Birkenside	13.25 hrs			
Carrington Village	13.30 hrs			
Loanhead Clerk Street	13.35 hrs			
Eskbank Lothian Street	13.42 hrs			
Dalkeith South Street	13.45 hrs			
	13.53 hrs			

# Dial-a-Bus Midlothian HcL

## Transport for people with mobility challenges

All routes in Midlothian are supported by Midlothian Council. All Dial-a-Bus transport is wheelchair accessible. Each journey has a cost attached. Routes going to Straiton [#] stop at Straiton Retail Park, Sainsbury's and Asda, but you can only disembark at one. Routes going to Gilmerton (%) stop at Lidl, Morrisons and Aldi, but you can only disembark at one.

**You need to be registered with HcL to use this service**

### How Does it Work?

You need to book a place by telephoning your local office, Monday to Friday. Their bus will then pick you up at your door (if necessary the driver will escort you to the bus) and will set you down at the shopping location. You will have between 1 to 2 hours at the shopping centre and then return home. The driver will take you and your shopping to your door if you need help.

Day	Number	Departure	Return	Pick Up Areas	Destination
Monday	Q25	09:00 hrs	11:30 hrs	Mayfield, Easthouses, Newtongrange	Newbattle Health Centre & Cameron Toll
Monday	Q15	10:30 hrs	12:30 hrs	Penicuik, Auchendinny	Tesco Penicuik
Tuesday	Q19	13:30 hrs	16:15 hrs	Penicuik, Auchendinny, Roslin, Bilston, Straiton, Loanhead	Gyle (Every 2 weeks)
Tuesday	Y1	09:00 hrs	11:00 hrs	Straiton, Loanhead	Cameron Toll
Tuesday	Y23	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Old Craighall, Millerhill, Newton, Hilltown, Danderhall	Danderhall and Cameron Toll
Tuesday	Y10	13:30 hrs	15:30 hrs	Newlandrig, Dewartown, Pathhead, Ford, Edgehead, Whitehill	Tesco Eskbank
Tuesday	Y3	14:30 hrs	16:30 hrs	Easthouses, Mayfield	Newbattle Health Centre & Tesco Eskbank
Wednesday	Q6	09:30 hrs	11:30 hrs	Roslin, Bilston	Straiton [#]
Wednesday	Q5	10:30 hrs	12:30 hrs	Penicuik, Auchendinny	Straiton [#]
Wednesday	Q20	14:00 hrs	16:00 hrs	Penicuik, Auchendinny, Roslin	Straiton [#]
Wednesday	Y5	09:00 hrs	11:00 hrs	Gorebridge, Newtongrange	Tesco Eskbank
Wednesday	Y6	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Newtongrange, Newbattle	Tesco Eskbank (Every 2 weeks)
Wednesday	Y17	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Newtongrange, Newbattle	Straiton [#] (Every 2 weeks)
Wednesday	Y9	13:30 hrs	15:30 hrs	Rosewell, Bonnyrigg Eskbank, Newbattle	Cameron Toll
Wednesday	Y4	14:30 hrs	16:30 hrs	Woodburn, Dalkeith, Eskbank	Tesco Eskbank
Thursday	Q13	09:30 hrs	11:30 hrs	Carrington, Temple Middleton, Gorebridge	Tesco Eskbank & Morrison Dalkeith

Day	Number	Departure	Return	Pick Up Areas	Destination
Thursday	Y7	09:00 hrs	11:00 hrs	Easthouses, Dalkeith	Newbattle Health Centre & Asda (The Jewel)
Thursday	Y18	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Old Craighall, Millerhill, Newton Village, Hilltown Danderhall	Danderhall & Gilmerton [%]
Thursday	Y13	13:30 hrs	15:30 hrs	Penicuik, Auchendinny	Cameron Toll
Friday	Y11	09:00 hrs	11:00 hrs	Straiton, Loanhead, Lasswade	Gilmerton [%]
Friday	Y16	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Rosewell, Bonnyrigg, Eskbank Newbattle	Straiton [#] (Every 2 weeks)
Friday	Y19	10:00 hrs	12:00 hrs	Rosewell, Bonnyrigg, Eskbank Newbattle	Gilmerton [%] (Every 2 weeks)
Friday	Y21	14:30hrs	16:30 hrs	Newtongrange, Mayfield, Easthouses, Whitehill Lodge, Dalkeith	Newbattle Health Centre & Morrisons Dalkeith
Friday	Y22	13:30 hrs	15:30 hrs	Old Craighall, Millerhill, Newton Village, Hilltown Danderhall	Danderhall & Morrisons Dalkeith

## Dial-a-Ride HcL

### Dial-a-Ride

Dial-A-Ride provides a door-to-door transport service for people with limited mobility who are unable to use ordinary buses. In addition, in certain circumstances they can provide transport for people who have limited access to public and/or private transport.

The service operates seven days a week including evenings, subject to availability.

It is advisable to book in advance, but you can try for bookings on the same day or day ahead although the availability of these bookings is subject to demand.

Their vehicles are specially adapted to carry combinations of wheelchair users and other passengers safely and comfortably. Each vehicle is linked by two-way radio to their offices in Loanhead and Bathgate.

The driver will also assist you - it is part of the service - so please do not offer a tip.

### You need to be registered with HcL to use this service

Passengers must be resident in Edinburgh or the Lothians and journeys are usually undertaken to places within the Lothians.

Can I travel outside the Lothians?

A special tariff is applied for journeys to destinations outwith the Lothian area. Prices will be quoted on request.

Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian HcL

Dial-a-Ride - 0131 447 9949

Dial-a-Bus - 0131 447 1718

24/3A Dryden Road  
Bilston Glen Industrial Estate  
Loanhead, EH20 9HX.

[www.hcltransport.org.uk/](http://www.hcltransport.org.uk/)

### Special Offer

First time user

**Dial-a -Bus FREE** Round Trip

**Dial-a-Ride £5** Discount





# Buses Across Midlothian

In 2018 4 bus companies run buses across or through Midlothian. The biggest bus company is Lothian Buses. 100% of the fleet is now wheelchair accessible. Lothian Buses can carry one wheelchair passenger at a time. If a person with a wheelchair is already aboard the next bus will only be a short while behind. For more information and a complete timetable please visit <https://lothianbuses.co.uk> or Tel: 0131 555 6363

Travelling as a wheelchair user or with a wheelchair user on Lothian Buses:

A wheelchair user will not be able to board a bus if the bus is full, or if there is already a wheelchair user occupying the wheelchair space. Wheelchairs which are in a condition which could endanger other passengers or damage their belongings will not be carried. Wheelchair users and/or carers must ensure that the wheelchair is positioned against the "ironing board" backrest, facing the rear of the bus with the brakes ON. Ask the driver for assistance if necessary. Whenever the wheelchair space is needed by a wheelchair user, other passengers must move to make it available unless the bus is full.

## Lothian Bus Routes

Alternative terminus for Lothian bus No3: All Number 3 buses from Edinburgh run to the top of Lauder Road. Monday to Friday daytime sees a two buses per hour service to Dalkeith Heights and Dalkeith Campus. All other buses serve Mayfield.

