

# How to set up a voluntary car scheme

## What is a voluntary car scheme?

A group of volunteer drivers with their own vehicles provide transport to residents without access to public or private transport.

Some schemes offer additional community services for people in need, such as:

- running lunch clubs
- befriending and visiting
- carrying out small practical tasks

## When is a voluntary car scheme suitable?

- Ideal for rural locations with few public transport services
- An alternative to costly taxi journeys for low income households.
- Meeting specific transport needs (e.g. medical appointments).
- Provide door-to-door transport for those with limited mobility.
- Drivers can provide support by staying with passengers during appointments or shopping trips.

## Running a regular timetabled journey

Voluntary car schemes can run regular, scheduled journeys. For example, passengers can pre-book a trip to a market town one or two mornings each week.

- Encourages passengers to share journeys.
- A better use of volunteer drivers' time.
- Removes the uncertainty of volunteer availability.

## Resources

Your voluntary car scheme will need:

- enough volunteer drivers with their own vehicles to provide a reliable service

- a committee, treasurer, safeguarding representative and bookings coordinator

## **Typical costs**

### **Operating costs**

The major costs of operating a voluntary car scheme are:

- the driver's mileage
- the driver's expenses
- administration costs

Capital and administration costs are low, but may include:

- an 0300 phone number (some current schemes operate using a mobile which is then held by the coordinator)
- publicity materials
- cost of postage and calls

### **Income**

- Passengers are expected to contribute to the cost of their journey. This should be enough to cover the driver's costs.

### **Legal requirements**

### **Taxation**

Volunteer drivers can claim for their mileage and other reasonable expenses in line with personal taxation guidelines. [HM Revenue and Customs](#) provide information on volunteer driver mileage allowances.

### **Car insurance**

Drivers must check that their car insurance policy covers carrying passengers on a voluntary basis. Many insurance companies sign up to

the Volunteer Drivers Commitment. This state they will cover volunteer driving at no extra cost.

## **Group insurance**

The group will need insurance.

## **Next steps**

- Contact the Community Information Network
- Gather local support and form a steering group
- Identify a treasurer, safeguarding representative and bookings coordinator
- Ensure you are compliant with all the legal requirements and policies
- Set up a clear volunteer application process
- Recruit volunteer drivers

## **Further advice**

If you would like more information about setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme in your community:

Call: 01993 776277

Email: [office@vlu.org.uk](mailto:office@vlu.org.uk)

Visit; [www.vlu.org.uk](http://www.vlu.org.uk)