

Concessionary fares

2010/11

A guide to entitlement

Reduced bus and train fares
for senior citizens
and people with
disabilities



Section 1

The Luton concessionary smartcard

Who is eligible for a smartcard?

You if you are a Luton resident and you are aged 60 or over (please check page 18 for details on recent changes to age eligibility)

or you are under 60 and have a qualifying disability

How much does the smartcard cost?

The smartcard is free. Replacement smartcards are charged at £10.

How long are the smartcards valid for?

Smartcards have a set expiry date of between three and five years. Expired smartcards for those who are over 60 can be renewed free of charge at the Customer Service Centre in the Town Hall up to 28 days before your pass is due to expire. People with a qualifying disability will be contacted by the PTU as new disability proof will be required. Disability passes **CANNOT** be renewed at the Customer Service Centre. You will be contacted in writing a month before the expiry date.



Smartcards with an orange strip are for concessionaires who are entitled to free travel because of a qualifying disability.



Smartcards with a blue strip are for concessionaires entitled to free travel because of their age.



The "+C" logo indicates that the pass holder and a companion may travel free of charge. *Please note that free travel for a companion can only be guaranteed within the conurbation.*

The new national scheme

What you're entitled to

From 1 April 2008, the new National Concessionary Fare Scheme means that you can obtain free off-peak travel (from 09.30 to 23.00) on local buses anywhere in England.

Locally, you can travel on local buses for free all day, every day, providing you do not board a bus going out of the Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis urban area before 09.30am. Free 24hr travel is permitted within the outlined area of the diagram below. Villages outside the 24hr zone are printed in red.



The boundary points of the 24 hour zone are:

A6 Pasque Hospice	Beech Hill, Putteridge Bury Campus
Crawley Green Rd, County Boundary	New Mill End, Lower Harpenden Rd
Markyate Rd, Woodside Farm	London Rd, Gibraltar Farm
Watling Street, Turnpike Farm	Whipsnade Rd, Royce Close
Totternhoe Rd, Beacon Avenue	Tring Road, The Avenue
Bedford Rd, Roslyn Way	Watling St, Chalk Hill
Sundon Pk Rd, Camford Way	Chalton Cross

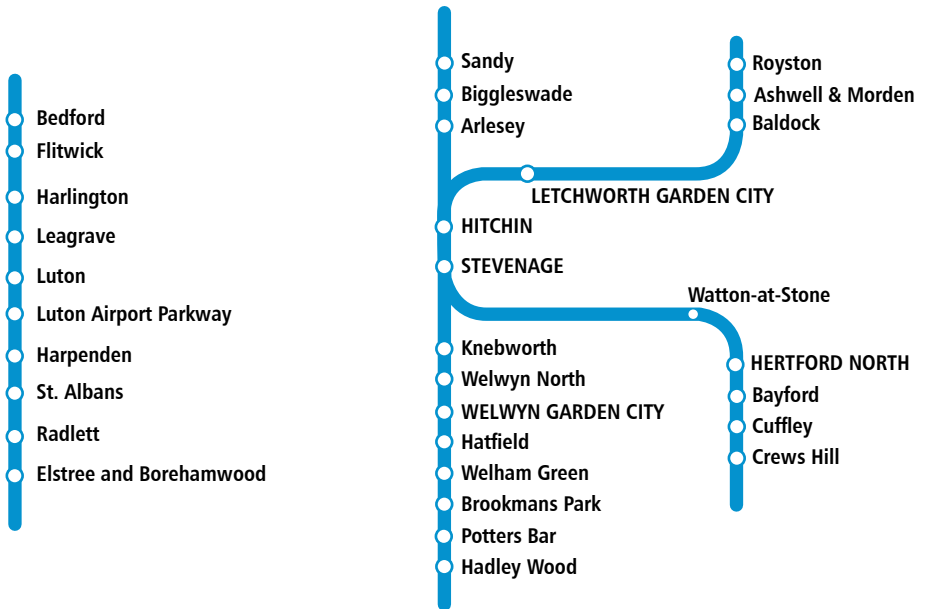
When can smartcards be used and on which buses?

Smartcards can be used on local bus services, during off peak hours Monday to Friday, anywhere in England. They can also be used in the Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis conurbation at any time, on any day. They may not be used on express coaches that are not local bus services or on excursions or buses not providing a service to the public.

If you are not sure if a service is eligible for free concessionary travel, please check with the bus or coach operator prior to making travel arrangements.

What about train travel?