Lothian No. 3   
 Dalkeith Campus or Dalkeith Heights  
 Mayfield (Keir Hardie Drive) or Mayfield Roundabout  
 All 3 Buses To Edinburgh  
 Dalkeith South Street  
 From Edinburgh  
 Dalkeith Buccleuch Street  
 Eskbank  
 Gilmerton Crossroads  
 Cameron Toll Centre  
 North Bridge  
 Haymarket Dalry Road  
 Balgreen Road  
 Calder Road  
 Westside Plaza  
 Clovenstone Drive

Lothian No. 4   
 Hillend  
 Fairmilehead (Swanston Drive)  
 Oxgangs Bank  
 Firhill  
 Craiglockhart Drive  
 Slateford Station  
 Haymarket Dalry Road  
 Princes Street  
 Waterloo Place  
 Meadowbank House  
 Northfield  
 Bingham  
 The Jewel (Asda)

Lothian No.15   
 Penicuik Deanburn  
 Penicuik Town Centre  
 Easter Bush  
 Damhead  
 Fairmilehead  
 Morningside  
 Tollcross  
 Waterloo Place  
 Marionville Road  
 Lochend  
 Restalrig  
 Findlay Gardens

Lothian Buses X15 Peak times  
 Monday to Friday only

Lothian No.29



Gorebridge (Birkenside)  
Gore Avenue (top)  
Newtongrange Park Gates  
Eskbank Stn & Tesco  
Gilmerton Terminus  
Cameron Toll Centre  
North Bridge  
Frederick Street  
Stockbridge  
Crewe Road South (W.G.H)  
Crewe Toll  
Silverknowes Shops

### Alternative terminus for Lothian No. 31

All Lothian 31 buses serve Bonnyrigg Toll. After Bonnyrigg toll number 31 buses alternatively serve Hopefield or Polton Mill Monday to Saturday. Sunday service: all buses service Hopefield only.

Lothian No.31



Polton Mill or Hopefield  
All 31 Buses  
Bonnyrigg Toll  
Lasswade Road Crossroads  
Cameron Toll Centre  
Newington Road  
North Bridge  
Haymarket Station  
Drum Brae Roundabout  
Maybury  
East Craigs Centre


Lothian No. 33



Gorebridge (Birkenside)  
Gore Avenue (top)  
Newtongrange Park Gates  
Mayfield Heights  
Mayfield Roundabout  
To Edinburgh  
Dalkeith South Street  
From Edinburgh  
Dalkeith Buccleuch Street  
Sheriffhall Park & Ride  
Danderhall  
Old Dalkeith Road  
Royal Infirmary  
Cameron Toll Centre  
Commonwealth Pool  
North Bridge  
Haymarket Dalry Road  
Balgreen Road  
Longstone  
Baberton

**Alternative routes for No. 37:** A selection of number 37 buses run from Silverknowes to Bilston and terminate at Easter Bush Campus. Day time services only, between 07.00 hrs until 18.00 hrs. Easter Bush is the location of The Royal School of Veterinary Studies. Not Saturday or Sunday.

Lothian No. 37



Penicuik Deanburn  
Penicuik Town Centre  
Roslin or Easter Bush  
All 37 Buses  
Bilston Roundabout  
Loanhead  
Straiton Retail Park  
Kaimes Crossroads  
Cameron Toll Centre  
North Bridge  
Queensferry Street  
Crewe Road South (W.G.H)  
Crewe Toll  
Silverknowes

Lothian No.47



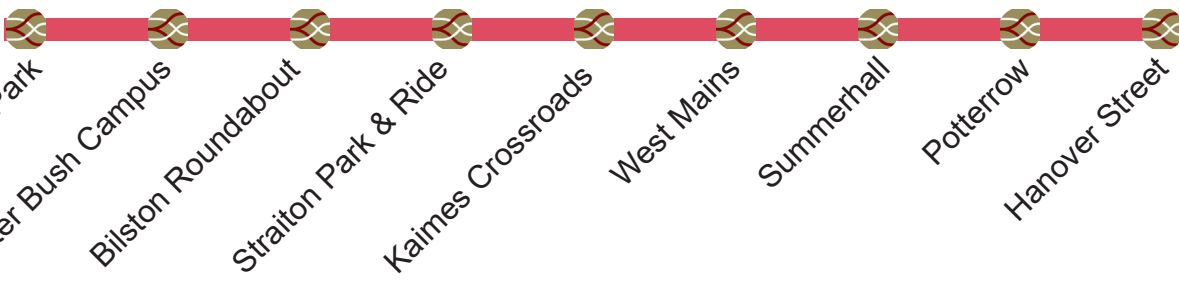
Ladywood Wyvis Park  
Penicuik Town Centre  
Bilston Roundabout  
Straiton Park & Ride  
Kaimes Crossroads  
Cameron Toll Centre  
Lothian Road (foot)  
West End Queensferry Street  
Crewe Road South (W.G.H)  
Crewe Toll  
Granton Harbour

Lothian No. 49



Rosewell  
Bonnyrigg Toll  
Eskbank Stn & Tesco  
To Edinburgh  
Dalkeith South Street  
From Edinburgh  
Jarnac Court  
Sheriffhall Park&Ride  
Danderhall  
Royal Infirmary  
Cameron Toll Centre  
North Bridge  
Foot of Leith Walk  
Lochend  
Portobello King's Road  
The Jewel (ASDA)  
Fort Kinnaird


Lothian No.67



Pentlands Science Park  
Easter Bush Campus  
Bilston Roundabout  
Straiton Park & Ride  
Kaimes Crossroads  
West Mains  
Summerhall  
Potterrow  
Hanover Street

### Lothian Buses Express buses

Lothian No.X29



Gorebridge (Birkenside)  
Gore Avenue (top)  
Newtongrange Park Gates  
Dobbies and Butterfly World  
Gilmerton Terminus  
Non-Stop Newington  
North Bridge  
Frederick Street  
Stockbridge  
Crewe Road South (W.G.H)  
Crewe Toll  
Silverknowes Shops

Lothian No.X31



Rosewell  
Hopefield  
Bonnyrigg Toll  
The Murrays  
Non-Stop Liberton Hospital  
Non-Stop Newington  
Non-Stop Surgeons' Hall  
North Bridge  
Atholl Crescent

Lothian No.X33



Mayfield (Keir Hardie Drive)  
Mayfield Roundabout  
To Edinburgh  
Dalkeith South Street  
From Edinburgh  
Dalkeith Buccleuch Street  
Sheriffhall Park&Ride  
Danderhall  
Non-Stop Commonwealth Pool  
Non-Stop Surgeons' Hall  
North Bridge  
Lothian Road (Foot)  
Semple Street

Lothian No.X37



Penicuik Deanburn  
Penicuik Town Centre  
Bilston Roundabout  
Straiton Park & Ride  
Non-Stop Kaimes Crossroads  
Non-Stop Surgeons' Hall  
North Bridge  
Queensferry Street  
Crewe Toll  
Granton Harbour



