

How to set up a community bus service

What is a community bus service?

A community bus service is a local bus service you run with a minibus.

- A not-for-profit village bus service
- Runs under a Section 22 Community Bus Permit
- The timetable must be registered with the Traffic Commissioner
- You can charge fares and accept concessionary bus passes
- Passengers do not need to book in advance to use the service

To see the difference between running a minibus under a Section 22 Community Bus Permit and the Section 19 Standard Permit for pre-booked group travel please click [here](#)

When is a community bus service suitable?

- Your service will be available to everyone (local people, walkers, tourists)
- Passengers do not need to pre-book their journey
- You want to offer free travel to people with concessionary passes
- You will have enough passengers to make the journey worthwhile. If you are replacing a commercial bus service, find out how many passengers used it

If you only want to provide transport for registered passengers in your community, see [how to set up a regular minibus service](#).

Resources

- A minibus (bought or hired) – see [how to buy or hire a minibus](#)
- Drivers (paid/voluntary) – a pool of volunteer drivers will make your service more cost-effective

- A treasurer
- Someone to decide routes and organise the driver rota

Typical costs

General costs

- [Buying or hiring a minibus](#)
- Insurance
- Fuel (if not included in the hire charge)
- Registration costs for the services you will run
- Promotion
- Administration

Buying your own minibus

- MOT
- Insurance
- Road tax
- Regular safety inspections
- Servicing and repairs
- Future replacement costs

Sources of revenue

- Fares
- Concessionary fare reimbursement
- Reclaiming tax on fuel through the Bus Service Operator's Grant

Additional sources of revenue

- Running one-off, pre-booked trips (e.g. to the seaside or cinema)
- Hiring the minibus to other local groups

Next steps

- Identify potential demand (number of people, journeys needed)
- Calculate likely costs, budget and funding sources
- Draw up and agree timetable and route
- Register the timetable with the [Traffic Commissioner](#)
- [Buy or hire a minibus](#)

- Recruit drivers (paid or volunteers)
- Trial the service
- Monitor the route, timetable, passenger numbers