

'A steer in the right direction'

If you're considering a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) for the first time you may be wondering if it's the right choice for you, and if so, what to do next.

We hope you find our short film 'A steer in the right direction', presented by Lara Masters, useful in helping you answer some of the questions you might have and highlight some things you perhaps hadn't thought about.

Watch the short film now at motability.co.uk/rightdirection

Meet three families looking for their next WAV







Three families looking for their next WAV talk about their needs and what they are looking for in their next vehicle.

What is a WAV?



Find out about the types and sizes of WAVs available and what to think about when choosing a vehicle.

What to expect if you choose a WAV



things to think about when making a decision and what to expect when making the move to a WAV.

Things to consider







Listen to their advice on what to discuss with a WAV supplier to help find the right vehicle for your needs.

Making a decision



Our three families then talk about the importance of home demonstrations and test drives and how this helped move them closer to making a decision.

Top 10 tips in choosing a WAV



Hear our top 10 tips for choosing a WAV.

If you would prefer to receive a DVD of the film please call us on **0800 093 1000**.

Hello

Welcome to the Motability Scheme

This guide introduces you to the world of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) and provides some useful advice that we hope will help you decide if a WAV is the right choice for you.



We've included some useful advice throughout to set you off on the right road to selecting a vehicle to meet your needs and help you understand what life is like with a WAV. We've also provided some guidance on questions to ask your WAV supplier. Look out for our 'things to think about' boxes from page 10 as they highlight some of the important considerations in choosing a vehicle.

Find more information, as well as our current WAV prices at **motability.co.uk/wavs**.

Who's involved: All Motability Scheme vehicles are leased to customers by Motability Operations Limited, a company authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

The Motability Scheme is overseen by Motability, the national charity which also provides financial help to customers who are unable to afford the right mobility solution to meet their needs.

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All about Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

What is a WAV?

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles, or WAVs, are vehicles that are specially converted so that a wheelchair user can travel in them whilst remaining in their wheelchair either as a passenger or a driver. The size, shape and design of the WAV will vary depending on the original vehicle used for the conversion and the specialist company that has converted it but all WAVs have easy access and provide safe travelling for the wheelchair user.

Is a WAV right for me?

When it comes to choosing a WAV there's plenty to think about. If you are no longer able to transfer from your wheelchair to a standard car seat, or if your carer is no longer able to lift you, a WAV could be the answer. We have over 20,000 WAV customers who value the independence it gives them. However, you'll need to weigh up all the pros and cons when selecting your next vehicle as a WAV may not be the right choice for everyone.

Is a standard car with adaptations an option?

If you are able to transfer out of your wheelchair without too much trouble or discomfort you may be better off with a standard car that's fitted with adaptations. Adaptations such as a transfer plate, swivel seat or person hoist could help with improving access to a car. There is also a wide range of adaptations available to help you store your wheelchair or scooter such as boot hoists or rooftop stowage boxes.



For more information visit our website at **motability.co.uk/adaptations** where you can:

- Click through the interactive tool which shows how different adaptations can help
- See film clips of how some of the more popular adaptations work
- Download our adaptations guide
- Find contact details for adaptation installers in your area.

Drive From Wheelchair Vehicles

This guide focuses only on WAVs where the wheelchair user is a passenger in the vehicle. If you would like to drive the WAV yourself, then there are a few types of vehicle that can be converted to allow you to drive from your wheelchair. These often require additional driving adaptations to suit individual needs and require more specific advice. It's important to know that these are a more expensive option and it will take much longer for your vehicle to arrive. More information is available about Drive From Wheelchair Vehicles on our website at **motability.co.uk/dfw**.



How do I get a WAV through the Motability Scheme?

Anybody who has at least 12 months remaining on one of the following allowances can lease a vehicle through the Motability Scheme:

- Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance
- Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment
- War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

You simply exchange your allowance to lease the vehicle of your choice.

In addition, WAVs will require an Advance Payment to cover the full cost of the lease. This is the non-refundable amount payable upfront to your WAV supplier in addition to your weekly mobility allowance. The Advance Payment amount varies across the range of WAVs. For the latest pricing check online at motability.co.uk.

In some situations Motability (the charity) may be able to offer financial help towards the vehicle that meets your needs. For more information please see page 17.