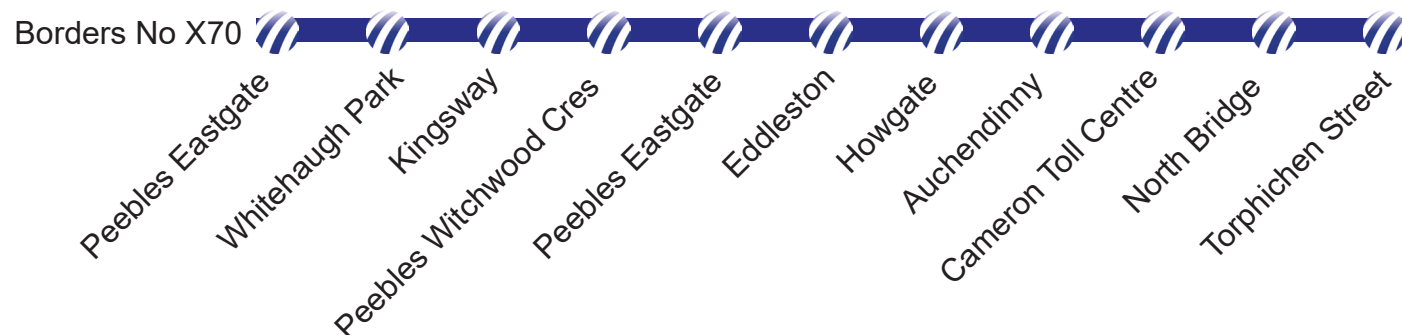
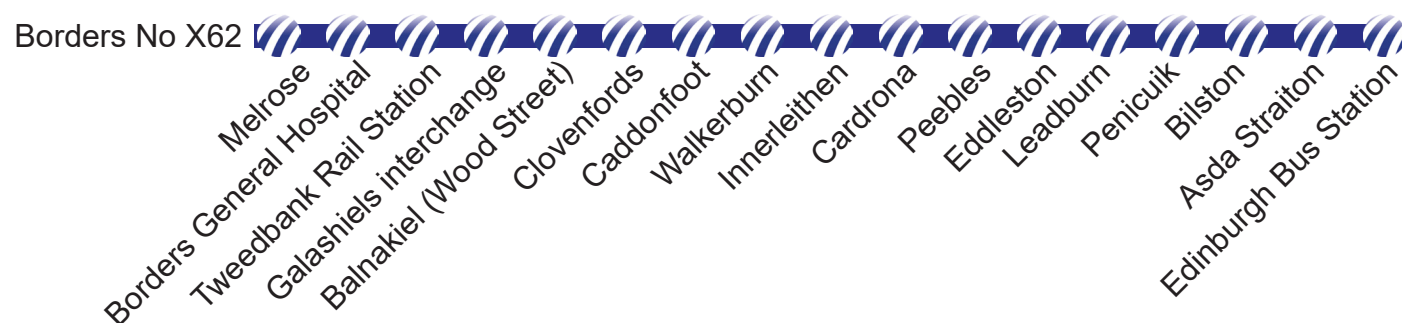


### Night Buses.

Lothian Buses also run Night Buses. The N3, N31 and N37 serve Midlothian. The National Entitlement Card is not valid on night buses. For times please visit <https://lothianbuses.co.uk/timetables-and-maps/night-buses>

### Other Bus Companies that Transit Midlothian.

Borders Buses. For time tables please visit [www.bordersbuses.co.uk](http://www.bordersbuses.co.uk)



Borders No 339



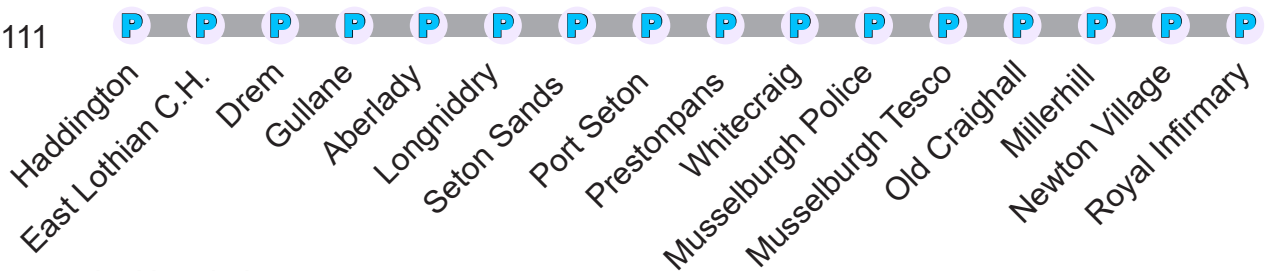
Stagecoach: For times please visit [www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables)

Stagecoach 101/102



Prentice Of Haddington: For times please visit [www.prentice.info/](http://www.prentice.info/)

Prentice 111



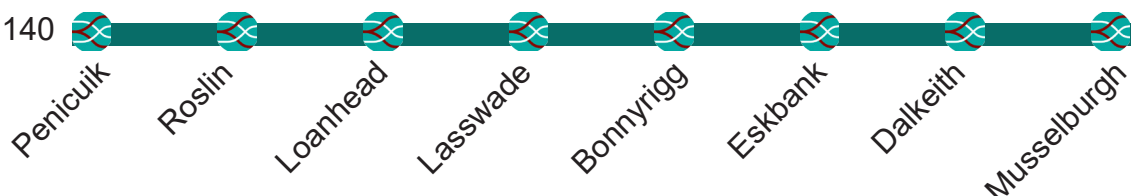
C.H. - Community Hospital

East Coast Buses: For times please visit <https://eastcoastbuses.co.uk>

East Coast No.139



East Coast No. 140



Thanks to Midlothian Travel Team for all the information they supplied on public transport across Midlothian and for supporting MOPA

## Buses and Trains at Midlothian Community Hospital

East Coast Buses 139 and Borders Buses 339 are the only bus services that enter the hospital grounds and stop at the main entrance to the hospital. Lothian Buses 49, East Coast Buses 140 and LCTS R1 and R2, all call at bus stops on Eskbank Road from where there are both stepped and step-free access to the hospital main entrance.

Walk south from the hospital main entrance and join the footpath that runs from Bonnyrigg to Eskbank Station. Turn East and the path crosses the A7 via a footbridge that leads to the bus stop at Tesco and Eskbank Station. Alternatively take 139 or 339 and change at Tesco for Lothian Buses 29 and 49, and LCTS R1, R2 and Eskbank Rail Station. Borders Buses X95 calls at Eskbank Toll, a walk of about a mile, or take the 49, 139 or 140 to Eskbank Toll and change.

Midlothian Council's Travel Team produces a map showing the buses and pathways around the Community Hospital, Tesco and Eskbank Station. Printed copies are available at all Midlothian libraries, main offices and Midlothian Community Hospital.

## Buses To and From Edinburgh Royal Infirmary

There is a six bay bus hub on the southern side of the ERI between the hospital and the new Bio Quarter. Three bus services link the ERI directly with parts of Midlothian.

**Lothian Buses 33 to Dalkeith, Mayfield, Newtongrange & Gorebridge;**  
**Lothian Buses 49 to Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg, & Rosewell;**  
**Prentice 111 to Newton Village, Millerhill, Musselburgh, East Lothian Community Hospital & Haddington.**

Other bus services run from the ERI Hub giving a choice of links from Midlothian via the ERI to points across Edinburgh and beyond.

Lothian Buses 7 to Newhaven

Lothian Buses 8 to Muirhouse

Lothian Buses 24 to West Granton

Lothian Buses 18 to Gyle Centre/Fort Kinnaird

Lothian Buses 38 to Granton via Western General

Lothian Buses 33 to Baberton

Lothian Buses 49 to Fort Kinnaird

Horsburgh 40/X40 to St John's Livingston

NHS Shuttle to the Sick Kids Hospital and the Western General Hospital.

Two services do not enter the ERI grounds, but call at bus stops on the main road:

Borders Buses 51/52 – Edinburgh to Dalkeith, Pathhead, Lauder & Jedburgh/Kelso;

Borders buses X95 – Edinburgh to Newtongrange, Galashiels, Selkirk, Hawick & Carlisle.

There is a diagram of the ERI stops on the Sheriffhall Park and Ride leaflet published by

Midlothian Council and is available from libraries, main Council offices and some health centres.

## Buses To and From Edinburgh Western General

Two bus stops within the grounds of the Western General Hospital are served by

Lothian Buses 38 [Granton-WGH-ERI] & East Coast Buses 113 [WGH-City-Pencaitland]

NHS Shuttle to Sick Kids and the ERI.

