



Falkirk Council
Development Services

Going Places

A Guide for Disabled People

Produced by Falkirk Council Development Services in
conjunction with the Disability Information Service.

about this booklet

This booklet tells you about various options which can help you travel. Eligibility to the schemes varies and can be by age, disability or if you are on a low income.

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EasyBoarder Service

What is Falkirk EasyBoarder?

Falkirk EasyBoarder is a fully accessible local bus service designed to meet everyone's needs.

Can I use the buses? Any member of the public can use the buses.

What special features does the bus have?

The mini-buses used have either a single very low step, flat floor and powered ramp or passenger lift mounted in the doorway. Wheelchairs are held securely in place, there are good handrails and drivers are helpful and specially trained for their job.

Where does it go?

Falkirk EasyBoarder services operate in the following places:

Avonbridge	Laurieston
Bainsford	Maddiston
Bellsdyke Hospital	Polmont
Callander Park	Redding
Carron	Reddingmuirhead
Denny	RSNH
Falkirk Royal Infirmary	Standburn
Falkirk Town Centre	Stenhousemuir
Fankerton	Strathcarron Hospice
Finistere Avenue	Wallacestone
Larbert	Whitecross

For details of routes and times or to get a timetable, simply contact the Transport Planning Unit at Abbotsford House, David's Loan, Falkirk on (01324) 504724.

What does it cost?

Normal bus fares apply including concessions.

Entitlement Card for Scotland-wide Free Bus Travel

What is it?

The Scotland-wide Free Bus Travel scheme for older and disabled people provides free travel on buses throughout Scotland. Residents of the Falkirk Council area can also use the Entitlement Card for half-fare rail travel within the Council area.

Am I eligible?

If you are aged 60 or over and live in Scotland then you will qualify for the scheme.

If you are of fare-paying age, you may also qualify on grounds of disability as follows:

- profoundly or severely deaf
- Driving Licence refused or revoked on medical grounds
- mental disorder
- terminal illness or progressively degenerative disorder
- loss of one or both limbs
- visual impairment

You may also qualify for a companion to be added to the EntitlementCard if you meet the qualification criteria.

Where can I go?

Bus Travel

Anywhere in Scotland for free. Both local and long-distance scheduled services will accept your Entitlement Card for travel.

Train Travel

Half-fare between stations within the Falkirk Council area, i.e. Falkirk High, Falkirk Grahamston, Camelon, Polmont and Larbert.

Enquiries to: Concessions Unit, Abbotsford House, David's Loan, FALKIRK
Telephone: 01324 506420

Disabled Persons Railcard

What is it?

It is a Railcard you can buy from train operators which will then entitle you to travel by train at a reduced fare. If an adult accompanies you, she/he travels at the same reduced rate.

Am I eligible?

You will qualify if:-

- you are registered as blind or partially sighted or are registered deaf.
- you are entitled to either:-
 - Attendance Allowance
 - Disability Living Allowance (at the higher rate for mobility component or at the middle or higher rate for care component)
 - Severe Disablement Allowance
- you receive a war pensioner's mobility supplement
- you drive an invalid 3-wheeler
- you are buying or leasing a vehicle through the Motability Scheme
- you receive War or Service Disablement Pension for 80% disability or more
- you suffer from epilepsy with a continuing liability to seizures in spite of drug treatment.

What does it cost?

To find out, please contact the National Rail Enquiry line on Tel.: 08457 484950 where staff will confirm the current cost of a Railcard and the amount by which particular fares will be reduced. (Before you buy your ticket, it is a good idea to ask which is the cheapest type for your particular journey.)

How can I get a Railcard?

Ask for a Disabled Person's Railcard leaflet from any staffed railway station. The application form - which is a tear-off part of the leaflet - can be filled in and sent along with proof of eligibility to : Disabled Person(s) Railcard Office, PO Box IYT, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 IYT (Details of proof of eligibility are listed on the back of the application form). If you already have a Railcard and wish to renew it, follow the same procedure. If you also qualify for another Railcard, e.g. Senior Railcard, Young Person's Railcard, simply choose the card that suits you best.