Two ways to lease a WAV

You can choose to lease either a new or Nearly New WAV, all of which come with our worry-free lease package. We take care of all the costs and hassle involved in running a vehicle including:

- Insurance
- Servicing and maintenance
- ✓ Full breakdown assistance from the RAC
- Annual car tax
- Replacement tyres fitted by Kwik Fit
- ✓ Windscreen and window repair or replacement
- ✓ You can nominate up to two named drivers and pay a little extra for a third

What's the difference?	New WAV	Nearly New WAV
Lease length	5 years	3 years
Mileage allowance	100,000	60,000
Vehicle age	Brand new	Less than three years old
Delivery times	On average 12-16 weeks	A few weeks or less
Advance Payment	Depends on the WAV	Depends on the WAV but will be less than the equivalent new WAV

Nearly New WAVs

What's a Nearly New WAV?

If you are looking for a more affordable way to lease a WAV, but with the peace of mind you would expect from the Motability Scheme, then a Nearly New WAV might be the option for you. Our Nearly New WAVs are vehicles that have been returned to us from another customer after less than three years. To ensure that we are able to offer guaranteed quality all Nearly New WAVs are carefully checked by a Motability approved supplier before we offer them to new customers as an alternative option.

A Nearly New WAV may be the right option for you if:

- ✓ There is one available that suits your needs; make sure the WAV you choose is suitable for you and your lifestyle
- ✓ You need to get a WAV quickly; if it's in stock your WAV supplier will be able to get your Nearly New WAV to you usually within a few weeks
- ✓ You need a WAV but would like a lower Advance Payment; as long it meets your needs, a Nearly New WAV offers the most affordable option
- ✓ You'd like a shorter lease length; a Nearly New WAV gives you the option to change your WAV after three years rather than five.

The price of Nearly New WAVs

A Nearly New WAV can often be a more affordable option for some of our customers. Nearly New WAVs are split into three price bands based on the size, condition and age of the vehicle.

If you would like more information on the price of a Nearly New WAV, or want to find out what's available, then please contact your local WAV supplier directly. We have examples of pricing available on our website **motability.co.uk/wavs**.

But remember:

- Availability is limited on Nearly New WAVs and not all brand new WAVs that you can lease through the Motability Scheme will be offered via our Nearly New lease option. It's always worth checking with a WAV supplier to see what vehicles we have available
- There will be limited choice on a Nearly New WAVs specifications; colour choice and other optional extras will be restricted
- We cannot guarantee stock; there is a limited amount of stock available so speak to a WAV supplier for details
- Vehicle condition; in order for us to offer guaranteed quality all Nearly New WAVs will be carefully checked by an approved Motability supplier. Each Nearly New WAV is quality checked and prepared for you, but as they are not brand new, you should expect some wear consistent with its age.



Where do I start?

Once you've decided that a WAV is right for your needs, we want you to make an informed decision about which vehicle you choose as it will support your mobility for several years to come.

When it comes to choosing a WAV, there are many features available that can help to improve your motoring experience. Some may come as part of the conversion; others may be optional extras that you will need to pay for. Around half of our WAV customers tell us they could have avoided problems if they'd spent more time researching when selecting their WAV, so it's well worth looking around, even if you already think you know what you want.

WAVs come in a range of shapes and sizes so there should be one to fit your needs. To help you start we've classified our WAVs as small, medium or large. The key factors when thinking about what size WAV you need are:

- ✓ The size and weight of your wheelchair
- ✓ Your seated height in your wheelchair
- ✓ The number of people you regularly travel with
- ✓ The amount of equipment that you need to take with you on your journeys.



Small

- Most small WAVs can accommodate up to four people
- These WAVs normally have a ramp, rather than a lift, to allow access
- They usually have a lowered floor to give more headroom inside the vehicle and reduce the angle of the ramp making it easier to get in and out.



Medium

- A medium WAV is more suited to a larger wheelchair or if you need to travel with equipment
- They usually seat between five and seven people including a wheelchair passenger
- Most medium WAVs have a ramp but some are available with an electric lift instead.



Large

- Large WAVs are a good option if you regularly travel with many passengers
- They are also suitable for a large or heavy wheelchair or if you have a lot of equipment that you need to keep with you
- These WAVs are normally fitted with a lift to allow easier entry.

