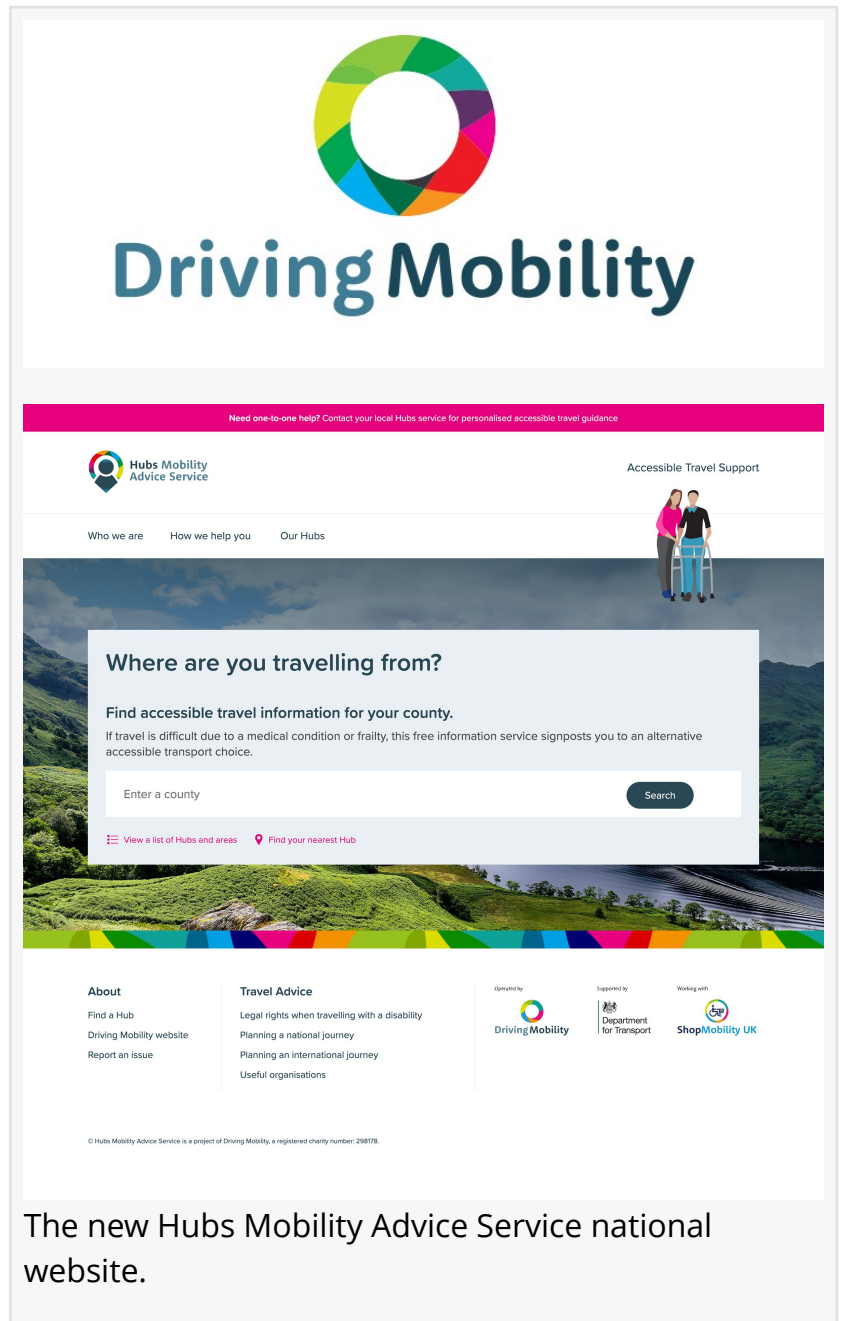


New Hubs Mobility Advice Service Signposts People with Disabilities to Accessible Travel Choices

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, September 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Supported by the Department for Transport, the charity Driving Mobility has introduced its latest information service which helps people with restricted mobility who cannot drive a car – the Hubs Mobility Advice Service (HMAS).

www.hubsmobilityadvice.com

Driving Mobility coordinates and accredits over 20 independent driving and mobility assessment centres which support self-referring drivers and those signposted from the DVLA, NHS, Motability and Police. Each centre's Occupational Therapists and Approved Driving Instructors provide clinical 'fitness to drive' assessments and adapted vehicle recommendations for individuals with a variety of medical conditions such as stroke, dementia and amputation. Driving Mobility provides an enabling service which aims to keep as many people driving safely as possible. However, if using a car is deemed unsafe or not best for individual needs, then HMAS now provides advice on alternative transport choices.