You can use your smartcard to obtain discounted travel on First Capital Connect train services after 10.00am on Mondays to Fridays and all day Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays. This offer will save you around 50 per cent on travel between the stations shown below:



Luton Concessionary Smartcard holders can now also obtain up to 50 per cent discount on the Marston Vale line which runs from Bedford to Bletchley. Accompanying children will travel for £2.00 but please ask for further details at the ticket office.

It is permissible to use a combination of a discounted ticket (e.g. Luton to Elstree and Borehamwood) and a normal ticket (e.g. Elstree and Borehamwood to London) to make one journey. You must use a train that stops at the station where the tickets change. A combination of tickets is not valid on fast trains which do not stop at Elstree and Borehamwood.

This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any Railcards or with GroupSave. The person using the ticket must carry their valid Concessionary smartcard with them throughout the journey and must show it on demand.

Coach travel

Your new smartcard may allow you to travel for free on some coach services that are registered as local buses. For further information on whether you can use your travel card to obtain free travel on a particular coach service, please contact the local authority in which the coach service operates.

Section 2 How to get a smartcard Information for **all** applicants

You need to provide proof that you live in the borough of Luton

This can be:

a state retirement pension book

or

an official letter (such as a recent gas, electricity or telephone bill, bank or building society statement

or

a council tax demand or payment book addressed to you at your Luton address

If you are 60 or over, you will also need to bring proof of your age.

(Please check page 18 for details on recent changes to age eligibility)

Please go to section 3.

If you are under 60 and are applying because you have a disability, you will also need other documents. **Please turn to section 4.**

Section 3 How to get a smartcard if you are 60 or over

You must bring proof of your age.

This can be:

a state retirement pension book or entitlement card

or

a valid driving licence

or

a valid passport

or

a birth certificate

Please turn to section 5.

Section 4 How to get a smartcard if you have a disability

You must bring proof that you have a disability.

This can be:

A recent letter confirming current award of Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA)

or

A recent letter confirming current award of War Pensioners Mobility Supplement (WPMS)

or

A Blue Badge (please bring your badge with you)

or

a proof from the following list (please see top of page 6)

If you are.....	You will need to bring....
severely sight impaired or sight impaired (see page 21 for definition)	letter from an eye specialist/optometrist or social services registration
profoundly or severely deaf (see page 22 for definition)	letter from an aural specialist or Sensory Team, Disability Resource Centre, Poynters House, Poynters Road, Dunstable, LU5 4TP

If you do not have one of the above disabilities, or one of the above proofs, then you must apply to the Passenger Transport Unit for assessment. Please call 01582 54 72 54 for an application.

Companion Travel

Please note that if you state that you need a companion to travel with you as you are unable to travel on your own, then you will need to submit proof in writing from a medical practitioner.

Section 5 Obtaining your smartcard

In summary, you need to provide

- proof that you live in Luton
- proof of your age if you are 60 or over
(please check page 18 for details on recent changes to age eligibility)
- proof that you have a disability.

When you are sure that you have everything you need, you must attend in person at Luton Town Hall.

Bring your documentation to:

**Customer Service Centre
Luton Borough Council
Town Hall, Luton, LU1 2BQ**



Opening hours for smartcards

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday Friday: 08.30 to 17.30

Wednesday: 10.00 to 17.30

Please come prepared to have your photograph taken.

The customer service centre can issue your free smartcard while you wait.

**Applications for Dial-a-Ride travel permits are only dealt with by post
- please see page 11**

Please note that in the unlikely event of us being unable to issue you with a smartcard when you attend the CSC we cannot refund any transport costs that you have incurred in attending.

Section 6 Care of smartcard

You should take great care of your smartcard because it is valuable and if lost, it could be used by someone else who is not entitled to concessionary travel.

- Keep it safely in a wallet or purse with a transparent window.
- Do not let it rub against loose change or other rough items in your pocket.
- Keep it away from chemicals or solvents which are harmful to plastics.

Smartcards are invalid if altered or defaced in any way. A damaged smartcard must be returned to Luton Borough Council for replacement.

What if my smartcard is lost or damaged?

If you lose your smartcard, please tell the passenger transport unit 01582 54 72 54 who can tell you if it has been handed in. If your smartcard has been lost or damaged, we will issue you with a replacement for which there will be a charge of £10. This charge cannot be refunded if you later find your smartcard. Replacements can be issued at the Town Hall.

What if my smartcard is stolen?

You should report the stolen smartcard to the police. There is no charge for a stolen

smartcard if it has been recorded as a crime and a crime reference number is obtained.

You should bring the crime reference number to the town hall when you are applying for a replacement smartcard. Please note a charge will be applied for all replacement cards without a crime reference number.