If you don't know where to start, or if this is the first time you've considered a WAV, then you may find it useful to create a checklist of the things that are important to you.

We have listed below some questions you might want to consider. You could also use

this checklist when talking to WAV suppliers and comparing potential vehicles.

It is essential to speak to a WAV supplier about your needs so they can help you select the right vehicle, you can then arrange a home demonstration once you have an idea of what may be suitable.

Your habits

- ✓ Where will you be regularly travelling to in your WAV? Are there lots of speed bumps or areas with height restrictions?
- ✓ How often will you need to use the WAV?
- ✓ Does your driver need automatic transmission to make motoring easier?
- Are you sensitive to temperature? Would you benefit from additional heating and air conditioning?
- ✓ What sort of activities would it be used for, e.g. days out, popping to the shops, the school run? Will there be sufficient space to get in and out of the WAV easily?
- ✓ Where do you normally park? Are there height restrictions? Will there be enough room behind the WAV to access the vehicle by a ramp or a lift? Will there be enough room for the ramp to fully extend?
- ✓ Have you budgeted for the cost of handing over your allowance for five years and ordinary running costs such as fuel?
- ✓ Do you mainly make local journeys, or will you be taking your WAV on longer trips? Diesel is not always the most economical or best option if you just tend to make short journeys. Speak to your WAV supplier about the types of journeys you take.
- ✓ Do you regularly travel with just the driver? Would sitting behind the driver be a problem for you?

Size and space

- ✓ How big is your wheelchair (the maximum width, length and weight)? Are you likely to need a new one within the next five years? If the wheelchair user is growing or their condition is likely to change will they need a larger chair?
- ✓ What's your height when you're seated in your wheelchair?
- ✓ How many people regularly need to travel with you? Is this number likely to increase over the course of your lease?
- What equipment will you need to regularly transport in the WAV? Is it especially large or heavy?
- ✓ Is there sufficient head clearance at the point of entry to the vehicle as well as in the wheelchair seating position?



Getting in and out

All WAVs are fitted with either a ramp or a lift, and access for the wheelchair user will either be from the back or the side of the vehicle, depending on the conversion.

Ramps

Ramps are the most common way of accessing a WAV. The ramp is usually manually operated with the carer physically unfolding the ramp from the back of the vehicle. They can be automatic where the ramp folds and unfolds at the touch of a button – however these will cost extra.

Some manual ramps are spring-loaded to raise or lower them more easily. It's also important to consider, and test, the angle and length of the ramp as they're not all the same and some may make it more difficult to push the wheelchair user into the WAV. Some converters offer powered winches at no extra cost, so if you think this may help ask your converter what options are available.

Consider whether your carer will physically be able to operate the ramp and push you into the WAV now and throughout the course of your lease.



Lifts

Some larger WAVs can be fitted with a lift which can be a help if your carer has trouble pushing your wheelchair up a ramp into the WAV. However, WAVs fitted with a lift are generally more expensive than those fitted with ramps so your Advance Payment may be higher.

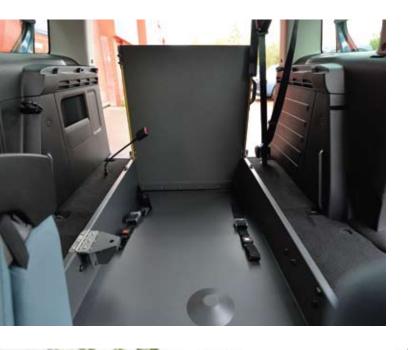
Lifts also require an annual service, but this cost will be covered within your lease.

- If your carer finds pushing your wheelchair up the ramp difficult an electric winch may help. This is a motorised cable that attaches to the wheelchair to help the carer by pulling the wheelchair into the vehicle. Ask your WAV supplier for more information if you think this will be useful
- If your carer finds bending and lifting difficult and you use a medium or large WAV having a lift might be the best option for you. These are button automated and require the least amount of physical effort from your carer
- Most ramps and lifts are fitted at the rear of the WAV, but there are a few WAVs which have access from the side of the vehicle – which would work best for you when out and about?

Conversion features

Lowered floors

Most WAVs will have had their floor specially lowered to allow enough headroom for the wheelchair user. A lowered floor also means that the ramp will either be shorter or the angle less steep for easier access.