The screenshot displays the Driving Mobility website interface. At the top, there is a colorful circular logo and the text "Driving Mobility". Below this, a pink banner contains the text: "Need one-to-one help? Contact your local Hubs service for personalised accessible travel guidance". The main navigation bar includes "Hubs Mobility Advice Service" and "Accessible Travel Support". A secondary navigation bar lists "Who we are", "How we help you", and "Our Hubs". The central content area features a search box with the heading "Where are you travelling from?" and the sub-heading "Find accessible travel information for your county." Below the search box, there is a text input field labeled "Enter a county" and a "Search" button. At the bottom of the search area, there are two links: "View a list of Hubs and areas" and "Find your nearest Hub". The footer section is divided into three columns: "About" (with links for "Find a Hub", "Driving Mobility website", and "Report an issue"), "Travel Advice" (with links for "Legal rights when travelling with a disability", "Planning a national journey", "Planning an international journey", and "Useful organisations"), and "Supported by" (with logos for "Driving Mobility", "Department for Transport", and "ShopMobility UK"). A small copyright notice is visible at the bottom of the page.

The new Hubs Mobility Advice Service national website.

As part of the Government's Inclusive Strategy, HMAS is a free information and guidance service on the best accessible travel options for people with disabilities and individuals who may be considering retiring from driving. It is provided online through a national website and via representatives at 15 Driving Mobility Centres. Each Centre has dedicated HMAS experts who will assist with inclusive transport queries if driving has always been, or is no longer, a viable option. Services vary slightly between centres; however, all provide free detailed advice on:

- Accessible buses and coaches
- Easy access rail and air travel
- Community transport
- Rights as a disabled passenger
- Hiring or purchasing the right mobility scooter or wheelchair
- Planning for local, national and international travel with a disability

The most up-to-date local accessible transport guidance, by county, is available on the HMAS website or by contacting a local service. Team members provide friendly telephone, email or face-to-face support, either at their respective Driving Mobility Centre or by visiting individuals in their home.

Terry Welsh, 71, heart attack/stroke survivor from Pelaw near Gateshead, was one of the first people to benefit from HMAS at the Driving Mobility Centre in Walkergate Park Hospital,

Newcastle upon Tyne. As Terry volunteers at Washington Stables, a Riding for the Disabled Centre (RDA), and has several part-time educational jobs, it was essential he could remain mobile especially as he felt isolated and lonely when at home. However, it was taking him over two hours each way to reach the stables using the bus and metro, whereas a taxi could get him there in 10 minutes. The issue was the cost of taxis – Terry couldn't afford it and needed a solution as the situation was impacting on all his volunteering and paid roles. HMAS at North East Drive Mobility (NEDM) found the answer.

Paula George, NEDM HMAS Lead, explains: "With Terry's approval, I asked Age UK to perform a benefits check for him. At the time he was not claiming any benefits and was unaware that he would be entitled to anything. Age UK looked into his situation and confirmed that he qualified for help with the travel costs of getting to the stables. It wasn't so much the expense of getting there, it was the time it was taking to get there and back. This meant Terry was always risking being late for his other part time jobs. This funding would help with the cost of taxis when he was pushed for time which meant he could continue volunteering at the stables and fulfilling his passion for helping children and adults with disabilities."

Terry concludes: "Being involved with charities such as RDA is a lifeline for my mental health and wellbeing. Not only has HMAS solved my transport issues, it has also made me aware of other services from Age UK and helped me access more brain injury therapy. Thank you, Paula, I'm so grateful for the guidance you gave me. I received some good advice on taxis and as I don't cope well on the phone, it was good to speak face-to-face with a professional. Having the extra money for taxis means I'm not worried about metros and buses being cancelled. HMAS will make a huge

difference to my life.”

* ENDS *

Driving Mobility, supported by the Department for Transport

As a registered charity, Driving Mobility accredits a network of 21 driving assessment centres covering the whole of the UK. Many with outreach facilities, these centres include independent charities and NHS centres which offer professional information and assessment so disabled and elderly people can gain or retain independence.

Driving Mobility ensures that there are common standards, promotes good practice and offers training and education to all regional centres, whilst working closely with associated national organisations. These include the Department for Transport, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Driver and Vehicle Agency (NI), Motability and the Police, along with many other valued stakeholders.

Driving Mobility is privileged to have Baroness Thomas of Winchester as their patron and is supported by HM Government.

Hubs Mobility Advice Service (HMAS)

Operated by Driving Mobility, HMAS is a free information and guidance service for people with a medical condition, disability or frailty seeking accessible travel options. If driving an adapted car is not viable, alternative transport recommendations are provided through its national website and 15 Driving Mobility Centres. Each centre has dedicated experts who advise on:

- Accessible buses and coaches
- Rights as a disabled passenger
- Easy access rail and air travel
- Hiring or purchasing the right scooters and wheelchairs
- Community transport
- Local, national and international travel planning

HMAS aims to provide all the answers needed for stress-free, inclusive travel without a car.

www.hubsmobilityadvice.com

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