Other Rail Travel Services

What if I need help when travelling by rail?

If you are severely disabled and need help to travel by rail - e.g. if you wish to be met at the station you leave from and escorted onto the train, and need the same service at changing points and/or your station of arrival - train operating companies will usually be able to do this. It will help them to give you a better service if you make a booking as far in advance as possible of the date of your journey (at least 48 hours).

Local Bus Services

Falkirk Council is determined to make travel by bus easier for everyone. Operators of contracted bus services for the Council have to comply with increasingly tight conditions demanding lower steps as well as easy-grip, colour contrasting handrails and palm operated bell pushes. A number of bus operators are investing in vehicles which are much more user friendly. These improvements may make it easier for you if you have found bus travel difficult. However, if you use a wheelchair or cannot manage steps, many buses will still not meet your needs. An exception is the **EasyBoarder** service operated on behalf of Falkirk Council and detailed on page 3. As well as improving buses, the Council has provided more shelters at bus stops and has fitted many of them with perch seating. Suggestions for stops needing shelters are always welcome - phone (01324) 504753. If you need to find out when and where buses go, what the fares are or anything else about local bus travel, simply ring the Public Transport Helpline on (01324) 504724.

Central Shopmobility

What is Central Shopmobility?

It is a scheme which offers free loan of powered and manual wheelchairs to make shopping easier in the town centres of Falkirk or Grangemouth and in other towns outwith the Falkirk area.

How and where does Central Shopmobility operate?

Trained staff are based in the Shopmobility office in the Callendar Square Shopping Centre in Falkirk and the Marches Shopping Centre in Stirling. There is also a mobile trailer service which operates on Fridays in the town centre of Grangemouth and in Alloa town centre on Thursdays. Staff will lend out suitable equipment to users of the scheme and give any assistance required.

Am I eligible?

You qualify for the scheme if you have a mobility or other problem which makes shopping difficult. Even if your problem is only temporary you can still use the scheme -

e.g. if you have a broken leg or are recovering from an operation etc.

Can I get help to shop if I am alone?

Escorts/guides/wheelchair pushers may be available but you must request this service at least two days in advance.

Is it easy to use the wheelchairs?

Yes, but if you require training in the use of equipment this can be provided.

What does it cost?

The service is free.

Do I have to register?

On your first visit, you will be asked to complete a simple registration and insurance form before receiving a wheelchair (please bring some identification with you).

Will I have to book in advance?

It is helpful if you are able to book in advance to ensure that a suitable chair will be available for you.

When can I use the scheme?

In **Falkirk** Shopmobility is available on Mondays to Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. in Callendar Square Shopping Centre.

Mobile Shopmobility is available in:

Grangemouth on Fridays from 10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m. in York Place car park.

Please note that Shopmobility is available in Stirling and Alloa on other days of the week. Please contact Shopmobility for details.

How do I use the scheme?

Contact Shopmobility staff at Callendar Square Shopping Centre, Level 4, Falkirk.
Tel: (01324) 630500

You can also write or call in to the office.

Blue Badge Scheme

What is the Blue Badge scheme?

It is a national concessionary parking scheme.

Am I eligible?

In order to qualify you must be aged two or over and:

- be registered blind or
- be receiving the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or
- be getting War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement or
- have a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking or
- have a severe disability in both upper limbs and be unable to turn by hand the steering wheel of a motor vehicle or
- use a vehicle supplied by a government department or receive a government grant towards running your own car.

What does it cost?

The badge is free.

What are the advantages?

It allows you to park close to the shops, public buildings and other places you may wish to visit. It also enables you to park free of charge in some areas.

Where can it be used?

A leaflet which is issued with the Blue Badge gives specific details of places where the badge is effective.

Where do I apply?

If you are resident in the Falkirk Council area you should contact the Transport Planning Unit at Abbotsford House, David's Loan Tel: (01324) 504725 or Disability Information Service, Dundas Resource Centre, Oxgang Road, Grangemouth. Tel: (01324) 504304.

Dial-A-Journey

***What is
Dial-A-Journey?***

Dial-A-Journey is a door-to-door transport service for people with mobility problems.

Am I eligible?