- As the floor has been lowered, you will need to make sure the WAV allows for enough ground clearance in the places you usually drive and the driver will need to drive more carefully over roads with speed bumps
- When the converter lowers the floor of a WAV, the fuel tank may need to be modified or replaced, reducing its size or changing its shape. This can mean your WAV will need to be refuelled more regularly and the fuel gauge may be less accurate. Ask your WAV supplier if this applies to the WAV that you are considering
- Some WAVs can also be fitted with lowering suspension which means that the rear of a vehicle can be lowered to allow for easier access.
 This feature is operated at the touch of a button to help reduce the angle of the ramp, but will cost



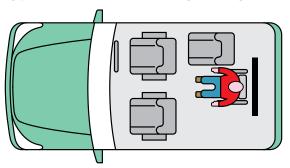
Travelling inside a WAV

Seating arrangements and comfort

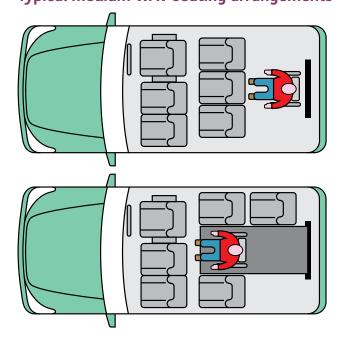
Travelling in a wheelchair in a WAV will feel different to a standard car seat. Most people get used to this in time but you may find this difficult at first. Most WAVs position the wheelchair passenger behind the front seats or towards the back of the vehicle. There are some WAVs where the wheelchair passenger can sit beside the driver, but these will be more expensive.

To give you an idea of the seating layouts available we have provided three diagrams below to show the most popular arrangements. However, there are lots of options available depending on the size of vehicle and your specific requirements. Speak to your WAV supplier to find out which seating layouts are available to you.

Typical small WAV seating arrangement



Typical medium WAV seating arrangements



- Depending on the seating arrangement, the wheelchair passenger may have difficulty seeing out of the windows or hearing other passengers near the front of the vehicle. If you have a seating preference speak to your WAV supplier and they will be able to advise you. Make sure you check this when you have a demonstration
- Consider whether a partner or carer will need to get to the wheelchair user during journeys – does the seating layout allow for this?
- The size of WAV you need may depend on how many passengers you regularly travel with. When making the vehicle accessible for wheelchair users the WAV supplier usually has to remove some of the standard seats. Some vehicles have rear seats designed to fold out of the way to make room for the wheelchair, or you may be able to request a seat as an optional extra. If you require an extra seat ask about its size – sometimes they can be smaller than a standard seat and might not be suitable for adults on long journeys or for fixing baby or child seats to
- Air conditioning comes as standard on all of our WAVs but in larger vehicles, if the wheelchair user is sensitive to temperature, you may benefit from additional heating and air conditioning although this is often an additional cost.



Safety

Most WAVs have four restraint belts that attach to the front and rear of the wheelchair to keep it in position inside the vehicle. The front restraints are adjustable and are usually self-locking, similar to a seatbelt, which can easily be attached to the wheelchair to lock it in place minimising movement when the WAV is travelling. There are different mechanisms for attaching the restraints to the wheelchair, some of which a carer might find easier to operate than others. Speak to your WAV supplier about the different systems available. Make sure everyone who will be helping you use the system tests this out during your demonstration. As well as the restraint system there will be a three-point seatbelt for the wheelchair passenger to use.

Things to think about

- If your carer has limited mobility or dexterity in their hands you can ask your supplier which restraining system might be most suitable. An automatic tie down system might help but will cost more than a belt system and isn't always suitable. Your WAV supplier can explain all the options available to you
- If your wheelchair weighs over 140kg not all restraint systems will be suitable for you. Speak to your WAV supplier to find out more about what's available.

Space

The space you have inside a WAV is vitally important – not just for all the passengers but also to accommodate the things you will be travelling with regularly such as shopping or mobility aids.