Other services call at bus stops on Crewe Road South. Three of these bus services link the WGH directly with parts of Midlothian

Lothian Buses 29 to Gorebridge

Lothian Buses 37 to Penicuik Deanburn

Lothian Buses 47 to Penicuik Ladywood

Other bus services run from the WGH giving a choice of links from Midlothian via WGH to points across Edinburgh and beyond

Lothian Buses 19 to Granton Square

Lothian Buses 19 to King's Road

Lothian Buses 24 to West Granton

Lothian Buses 24 to ERI

Lothian Buses 29 & 37 to Silverknowes

Lothian Buses 47 to Granton Waterfront/Harbour



# Midlothian Taxicard

From 1 April 2015, the Midlothian Taxicard Scheme has been closed to all new entrants. Those people who already had a Taxicard can continue to use them, and their Taxicards will be renewed when they reach their expiry date. Also from April, Taxicards are now issued for 4 years.

## Travelling in a taxi with a Taxicard

There is a maximum £3 discount per single taxi journey - you pay the first £2, then the Council pays up to the next £3, and you pay anything over the £5.

Each year you will be allowed to make 104 single journeys using your Midlothian Taxicard (equivalent to 1 return journey a week).

Taxicard fare example		
Examples	Fare on the meter	Price you pay
Examples 1	£4.90	£2.00 Flat Fare
Examples 2	£6.00	£2.00 Flat fare plus £1.00

## When and where can the Taxicard be used?

You can use your Taxicard whenever you like and for whatever purpose, for example: a trip to the shops, visiting friends or going to classes. It's valid day and night, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. We recommend that you keep a note of the number of trips you have made.

**Remember**, you are only allowed 104 trips per year.

If you use up your full allocation before the year is up, you should stop using the Taxicard until the anniversary comes round and you can start using the next year's allocation.

Not all taxi companies are part of the Midlothian Taxicard scheme. It is a voluntary arrangement whereby taxi operators apply to be part of the scheme.

## What happens if I lose or damage my Midlothian Taxicard?

Collect a blank Taxicard replacement/renewal form from any Midlothian library, main Council office or some health centres. Post your completed form, along with a fresh passport-style colour photograph and any damaged Taxicards to the Travel Permits and Passes Team in Dalkeith.

A fresh Taxicard will be issued with the same expiry date as your original Taxicard. The replacement card will have the word "REPLACEMENT" written on it. Should the previously lost or mislaid Taxicard subsequently turn up, please do not use it. Continue to use the "Replacement" card, and return the newly rediscovered original Taxicard back to the Travel Permits and Passes Team in Dalkeith.

## How do I renew my Midlothian Taxicard when it expires?

You will receive a letter and form inviting you to renew your Taxicard from the Travel Permits and Passes Team in Dalkeith.

This is sent out at the beginning of the month when your Taxicard expires at the end of the month. The form contains the details already held on system for you. Please check those details and make any corrections necessary. The Travel Permits and Passes Team require a colour passport-style photograph to be sent with the completed renewal form to them in Dalkeith.

Taxicard holders often comment that they have not received their renewal letters. In the majority of cases, this is because they have moved house and forgotten to let the Travel Permits and Passes Team know that they have changed address. The renewal letter will be sent to the most recent address held on system.

If you have changed address, or are about to change address, then please



don't leave it until your renewal is due, but let them know as soon as possible.



There is a special "Change of Circumstance" form available for the purpose in all Midlothian Travel Team information carousels located at:

- All Midlothian libraries;
- Main Council offices;
- Midlothian Community Hospital;
- Health Centres at Pathhead and Penicuik;
- Rosewell Development Trust.

### Is there a charge to obtain my Midlothian Taxicard?

























There is no charge for the renewal of a new Midlothian Taxicard or a replacement card (if you lose one before it expires).

Completed forms should be sent by post to:

Midlothian Council Travel Permits and Passes Team, 2nd Floor, Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN. Tel:  0131 561 5455 or Email:  [ptu@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:ptu@midlothian.gov.uk) .






## Midlothian Taxicard Participating Companies

This symbol  means they can carry a wheelchair. There are conditions.





Taxi companies that accept Midlothian Taxicard		
Bonnyrigg		
Peter Jack		 0754 585 4449
Town & Country 	1 wheelchair vehicle. When booking state you need a wheelchair accessible cab.	 0131 660 2666  0131 663 2666
United Private Hire		 0131 660 0011
Dalkeith		
1212 Taxis 	1 wheelchair vehicle. Must be booked in advance and state you need a wheelchair accessible cab. Pathhead Ring & Go.	 0131 654 1212
Aerial ABW Cabs 	28 wheelchair taxi cab vehicles. When booking state you need a wheelchair accessible cab.	 0131 663 2000  0131 663 3232  0131 663 9666
Antonio Palys		 0131 660 2000
D&M Taxis		 0776 154 0580
Dial-A-Cab Direct		 0131 516 4141
Freewheeler Taxis		 0131 660 3880
Ian Diamond		 0771 133 6884
Danderhall		
Aztec Cabs		 0131 663 0999
Edinburgh		
All Edinburgh cabs charge a surcharge when they leave the Edinburgh District boundary.		
Central Taxis 	All Taxis wheelchair accessible.	 0131 229 2468
ComCab 	All Taxis wheelchair accessible.	 0131 272 8000
Gorebridge		
D&D Private Hire 	1 wheelchair vehicle. When booking state you need a wheelchair accessible cab.	 01875 820477
Gore Cabs	Carry a small step to assist people getting in and out of minibus. The step in can be quite high for elderly/disabled people.	 01875 822233

## Taxi companies that accept Midlothian Taxicard





### Loanhead

Chauffeur Drive 	3 single wheelchair accessible vehicles and one either two standard wheelchair or one large or extended wheelchair. Must be booked in advance by a Min 24 hours.	 0131 440 1192
Fountain Private Hire 	1 wheelchair vehicle. When booking state you need a wheelchair accessible cab.	 0131 440 1688
Midlothian Taxi Hire		 0131 440 2985

### Newtongrange

Grange Cabs		 0131 663 9220
Swift Taxis 	1 wheelchair vehicle. Must be booked in advance. Midlothian Council Ring & Go services for both Cousland and Pathhead.	 0131 654 1004  0131 660 1031


### Penicuik

FM Private Hire		 01968 677370
JC Taxis		 01968 676161
Penicuik Private Hire Ltd 	Wheelchair accessible cab must be booked in advance. Ring & Go Howgate and Auchendinny	 01968 679600

## Ring & Go

Midlothian Council funds a Ring & Go taxi service to communities that have been isolated following the withdrawal of regular bus services. Ring & Go taxis run only when booked by the scheme members. The Council agrees a contract price for each taxi run. Users pay a fixed rate per single journey, and the Council tops up the payment to the agreed contract price. NEC bus passes are not valid for use on Ring & Go. Four schemes operate in Midlothian.

Scheme	Single Fare price	Operator	Area Covered
Auchendinny	£1.70	Penicuik Taxis	Milton Bridge - Penicuik
Cousland	£1.70 Dalkeith	Swift Taxis	Dalkeith
Cousland	£2.40 Pathhead	Swift Taxis	Pathhead
Howgate	£1.70	Penicuik Taxis	Loanstone - Maybank - Penicuik
Pathhead -Edgehead	£2.40	Swift Taxis	Fala - Pathhead - Dewartown - Dalkeith

You must register with the Council Travel Team if you wish to use this service. Application forms are available in carousels at all Midlothian libraries etc. Completed forms should be sent with a colour passport-style photo to the Travel Permits and Passes Team at Midlothian House, Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN. Contact the Travel Team on  0131 561 5455 for more information.



