



Frome **community drivers**  
Providing volunteer drivers for those in need

Part of Sustainable Frome CIC

# Handbook

Last updated Jan 2020

# About Frome Community Drivers

Frome Community Drivers was first set up in 2016 to meet the needs of local residents who had no access to public or private transport and were unable to get out and about.

We use volunteer drivers who we pair up with BA11 residents in need of a lift.

We charge a small fee to cover the admin costs and pay the driver the standard HMRC mileage allowance.

We achieve so much more than just providing transport though.

We enable people to get to Doctor's or hospital appointments. We help people do their weekly shopping or attend social events. We help reduce isolation and loneliness by connecting drivers and passengers, many of whom go on to form firm friendships.

We believe that in 2019 alone we helped save the NHS £48,000 in making sure appointments were not missed.

We have a huge impact socially and financially on many people in and around Frome, and hope to continue to do so for years to come.

Contact: 07596 591391

Email: [hello@fromecommunitydrivers.org.uk](mailto:hello@fromecommunitydrivers.org.uk)

## How much does it cost?

We have a standard fare structure of £2 admin fee per journey plus 60p per mile for a single or return journey (max waiting time 45mins).

If you have a Somerset County Council Bus Pass then the fare drops to just 30p per mile for the first 34 miles).

Please see our fare regulations below for detailed information about how we calculate the cost of a journey.

## How to register as a Driver

1. REGISTRATION - drivers register with us and complete our paperwork which includes:
  - DBS check
  - Car insurance check
  - Driver's licence check
  - GDPR consent
2. ADDED TO BOOKING SYSTEM - we add the driver to our booking system.

## How to register as a Passenger

1. REGISTRATION - passengers register with us and complete our paperwork which includes:
  - Bus Pass details
  - Any special requirements or assistance required (eg wheelchair, car seats, etc.)
  - GDPR consent
2. ADDED TO BOOKING SYSTEM - we add the passenger to our booking system.

## How to get a lift

1. Email us on [fromelifts@gmail.com](mailto:fromelifts@gmail.com) or call us on 07596 591391 and speak to our operator or leave a message with details of:
  - Date and time of lift
  - Start location
  - Destination
  - Purpose of the trip (this is purely for our records and is optional info)
  - Any additional info (such as children's car seats, walking aids or luggage).
2. We add your lift to our booking system and match you with a suitable driver who is available on that day.
3. We confirm with the driver and then call back the passenger to confirm that everything is arranged and let the passenger know the cost of the trip.
4. The driver will collect you on the day of your trip and you pay them the full fare directly.

## Fare Regulations

1. A £2 admin fee is applied for all single or return journeys.
2. Mileage is 60p per mile, or 30p for valid Somerset County Council Bus Pass holders.
3. We are unable to offer a bus pass discount if we don't have your up-to-date bus pass information. If your bus pass information changes please notify our admin team.
4. Return journeys have a maximum wait time of 60 mins after which you will need to book two separate journeys. The exception for this is longer journeys to hospitals in other cities in which case the wait time is 2 hours.
5. Reduced Bus pass fares are only applicable for journeys after 9.30am and under 34 miles.
6. Reduced Bus Pass fare journeys will be charged at the reduced rate up to 34 miles and standard rate thereafter.
7. You will be informed of the fare before the journey - please ensure you have the correct change. Drivers cannot be expected to provide change. Any extra money handed to the driver will be considered a donation.
8. Mileage is calculated from the drivers home, to your starting location to the destination and back to the drivers home for single journeys. Mileage for return journeys includes the route back to your starting location.
9. Parking or toll charges are to be paid directly by the passenger either purchasing the appropriate ticket directly or paying the appropriate amount to the driver.
10. We accept cash, cheques or bank transfer as payment. Cheques should be made out to "Sustainable Frome CIC". Payment via bank transfer is possible by prior arrangement in advance of the journey. Please speak to the operator for more details.

## Driver Guidelines

1. Volunteer drivers should commit to a high level of punctuality as many passengers will have appointments to attend.
2. No unauthorized passengers are allowed at any time whilst voluntary driving for the Scheme.
3. The passengers have also signed an agreement (see next page), if there are instances of abuse or attempted abuse of the system, please report the matter to the coordinator. It will be treated with discretion.
4. If on arriving to pick up a passenger and the volunteer driver is not happy with their behavior, physical or mental condition or they appear to be under the influence of drink or drugs, then the driver may refuse to carry them. The Scheme will support you in your decision but this must be reported to the transport coordinator as soon as possible.

5. Any client under 18 years of age must be accompanied by either their parents or a nominated adult with arrangements put in place at the time of booking. Passengers under 18 must not be accepted to travel without this escort.
6. Volunteer Drivers must observe passengers' confidentiality and dignity at all time.

## Insurance

7. Valid car insurance must be held by volunteer drivers, with their car scheme driving duties confirmed as being covered by their existing policy. This should not be affected by serving as a scheme volunteer because legislation precludes that community car schemes should not be treated as "carriage for hire" as in the case of a taxi (as volunteers only receive out of pocket expenses to cover the cost of the journey). However, they must inform their insurer or broker of their voluntary driving which should not increase their insurance premiums and as part of registration will be asked to complete a confirmation that insurance is in place.
8. Drivers are also covered by Frome Community Drivers insurance through being a member of the Mid Somerset Community Car Scheme Partnership. Through this we have public liability insurance not covered by normal car insurance.
9. Car scheme drivers must not take bookings directly from passengers as this will invalidate the schemes insurance.

