

Volunteer Drivers - A few Questions and Answers

Who needs my help?

Community Transport schemes help people who find it difficult or impossible to access public transport.

How much time do I need to give?

As much or as little as you want. You can drive on a regular basis or be flexible and help when you can. Any time you could give on any day of the week would be extremely helpful to us. We do ask for a commitment of at least six months.

What insurance do I need to become a volunteer driver for a Social Car Scheme?

Driving for a social car scheme using your own car is considered car sharing under your insurance policy. This means your insurance should cover you without needing any additional cover and at no extra cost. We recommend that you check with your insurance provider and notify them that you will be volunteering as a driver so it can be confirmed. The Association of British Insurers website includes a list of insurers, including any conditions around volunteer driving.

Is my driving licence valid to drive a minibus?

Drivers who passed their test before 1st January 1997 normally have a D1 entitlement on their licence. D1 enables someone to drive a minibus 'not for hire or reward' for a Community Transport scheme. This will remain on the licence until it expires at age 70 or unless removed by the DVLA. If you passed your driving test after 1st January 1997, this does not necessarily mean you cannot drive a minibus but some further factors apply such as your age, how long you have held a licence and the size/weight of the minibus. We can check your eligibility with the specific scheme you are interested in. For further details visit: www.ctauk.org/training/who-can-drive-a-minibus.aspx

Do I need to have driven a minibus before?

No. Full training and support will be provided by the Community Transport scheme until you feel confident. MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) training may also be available.

What else do I need to become a volunteer driver?

To become a volunteer driver for a Social Car Scheme, in addition to notifying your insurance provider you will need a valid driving licence and a roadworthy car. For either type of scheme, you will need a telephone so the scheme can liaise with you. You will also need to be reliable and have a positive and patient attitude. Any further training needed will be provided by the community transport project.

What is a DBS check?

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. As this role will involve working with vulnerable people, volunteers are required to have a DBS check. We look at each DBS check on an individual basis so it does not necessarily mean that if you have a previous offence or conviction you won't be able to volunteer with us. We would be happy to discuss this with you.

How much notice will I get about when I am needed to volunteer?

We will always try to give as much notice as possible (at least a week before) but you can always say no if you are unavailable.

Will I get help with my expenses?

If you are volunteering as a driver on the Social Car Scheme, you will receive reimbursement for every mile you travel using your own car when driving as part of the role. Payment of other travel or subsistence expenses may be available – each scheme can provide details of their policy on volunteer expenses.