You are eligible if you live in the Falkirk Council area (including visitors) and are unable to use ordinary buses due to mobility problems.

When can I use it?

The service operates seven days a week from 7.30 a.m. - 11.00 p.m. (including bank and public holidays but excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day).

Where can I go?

Anywhere within Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council areas. It may be possible to travel further afield but you should check with the office first. There is no limit to the number of journeys you can make and you can use Dial-A-Journey for almost any purpose e.g. to go shopping or to visit friends; the service cannot be used to attend hospital appointments where the ambulance service provides transport. Excursions are available in the summer months.

How do I book?

Telephone Dial-A-Journey office on (01786) 465355 between 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9 a.m. - 12 noon on Saturday. Bookings can be made up to 3 days in advance of the trip and you are advised to give as much notice as possible because demand for the service is very high. For important occasions such as weddings or holidays etc., you will be able to make up to 2 long term bookings at the same time, between a minimum of 4 weeks up to a maximum of 6 months in addition to your normal 3 day bookings.

What does it cost?

The fare you pay will depend on the distance travelled and the number of people travelling. Please ask for details when you book your trip. If you need to take someone to assist you, half fare will be charged for that person up to a maximum fare of £1.00.

Can friends travel with me?

Friends may be able to travel with you provided you inform the office of numbers when making the booking. They will pay the same fare as you.

Grangemouth Community Care Car Scheme

What type of service is it?

It is a scheme using volunteers' own cars.

Am I eligible?

You can use the service if you are unable to use public transport and have been unable to secure transport from any other source. You must also live in the Grangemouth area.

What can I use it for?

You can use it to attend medical appointments or visit relatives in hospital.

Where can I go?

You can go anywhere within the Falkirk Council area and as far as Glasgow or Edinburgh if required.

When should I book?

As soon as possible before your journey (at least 2 days).

Whom should I contact?

Anne Laurie - 50 Kenmore Avenue, Polmont
FALKIRK Tel: (01324) 713363.

Quick-check list of useful telephone numbers

Access to Work Business Team		0845 6021358
Benefits Agency, Falkirk		(01324) 505000
Benefits Agency Freephone Enquiry Line		0800 882200
Blue Badge Scheme		(01324) 504725
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Concessionary Travel Scheme		(01324) 506420
Dial-a-Journey	Tel.	(01786) 465355
	Minicom	(01786) 471954
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Disability Benefits Unit		(08457) 123456
Disability Information Service Tel. & Minicom		(01324) 504304
	Fax	(01324) 504312
E-Mail	dis@falkirk.gov.uk	
Disabled Drivers' Association		(01508) 489449
Driving Assessment Service		(0131)537 9192
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EasyBoarder		(01324) 504724
Grangemouth Community Care Car Scheme		(01324) 713363
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Motability		(01279) 635666
National Rail Enquiry Line		(08457) 484950
National Blind Persons' Concession Scheme		(01324) 506420
Public Transport Information Line		(01324) 504724

Quick-check list of useful telephone numbers

Red Permit Scheme		(01324) 504725
British Red Cross Transport and Escort Service	or	(01324) 679060 (01786) 474620
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Scottish Ambulance Service (private hire only)		(01382) 882400
Shopmobility Central		(01324) 630500
Development Services		
	Public Transport Helpline	(01324) 504724
	Stops and Shelters	(01324) 504753
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Taxicard	Tel.	(01324) 504725
	Minicom	(01786) 471954
Taxi Services (Specially Adapted Taxis)		
A2B		(01324) 633677
Bruce's Taxis (Freephone)	0500	636000
Bluestar		(01324) 628000
Express Taxis		(01324) 638000
FAST Cabs		(01324) 611116
Stenhouse TOA Taxis		(01324) 551161
Baird Taxis		(01324) 612012

Red Permit Scheme

- What is the Red Badge scheme?*** It is an access/parking permit to gain entry to the pedestrianised parts of the High Street area in Falkirk, within specified times.
- Am I eligible?*** To qualify you must be severely disabled (e.g. needing a wheelchair).
- What does it cost?*** The permit costs £5 for one year.
- Where do I apply?*** Contact the Transport Planning Unit at Abbotsford House, David's Loan, Falkirk, Tel: 01324 504725.

