

# Detailed presentation of some door-to-door services: London

## Two main services are provided for mobility impaired people in London:

- **Dial a Ride, a demand responsive mini-bus service**
- **Taxicard, a system offering reduced cost trips in London taxis for mobility impaired people**

## Dial a Ride

Established in its current form in **1982**, Dial a Ride provides a multi-occupancy door to door transport service for people with a permanent or long term disability or health problem who are unable, or virtually unable, to use conventional public transport. It can be used for all sorts of journeys (shopping, visiting friends, attending meetings or doctors).

The service started in 1982 with one vehicle. It now has **six bases across London** with a fleet of **315 vehicles** providing **1.3 million journeys** a year to **58,000 registered users**.

Dial a Ride is generally best at providing shorter distance transport within the operating areas of the six depots. Longer distance travel beyond the boundaries of the depots can be arranged, but cannot be guaranteed.

### Fares of Dial a Ride

	DISTANCE	FARE
<b>ADULTS</b>	less than 1 mile	£0.60 (€0.90)
	1 - 2.99 miles	£0.80 (€1.20)
	3 - 4.99 miles	£1.00 (€1.50)
	5 - 9.99 miles	£1.50 (€2.25)
	10 - 14.99 miles	£2.00 (€3.00)
<b>CHILDREN</b>	15+ miles	£3.00 (€4.50)
	Under 16	£0.40 flat fare (€0.60)

### Dial a Ride History

**1980:** the first Dial-a-Ride service was established as a service run by disabled people for disabled people.

**1982:** the service was funded by the Greater London Council (GLC) and expanded to cover the whole of London, through 29 separate local schemes. When the GLC was abolished in 1986: funding was taken over by the national government through a grant administered by London Transport.

**1991:** the borough based Dial-a-Ride schemes were reorganised into six regions each covering between four and seven boroughs and were operated by an independent, charitable company run by a board of directors elected by the users of the service.

**July 2000:** the Mayor, through Transport for London, took over responsibility for the funding of Dial-a-Ride and ordered a review of how the service was organised.

The review was completed in October 2001 and made a number of recommendations, the main one being that Dial-a-Ride should be operated by a single company across London, in order to improve the service to its users.

**April 2002:** in response to the findings of the Dial-a-Ride Review, Transport for London took over the operation of the service through its operating subsidiary, London Buses Limited.

### Service improvements

The Dial a Ride Review of 2000-2001 listed a number of major problems with the service including:

- unhappiness with the booking process;
- restrictions on travel (passengers could only travel within the boundaries of their region).

High levels of unmet demand (only a third of Londoners who could be classed as severely mobility impaired were registered Dial a Ride users. Dial a Ride was particularly bad at attracting younger disabled people to use the service. It has also failed to address the needs of ethnic minorities in any systematic way).

In April 2002, in response to the findings of the Dial a Ride Review, Transport for London began to run the service itself, through its operating subsidiary London Buses Limited. London Dial a Ride is currently in the process of reorganising the service to enable major improvements. Key priorities for change include:

- improving booking and scheduling;
- increasing the capacity of the service (eg recruiting more drivers);
- extending operating hours to provide more travel opportunities in the evening and at weekends;
- exploring the possibility of new, smaller vehicles.

### New vehicles

A new smaller Dial a Ride vehicle has moved a step closer with the delivery of a modified Mercedes V class MPV (multi purpose vehicle) or people carrier for evaluation. The prototype vehicle has been modified to include easy access seating for ambulant passengers and one wheelchair position.

### New Booking System

Dial a Ride have introduced a new booking service across London. Bookings for travel on the same day can now be made from 8am to 11pm. Extended opening hours have been introduced for the next day service - from 9am to 4pm.

Advance bookings for special events are easier to request- by telephone, letter or fax, as far in advance as passengers like. Dial a Ride confirms bookings no less than 7 days before travel day.

# Taxicard

Advance bookings can be made for trips involving:

- pre-booked tickets (eg cinema, theatre, going on holiday, restaurant bookings);
- travel to stations (bus, coach, train);
- special one-off events (eg weddings and other family occasions);
- medical related (non-hospital) appointments (eg doctors, dentists);
- other appointments (eg vets, appointments at job centres, job interviews);
- meetings including conferences;
- visits to relatives in respite care/residential homes.

The new system has been designed to make it much easier to get through on the phone - a major bugbear for Dial a Ride passengers in the past.

## New eligibility criteria

New eligibility criteria have been introduced for Dial a Ride to make sure that the improvements currently taking place benefit those people who really need door to door transport. The new criteria are an interim measure pending the results of a review of eligibility for all door to door services operated by Transport for London.

All new applicants for the Dial a Ride service must have a permanent or long term disability or health problem and be unable or virtually unable to use public transport services including buses, overground and underground trains.



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For more information:

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/dial-a-ride/>

Taxicard is a method of providing subsidised door-to-door transport for people who have serious mobility impairment and difficulty in using public transport. Taxicard holders make journeys in licensed London taxis and the subsidy applies directly to each trip. Taxicard can be used anytime, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, subject to taxi availability. Booking is made by telephone.

Taxicard is currently running at 770,000 trips per year.

Taxicard Scheme is funded by the participating London boroughs and the mayor of London. The Association of London Government Transport and Environment Committee (ALG TEC) manages the London Taxicard Scheme on their behalf.

For most journeys, passengers pay a flat fare and their local authorities pay the balance between the metered fare and the flat fare charged to Taxicard holders with the following rules:

- **Member Flat Fare**  
In most boroughs, members pay a £1.50 (€2.25) flat fare up to the fare limit (see table below).
- **Borough Maximum Subsidy**  
The borough maximum subsidy per trip is different depending on the time of day and at weekends in most boroughs. This is because it is more expensive to travel at night and weekends than on weekdays. The boroughs of Bromley and Harrow have different rates.
- **Fare Limit**  
The Fare Limit is the Borough Maximum Subsidy and Member Flat Fare added together. If the fare on the meter is less than the fare limit, passengers only pay the flat fare. If the fare on the meter is more than the fare limit, passengers have to pay the flat fare plus the difference between the fare limit and the meter reading.

MOST BOROUGHS	MEMBER FLAT FARE	BOROUGH MAXIMUM SUBSIDY	FARE LIMIT
FROM 6 AM - 8 PM MON - FRI	£ 1.50 (€2.25)	£10.30 (€15.45)	£11.80
FROM 8 PM - 10 PM MON - FRI & FROM 6 AM - 10 PM SAT - SUN	£ 1.50 (€2.25)	£11.30 (€17.95)	£12.80 (€19.20)
FROM 10 PM - 6 AM MON - SUN	£ 1.50 (€2.25)	£12.80 (€19.20)	£14.30 (€21.45)

For more information: <http://www.taxicard.co.uk>