Where can I get my replacement smartcard?

You can apply for a replacement travel smartcard at the customer service centre in the town hall (please see page 7 for opening hours.)

Replacement Dial-a-Ride smartcards are only available from the passenger transport unit. If you lose your Dial-a-Ride smartcard, call us on 01582 54 72 54 or write to the address on page 13.

Expired smartcards can be renewed free of charge at the Customer Service Centre in the Town Hall up to 28 days before your pass is due to expire. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to replace your expiring pass.

What if my address changes?

Please notify the council's passenger transport unit of any permanent change of address in writing, to the address on page 13.

If you move out of the Luton borough area, you must surrender your Luton smartcard and seek a replacement from the local authority in the area to which you move. Please return your smartcard to the passenger transport unit - see address on page 13.

What if I no longer want or need the smartcard?

Tell the passenger transport unit at the council, and return to the address on page 13.

Things you should remember about the smartcard

- You should have your smartcard ready to show the driver **every time you travel**.
- Your smartcard is not transferable and may be used only by you. It remains the property of the council and must be shown on request.
- The driver (or other company official) has the right to check your entitlement in suspicious or doubtful circumstances and may retain your permit for verification by the council.

- Like any other fare paying passenger, you must comply with bus company regulations.
- If you break any of these conditions or breach bus company regulations whilst travelling under the concessionary fare scheme, you risk losing your right to a smartcard.
- Your smartcard must be in your possession at all times when travelling. No refunds will be given in retrospect.

Where can I obtain timetable information?

Bus timetables are available at the customer service centre in the town hall and at the central library in St George's Square, Luton.

To find timetable information on all public transport including bus and coach services throughout the UK and locally, simply call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or visit the Traveline web site www.traveline.info



Section 7 Luton Shopmobility



What is Luton Shopmobility?

Luton Shopmobility is an Independent Local Charity that assists people with walking difficulties wishing to gain access to the town centre and its amenities. The Charity loans out wheelchairs, electric wheelchairs and scooters free of charge on a daily basis for this purpose.

The service is located on the 3rd floor of the Market Car Park within the Shopping Mall. Through its Volunteer helpers they can also assist people having no other means of access by pushing them around the centre in wheelchairs to shop.

Luton Shopmobility and its services are available to anyone with limited mobility, young or old, whether their impairment is temporary or permanent.

The scheme also operates a transport service that will collect you from home and take you to the Shopping Mall. This service is free of charge to all holders of concessionary bus passes wishing to visit the town centre and use the facilities. Non concessionary pass holders' fare is £2.50 each way, payable to Shopmobility.

People with sight impairments can use the bus service through arrangement with Sight Concern.

Bus pick up times are between 9.30am and 10.00am from home, returning at 12.30 or 2.00pm to suit your needs.

All people needing the service must make a reservation with **Shopmobility** by 3.00pm the day before travelling.

Telephone Luton Shopmobility 01582 73 89 36

Registration is simple, telephone to arrange your first bus journey, on arrival you will be asked to complete a simple form, produce your bus pass and one other form of identification having your name and address on (a utility bill etc).

Shopmobility hours are:

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm

Saturdays 9.00am to 4.00pm

The service is not available on Sundays or Bank Holidays.



Section 8 South Beds Dial-a-Ride

The council also operates a concessionary fares scheme for users of the South Beds Dial-a-Ride service.

What is South Beds Dial-a-Ride?

South Beds Dial-a-Ride provides a door-to-door service to help those with a mobility problem or a disability which makes it difficult for them to use ordinary local bus services.

Who is eligible?

If you are aged 60 and over or you have a recognised disability you may apply for a Dial-a-Ride permit which is also valid on ordinary bus services.

How much is the fare?

Travel is free within the Luton and Dunstable conurbation (see page 2). Outside the free fare zone, you must pay half the normal adult fare.

Fares on South Beds Dial-a-Ride services are higher than on ordinary buses but normally lower than taxi fares. (Tours and excursions are not included.)

If you cannot travel without being accompanied by someone, you will need to indicate this on your application form. A companion permit will allow someone to travel with you for the same concessionary fare.

How to register

To register with South Beds Dial-A-Ride, you can call them on **01582 22 00 44** or you can write to them at: **165A Castle Hill Road, Totterhoe, Dunstable, LU6 1QQ.**

After you have registered with **South Beds Dial-a-Ride**, they will provide you with an application form for a Luton Borough Council smartcard. Once you have completed the application form and South Beds Dial-a-Ride have countersigned it, send it directly to us at the address on page 13.