Disabled Drivers Association

- What is the DDA?*** It is a self help organisation concerned with the mobility needs of drivers and non-drivers and it is run for disabled people by disabled people.
- What are its aims?*** To improve mobility and access and campaign for improvements in services. DDA offers a confidential advice service dealing with individual problems.
- Is there a fee?*** Yes; this is in the form of a yearly subscription.
- How do I become a member?*** Contact Disabled Drivers Association, Ashwellthorpe, NORWICH NR16 1EX. Tel: (01508) 489449.

Taxicard

What is Taxicard?

Taxicard allows people with disabilities who cannot use buses to travel in taxis at reduced fares. Taxicard is not available to people with temporary disabilities (e.g. broken leg).

Am I eligible?

You can apply for a Taxicard if you are over 2 years of age, registered blind or unable to use buses because your ability to walk is seriously impaired. You must also live in the Falkirk Council area and be able to use taxis.

When can I use it?

You can use it anytime, but you must book your journey in advance.

Where can I go?

You can go anywhere, provided your journey starts and/or finishes in the Falkirk Council area.

What does it cost?

On journeys where the fare is up to £4 you will pay half fare. For fares in excess of £4 you will pay the fare less £2. You cannot make more than 12 subsidised journeys per week. There is no charge for the Taxicard itself.

Can friends travel with me?

Yes. Up to 3 people may accompany you for 20p each per single journey.

How do I book?

Just phone the Taxicard office, normally one day in advance. You will be picked up at the booked time and taken to your destination. On completion of the journey simply pay your portion of the fare to the driver.

How do I join?

Contact the Transport Planning Unit on (01324) 504725 or the Disability Information Service on Tel. & Minicom: (01324) 504304 for an application form and/or further information. A medical report from your doctor or from a physiotherapist employed by Falkirk Council may be necessary.

Specially Adapted Taxi Services

Who can use the taxis?

Anyone can.

What special features do the taxis have?

Taxis are wheelchair accessible and adapted so that many wheelchair users can travel without having to transfer to a seat. Cabs are fitted with special devices which secure wheelchairs to the floor and ramps are provided to help you enter and leave the taxi.

What does it cost?

Normal taxi fares apply - if you are a Taxicard holder, fares will be reduced accordingly.

How do I book?

Contact any of the following numbers

A2B	(01324) 633677
Bruce's Taxis	(0500) 636000
Express Taxis	(01324) 638000
FASTCabs	(01324) 611116
Stenhouse T.O.A.	(01324) 551161
Tartan Taxis	(01324) 474407

Taxi drivers will be happy to give assistance when required.

N.H.S. Travel Costs

Can I get help with the cost of travel to hospital?

If you are having N.H.S. treatment, as an in patient or out patient, you are entitled to have your hospital travel costs paid if one of the following conditions applies:

- Job Seekers Allowance (income based), Income Support (also known as Minimum Income Guarantee). Proof of entitlement is required either by producing a payment book or a current DSS letter of award, or
- an N.H.S. Charges Exemption Certificate was included with your letter of award of Working

Families' Tax Credit or Disabled Person's Tax Credit. You must present this certificate when claiming your travel costs, or

- you are the partner or dependent child of someone who gets any of these benefits, or
- you are a patient of a sexually transmitted disease clinic more than 15 miles from home, or
- you get a War or MOD Disablement Pension and are being treated in an N.H.S. hospital for your disability, or
- you, or a member of your family are an asylum seeker who gets support under the new support system.

Parents - If you are in one of the appropriate groups above and your child has to go into hospital, or attends on a regular basis, you can claim help with travel expenses to accompany your child.

In-patients who are sent home by the hospital on short leave - either as part of their treatment or for the hospital's convenience - should have their fares paid by the hospital itself and not under the hospital travel means tested scheme.

What happens if I cannot travel to hospital alone?

If the hospital agrees that you need someone to travel with you, they will also get help with their travel costs.

Am I entitled to help with travel costs if I am visiting someone in hospital?