- The wheelchair will need to fit into the vehicle without any tight, difficult manoeuvres that might damage it or the interior of the WAV
- It is strongly recommended to have a head restraint fitted to your wheelchair when travelling in a WAV. They are easy to use and won't damage the chair
- Most WAVs can accommodate a small or medium size wheelchair. Larger wheelchairs or scooters may be too large or too heavy for smaller vehicles
- If you think that you may need to change your wheelchair during your lease, consider how this might affect your choice of WAV
- Consider how much space you will need for any luggage or equipment. Some vehicles have useful lockers and shelves for small things. Bear in mind that loose luggage can be dangerous if the driver has to brake suddenly. Car accessory shops sell accessories that can hold luggage in place and roof top boxes are another option for carrying luggage.

Vehicle Demonstrations

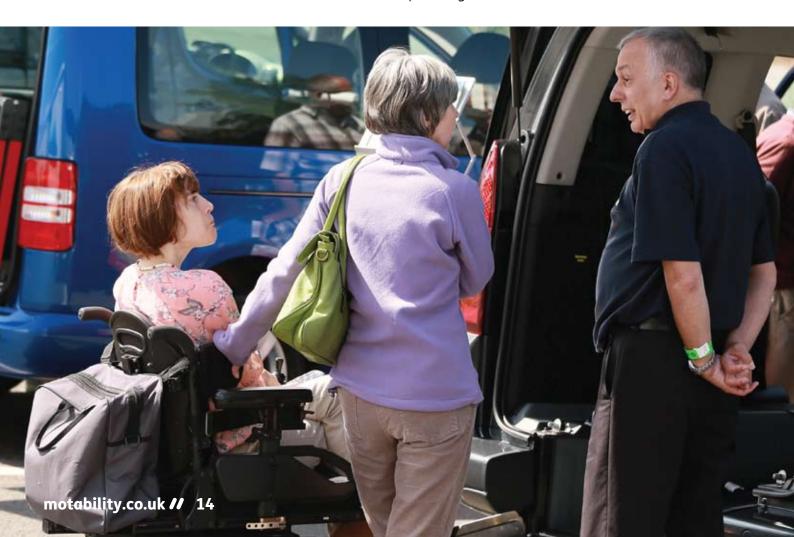
Once you've thought about your lifestyle needs and requirements and have an idea of the type of WAV that might be suitable, we recommend speaking to more than one WAV supplier. They'll be happy to discuss your needs and considerations with you and will be able to recommend a potential solution.

The best way to know for sure if a WAV is going to be right for you is to get out and about in it. Contact the WAV suppliers you think might be suitable and book a home demonstration – there's no cost involved and no obligation to order. To ensure that we are able to provide the best level of choice and customer service throughout the UK, nearly all of our specialist WAV suppliers will offer you a nationwide service. Some work with a network of regional dealers to supply and support your WAV; others will supply directly. In order to locate your local WAV supplier, use our 'Find a dealer' tool at motability.co.uk/wavs or call 0800 093 1000.

Our WAV suppliers are used to talking through your needs on the phone to build up a picture of the type of WAV which might be suitable for you. This will help them to understand what your needs are and enable them to bring an appropriate WAV to demonstrate and for you to test drive.

Nearly New WAVs

If you're considering a Nearly New WAV it's unlikely that the supplier will be able to bring the exact WAV for you to test drive. It's still important to test a WAV that is as similar as possible to the one you're selecting to check its suitability for the wheelchair user, the passengers and the driver.



Here are our top ten things to consider to make sure you get the most out of a vehicle demonstration.

1. Try more than one

- Try out a few different makes and conversions of WAVs, it may seem perfect on paper but it could be a very different story when you try it out
- Book a test drive at a time that is good for you so you feel comfortable trying out the vehicle fully.

2. Involve the people you travel with

- It's essential you bring the people you regularly travel with for the test drive
- Your carer must be happy helping you into the WAV, securing your wheelchair and driving the vehicle.

3. Try the WAV where you will use it

- Visit places and roads you would regularly use to see if a WAV will fit with your day-to-day life
- Your driver should practice parking and making sure they have clear visibility when you're secured in your wheelchair
- It's important your driver feels comfortable and confident in the vehicle.

4. Pack your bags

• If you regularly travel with luggage or extra equipment make sure you bring those to your test drive so you can ensure there is enough storage space.