## Safety

10. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure the vehicle
  - is safe
  - has enough fuel for the journey
  - is clean and roadworthy with child seats fitted correctly where applicable.
11. Drivers must at all times drive safely in accordance with the Highway Code.
12. All passengers must wear seat belts and drivers should be conversant with up-to-date safety recommendations for car seats and seat belts (See <https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules>).
13. In the case of transporting children, those under 135cm (4ft 5in) must not travel in the front passenger seat. Babies may travel in the front seat as long as they are in a rear facing car seat and the front passenger air bag is turned off.
14. Child car seats and booster cushions for younger children must be used where applicable and supplied by the parents and should be arranged by the transport coordinator before the day of the journey.
15. Be aware of environmental factors which may affect the safety of incoming or leaving passengers, such as rain, ice, steps, and other road users or where there is poor or lack of lighting and take appropriate precautions.
16. Ensure that you are not distracted from your driving duties whilst communicating with passengers in transit.

## In the event of an accident or breakdown

17. Ensure you carry a mobile phone and numbers of contacts who can be summoned in the event of an accident or breakdown.
18. In the event of a breakdown or accident, please call your transport coordinator for assistance. In the event of a medical emergency please call an ambulance, on 999.
19. All accidents or near misses must be reported to the transport coordinator by using the correct form
20. If a passenger should become ill, use your discretion to take them directly to the nearest hospital, or if it is too far away and the situation requires it, stop and phone for an ambulance, once you have done so follow their instructions explicitly.

## Fares & Payment

21. Drivers are not expected to issue change for a fare. Change owed will be considered a donation.
22. If you are offered a gift in the form of a monetary tip it is acceptable. If the passenger specifically wishes to add to the agreed charge with a donation to the scheme, please ensure you issue them a receipt. It is advisable to decline gifts of an expensive nature.

## Expenses

23. Volunteer drivers will be reimbursed expenses to cover the cost of running their vehicle whilst driving for a car scheme at the rates of no more than the guidance rate as set out by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC). At the time of printing, this is 45 pence per mile, up to a maximum of 10,000 miles per year, otherwise these expenses will need to be declared.
24. The amount that can be claimed will be advised to the driver prior to the assignment. You will receive 45 pence per mile according to the computer routing system in use. If for any unforeseen reason you have to take an alternative route you should contact the coordinator to advise of this and make a note on your running sheet.
25. The driver is to collect the money from the passenger at the start of the journey, and provide the passenger with a formal receipt. It is a risk that a passenger claims they paid more than they did, or they did not receive enough change, it is important that you ensure all monies are correct at the time.
26. The driver will deduct the amount they have been advised for expenses and then on the last working day of the month pay the remaining money over to the Treasurer of the car scheme at the Town Council Offices, who will then complete the process by issuing a receipt
27. Parking or toll charges are to be paid direct by the passenger either purchasing the appropriate ticket or paying the appropriate amount to the driver.

28. We do have access to cars belonging to the Car club, these are hired in and if the passenger agrees to the additional expense they can be used.
29. We also have access to a car that has been adapted to carry a person in a wheelchair. You will be offered the opportunity to be trained on how to use this, if you wish to do so. Please speak to the transport coordinator. You will be required to put the fuel in if needed, one car is fully electric, but you can still claim the fuel element of the expenses, 50% of the set rate, 23 pence per mile.
30. The coordinator will also whenever possible utilise a car by combining 2 or more passengers providing the appointments allow for this. When this takes place, the passengers will pay a shared pro rata rate, but to keep in line with HMRC the driver can only receive the agreed allowance.

## Passenger Guidelines

1. Lifts can be booked in office hours, eg, Monday to Friday 8am-6pm. Bookings outside this time may not be able to be fulfilled.
2. All bookings must be made through the scheme co-ordinator, drivers must not be asked directly.
3. Please book your lifts as far in advance as possible.
4. The scheme cannot guarantee a driver is available for but will do its best to find one.
5. If a passenger requires a carer, or has a companion, you must advise the coordinator when making the booking.
6. It is important that the passenger must be able to get to the car, get in and out without assistance from the driver.
7. When making a booking you must know the date, time and full address including postcode of your destination and, if it is a return journey, the time you will need to be collected.
8. Drivers can only wait up to a maximum of 15 minutes to collect passengers at the start of the journey.
9. Return journeys have a maximum wait time of 45 mins thereafter you will need to book two separate journeys.
10. If you are delayed for any reason you must contact the scheme coordinator to advise of the delay. Users who are habitually late will be taken off the register.
11. Car sharing will take place whenever possible; the cost will then be divided equally between the passengers.
12. Passengers who are deemed unfit to travel by the driver can be refused at any time and no refund of charges will be made, this could be for drinking alcohol, drugs, unacceptable behaviour or illness.
13. The consumption of any food or drink during the journey is not allowed unless for medical reasons.