If you are visiting someone in hospital and cannot afford the fares, you may be able to get a Social Fund Community Care Grant if you are visiting a close relative and are getting Jobseekers Allowance (income based) or Income Support (also called Minimum Income Guarantee). Contact your Local Benefits Agency office for help.

What travel costs can be paid?

- the cheapest form of travel available normally public transport, 2nd class fare.
- The amount of petrol used, if travel is by private car, or the equivalent public transport costs - whichever is less.

- Full petrol costs can be covered if there is no public transport available and you go by car but you should get the agreement of the hospital first.
- Taxi fares, if there is no other way you can travel for all or part of the journey. (Taxi fares are only allowed on medical grounds at the discretion of the hospital clinic you are attending).
- All travel receipts must be produced.

If you are having N.H.S. treatment and you and your partner are on a low income with no more than £8,000 savings (£12,000 if you and your partner are aged 60 or over) you may be able to get help with travel costs. The amount you get will depend on your income.

For further details on how to claim see leaflet HC11 'Help with N.H.S. Costs' issued by the Department of Health - available at hospitals, most Post Offices and Citizens' Advice Bureaux.

Scottish Ambulance Service

<i>What is it?</i>	It is a patient transport scheme.
<i>Can I use the service?</i>	You can use the service if your ambulance or ambulance-car journey is authorised by your G.P. or the hospital you attend.
<i>What can I use it for?</i>	You can use it for hospital appointments. (It may also be possible for your G.P. to arrange a journey to the dentist, chiropodist etc. if you are unable to walk).
<i>How far will it take me?</i>	Travel can be arranged to any health care facility in Britain. There is also an air ambulance fleet available if required.
<i>What does it cost?</i>	There is no cost for N.H.S. journeys. (Ambulances are available for private hire if required).
<i>How do I book?</i>	You can book through your G.P. or the hospital clinic you attend.
<i>Whom should I contact for private hire bookings?</i>	Mr Douglas Meldrum, Operations Room Support Officer Tel: 01382 882400

British Red Cross Transport and Escort Service

<i>What type of service is it?</i>	Door-to-door service for vulnerable people using volunteers' own cars or British Red Cross car. Escort service available on other transport.
<i>Am I eligible?</i>	You can use the service if you find it difficult or impossible to use ordinary transport unaided and you need to make an essential journey.
<i>What can I use it for?</i>	You can use it for all essential journeys, including visits to sick relatives and hospital

appointments for yourself (but only when other transport is not available).

Where can I go?

You can travel within Falkirk Council area and to other parts of Forth Valley (that is Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council areas). If you need to travel further afield, we may be able to help occasionally if there are special circumstances.

What does it cost?

Donations to help cover expenses are always appreciated.

How do I book?

Contact our Community Services Dept. on (01786) 474620 between 9.30am - 12.30pm, Monday to Friday. Bookings should be made at least 7 days in advance, but as an emergency response organisation we will try to meet your needs at short notice.

Are there any other services?

A Passenger Transport vehicle with tail lift and lowered side step can offer transport for up to 3 wheelchair users and 8 seated passengers. Medical Loan Service - equipment such as wheelchairs and comodes can be lent on a short term basis.

Wheelchairs can be booked for various purposes such as holidays both in this country and abroad, use by someone visiting the area for a few weeks, or use by someone with a temporary disability or serious illness. The usual lending period is three weeks, but this may be extended if there is an urgent need. Booking arrangements as above.

For information about other British Red Cross services, or details of your local centre, contact our Branch HQ on (01786) 474620.

Travel to Work Scheme

What is the Travel to Work scheme?

Department of Employment schemes which help cover the cost of travelling to work for people with severe disabilities who cannot use public transport.

Am I eligible?

It must cost you more to travel to and from work because of your disability. It must be impossible for you to use public transport for all or part of your journey to and from work, because of your disability. If public transport is not available, you must have higher travelling costs because of your disability.

What if I own/drive my own car?

You cannot have a grant towards the cost of driving your own car to and from work. However, if your car breaks down, you can claim for the period while it is being repaired.

What happens if I get D.L.A. Mobility Component?