You will need to send

- the application form and a recent passport photograph of yourself
- proof that you live in Luton **see Section 2**
- proof of your age **see Section 3** (page 5) or
- proof that you have a disability **see Section 4** (page 5/6).

We will send you a smartcard which is valid on ordinary bus services as well as Dial-a-Ride.

Section 9 Our service standards

Our commitment to you

- 1 When you apply in person for a smartcard, we will try not to keep you waiting. If you have brought the correct documents, we will issue a smartcard straight away.
- 2 All complaints relating to the scheme will be answered within ten working days where they relate specifically to the council and its management of the scheme. Alternatively, complaints about transport operators will be submitted to the appropriate operator for a response.
- 3 The council will endeavour to treat all applicants fairly, politely and courteously.
- 4 The council will consult with scheme users and provide opportunities for users to feed into the development and review of the scheme and its management.
- 5 The council will endeavour to put things right where they go wrong, where these relate to areas specifically under the direct control of the council.

Data Protection Act: we will keep the information you give us on both computer and paper records, treat it as confidential and will not pass it on to any unauthorised person.

However, we may pass on some of the information to meet legal or welfare needs, or if we feel it is in the public interest, or to protect public funds. We will also send information to other organisations to be used in the detection and prevention of fraud.

Comments or complaints?

The council aims to provide a quality service to all its customers and welcomes any comments or suggestions you may have which you feel may improve this service.

If you are unhappy about something we have done or the service we have provided, please tell us about it so that we can examine the problem.

If you have a complaint, please contact:

Emma Gosling
Public Transport Manager
Passenger Transport Unit
Central Depot
Kingsway
LUTON LU4 8AU

concessionary.fares@luton.gov.uk

For advice, please call the Passenger Transport Unit on 54 72 54 or write to "Smartcards" at the above address.



Appendix Government guidance on eligible disabilities

The Transport Act 2000 allows people with specific disabilities to receive travel concessions on local bus services. If you want a travel permit because you have one of the following disabilities, you must provide the appropriate evidence which is explained below.

Interpretation of the following eligibility categories is in accordance with statutory guidance issued by the Department of Transport (DfT) under section 146 of the Transport Act 2000. The DfT is of the opinion that the types of disability which should enable people to claim the statutory minimum are those which are permanent or which have lasted at least 12 months, or which are likely to last at least 12 months – and which have a substantial effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Category A: people who are severely sight impaired, or sight impaired

- Blind means having a high degree of vision loss i.e. seeing much less than is normal or perhaps nothing at all. Severely sight impaired, or sight impaired people may register with the council if they cannot see with glasses (if worn) the top letter of the eye test chart used by doctors and opticians at a distance of 3 metres or less.
- Some people who can read the top letter of an eye chart at 3 metres but not at 6 metres may still be eligible for registration as blind if their field is also severely restricted. Only being able to read the top letter at 3 metres is sometimes referred to as 3/60 vision: the person can see at 3 metres what a person with normal vision can see at 60 metres.
- 'Partial sight' is a less severe loss of vision. Partially sighted people can see more than someone who is blind but less than a fully sighted person.
- A person may be registered as partially sighted if they have a full field of vision but can only read the top letter of the eye test chart at a distance of 6 metres or less with glasses (if worn). However, if they can read the next three lines down at the same distance, but the field of vision is either moderately or severely restricted, they may still qualify for registration.
- The DfT advises permits should be issued to people whose sight is so impaired that they would be able to register as blind or partially sighted. For both blind and partially sighted people, however, registration is voluntary. It is recognised that local authorities are unlikely to have the expertise to assess applicants. For the purposes of the travel concession local authorities may, where a person is not on the local authority blind and partially sighted register, require evidence that the applicant is registerable as blind or partially sighted from an eye specialist such as an optometrist.

Category B: people who are profoundly or severely deaf

- Hearing loss is measured in decibels as dBHL (hearing level). People are generally regarded as having a severe hearing loss if it reaches 70-95 dBHL and a profound loss if it reaches 95+ dBHL. The DfT advises that the statutory minimum should be made available to people in these categories.
- There is no statutory registration for deaf people. However, many will be registered on a voluntary basis with their local authority social services department. The register is open to people who have varying degrees of hearing loss, so in checking the register a local authority is advised to check that the applicant is profoundly or severely deaf.
- Local authorities may, where appropriate, require applicants to show evidence of registration before issuing a permit or evidence that they are registrable. This might be an audiological report or a report from an aural specialist.

