

# Useful Contacts...

Your first point of contact for all questions and queries relating to Community Cars is your Coordinator.

However, if you are unable to contact your Coordinator and urgently need advice, please contact the following Shropshire Council employees;

## North Shropshire



**Amy Tipton**

[amy.tipton@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:amy.tipton@shropshire.gov.uk)

Areas including; Oswestry, Market Drayton, Whitchurch, Wem, Prees, Shifnal, Albrighton, Cosford, Pontesbury, Minsterley & Telford

## Shrewsbury & South Shropshire



**Maria Moore** (Mon - Wed)

[maria.moore@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:maria.moore@shropshire.gov.uk)



**Wendie Springer** (Wed - Fri)

[wendie.springer@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:wendie.springer@shropshire.gov.uk)

Areas including; Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Bishop's Castle, Cleobury Mortimer, Bridgnorth, Broseley & Much Wenlock

# Shropshire Community Cars

**Connecting Shropshire's Communities together**



March 2018

**Information for Drivers**

# WELCOME TO Shropshire's Community Car Schemes!

As a Community Car Driver, you will be helping people to get where they need to go, when they can't get there any other way—it's a vital service, so thank you for volunteering!

This booklet is designed to answer many of the questions you may have about your role as a driver—we hope it will prove a handy reference, so please keep it in a safe place.

For further advice or guidance, please contact your local coordinator.

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# Role of Council / Coordinators

## The Council...

The Council recognises the vital role that Community Car schemes play, particularly in rural areas where the public transport network is sparse. The schemes are part-funded from the Council's wider transport budget (which also pays for road building and maintenance and subsidises many local bus services).

The Council welcomes ideas about how the schemes could be improved. Please feed any comments through your Coordinator.

## Your Coordinator...

Your local Coordinator is responsible for:

- Recruiting new drivers and introducing them to the scheme.
- Publicising and promoting the scheme locally.
- Responding to journey requests and arranging the transport with available drivers.
- Processing claim forms for payment.
- Supporting drivers, including providing advice and guidance and passing information to them.
- Ensuring driver information is up to date (e.g. records of insurance, MOT etc.) and that drivers operate consistently, in accordance with the guidelines for the scheme.

Please contact your Coordinator if you can offer any help with local publicity or recruiting new drivers!

# Expenses, Tax & Insurance

## No Claims Bonus...

Shropshire Council has taken out a policy which covers all drivers against the loss of their No Claims Bonus (up to £250) in the event of an accident whilst driving for the scheme (but not at other times). Drivers may also be eligible for reimbursement of any excess payment which they have to make (up to the maximum of £250). If the occasion arises, please contact your Coordinator for further information.



# Joining the scheme.

## Application Process

All new volunteers complete a short application form, outlining their driving history, relevant health issues.

Assuming all is in order, you'll be asked to meet your local coordinator, who will be able to explain how the scheme works and answer any questions that you have.

You will need to show your coordinator the following;



Your coordinator will take note of the renewal/expiry dates so that they can regularly check that each of these is still valid.

Your coordinator will also want to see your vehicle, to help make sure that they match you with appropriate passengers.

**You must inform your coordinator if you change your vehicle**

Please provide two passport-sized photographs, one of which will be kept on file by Shropshire Council and the other will be used to create your ID Badge.



Before you can receive your ID Badge and are accepted to drive on the scheme you will be required to have a DBS check which lasts 3 years. More details of which are on the next page

# Joining the scheme.

## Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

Community Car Drivers often provide transport for more vulnerable members of the community. For this reason all new drivers will be required to have a satisfactory DBS Certificate from the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS).



You will be contacted by Shropshire Council to start the process shortly after your application has been received.

Even if you have had a DBS for another volunteering scheme you will be required to have a new one to become a Community Car Driver.

You will be required to attend one of two locations either Shirehall in Shrewsbury or Ludlow Library, both will require a pre-booked appointment and you will need to bring certain documents to the appointment in order for us to complete the process, details of these can be found through your local coordinator.

Once it has been processed you will receive your DBS Certificate through the post. If you have signed up to the Update Service you will need to keep us informed of when this is completed.

Please note that this can take some time and unfortunately you will not be permitted to work on any of these schemes until your DBS Certificate has been fully processed.

Please remember that a DBS is a 'snapshot' of your suitability at the time of your application. You must notify your coordinator of any motoring or criminal offences which occur after you are accepted as a volunteer

# Expenses, Tax & Insurance

The scheme should not be regarded as a source of predictable income - by its nature the demands of the scheme are unpredictable, and regular journeys should be the exception rather than the rule.

## Tax...

There are no tax implications for the vast majority of drivers, as the mileage rate set by the Council covers your costs only and no profit is made.

If you undertake more than 10,000 miles in a financial year the mileage rate which is set by the Inland Revenue drops to 0.25p per mile. We will write to you to confirm if you have reached the 10,000 mile threshold and you will not receive any reimbursement from the council. At the beginning of the next financial year your mileage will reset.

## Insurance...

You must notify your insurance company of your intention to drive for the Community Car Scheme. This is normally accepted without problem and without affecting your premium. If you do experience any problems please contact your Coordinator for advice.

Changes of insurance company and/or cover must be notified to your Coordinator.

All volunteers working on behalf of the Council are covered by Public Liability insurance. It should be noted, however, that you are covered only for activities relevant to your duties as a Community Car Driver, not for carrying goods or undertaking any extraneous activity.

# Expenses, Tax & Insurance

## Mileage and Expenses...

The Council will reimburse up to £0.15p per mile (dependent on passenger contribution), based on the agreed mileage rate.

The mileage rate is set at a level which will cover your fuel costs, and make a contribution towards the running costs of your vehicle.

All journeys should be recorded on the official claim form. You must fill these forms in completely, because they will be kept for purposes of auditing. Your Coordinator will provide you with a supply of these forms, and will be able to answer any questions that you have about filling them in. When completing the journey log, round up any part of a mile to the nearest full mile.

Claim forms should be sent to your Coordinator regularly (monthly, or at a less frequent interval if agreed with your Coordinator). Please ensure that all claim forms for the financial year are sent in at the end of March, to coincide with the end of the Council's financial year.

After the claim has been processed, your Coordinator will send you confirmation of the amount you have been reimbursed and you will receive a confirmation slip and money directly into your bank account.



# Who can use Community Cars?

**Community Cars are available to anyone who...**

**Needs to make an 'essential' journey**

**Does not have a car, or has not got access to a car when they need to travel**

**Is not able to use public transport, either because they can't get on board or because it is not available**

Children may be carried, if accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult.

## Refusals

Schemes are quite entitled to refuse any request for transport which they do not feel to be in the spirit of the scheme.

Requests from passengers for non essential journeys should be refused.

If you receive a request for transport which you believe should be refused, please ask the passenger to contact your coordinator.



# Who can use Community Cars?

## Examples of 'essential' journeys;

- ◆ **Hospital Appointments**
- ◆ Visiting friends or relatives in hospital
- ◆ **Visiting the doctors, dentists, opticians, chiropodist or physiotherapist. Also to hearing aid and ulcer clinics.**
- ◆ Collecting urgent prescriptions.
- ◆ **Shopping, collecting pensions, personal business (e.g. bank, building society or solicitor)**
- ◆ Transport to a bus stop or train station to catch onward service or return to any of the above.
- ◆ **Attending a funeral**
- ◆ Other journey requests, at your Coordinators discretion, provided they fit within the general guidelines (see above) and a driver is willing to take it on.



## What journeys are not permitted?

- ◆ **Regular journeys over a long period of time (e.g. to a day centre)**
- ◆ Trips to school, college or work
- ◆ **Journeys which could have been made by public transport, even if less convenient. Community Cars is designed to complement local bus services, not compete with them.**
- ◆ Drivers should not claim under the scheme for carrying members of their own family, or for journeys that they themselves would have made anyway.
- ◆ **Out of county trips, unless to hospital appointments, should be agreed with your local coordinator**



In special circumstances exceptions may be made, but **only** with prior agreement from Shropshire Council. If in doubt, seek guidance from your coordinator.

# On the Road

## Contact with Passengers...

As a Driver, you must not get involved in suggestive or intimate conversations with your passengers and you should not interfere with their belongings. If passengers tell you personal information, please treat this as confidential.

To safeguard you from accusations, you should not touch, hold or make any physical contact with passengers, other than that required to assist the passenger into or out of the vehicle, if appropriate.

If allegations of impropriety are made, the driver will be suspended from the scheme while the matter is investigated.

## Reporting Accidents and Incidents...

You must report any accident or injury affecting yourself or your passenger, which occurs whilst driving for Community Cars if this occurs please contact your Coordinator.

## Payment...

Passengers are expected to make a contribution towards the drivers' costs of £0.30p per mile.

Please note the actual mileage for each trip (including miles driven to the pick up point and rounding up any incomplete miles) and use the rate chart provided to determine how much your passenger is expected to pay. If two or more passengers share a journey, the costs may be split between them. If the passenger pays more than the minimum contribution, then you must record the actual amount paid on your claim form.

Travel Tokens may be used in part or full payment for journeys. Please record this on the claim form and submit these to your Coordinator with your claim. The National Concessionary Bus Pass is not valid for use on Community Cars.

## Training and Support

New drivers sometimes wish to accompany an existing driver to 'learn the ropes'. If you are interested, please arrange this through your Coordinator.

Training sessions and social events will periodically be arranged, either locally or at County level. You will find about these via your Coordinator.



Journeys should be booked through your local Coordinator, with as much advance notice as possible. It is occasionally possible to meet urgent journey requests at very short notice, subject to driver availability.

## Responding to journey requests yourself...

As a general rule, passengers should not make arrangements directly with drivers and any requests should be referred on to your coordinator. In practice, however, once you have established a link with a passenger, it may be practical to circumvent the process. Always keep your coordinator informed of all journeys planned, not least so that they are aware of your availability.

If you receive any unusual requests, are uncertain about the eligibility of a journey, or are concerned in any other way about a request, please refer the matter to your coordinator for advice.



# On the Road

You should show dignity and respect toward your passengers and other road users and act in a helpful and pleasant way at all times. You must always drive safely, with due care and attention, within the speed limits and within the terms of the Highway Code. All passengers must be properly seated whilst the vehicle is in motion and seat belts must be worn. It is recommended that you check your vehicle's oil, tyres, lights, fuel and washer/wiper systems daily.



## Hours of work...

Journey requests tend to be ad-hoc, which makes it difficult to predict the 'hours of work'.

We suggest that you let your Coordinator know any times/days when you are not available or when you would prefer not to drive. If you will be away for an extended period, e.g. on holiday, please let your Coordinator know. If you would like to set aside a particular time each week for driving, please arrange this with your Coordinator.



## Identification...

When on Community Cars business, please display the Community Cars car sticker in your vehicle and wear your ID Badge prominently. Use your ID Badge to identify yourself to your passenger if required.

# On the Road

## Dropping off passengers...

You are legally required to obey parking restrictions (such as double yellow lines or restricted areas), even when driving on Community car business. If your passenger has difficulty walking, drop him/her as close as possible to their destination, park elsewhere and bring the car back to pick him/her up.

Please ensure that passengers alight on the pavement side of the road - never in the middle of the road or on a central reservation - and that all passengers are clear of your vehicle before moving off.

## Parking...

Registered disabled passengers may display their Blue Badge in your windscreen, entitling you to park in a space allocated for disabled parking.

At hospitals, you may park in the emergency area to drop your passenger(s) off, and you must then park in the public car park. If your passenger does not have difficulty walking, please do not use the emergency area at all.

