

# Volunteer Drivers Handbook

## Welcome to Swansea's Community Car Schemes

Becoming a volunteer driver shows your wish to undertake positive action within your community. Working in partnership with the four car schemes in the county, the City and County of Swansea actively encourage people like yourself to commit time and energy to a cause we believe to be vital. The service that the schemes provide is essential to the 1000's of monthly passengers who need the Community Car Scheme to undertake essential journeys and improve on the quality of life that they live.

We understand the importance of the role that you as a driver provide. To support your input we as a partner offer training, advice and support to ensure that you feel part of a friendly and effective service. If at any time you require advice about any issue related to the scheme please do not hesitate the scheme's co-ordinator, or alternatively the Community Transport Officer (CTO) on (01792) 522976 if you have decided to become a volunteer driver (and if you have read this far you are certainly interested!) there are a few simple steps to be taken to become registered. All you need to do is fill out the registration form and return it to the attached address. Don't worry – the form has step by step instruction to help you fill it in, with an explanation as to why we need the information requested.

### Who is eligible to use the scheme?

The Community Car Schemes is open to anyone who is elderly or disabled. The person may find it impossible to use public transport because they cannot get to the bus stop or they cannot climb the steps onto the bus, or there is not an appropriate service provided at all. *If a driver thinks that a passenger falls outside these eligibility criteria, he or she is asked to inform the co-ordinator.*

### Wheel chair accessible cars

Some of the schemes have Wheel chair accessible cars. These are charged at the same rate as a volunteer car. If you feel that you would like to drive these vehicles please tick the relevant box on the application form - additional training will be provided.

### Booking procedure

Passengers are asked to give at least 48 hours' notice, which provides the Co-ordinator of the scheme enough notice to find a volunteer driver. Please note: ALL bookings must go through the co-ordinator. So, even if a passenger asks a driver to take them on a particular journey the driver should refer the passenger to the co-ordinator.

### This is very important because:

- To keep costs as low as possible, passengers should be carried by the driver who lives nearest to them.
- The co-ordinator is the central point of contact and needs to know the moments of each driver and who their passengers are – this is vital in an emergency.
- If you are involved in an accident whilst carrying a passenger, your insurance company will require confirmation from the co-ordinator.

- The scheme should not result in some drivers overloaded with journeys and others not having enough.

Of course, many journeys are regular ones where passengers and drivers are used to each other – changes will not be made unless absolutely necessary.

### **Fares**

All passengers are asked to pay towards the cost of their journey. These fares are paid directly to the drivers by passengers. Passengers only pay for the miles they travel in the car. Please ask your scheme for pricing details.

### **Expenses**

Drivers who use their own cars are entitled to payment of expenses for every mile they travel – whether or not a passenger is in the car. This should cover the cost of petrol and wear and tear on the car (mileage accumulated without a passenger is known as dead mileage) – without the drivers making a profit. This would cause problems with tax and / or benefits. Please contact the CTO on (01792) 522976 for more information.

### **Claim forms**

Drivers should record all details of journeys undertaken for the scheme and return them to the co-ordinator. Ask your co-ordinator how best to fill out the record sheets. Once received the co-ordinator will calculate the sum of money owed for your dead mileage, and will sort out payment to the drivers (usually monthly).

### **Driver Identification badge**

You should wear your driver Identification badge at all times whilst engaged in voluntary driving. Whenever picking up passengers for the first time, it should be shown to the passenger. If you stop driving for the scheme you will be asked to return the badge to the coordinator.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service Checks**

DBS checks are becoming more common in everyday life. Becoming a Volunteer driver you offer a service to and are in regular contact with the general public. The DBS offer a free service to volunteer drivers. The information you provide is treated in the strictest of confidence by the City and County of Swansea.

### **Training Information**

To support you we offer a MiDAS/MPV training course.

### **What next?**

To become a volunteer driver is easy – fill out the form in the middle of this booklet using the step-by-step guide lines below. Then send it to the printed address. Once we have received the form the relevant scheme co-ordinator will contact you.

### **Good Practice and Safety Guidelines**

These are a few highlights from the training scheme to help promote good practice:

- There should be no sharp, loose or heavy objects in your car which could be a hazard to passengers.
- Any baggage should be safely stowed away
- Be careful not to make physical contact with passengers that could be

misinterpreted.

- Seatbelts should be worn at all times – anyone who refuses to wear a seatbelt should be refused transport unless they can produce a medical exemption certificate.
- Anyone requiring assistance from their home, help in and out the car, and/or someone to stay with them at their destination should provide a suitable escort.

## **CONTACTS**

### **Car Schemes:**

Swansea Community Transport (01792) 522970

DANSA Ltd (01639) 751067

Gower Voluntary Transport (01792) 851942

Gorseinon Car Scheme (01792) 899933

Pontardulais and District Community Car Scheme (01792) 884944

Christina Christie  
City and County of Swansea  
Social Services Transport Unit  
Kingsway, Swansea West Industrial Estate  
Fforestfach, Swansea, SA5 4DL

**Tel:** (01792) 522976

**Email:** [Christina.christie@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Christina.christie@swansea.gov.uk)

**If you require this information in a different format please contact Christina Christie, the Community Transport Officer on (01792) 522976**