

ASSISTING YOUR JOURNEY



Wheelchair and mobility scooter guide

November 2018



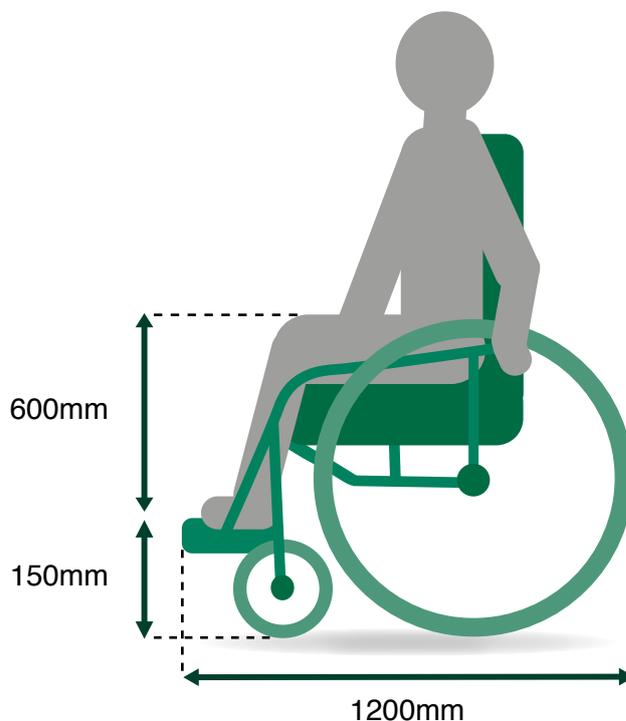
ThamesLink/

Following feedback, this wheelchair and mobility scooter guide has been created to provide you with some helpful information around:

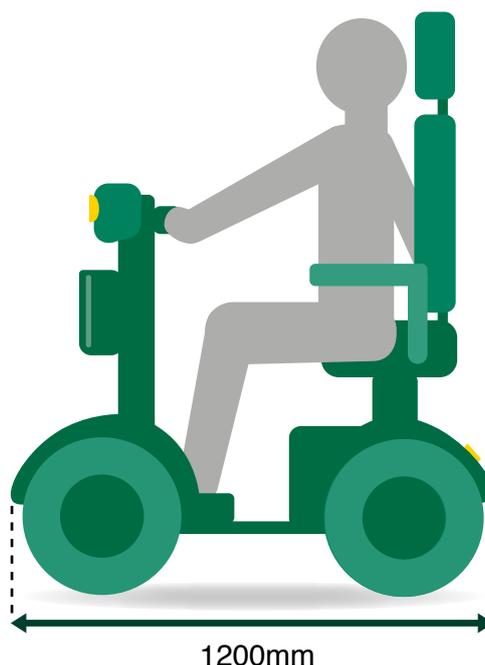
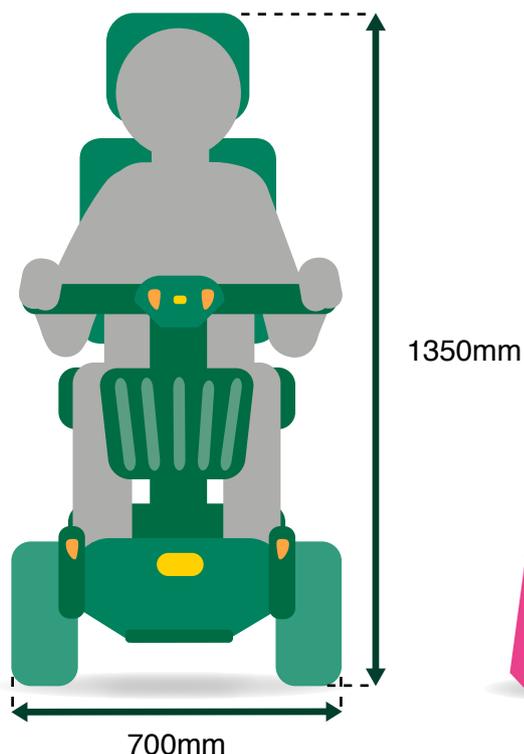
- travelling safely in our stations and on our trains, plus;
- additional guidance for mobility scooters, as there are some restrictions on the type of scooters that can be used on our services.

All of our trains can accommodate wheelchairs of up to 1200mm long and 700mm wide. There are some further restrictions on scooters. Please see further details of our mobility scooter policy at the end of this guide.

Wheelchair



Mobility scooter



Before you travel

Whether you book assistance or you simply show up at a station, we'll always do what we can to help. Booking the support you need in advance just gives us a little more time to ensure we have the staff available to provide you with any help you may need.