Category C: people without speech

People who are unable to communicate orally in any language will be:

- unable to make clear basic oral requests, for example, to ask for a particular destination or fare
- unable to ask specific questions to clarify instructions, for example, 'Does this bus go to the High Street?'

This category would not, in the DfT's opinion, include people who are able to communicate orally but whose speech may be slow or difficult to understand because of, for example, a severe stammer.

- In considering an application on these grounds the local authority may reasonably seek medical evidence to support the application in appropriate cases.



Category D: people who have a disability or have suffered an injury which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to walk

To simplify the assessment process, local authorities may wish to accept receipt of the following state benefits, which link eligibility to the ability to walk, as evidence of eligibility under this definition provided that the award of the benefit has been for at least 12 months:

- higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA)
- war pensioners mobility supplement.

Applicants claiming these benefits will be able to produce documentary evidence of their entitlement.

In assessing the eligibility of other applicants, local authorities will wish to consider:

- whether the applicant cannot walk for distances up to 100m without stopping, severe discomfort or help from another person
- whether a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, crutches, walking frame or stick is used.

It is envisaged that permits will be issued to people who can only walk with excessive labour and at an extremely slow pace or with excessive pain. In other words, the degree of disability should not fall far short of that required to qualify for the higher rate mobility.

Category E: people who do not have arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms

This category includes people with a limb reduction deficiency of both arms upper limb double amputees and those with congenital absence of both upper limbs.

In the DfT's opinion, it also covers both people with deformity of both arms and people who have both arms if in either case they are unable to use them to carry out day to day tasks, for example, paying coins into a fare machine. In these cases, the DfT advises a local authority should normally seek independent medical evidence to support the application.

Muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injury, motor neurone disease, or a condition of comparable severity are also considered acceptable under this category.

Category F: people who have a learning disability that is a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning

- A person with a learning disability has a reduced ability to understand new or complex information, difficulty in learning new skills and may be unable to cope independently. These disabilities must have started before adulthood and have a lasting effect on development. The person should be able to qualify for specialist services and he or she may have had special educational provision.
- The Department of Health adopted the term learning disability in 1992. It has the same meaning as mental handicap but it is seen as more acceptable, particularly in reducing the confusion with mental illness.
- In determining eligibility in a case where there has been no previous contact with specialist services, a local authority should normally seek independent medical advice, or check any register of people with learning disabilities which might be held by the social services department of the applicant's local council.

Category G: people who if they applied for a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, would have their application refused pursuant to section 92 of the Act (physical fitness) otherwise than on the ground of persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol

Under Section 92 of the Traffic Act 1988 the Secretary of State may refuse to issue a driving licence on the grounds of the applicant's medical fitness. Those barred from holding a licence are people with:

(i) uncontrolled epilepsy (ii) a severe mental disorder (iii) liability to sudden attacks of giddiness or fainting (whether as a result of cardiac disorder or otherwise) (iv) inability to read a registration plate in good light at 20.5 metres (v) other disabilities likely to cause the driving of vehicles by them to be a source of danger to the public.

It is not a condition of entitlement under this category that the disabled person should apply for and be refused a driving licence (which would be unduly burdensome for everyone involved). For people with any of the disabilities (ii) - (iv) listed above, the local authority can be confident a licence would be refused and should therefore be able to issue the travel pass automatically. For (i) epilepsy, the bar is not automatic and depends on the circumstances. The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999 specify the conditions under which a person with epilepsy may be granted a driving licence.

Changes to Bus pass eligibility for Over 60s

The changes mean that the qualifying age for concessionary bus passes will be brought into line with the pensionable age of UK residents.

Anyone with a birthday before 5th April 1950 or who already has a bus pass will not be affected. There will be an incremental change for those born between 6th April 1950 and 5th April 1955. Those born on or after 6th April 1955 will qualify for a bus pass when they become eligible for a state pension.

For further information or to check when you will be eligible to apply for a bus pass you can email concessionary.fares@luton.gov.uk, or call **01582 54 72 54**

Bus Operator Contact details

Traveline	0871 200 22 33
Arriva The Shires and Essex	0844 800 44 11
Centrebus	0844 357 6520
Grant Palmer	01582 60 08 44
Stagecoach	01604 67 60 60
National Rai Enquiries	08457 48 49 50

Blue Badge Guidance Notes

If you hold a Blue Badge issued by Luton Borough Council this can be used as proof of your disability.

In these cases, you will need to bring;

- Proof of address
- Your blue badge

In some cases we may contact The Parking Shop to confirm eligibility.

