
SELBY DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES

VOLUNTEER CAR AND DRIVER SCHEME POLICY

November 2013

This Policy sets out the schemes aim and the parameters in which it needs to operate to be sustainable and legal for the benefit of the scheme's clients, the volunteer drivers and coordinator.

INDEX

VOLUNTEER CAR AND DRIVER SCHEME POLICY

PAGE 2

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Definition of Volunteering
- 1.2 The Aim
- 1.3 What is a Community Car Scheme?
- 1.4 Car-sharing and the law
- 1.5 Being a Volunteering driver
- 1.6 Volunteer driver reimbursement
- 1.7 Policy Review

OPERATING PARAMETERS

PAGE 4

- 2.0 Eligibility: who can use the scheme?
- 2.1 Geographical boundaries
- 2.2 Operating Hours
- 2.3 Client contributions
- 2.4 Dead mileage
- 2.5 Additional passengers
- 2.6 Scheme Limitations
- 2.7 Failure to cancel
- 2.8 Declaring gifts

APPENDICES

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS GUIDANCE NOTES

PAGE 6

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Definition of Volunteering
- 3.2 Being a Volunteering driver
- 3.3 Safeguarding & receiving gifts
- 3.4 Drivers Insurance
- 3.5 Volunteer driver reimbursement
- 3.6 Reimbursement scale explained
- 3.7 Dead mileage
- 3.8 Summary

INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 Many isolated or disadvantaged people living in Selby district, whose independence and lifestyle are frequently limited by reduced mobility, can make use of the Selby District Community Car Scheme to significantly enhance their quality of life.

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

- 1.1 *‘Volunteers are people who are unpaid and choose to give their time, energy and skills to benefit individuals, groups or issues in their community.’*

THE AIM

- 1.2 To provide a volunteer community car scheme to meet the mobility requirements of elderly, disabled or disadvantaged clients who are, for whatever reason, unable to use other forms of public transport.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME?

- 1.3 The hallmark of a quality community car scheme is the principle that it is nothing more than organised form of car-sharing. In this system a local pool of volunteer drivers is available to take people on pre-arranged journeys, coordinated by a central organisation, in this case Selby District Association of Voluntary Service (AVS). The drivers use their own cars to make these journeys and their expenses are reimbursed on a mileage basis.
 - 1.3.1 Such schemes are a relatively expensive way of providing people with transport, so the Selby district scheme has clearly defined operating boundaries (see Operating Parameters), only covering journeys that other transport systems do not provide.
 - 1.3.2 Client contributions will not cover the scheme’s total running cost so support funding will be sort from all ethical and appropriate sources.

CAR-SHARING AND THE LAW

- 1.4 Social car schemes are the subject of a series of exemptions from all the licensing and operating regulations. Provided that drivers do not make a profit on any expenses they are paid (i.e. over and above the reasonable running costs of the car they use), the scheme and - more importantly – its volunteer drivers, need only comply with regulations applicable to private motorists.
 - 1.4.1 The requirements of the various Road Traffic Acts must be met and vehicles used in the scheme must be roadworthy, insured and taxed.
 - 1.4.2 Organised car-sharing, where clients make a contribution to the cost of the scheme, has been legal since 1978. Subsequent amendments to the law have removed earlier restrictions on the kind of scheme that can be set up and have allowed wider advertisement of facilities to the general public.

BEING A VOLUNTEERING DRIVER

- 1.5 A volunteer driver requires competent driving and interpersonal skills. Beyond that the volunteering opportunity benefits drivers with additional social interaction as they transport a wide variety of people, all with individual circumstances and stories. In common with many other community-based initiatives, car schemes can benefit people by helping to strengthen social bonds, especially between volunteer drivers and the clients.
- 1.5.1 Where appropriate and wanted, we encourage our volunteers to wait with clients at their appointments. Offering this extra support, assistance and encouragement to clients underpins what a community car scheme is about and is seen as real benefit by clients. This type of community service is beyond the scope of most commercial transport providers or too expensive for the customer.
- 1.5.2 Drivers will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) and basic 'Safeguarding' training to help improve safety for both clients and drivers. For more information see 3.2 in the Voluntary Drivers Guidance Notes.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER REIMBURSEMENT

- 1.6 There are no clear guidelines as to the legally acceptable maximum expenses which may be paid to volunteer drivers. However, rates of reimbursement which could be regarded as profit-making for the driver (that is exceeding the reasonable running costs of the vehicle) would not be valid under the car-sharing legislation, may invalidate the terms of insurance and would also have to be declared for Income Tax assessment.
- 1.6.1 We reimburse our drivers following HM Revenue and Customs Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) guidance. This ensures our volunteers don't have to worry about any tax or legal issues. For more information see Volunteer Driver Reimbursement in the Volunteer Drivers Guidance Notes. You can also visit the HMRCs AMAPs web site: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/volunteer-drivers.htm>

POLICY REVIEW

- 1.7 This Policy, the Operation Parameters and Volunteer Drivers Guidance Notes will be reviewed annually and approved by the trustees. Any amendments or increase in charges communicated to clients and volunteer drivers.