There are some restrictions but you can still qualify under certain circumstances. To find out contact the Access to Work Business Team Tel.: 0845 6021358

Which costs do grants cover?

Grants are usually paid towards the cost of taxi fares but may also be paid if your family or friends drive you to and from work.

How much grant can I get & how do I apply?

Contact the Access to Work Business Team Tel.: 0845 6021358 to find out if you are entitled to a grant and, if so, how to make a claim.

Can grant awards be backdated?

No, so if you think you may be entitled to a grant, contact the Access to Work Business Team.

Access to Work Business Team

Tel.: 0845 6021358

Text Phone: 0141 800 2223

Fax: 0141 800 2222

Driving Assessment Service

What does it do? The Edinburgh Driving Service answers informal enquiries and undertakes full assessments of people with disabilities who wish to learn to drive or return to driving.

What else does it offer? A wide range of information, advice and guidance on driving related topics such as vehicle adaptation, suitable driving schools for people with disabilities etc. It is also possible to test drive an adapted car within the hospital grounds. Passenger assessments are also undertaken.

How do I apply? A referral letter from your doctor giving medical details and a contact telephone number is required before an assessment appointment can be arranged.

Whom should I contact? Edinburgh Driving Assessment Service, Mobility Centre, Astley Ainsley Hospital, 133 Grange Loan, Edinburgh, EH9 2HL.
Tel: (0131) 537 9192.

Disability Living Allowance (Mobility Component)

What is D.L.A. Mobility Component? It is a tax-free, non-means tested benefit which is paid to help people who have mobility difficulties.

Am I eligible? You can claim if you are aged between 3 and 65 years.

Which rate will apply to me? Mobility component of D.L.A. is paid at either lower or higher rate. The higher rate (which can be awarded from 3 years old) is paid if:

- you are unable to walk OR

- you are virtually unable to walk because of pain, severe discomfort, etc. OR
- the exertion in walking would threaten your health OR
- you have had both legs amputated above or at the ankle or were born without legs or feet OR
- you are severely mentally impaired and have serious behavioural problems AND satisfy the criteria for the highest Care Component.

The lower rate (which can only be awarded from 5 years old) is paid to you if you are able to walk but need someone to guide/supervise you most of the time.

Can I claim?

If you think you may be eligible for this benefit you can apply on a D.L.A. claim pack, available from:

Disability Information Service, Dundas Resource Centre, Oxbang Road, Grangemouth. Email: dis@falkirk.gov.uk
 Tel. & Minicom: (01324) 504304
 Fax: (01324) 504312

Falkirk Benefits Agency, Heron House, 10b Wellside Place, Falkirk Tel: (01324) 505000
 or call the Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200.

Claim forms are lengthy and filling them in can sometimes be difficult. For Advice on who can help contact the Disability Information Service on Tel. & Minicom: (01324) 504304, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, D.I.A.L. or Falkirk Council One Stop Shops

If you have already claimed and were turned down you have the right to appeal against the decision and Disability Information Service Tel. & Minicom: (01324) 504304 would be pleased to advise and assist you.

Exemption from Vehicle Excise Duty

- What is it?*** The provision of a road tax disc without having to pay for it.
- Am I eligible?*** You qualify for Vehicle Excise Duty exemption if you get the higher rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance
(Someone getting the higher rate (Mobility Component) can nominate another person's vehicle to be exempt from road tax, providing that vehicle is to be used for the purposes of the disabled person).
- How do I apply?*** Contact the Disability Benefits Unit, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill, BLACKPOOL, FY2 OYE (Tel.08457 123456) requesting an application form for exemption from road tax and give your national insurance number.

Motability

- What is Motability?*** It is a non-profit-making organisation which helps with buying or hiring a vehicle.
- Am I eligible?*** To qualify you must receive the higher rate DLA Mobility Component.
- How does it Help?*** It allows you to use your DLA. mobility component to buy or hire a vehicle.
(Conditions and fringe benefits of Motability are detailed in its brochures).

Brochures obtainable from Motability, Goodman House, Station Approach, HARLOW, Essex CM20 2ET. Tel: 01279 635666.