# The Borders Railway

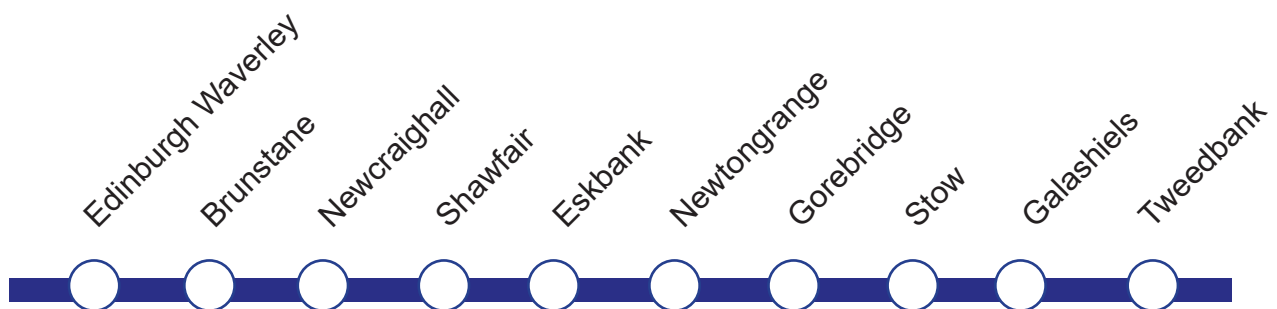
It has been over half a century since there has previously been a working railway in Midlothian to Edinburgh or the Scottish Borders.

The railway operates a half hourly service between Tweedbank and Edinburgh Waverley. If you travel to Edinburgh you will find connections to the rest of the rail network.

Tickets can be bought in advance from [www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk), by calling the ScotRail Telesales team on 0344 811 0141 between 0700 and 2200, seven days a week.

**Disabled Assistance:** If you would benefit from a little extra help when using the trains, you can arrange disabled assistance by advising ScotRail at least 24 hours in advance by:

- Calling 0800 912 2901;
- Calling Textphone 18001 0800 912 2901 if you are hard of hearing;
- Completing an online assistance request form on [www.scotrail.co.uk/form/assisted-travel](http://www.scotrail.co.uk/form/assisted-travel)
- Making arrangements with a member of staff at a staffed railway station [only Edinburgh Waverley on this line].



## Wheelchair Users

Edinburgh Waverley is the only staffed station on the Borders' Railway line. In order to provide disabled assistance at all other stations from Brunstane to Tweedbank, there will be a set of ramps on each train managed by the train conductor. To ensure you can travel please complete the assistance request form [www.scotrail.co.uk/form/assisted-travel](http://www.scotrail.co.uk/form/assisted-travel). The wheelchair accommodation on trains is restricted to standard wheelchairs not exceeding 70cm wide, 120cm long and with a combined weight of less than 300 kilograms of user and wheelchair. These dimensions are in accordance with Interoperability PRM-TSI legislation. (Technical specifications for interoperability relating to accessibility of the Union's rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility).

If you hold a bus pass with an "eye" symbol on the front, then you are eligible to travel free on trains throughout Scotland, including journeys starting/ending at the four Midlothian stations. If you hold a valid Midlothian Taxicard, then you can present this for free travel by train but only within the Edinburgh and three Lothians areas including Shawfair, Eskbank, Newtongrange and Gorebridge. The Midlothian Taxicard is not valid for travel south of Gorebridge.

In both cases, you do not need to obtain a rail ticket from the station travel office. Show the card at the gate barrier. Do not attempt to enter via one of the automatic gates. Do not try to push your NEC or Midlothian Taxicard into the slot on the automatic gates – it will damage your card and

may put the automatic gate out of action for other travellers. Instead, approach one of the staff at the manually controlled gate and show your card. Where there is no gate, show the card to the conductor on the train.

## Scottish Blind Scheme

This scheme was created in the year 2000 and applies to blind persons resident anywhere in Scotland including Midlothian. Cardholders enjoy free travel on buses, trains, ferries, Glasgow Subway and Edinburgh Trams for themselves. There is free travel for a companion on buses [denoted by the two symbols of an eye and a “+1” on the card], but this companion entitlement does not extend to the other modes. SBS is financially supported by the 32 Scottish local authorities, but as far as the cardholder is concerned, the scheme is co-produced with the Scottish Government using their National Entitlement Card [NEC]. Application forms are available at all Midlothian libraries where completed forms must be handed in by the applicant in person [part of the process of verification is that the face of the applicant and the photo image supplied must be cross-checked by the librarian before the application is accepted].



## Disabled Persons Railcard

If you have a disability that makes travelling by train difficult you might qualify for the Disabled Persons Railcard. The Disabled Persons Railcard allows you to get 1/3 off most rail fares throughout Great Britain. If you're travelling with an adult companion they also can get 1/3 off their rail fare. It costs £20 for a one-year Railcard. £54 for a three-year Railcard.

You can apply online at [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/)

Email: [disability@raildeliverygroup.com](mailto:disability@raildeliverygroup.com)

Tel: ☎ 0345 605 0525

Minicom/Textphone: 0345 601 0132

Letter: Disabled Persons Railcard Office  
PO Box 6613 Arbroath, DD11 9AN

## Borders Railway: Edinburgh – Tweedbank

Travel the longest new domestic railway to be built in over 100 years, deep into the picturesque Scottish Borders and the land of Sir Walter Scott.

From the grandeur of the Scottish capital to the Borders town of Tweedbank, this scenic route takes you through former mining towns, wide open farmland and the lush valleys that the Borders are famous for.

Time your trip around sunset for spectacular views between Gorebridge and Stow, and make the short bus or taxi journey from Tweedbank to Melrose to explore the historic market town.

## Going Forward

There is a robust campaign for the extension of the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Hawick and ultimately Carlisle. Revenue from passenger trains alone may not be sufficient to make a business case for the southern end of the line. Any feasibility study will need to look at the contribution freight trains could make, particularly bringing out timber from the Kielder Forest area.



# Transport For a Health Appointment

## What to do if you need transport for a health appointment?

If you have an appointment at a hospital or other health venue, or you are visiting someone in hospital you may find that you need to arrange transport. Feedback we have received indicates that people don't always have clear information about how to do this. Information to help is below.

## Using Public Transport

If you are planning to travel by public transport, information is included in this newsletter about buses that serve the Royal Infirmary, Western General and Midlothian Community Hospitals [page 17].

## Traveline Scotland Journey Planner

For other destinations the Traveline Scotland journey planner can assist. This can be found at [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com) or by calling Traveline Scotland Tel: ☎ 0871 200 22 33. Give details of your start point and destination, along with journey times and the journey planner will give details of bus times, route numbers, bus stop locations and journey times.

## Midlothian Community Hospital

A public transport guide for Midlothian Community Hospital has been produced, giving information about bus routes from across Midlothian to the hospital. Copies are available at all Midlothian libraries, main Council offices, the Midlothian Community Hospital [MCH] and the health centres at Pathhead and Penicuik. The bus stop at MCH is closer to the main hospital entrance than the free main car park. Special Free parking spaces marked for the use of Blue Badge holders are closer to the main door than the bus stop.

## Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

The Royal Infirmary site is undergoing development at present due to the building of the new Royal Hospital for Sick Children and the Department for Clinical Neuroscience. Car parking at the site will continue to be provided. The building work will mean changes to where car parks are located. As a result of the site development the bus stop has been relocated to the rear of the Royal Infirmary, closer to outpatient departments (see page 17). For more information please visit [www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/riecampus](http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/riecampus)

## Transport Between the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and Other Hospitals

If you can reach the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary Bus Hub easily by using the 33 or 49, there are links from the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to both St John's Hospital in Livingston using Horsburgh's route 40, and to the East Lothian Community Hospital using Prentice of Haddington's route 111. Neither service can be described as frequent, and you would be best to check the timetables for details.

## General Anaesthetic + Driving?

Please use public transport, if possible, or arrange to be dropped off at the hospital and picked up again by car. Car parking spaces are limited at some hospitals. There are 'drop off' zones at hospitals.