5. Load and unload

- You and your carer should practice getting in and out and loading everything a couple of times
- This will also help identify if you need any extra features, such as a winch (often available at no extra cost), to help move the wheelchair passenger up the ramp and into position.

6. Practice makes perfect

• The WAV supplier will demonstrate how the features of a WAV work

- You should practice these yourself to check you feel comfortable and confident with them
- This will help you decide if you could use them on a daily basis.

7. Take your time

- When you're on a test drive, don't rush it, take as long as you feel you need
- Try out the regular journeys you normally make
- Make sure you get a thorough understanding of the WAV
- Don't be afraid to ask your WAV supplier questions – they have the best knowledge to advise you.

8. Consider the fuel costs

- Consider how often you will use the vehicle and what sort of journeys you will make
- Ask your WAV supplier how your travelling may impact fuel costs and whether a petrol or diesel would be a better option.

9. Think of the future

- Consider whether your needs will change during the course of your lease. For example, if you will need a bigger wheelchair during the next five years this may impact on the amount of space you need or the size of WAV
- It's also a good idea to think about whether you will need additional seating for passengers who will travel with you in the future.

10. Sleep on it

- Don't feel obliged to order because you've had a home demonstration
- WAV suppliers understand this is an important decision to make and cannot be rushed
- Only place an order if you're sure the vehicle meets all of your needs and you're happy.

Ordering your Motability WAV

Once you've found the WAV that best suits your needs it's time to place your order with the WAV supplier. This is a simple process and your WAV supplier will manage everything from start to finish.

As part of your home demonstration the WAV supplier will take you through the Motability Suitability Questionnaire which you will need to sign. This document is designed to ensure the WAV you're considering, and the Motability Scheme, meets your needs now, and for the duration of your lease. They will also discuss how the Advance Payment works and when you will need to pay this.

When you are ready to apply for a WAV on the Motability Scheme, your WAV supplier will ask you to complete the following simple forms:

- Statement of Responsibilities, which confirms that you and your drivers understand and agree to abide by the Scheme rules around your WAV usage
- Driver consent forms, so your nominated drivers can give their consent for us to check their details with the DVLA.

Along with these forms, you should also send them:

- DWP entitlement letter this can be a copy so you don't have to send your original
- Copies of your nominated drivers' driving licences
- Your award letter if you are receiving financial help from Motability (the charity).

Your WAV supplier will then place your order through our online system. The processing of your order will usually take a few days, and once your application has been accepted, we will send you a letter confirming your order and containing your Personal Identification Number (PIN). Please

keep your PIN in a safe place with all your other paperwork, as this will act as your signature and acceptance of the terms and conditions of your lease agreement. Your WAV supplier will usually send you an order form to sign and return which will specify the vehicle you've chosen and any options you have added to your WAV.

Taking delivery of your WAV

Once your order is placed your WAV supplier will let you know when it will be ready for delivery.

On average it will take between 12 and 16 weeks but can be sooner. If you've ordered a Nearly New WAV it should only take a few weeks.

When your WAV is ready your supplier will deliver it to your home. They will then show you and your carer around your new WAV and will remind you how each of the conversion features work.

Take some time to practise using the features for yourself and don't be afraid to ask the supplier questions – that's what they're there for. Your WAV supplier will also ask you to sign a document to give them the authority to use your PIN number on your behalf and then you can officially take delivery of your WAV.

Your supplier will give you a welcome pack, including a copy of our WAV Handbook, which contains everything you'll need to know over the course of your lease. The pack will also include your insurance documents. It's important that you check that all nominated drivers are on your insurance cover note.



Financial help

For customers who would otherwise be unable to afford the type of vehicle they need, Motability (the charity), may be able to offer financial help. To ensure their limited funds go to those in most need, applications are means-tested and any help will only be given towards your basic mobility needs.

This means that if you are successful you will not necessarily receive help towards your preferred vehicle if a better value alternative that meets your needs is available on the Scheme. For that reason, if you think you will need financial help, always consider the lowest cost vehicles first. For more information on financial help, call our Customer Services team on 0300 456 4566.