OPERATING PARAMETERS

ELIGIBILITY: WHO CAN USE THE SCHEME?

2.0 Eligibility for the Selby District Car Scheme is:

- People who are retired, disabled, disadvantaged or vulnerable, for example, clients must be **unable** to travel by other methods of transport (e.g. **unable** to get from home to the bus stop).
- The maximum number of journeys allowed is one return trip per day, (unless agreed in advance by the scheme coordinator)
- Paid the annual membership fee, currently £12.00 due in April every year

GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

2.1 Our scheme will endeavour to meet user journeys requirements to:

- Any destination within Selby district
- A hospital or medical treatment centre of any neighbouring Local Authority for a confirmed appointment.
- Any destination within the city of York

2.1.1 No other journeys will be considered unless a person's disability prevents them accessing public transport.

OPERATING HOURS

2.2 All journeys must be booked at least **48 hours** in advance.

2.2.1 Depending on volunteer driver availability, car journeys operate from Monday to Friday 7am to 5pm.

2.2.2 The office is staffed Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 2:00 pm. At all other times, and when the office is busy, an answering machine will take a message. The journey coordinator will get back to clients as soon as possible.

CLIENT CONTRIBUTIONS

2.3 In addition to the annual membership fee our clients are required to contribute toward the running costs of the volunteer driver's car and the coordination of the scheme. This contribution is calculated on the total number of miles travelled (including the mileage from the volunteer's drivers home and back again, known as 'dead mileage') and a booking fee.

- Annual scheme membership (due April each year) £12.00*
- booking fee for each return journey £2.00
- Mileage rate £0.45

**payable on your first journey, a membership card will then be sent to you in the post. If you join After 30 September you'll be charged 50% of the annual membership.*

DEAD MILEAGE

- 2.4 'Dead' mileage is inevitable and occurs when the driver has to travel from home to pick up a client and on the way home having dropped a client off. Dead mileage will always be greater when clients only need to travel in one direction (a single journey). By recovering the dead mileage the scheme is more sustainable. The coordinator will seek to minimise dead mileage where possible but the client needs to pay the driver for the entire journey, including dead mileage.

ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS

- 2.5 When booking your journey you must state if you want additional people to come with you. Up to 3 (including children) additional passengers can accompany you, as the client, to the destination stated when booking. There is no additional charge.

SCHEME LIMITATIONS

- 2.6 Our scheme runs on volunteer drivers using their own cars, so it will always be at their discretion if they feel able to transport someone accompanied by:
- A pet
 - Children – *the client needs to provide the correct safety seating for the child*
 - Guide / hearing dogs or other 'assistant' dogs
 - Wheelchair or other large mobility aid
- 2.6.1 Any journey that requires the transport of any of the above may require additional time for coordinator to find a driver willing to do the journey.
- 2.6.1 Waiting by volunteer drivers is limited to 2 hours. However, volunteer drivers are not expected to wait so it is recommended client inform their driver if they would like them to wait and estimate how long the wait might be.

FAILURE TO CANCEL

- 2.7.1 You can cancel your journey at any time without incurring costs up to the volunteer driver leaving their home. However, if the volunteer driver has left home or arrives at a client's pick-up point and they do not use the transport the client is liable for the booking fee and the cost of the driver's mileage from their home to the pick-up point and back home.

DECLARING GIFTS

- 2.8.1 If you over pay a volunteer driver as a 'tip' or give them a gift of any kind, it is very kind and unnecessary. Within reason drivers may accept gifts, however, to protect you and the drivers anything gifted will be declared by the driver to the scheme's administrator who will make a note of it.

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS GUIDANCE NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 3.0 This section clarifies what is required what from a volunteer driver and what they can expect from the coordinator. Some sections from the main policy are repeated here for your convenience

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

- 3.1 *'Volunteers are people who are unpaid and chose to give their time, energy and skills to benefit individuals, groups or issues in their community.'*

BEING A VOLUNTEERING DRIVER

- 3.2 To be a volunteer driver you need:
- An insured car - *your normal insurance is fine, see below*
 - Have category 'D' on your driving licence
 - Competent driving and interpersonal skills
 - Undergo a Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) – *this is free as a volunteer driver*
 - Basic Safeguarding training - *provided free*
- 3.2.1 In return you will benefit from greater social interaction with a wide variety of people, all with individual circumstances and stories. You may also visit places you haven't been to before and get to see a lot more of Selby district countryside. In common with many other community-based initiatives, car schemes can help to strengthen social bonds, individual confidence and self-esteem between volunteer's drivers and their passengers.
- 3.2.2 Where appropriate and wanted, we encourage our volunteers to wait with clients at their appointments. Offering this extra support, assistance and encouragement to clients underpins what a community car scheme is about and is seen as real benefit by clients. This type of community service is beyond the scope of most commercial transport providers or too expensive for the customer.