If you have not travelled before or recently changed your mobility aid, please check the dimensions with our dedicated Assisted Travel team to ensure it is okay to use on trains. Some scooters are only meant for road use and cannot be carried on trains.

Our dedicated Assisted Travel team can also help provide guidance on the availability of staff, the accessibility of a station or to book assisted travel. Please refer to the back page of this booklet, where you will find contact details for the team.

In the following circumstances, we advise that you give us 24 hours' notice, so we can ensure assistance is provided:

- When making a journey involving other train operators
- When travelling to or from unstaffed stations
- If you need step-free access, but are travelling to or from a station which doesn't have this

Arriving at the station

When you arrive at the station either speak to a member of staff or at unstaffed stations use a help point.

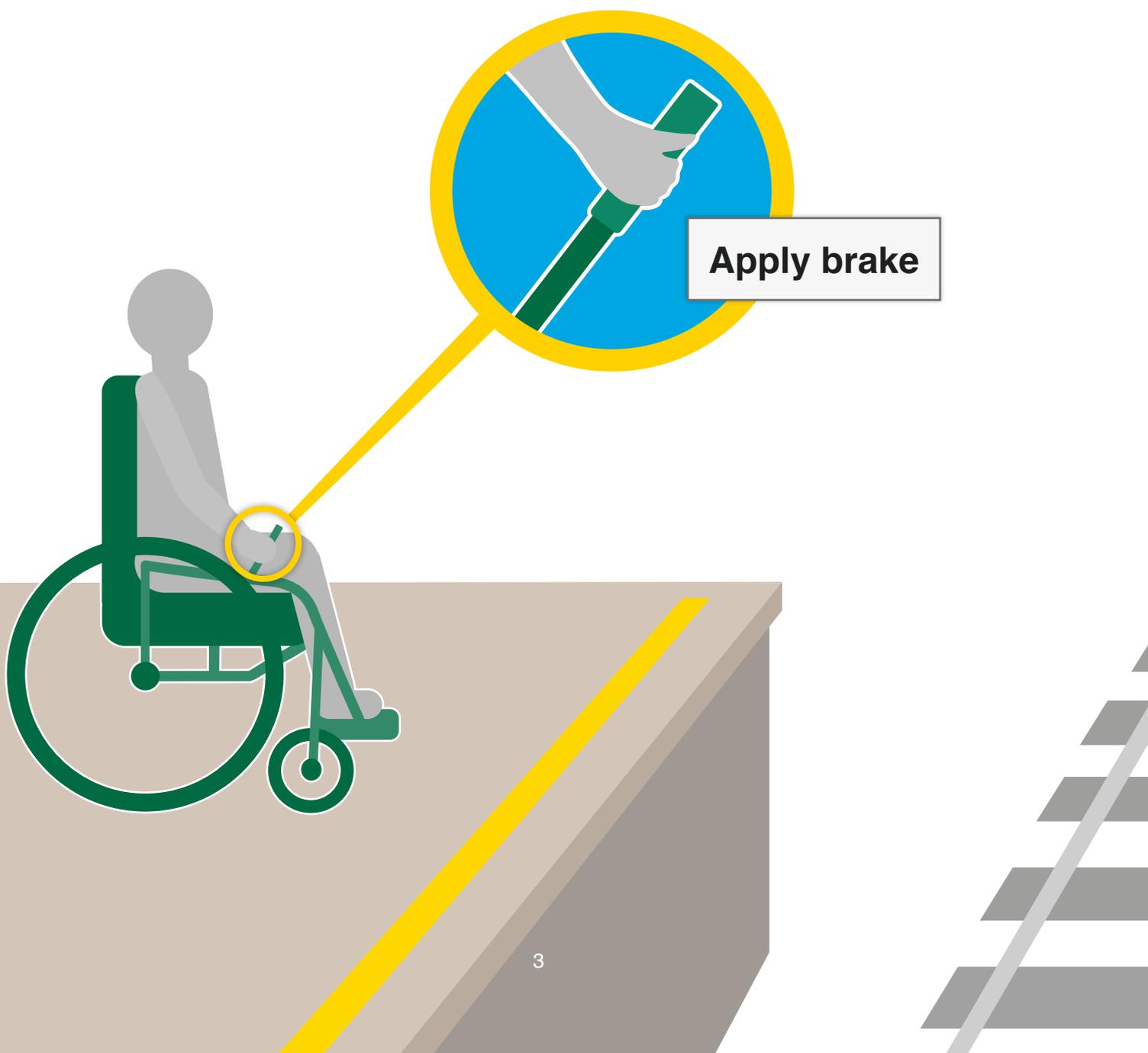
We recommend you arrive 20 minutes before your train is due to depart. This will give staff time to make sure arrangements are in place for you, especially if you haven't booked in advance. To help us to provide the right support for you, it is helpful if you could advise our member of staff of your access needs.