# The Scottish Ambulance Service Patient Transport Service

If you are not able to use public transport and do not have your own private transportation, you may qualify for support from the Scottish Ambulance Service Patient Transport Service



## Ambulance transport is available for patients who:

- Require assistance from skilled ambulance staff;
- Have a medical condition that would prevent them from travelling to hospital by any other means;
- Have a medical condition that might put them at risk from harm if they were to travel independently;
- Have mobility difficulties that require the assistance of ambulance care staff;
- Are attending hospital for treatment that might have side effects and require ambulance care on the return journey.

## Can I be accompanied by my carer?

There are circumstances when you may be accompanied by a carer or escort:

- If you are under 16 years old;
- If you have learning difficulties;
- If you require more specialist personal support from a carer due to your medical condition or a mental health condition.

## How can I request ambulance transport?

To request an ambulance, call the Scottish Ambulance Service Booking Line. Booking line: ☎ 0300 123 1236 OR Text Relay: 📠 18001-0300 123 1236 for patients who may be deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

Calls will be charged at local rates for mobiles and landlines.

When you call our booking line you will be asked for your CHI number. This is a unique health number given to you. The CHI number is a 10 digit number created from your date of birth and four other numbers. You will usually find this at the top of your appointment letter. Do not worry if you cannot find this number as we can still book transport without it.



You will then be taken through a Patient Needs Assessment.

A hospital or clinic appointment does not mean that you qualify for ambulance transport. The assessment will help us understand your requirements and if you need to use our service. Patients who are allocated transport unnecessarily may be preventing a patient with a genuine medical reason from getting to hospital.

## Ambulance transport is available if you:

- Require assistance from skilled ambulance staff,
- Have a medical condition that would prevent you from travelling to hospital by any other means,
- Have a medical condition that might put you at risk from harm if you were to travel independently,
- Are attending hospital for treatment that might have side effects and require ambulance care



on the return journey,

You will also be asked about your mobility and home access and if you need a stretcher or need to travel in a wheel chair. This will enable us to send the most appropriate type of transport for your medical need and/or mobility needs.

You will be asked your appointment time and the health centre that you are attending.

A lot of time is wasted by people not cancelling a journey no longer needed. If you need to cancel a journey which has been booked, please call ☎ 0800 389 1333 (freephone from landlines).

## **What is the NHS Travel Costs Scheme?**

If you travel to hospital by other forms of transport, you may be entitled to get help with your costs. More information is available at [www.scotland.gov.uk/healthcosts](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/healthcosts) or call ☎ 0845 850 116 (calls charged at local rates).

## **Other Transport Options**

If you contact the Patient Transport Service and you do not qualify for an ambulance, they will advise you about alternative options. One option available locally is the British Red Cross Transport Service.

## **Travelling Home from Hospital**

When being discharged from hospital, the first option to travel home should be family or friends. You should make the staff in the ward aware as soon as possible if you have someone who can collect you from hospital when you are being discharged.

If you have a clinical or mobility need and require assistance, staff in the ward can contact the NHS Lothian Transport Hub. There is limited access to transport and this is prioritised for patients who require assistance and for transfer to other hospitals.



## **NHS Lothian Transport Hub**

NHS Lothian Transport Hub is a single point of contact for patient transport and can only be accessed by NHS Lothian staff.

When a patient needs transport to leave hospital or be transferred to another hospital, nursing staff will call the Transport Hub on the patient's behalf.

Call handlers within the Transport Hub have access to various transport options including ambulances, patient transport buses, Royal Voluntary Service patient transport drivers and taxis. The Hub uses the same assessment as the Scottish Ambulance Service to decide what the most appropriate transport solution is for each patient.

### **The Hub benefits for each patient are:**

- Staff are able to access the most suitable type of vehicle when the patient is ready for discharge or transfer;
- The waiting time for transport outwith the Lothians has reduced from 2-3 weeks to 2-3 days. This means that bed capacity is available much sooner;
- Nurses only have to make one 5 minute phone call to arrange transport. Previously this could take up to an hour. This frees up nursing time which can be used for patient care;
- All transport is used more efficiently and all patients that need the assistance of an ambulance crew will receive this assistance.

Thanks to Catherine Evans for this section.

# The Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme provides parking concessions nationally and across Europe for people with a permanent and substantial disability, whether that person is the driver or a passenger. The holder of a Blue Badge is permitted to park in areas normally subject to restrictions and benefits those who are unable to walk great distances.

Brand new applicants for a Blue Badge can apply either online or by paper application form [BB 001]. If you use the printed form, you can send the completed form [with one colour passport-style photo with your name printed on the back] along with the supporting documents and £20 fee [except for those completing Section 3 payment is taken later] direct to the Travel Permits and Passes Team at Midlothian House.

The fee can be paid by cheque or postal order if sent with your completed form by post to the Travel Team. The fee can be paid by cash, cheque, postal order or credit/debit card if you personally hand in the form at the counter at Buccleuch House in Dalkeith. Cheques must be made payable to “Midlothian Council”.

Online applications are done via [www.mygov.scot/apply-blue-badge](http://www.mygov.scot/apply-blue-badge). You will be able to enter personal details, answer an array of questions and arrange payment by credit/debit card. However, there is no facility to scan and store all the documents the Council needs to see, and at the conclusion of the online process, the system will create a list of items that you will need to take to the Council at Buccleuch House, Dalkeith



For Blue Badge replacements [for lost, stolen or damaged cards] use the pink form BB 005. For Blue Badge Renewals [after an existing Blue Badge expires] use the white form BB 002. Please do not attempt to use the online screen for anything other than brand new applications as this will result in delays in processing your request. If your Blue Badge has been lost or stolen, this fact must be reported to Police Scotland. Contact a local police station or phone 112. You will be required to make a statement. The police will give you a reference number to be quoted on the pink form. The Blue Badge is a legal document. Should it reappear you must inform the police. A damaged badge **must** be handed in with the pink form. Remembering to renew a Blue Badge is the badgeholder's responsibility – no reminder letter is sent out by the Midlothian Travel Permits and Passes Team.

If you move address, then there is a form for that too! You need a green “Change of Circumstances” form [CC 001]. Use this to advise any changes in your personal details, from a change of address, to a change of name [getting married or divorced, for example]. Please use this form as soon as the circumstances change – do not wait until you need a Blue Badge renewal, for instance, before sending in the “Change of Circumstances” form. Complete and return your form and the Travel Permits and Passes Team will update records for your Blue Badge, Bus Pass, Taxicard and Ring & Go.

## ALL APPLICANTS COMPLETE SECTIONS 1 AND 7 ON THE FORM.

Applicants will be automatically eligible for a Blue Badge if they can produce appropriate documentation dated within the previous 12 months. Complete sections 1, 2 and 7 if any of the following apply:

1. Registered blind;
2. High Rate of Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance [DLA];
3. Personal Independence Payment [PIP] 8, 10 or 12 points in the “Moving Around” category;

4. PIP – 12 points in the “Planning and Following Journeys” category;
5. War Pensioner’s Mobility Supplement;
6. Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme Tariffs 1-8;
7. Special arrangements for those in transition from DLA to PIP.

Applicants should bring the original documents with their form if handing them in personally at Buccleuch House. Original documents will be handed back to you after being checked by staff. Arrange for a certified photocopy of the documentation if you are posting the application form direct to the Travel Permits and Passes Team at Midlothian House as originals sent by post will not be returned.

For those with a disability in both arms who have difficulty using parking meters or pay machines, please complete sections 1, 4 and 7.

For parents or guardians of applicants under the age of three who have a specific condition as detailed in the form, please complete sections 1, 5 and 7.