Useful Contacts

For enquiries about the Motability Scheme

Motability Operations

City Gate House 22 Southwark Bridge Road London SE1 9HB

Telephone: **0800 093 1000**

motability.co.uk

If you are an existing Motability Scheme customer, please call our Customer Services team on **0300 456 4566**

If you have specialist Minicom equipment, call our text phone: **0300 037 0100**

For enquiries about the Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

Department for Work and Pensions

Telephone: 03457 123 456

dwp.gov.uk

Department for Social Development (NI)

Telephone: **028 9090 6182**

dsdni.gov.uk

For enquiries about the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement or Armed Forces Independence Payment

Veterans UK

Telephone: 0808 191 4218

veterans-uk.info

For independent information and advice

The Forum of Mobility Centres

Mobility Centres can give practical advice and carry out assessments for vehicles. There are 17 centres in the UK and they are well informed on most mobility and disability issues.

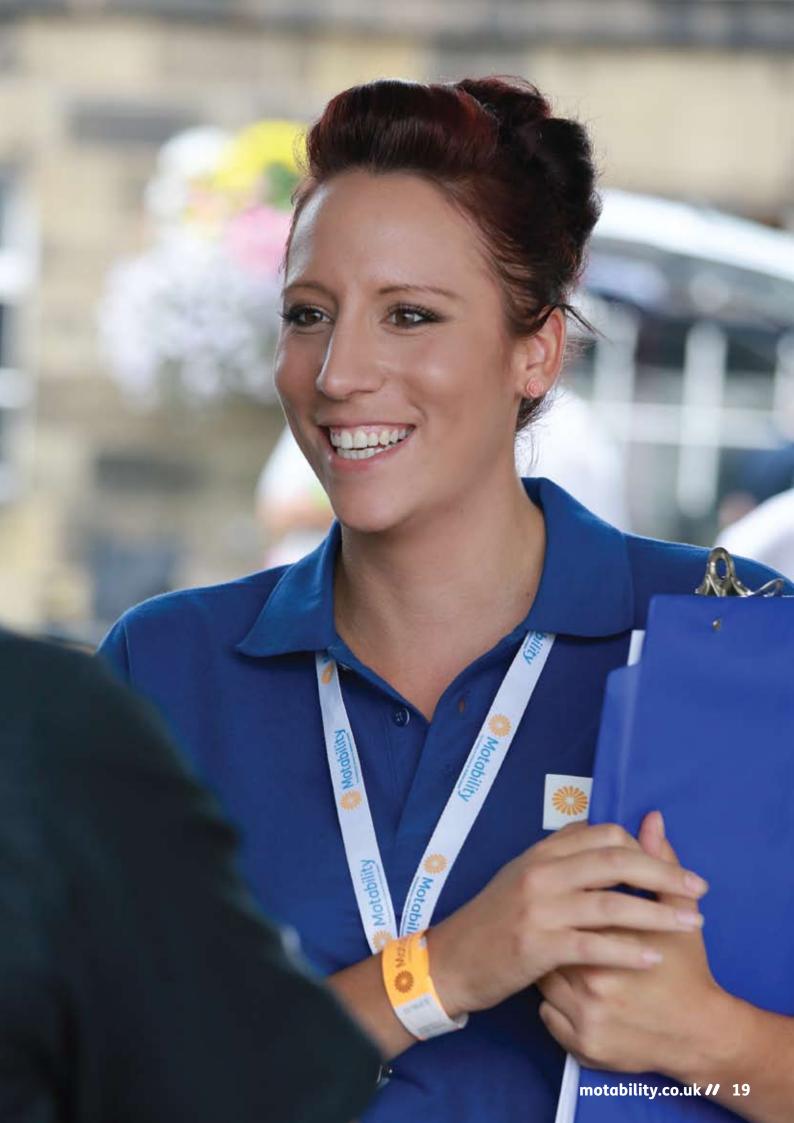
Telephone: **0800 559 3636 mobility-centres.org.uk**

Rica

Rica is an independent research charity that provides information to enable disabled and older people live independently. Their website provides motoring advice including information on WAVs. They also have printed publications on car adaptations, motoring guides for people with specific disabilities and public transport.

Telephone: **0207 427 2460**

rica.org.uk



motability.co.uk

Telephone: **0800 093 1000**



Motability Operations Limited is the principal service provider to Motability and the Motability Scheme. Registered Office: City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB. Registered in England and Wales. Co. No. 1373876. Motability Operations Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Please note that quoted customers are not pictured.