If you arrive at a station which is not staffed at the time and have chosen not to book assistance, please contact us by using the help point or phone. We will do our best to arrange assistance as quickly as possible, but this may take some time.

Getting to the platform

One of our station team member will help you to the platform and wait with you, or advise you where to wait and when they will return. As platforms are not always level please make sure you apply your brake to your wheelchair or scooter.

Platforms can be busy places so please be aware of other passengers and if using a powered wheelchair or scooter make sure you minimise your speed and keep away from the platform edge, staying well behind the yellow line.



Boarding the train

Please wait for a member of staff to deploy the ramp before attempting to board the train.

You will normally be boarded facing the train, so the member of staff or your companion are pushing you, rather than pulling you on to the train.

If boarding on your own be aware of the speed you are travelling. You are entering a confined space so be aware other people might be in your path.

Make sure your wheelchair/scooter is aligned with the middle of the ramp and do not turn when on the ramp.

There is a combined weight restriction of 300kg for mobility aids (e.g. wheelchairs or mobility scooters) and passenger on our ramps.



Once on the train

If there is a wheelchair space on the train, position your wheelchair/scooter in it, parallel to the side of the train. Ensure as best as possible that you are within the designated space and not blocking the doors or corridor.

Make sure the brakes are applied to your scooter/wheelchair so that it doesn't move around.

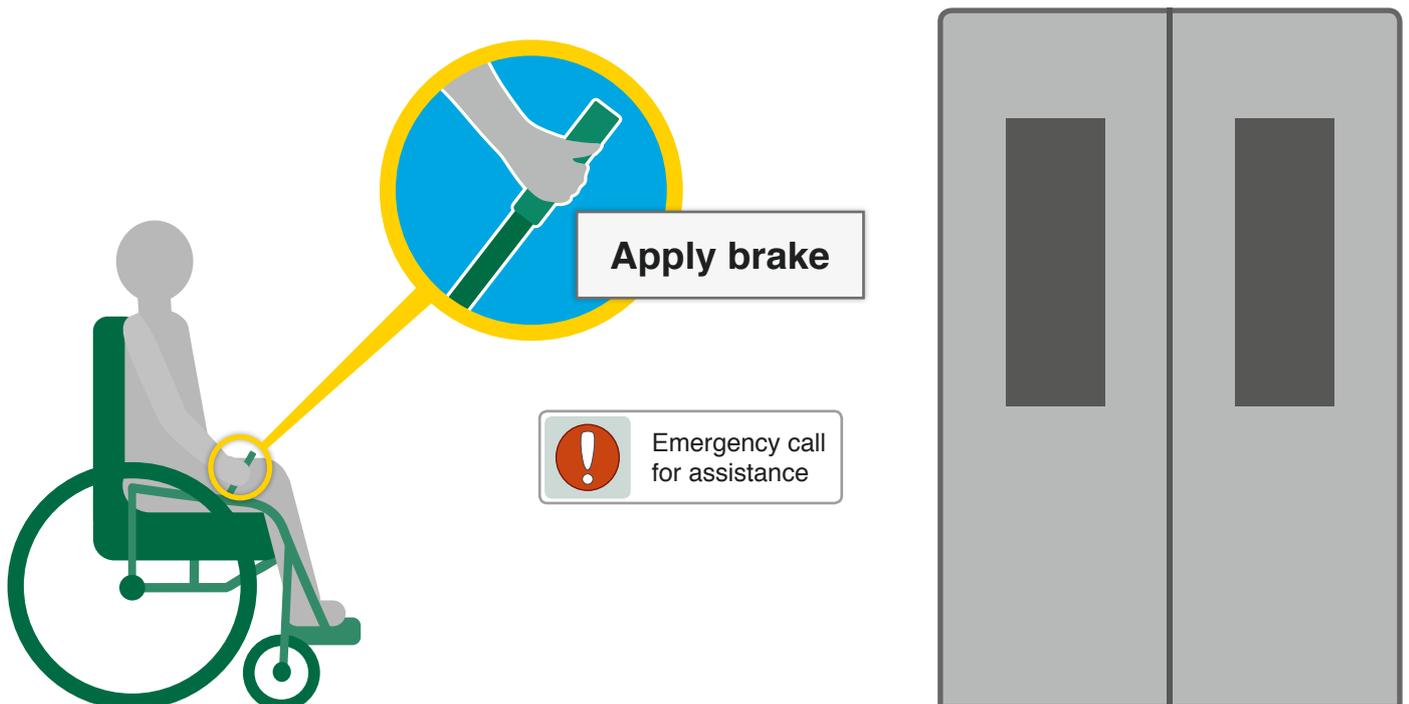
Be aware that the train may rock and tilt as it goes along, so make sure you are seated securely.