Further assessment will be needed for all applicants who do not fall within one of the above categories. Please complete sections 1, 3 and 7.

Circumstances covered by Section 3 “Subject to Further Assessment” include:

- If you have a temporary mobility impairment which makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for you to walk and which is likely to last for a period of at least 12 months;
- If you have been supplied with a wheelchair by the NHS;
- If your disability is substantial and means you are unable to walk or you experience considerable difficulty in walking;
- If you cannot walk far without severe discomfort, stopping or receiving support from another person.

Applicants completing Section 3 may be invited to an “Independent Mobility Assessment” with a medical professional appointed by the Council. Assessments do not involve any physical examination. The applicant can take a spouse or companion with them for support.

All assessments in Midlothian take place at Bonnyrigg Health Centre. You will receive a letter from the Travel Permits and Passes Team giving you a date and time to attend. If you cannot make the appointment, please let the Travel Permits and Passes Team know as soon as possible as they may be able to offer your time slot to someone else. A couple of assessment sessions are held each month and most Section 3 applicants are seen within four to six weeks.



The doctor will decide to accept or reject the application. You will be notified of the result by the Travel Permits and Passes Team by email, phone or letter. If your application is accepted, you will need to make arrangements to pay the £20 Blue Badge fee. If the application is rejected, you will be advised of the appeal procedure if you are unhappy with the outcome.

The Scottish Government introduced a new eligibility for those with a Mental Disorder or Cognitive Impairment in 2016, to the Blue Badge scheme. There is no online version of the special application form created for this scheme. Paper forms BB 003 for the scheme, along with any of the other forms mentioned in this article, are available at all Midlothian libraries, main Council offices, health centres at Pathhead and Penicuik, the Midlothian Community Hospital and the Rosewell Development Trust.



## A Word from Edinburgh Trams

We want as many people as possible to be able to use our trams in safety and comfort. All our trams have dedicated wheelchair spaces. If there is no wheelchair user occupying or requiring to occupy a wheelchair space, other passengers including those travelling with a buggy or with bulky luggage may occupy a wheelchair space. Any passenger using a wheelchair space must vacate that seat if requested to do so by a Company official.



Our trams have certain seats which are designated as 'priority seats' and are intended for use by those passengers who are less able to stand throughout their journey. Any passenger using a 'priority seat' must vacate that seat if requested to do so by a company official.

### Travelling as a wheelchair user or with a wheelchair user

All of our trams have dedicated wheelchair spaces. These spaces are designed for wheelchairs which are no bigger than 700mm wide, 1200mm long and 1350mm high. A wheelchair user will not be able to board a tram if the tram is full, or if there are already wheelchair users occupying the wheelchair spaces.


### Mobility scooters on tram - trial from 1st January 2016

Following a successful trial, we are delighted to announce that from 1st August 2016 our conditions of carriage will be permanently amended to allow customers to travel with class 2 mobility scooters on our services in line with a permit scheme. Holders of Scottish National Entitlement Cards (SNEC) or a Disabled Person's Blue Badge parking permit are eligible to apply for a permit.

To ensure the safe operation of mobility scooters, a permit scheme will be introduced - applications can be downloaded at [http://edinburghtrams.com/uploads/general/ET\\_~\\_Mobility\\_Scooter\\_Application\\_Form.pdf](http://edinburghtrams.com/uploads/general/ET_~_Mobility_Scooter_Application_Form.pdf). Completed applications should be taken to a Travelshop or Ingliston Park & Ride where they will assess your mobility scooter and ensure that you are able to manoeuvre it in a safe manner. The assessment will ensure your mobility scooter meets the following criteria:

- Class 2 mobility scooter;
- Maximum 600mm wide;
- Maximum 1,000mm long;
- Maximum 1,200mm turning radius.

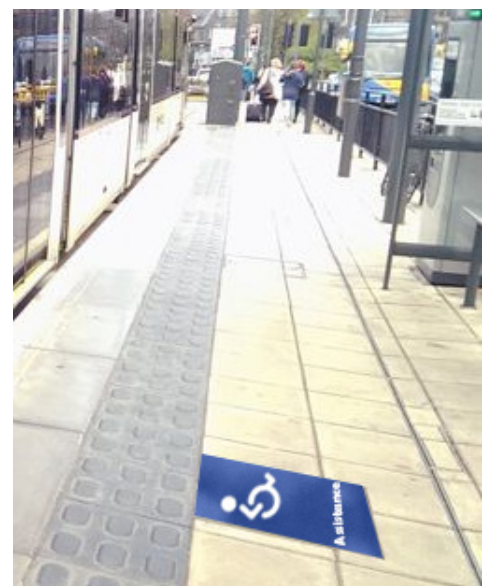
Upon successful assessment of your mobility scooter your permit will be processed and posted directly to your home address free of charge within 10 working days. The permit will take the form of a pass that should be presented to the Ticketing Services Assistant on board your tram.

If you are unsure if you qualify or would like to discuss your specific needs, please contact Customer Services Tel:  0131 475 0177.

### Guidance on Using the Tram

There is guidance on how to use your mobility scooter when boarding, on-board, and alighting trams in a safe and easy manner. The guide will show you the best way to manoeuvre your mobility scooter on the tram and the ideal positioning at tram stops and where to park once on board.

Please note that there are only two disabled priority bays per





tram, if these are occupied, you may need to wait for the next available tram.

## Platform Positioning

When you arrive at the tram stop, look for the wheelchair symbol located in the middle of the platform. Position your scooter near the tile, with your scooter facing onto the track. This will make access onto the tram much easier. For your safety, make sure you are behind the white line.

Due to platform layout it may be difficult to reach the 'open doors' button when the tram arrives. In order to prepare for this, if you are travelling alone, please press the green help point button to contact tram control. Advise them of your location and your destination, and that you wish to board the next tram. They will try to ensure that the on-board Ticketing Services Assistant will be available to assist you in boarding. Alternatively, you can ask a fellow passenger to open the door when the tram arrives to allow you to board.

## Boarding the Tram

When boarding the tram, please ensure that you are entering through the doors at the centre of the tram displaying the wheelchair symbol – this is the only section of the tram which contains the designated disability priority bays.

Please board safely by driving forward onto the tram. Be aware of other passengers and tram furniture (i.e. seats, grab rails and panels).

Upon entering the tram, please park in one of the priority disabled access bays, ensuring that you are not blocking the gangway. Apply the brake on your scooter. Take extra care when doing this as the tram may now be in motion. Once parked, please have your permit ready for inspection by the tram crew.

## Alighting the Tram

When you wish to disembark, please press the stop button prior to the tram stop – this will let the driver know to allow extra time for you to disembark.

Please disembark the tram in a forward motion. For safety reasons, it is strictly prohibited to reverse out of the tram.

Once you are out of the tram, please ensure you keep away from the platform edge. If you need to cross the tracks, remember to look both ways for oncoming trams and listen out for the bell.

Scottish National Entitlement Cards that do not have City of Edinburgh Council as the issuing Local Authority are **NOT valid on tram services**. Scottish Blind Scheme card holders can travel on the Edinburgh Trams free of charge.

As part of the Scottish Blind Scheme [SBS]. This scheme was created in the year 2000 and applies to blind persons resident anywhere in Scotland including Midlothian. Cardholders enjoy free travel on Edinburgh Trams for themselves. There is free travel for a companion on buses [denoted by the two symbols of an eye and a "+1" on the card], but this companion entitlement does not extend to the other modes.



## On the Bus by Mike Harrison

Mike is Secretary of the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance and Chair of the Midlothian Disability Access Panel. Following a spinal injury in 2006 he is a tetraplegic wheelchair user who relies on buses for about 90% of travel (trains for the other 10%). Hopefully, it's a mixture of bits of information and tips which could help someone who does not use buses to reconsider and experiment.