SAFEGUARDING

- 3.3.1 The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a priority. Selby District Community Transport service understands that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility as a member of staff or volunteer.
- 3.3.2 We exercises care in the appointment of all those involved with transporting children, young people and vulnerable adults. There for it is essential as a volunteer you register on the *Disclosure and Baring Service* and attend basic *Safeguarding* training. Both are explained below:

- 3.3.3 The *Disclosure and Baring Service* (DBS); For this you will required to produce one from of photographic identity such as your Passport or Driving Licence, you will also need to evidence where you live, utility bills are the best. You may also be required to show other forms of identification such as your Birth certificate. *If you want help we can explain everything and help you get all your necessary paperwork right.*
- 3.3.4 The *basic ‘Safeguarding’ training* helps improve safety for both clients and drivers by raising awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues. It also provides some practical information of what to do if you have any concerns. The mandatory training takes half a day with courses run frequently throughout the year. The training is free for volunteer drivers.
- 3.3.5 *Both your DBS check and Safeguarding training must be completed within an agreed timeframe. If you DBS check requires qualification or you fail to attend your safeguarding training you will not be able to volunteer for us.*
- 3.3.6 *Gifts:* Sometimes your passenger may offer you a ‘tip’ or give you a gift. Its fine that you keep what has been gifted to you (within reason) however, you need to inform the community transport administrator so the gift can be logged on a register. This protects you and your passenger in case of any allegations been made for whatever reason.

DRIVERS INSURANCE

- 3.4.1 The drivers must be insured. Insurance companies have accepted that participation in a social car scheme (where no profit is involved) does not constitute operating a vehicle for “hire or reward” and a standard “domestic, social and pleasure” policy is adequate. Most policies contain a clause stating that this is the case and drivers should not have to pay any additional premiums. In some instances, companies may wish to extend the policy to include “business use” but again this should not lead to extra cost.
- 3.4.2 Drivers should, however, notify their insurance company of their involvement in a social car scheme. It should be made clear to the insurance company that “expenses will be claimed strictly on a non-profit basis.” This is the phrase agreed by the Motor Underwriting and Technical Panel of the Motor Conference (which is the Standing Joint Committee of the Association of British Insurers and Lloyd’s Motor Underwriters” Association).

VOLUNTEER DRIVER REIMBURSEMENT

- 3.5.1 There are no clear guidelines as to the legally acceptable maximum expenses which may be paid to volunteer drivers. However, rates of reimbursement which could be regarded as profit-making for the driver (that is exceeding the reasonable running costs of the vehicle) would not be valid under the car-sharing legislation, may invalidate the terms of insurance and would also have to be declared for Income Tax assessment.

- 3.5.2 We reimburse our drivers following HM Revenue and Customs Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAPs) guidance. This ensures our volunteers don't have to worry about any tax or legal issues. For more information on the HMRCs AMAPs rate visit: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/mileage/volunteer-drivers.htm>
- 3.5.3 To avoid double-handling of the money taken in fares volunteer drivers may keep any cash they collect up to the appropriate amount to be deducted from any expenses due to them for the journey. Any additional cash, such as the booking fee, is to be deposited with the coordinator as soon as practicable. The driver will be given a receipt. Any outstanding amounts owed to the volunteer driver will be reimbursed at the end of the month.
- 3.5.4 Drivers will be reimbursed at **45 pence a mile** per journey, from when they leave home until they return.
- 3.5.5 All mileage records must be submitted to the coordinator weekly and reconciled monthly by the coordinator. Any variances will be discussed with the driver and resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. If this is not possible this issue will be reviewed by the AVS Chief Officer who's decision is final.
- 3.5.6 Some volunteers' drivers will carry out account work on behalf of our scheme. This is when an individual or an organization sets up a regular journey and are invoiced directly by Community Transport monthly. Drivers carrying out these journeys will record their mileage as usual and be reimbursed monthly at the above mentioned rate.

REIMBURSEMENT SCALE EXPLAINED

- 3.6.1 Our scale for driver reimbursement is based on the mileage the client travels and 'dead' mileage (see below). We pay a fixed amount per mile so it is simple for the driver to record and easy for the coordinator to verify and authorise any additional reimbursement.
- 3.6.2 For the system to work it is the volunteer driver's responsibility to note the mileage shown on the speedometer when setting off from home, when the client is collected, when the client is dropped off and when arriving back home. Failure to submit a mileage record will require AA Auto Route to be used to calculate the quickest route for each leg of the journey. Volunteer drivers may not be used if they continually fail to submit an accurate mileage record.
- 3.6.3 Any complaints about which is the shortest or quickest route between two places will be settled by the coordinator using AA auto route or an agreed equivalent; there is no right of appeal.

DEAD MILEAGE

- 3.7.1 'Dead' mileage is inevitable and occurs when the driver has to travel from home to pick up a client and on the way home having dropped a client off. Dead mileage will always be greater when clients only need to travel in one direction (a single journey).

The coordinator will seek to minimise dead mileage where possible but the client needs to pay the driver for the entire journey at the correct mileage rate.

SUMMARY

- 3.8.1 As a volunteer driver, you will get to meet lots of people from many different backgrounds. You provide an invaluable service allowing them to share your car to get them to places public transport will not. On some occasions you might stay with the client, offering valuable support before taking them home. The social interaction and satisfaction our drivers tell the coordinators about make the service worthwhile.