There will be a **call for assistance** device in the wheelchair space at a reachable height, possibly behind a fold down table which the assisting staff should make sure is available to you.

If there is no wheelchair space on the train, or all spaces are occupied, then position the wheelchair/scooter to one side of the door vestibule to keep the route clear through the train for other passengers.

Please be aware that you may have to move your wheelchair/scooter if the side of the train that is adjacent to the platform, changes.

If you wish and are able to transfer to a seat, you may find a fold down seat in the wheelchair space or a fixed one nearby.



Leaving the train

A member of staff will make sure a ramp is in place to help you get off the train. At a terminal station it may take up to five minutes for a member of staff to arrive as they may have other passengers to assist.

Please wait for the ramp to be in place before attempting to get off the train. Being lifted off the train is unsafe and our staff are unable to do this.

If a member of staff fails to show up please use the call for assistance point located in the wheelchair space or by the door to contact the driver, or ask a fellow passenger to alert staff to assist with getting off the train. It's unsafe to try and prevent the doors from closing by positioning your wheelchair or using a cane or even your leg.

Please reduce your speed when leaving the train as there may be people on the platform or fixtures such as benches or lamp posts that need to be avoided.

If you are being assisted off the train, staff will bring you down the ramp in the safest way possible, often with you facing towards the train. If you do not need assistance on the ramp and wish to face forward, then do let us know.



Guidance applicable only to scooter users

A scooter is different to an electric wheelchair. While a scooter can have three or four wheels it has a steering column instead of the joystick controls used for an electric wheelchair. This means that the turning circle of a scooter requires more space than a wheelchair, making them less manoeuvrable on a train.

On all our services

Folding/collapsible scooters that can be stored as luggage in luggage racks, can be carried on any type of train.

To help prevent scooters tipping back whilst going up the ramp, please make sure that any shopping bags or similar are removed.

Do not pause on the ramp, nor be tempted to look behind you, as this can affect your centre of gravity and lead to instability.

If you wish to get off your scooter and ask staff to help push your scooter up the ramp, please make sure the scooter is put into free wheel mode.

Scooter users are advised to drive down the ramp facing forwards. For your own safety and that of others, please do not exceed 3 miles per hour whilst at any station.

For safety reasons, we have some restrictions on the size and weight of mobility scooters (and wheelchairs) that we can carry. Larger mobility scooters (and wheelchairs) may not fit safely onto our ramps or into the accessible spaces on our trains.

The limits are:

- **Width: 700mm**
- **Length, including footplates: 1200mm**
- **Weight, including your weight: 300kg**
- **Height: 1350mm**

Scooter users are advised to transfer to a seat whilst on board the train where possible.

Priority Seats are available on all trains and our Priority Seating Card allows you to show passengers who are sitting in these seats that you need to sit down in a discreet manner.

You can apply for the Priority Seating Card through our Customer Relations team and it is valid on any Gatwick Express, Great Northern, Southern and Thameslink service. Contact details are provided at the end of this guide.

Feedback

We appreciate you taking the time to provide us with feedback, which helps us to improve the assistance support we provide.

Please let us know about your experience travelling with us

The vast majority of assisted travel goes smoothly and disabled passengers, whatever their assistance requirements, are successfully assisted throughout their journeys.

But things can go wrong, and if they do please let us know. If we fail to provide the help you booked through our assisted travel service, let us know immediately. We will investigate why this happened and will arrange a refund of your ticket.

Further information

Please note that during times of service disruption or engineering work, the operators of replacement transport services such as buses, coaches and taxis may be unable to accommodate scooters or wheelchairs.

Alterations due to planned engineering work are publicised in advance, see nationalrail.co.uk for more information.

Our dedicated Assisted Travel team can help with any assistance questions you may have. Details of how to contact the team are provided on the following page.

Contact us

Our assisted travel helplines are open every day from **7.00am to 10.00pm**, except on Christmas Day.

We want to be able to offer you the best possible assistance when making your journey, so we ask you to contact us in advance of your journey if possible.

When travelling on Gatwick Express, Great Northern, Southern or Thameslink services only, we advise that you **give us 12 hours' notice**, and contact us the day before travel if possible.

For information, advice or to comment on our service, please contact us:

Southern/Gatwick Express

Phone: 0800 138 1016

Email: myjourney@southernrailway.com

Web (Southern):

www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel

Web (Gatwick Express):

www.gatwickexpress.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel

Thameslink/Great Northern

Phone: 0800 058 2844

Email: assistedtravel@thameslinkrailway.com or assistedtravel@greatnorthernrail.com

Web (Thameslink):

www.thameslinkrailway.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel

Web (Great Northern):

www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/travel-help/assisted-travel