### Legislation

The legislation requiring all single-decker service buses to be 'accessible' came into operation on Jan 1st last year. The definition of 'accessible' is misleading. What it requires is that there is one wheelchair space. Not more than one, not that there shall be a separate buggy space, not that ambulant people who have difficulty with steps can access the vehicle.

### Operators

There are four main operators with services running in or through Midlothian.

1. Lothian Buses provide the most frequent services in Midlothian – generally radially from Edinburgh out to Mayfield, Gorebridge, Rosewell and Penicuik. There is also the 'bus in search of a destination' on it's website, Lothian Buses have all been fully wheelchair accessible for a few years, and the ones on the most used routes now also have a second space for a buggy.
2. Borders Buses also operates between Edinburgh and some Borders towns. It advertises that low-floor buses with a wheelchair space is now the standard, but that occasionally circumstances may mean that one which does not meet the criteria may be substituted rather than cancelling a service. The number 339 which goes between Gorebridge and Eskbank Station by a circuitous route
3. East Coast Buses operates services between Musselburgh and Midlothian. All of their buses have low floors, ramps and wheelchair space.
4. Stagecoach has services to Dumfries which run through Penicuik. Its website is particularly un-helpful as all it says about users with special needs is 'contact the local operator' but gives no information as to who the local operator is or how you contact them. While its fleet has been upgraded significantly recently, and its drivers are now trained to be more friendly to the disabled, many of the upgrades are of the coach-style. Access to the wheelchair space is often by lift rather than ramp, and for walking passengers there are steps to the passenger deck. Check before travelling.

All operators have conditions of carriage which set out their policy about numbers and types of chairs. All trying to juggle constraints to be as fair as possible to most of the users. So we may not get what we want all of the time, but should expect it most of the time.

### Reliability

Buses do occasionally break down. I've experienced two engine failures and two halts caused by broken windows; jobs throwing stones; that's an average of 1 in 250 journeys.

In Edinburgh we seem to have passed the period of aggro between wheelchairs and buggies. There's rather more difficulty over chair space. More wheelchairist are travelling by bus, and I have had some long waits – one day 3 consecutive buses already had one on board, and another Sunday morning where I need 2 buses I had to wait for a second bus in each case. You may just have to wait for the next bus – not a problem if it's the No. 3 with a 10-minute service, but a 140 or in the evenings when it's 30' it's a pain. I allow 'congestion time', just as a car driver has to, by taking one bus earlier than the one I need to arrive at my destination in time. This means that most of the time I arrive at places 20 to 30 minutes before I need to be there. Reduces stress no end.

## At home

Is your wheelchair in good condition? On a bus you are protected against a sudden stop by the backrest, but if your brakes are not well adjusted you may be liable to some skidding when a bus starts off from a stop and this is much more a significant problem in wet weather. There is no need for restraints in trams or trains, but the modern bus does accelerate quite quickly. It is not a problem if the brakes are well set and the tyres are dry. Most buses have a grab rail, but Lothian Buses have recently bought some without this safety feature. (I have complained!).

## At the bus stop

At every stop there is a board which details the kinds of ticket available and the price. If you don't have an entitlement card, **READ THIS(!)**, Lothian Buses drivers do not have any access to cash to give change. Bus tickets are sold in certain shops.

The drivers will usually stop if there is anyone waiting even if they don't look as if they are waiting for that particular bus, but it's always best to signal. If you are obviously physically disabled and have a wheelchair or a stick the driver will do his best to get in close to the kerb.

The convention is that a wheelchair user goes to the front of the queue and gets on first so that they have time to position themselves and get the brakes on before the bus sets off, and generally other passengers are on the side of the disabled and those with buggies.

## Ramps

The ramps are generally reliable, although slightly oversensitive and will retract automatically if they hit an obstacle, but there are various tricks the drivers will use and generally will make three or four attempts to get a ramp out before they will come out of their cab and assist manually with a wheelchair.

If you have a chair that is not well balanced try to make sure there was somebody behind you in the queue and ask them for help, but I learnt that if I said "please stop me tipping backwards" it panicked them, but if I said "can you help me up the ramp?" They were happy to help.

## On the bus

If you have an entitlement card and are in a wheelchair you will not be able to reach the card reader. For driver safety reasons they will usually have their window closed, in which case the card has to be passed through the small slot at the front so the driver can scan it. At busy times very often the driver will just offer to enter the 'fare' manually, as long as he/she has seen the card.

If you are not a wheelchair user but have difficulty in walking, it's probably a good idea to have a Thistle Card which can indicate to the driver that you need time to sit down before the bus moves. If you say where you are getting off, it will also enable the driver to give you time to get to the front of the bus. One of the disadvantages of the additional space for the buggy is that it has reduced the number of handholds for getting to the front.

The wheelchairist has an additional problem on some of the older single deck buses which have four inward facing seats on the left-hand side. These are very popular with those who have reduced mobility, but unfortunately the space is quite narrow and it is very difficult to get a chair past without running into people's shins, and of course these are the people who have the most difficulty in getting out of the way. On these buses there is also a slope from front to back so as well as trying to avoid people's legs you are going uphill.



**Mike Harrison embarking a bus**

## Getting off the bus

Sometimes this is harder than getting on. Firstly you have to do a 180° turn usually around the pillar that has the blue bell on it. Diagonally opposite are usually the seats for disabled people but these are also very popular with people who have shopping trolleys or walkers. Generally they are not aware of how much space is needed for a wheelchair's footrests, and a polite "Watch your legs I don't want to hit them" is in order.

Go squarely down the ramp, keeping control of the speed. People don't realise that you need to go to the end of the ramp before turning and will stand there blocking your exit. Speak nicely to them! A 'thank you' at this point can be both to the driver and the people who are giving you space to get off. Be careful in wet weather where you may not have the normal grip on the rims.

## Finally

If you have not used a bus because you think you may not be able to, get a friend or a carer to go with you who can help if you need it and just give you confidence anyway. Don't be frightened, don't be dissuaded. It can be an adventure and a sense of humour and a relaxed attitude is an advantage. Always allow more time than you think you will need. You have all the time in the world.

## Postscript

Lothian Buses are considering trialling the carriage of mobility scooters. Up to now they have said 'no' to all scooters for, I think, three reasons:

- Many are not manoeuvrable enough to get into the space in a reasonable time;
- A significant number have a narrow width wheelbase and stability going round corners could be an issue;
- It's unfair to expect drivers to have to make a snap decision about whether or not to let any particular scooter try to board.

The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) scheme which some operators use gets round these issues. Anyone who wants to take a scooter on a bus has to do four things



1. Go to a designated place (usually a bus depot) with the scooter and have it assessed for size, weight, turning circle and stability;
2. Be trained in getting on and off a bus – without the pressure of a live journey and other passengers waiting to board;
3. Be assessed on handling skills and the time taken;
4. Receive a permit to show to the driver of a bus on routes operated by the company that issued it.

The last point is significant, because there are many different bus configurations, and what might fit on to one type will not go on another.

Hopefully, Lothian Buses will go for something like this. To just say, 'we are going to have a trial' and allow anyone just to turn up at any bus stop with any kind of scooter would cause a lot of confusion, delays and aggro towards both drivers and the disabled. This could destroy the goodwill and encouragement that currently prevails.

## Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/forwardmid/](http://www.facebook.com/forwardmid/) 

Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print by request to Eric Johnstone. Tel: 0131-663-9471 or email [eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk](mailto:eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk) Write to him at MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on [www.forwardmid.org.uk](http://www.forwardmid.org.uk). The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol  in the address bar, click and select narrate from the left menu. The latest Safari browser has the reader symbol  but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

**Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid**