

## **Do you enjoy driving? Do you think you would like to volunteer to drive the Bodmin Community Bus?**

A trial period of six months will start on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 for a Bodmin Community Minibus. It will be operated for this period by Andy Lyle, of Concern Wadebridge, who already runs Concern Wadebridge's own minibuses.

The objective of this is to run a bus for a trial period to see if we could sustain a Community Bus in Bodmin in the longer term.

However, we desperately need some Bodmin-based volunteer drivers to drive the minibus. The aim is to get a pool of drivers so that each volunteer driver can drive as much or as little as they like while still being able to offer a comprehensive cover for organisations who want to hire the minibus.

We would also urge organisations who would like to use the bus on a regular basis, or for extended trips, to provide their own driver.

The advantage of an organisation having their own drivers(s) is that we can guarantee that they can have the bus when they need it (assuming that it is not being used) as we won't be constrained by having to find a driver for them

If an organisation has its own driver, they can also use the bus for more than one trip, or for a longer trip, during the day. The daily hire charge of £65 reserves the bus from 9am till 11pm. There is an additional mileage charge of 35p per mile but finding a volunteer driver to do more than one trip in a single day, or for a long period, may well be difficult. If you fancy staying for an extra hour or so at your destination you can if you have your own driver but not if you have a volunteer driver.

So, you can book a bus more easily, save money and be much more flexible if you have your own driver.

## **The benefits of being a Volunteer Driver**

Being a volunteer driver is a great way to give back and make a contribution to the Bodmin community. If you enjoy driving, it is the perfect way to get out and about and meet people. You don't have to commit to any particular days, times or number of hours so you can easily fit it around the other things you do. You would be asked to do a specific trip and you can then decide if you want to do it.

## **So, would you be suitable to drive a minibus?**

The Bodmin Community bus will be operated for its trial period by Concern Wadebridge and so anyone wanting to drive the minibus must be on the Concern Wadebridge Minibus Register of Drivers.

Firstly, you need to be between the ages of 25 and 70.

## **What license do you need?**

You will be asked to fill in a registration form and provide a current, clean driving license. We will also ask you for two non-family references who we can contact to vouch for your good character. This is done to help to ensure that the drivers of the minibus are people who will not present any kind of risk to passengers.

Entitlement to drive the Minibus is partly determined by the date when a driver passed his/her UK manual car driving test. Drivers who passed the test before 1 January 1997 have an automatic entitlement (until the age of 70) to drive a minibus with 9-16 passenger seats. The old style of driving licence will show a driving entitlement of category A (cars). The new style of driving licence will show category B (cars) and D1 (9-16 passenger seat minibuses).

Drivers who passed the test after 31 December 1996 are required to pass a further driving test in order to gain entitlement to drive a minibus with 9-16 passenger seats (category D or D1 on the new style driving licence). A driver who passed the manual car driving test after 31 December 1996, and who has subsequently passed a further driving test, which gives an entitlement to drive category D, or D1 vehicles, is required to have held his/her driving licence for a minimum of 1 year.

You also need to be able to answer "NO" to the following questions:

- a. Have you had any convictions within the last 5 years, or do you have any prosecutions pending?
- b. Have you had an accident whilst driving a motor vehicle in the last 3 years?
- c. Has any period of a ban from driving been operative within the last 5 years?
- d. Has any company or underwriter ever declined, cancelled or refused to renew any motor insurance, or increased the premium or policy excess, or imposed special conditions?

### **Are you fit and healthy?**

You do need to be healthy and fit enough to be able to help people board and alight from the Minibus, if necessary.

You will need to provide details about any medical condition, or medical history (whether physical or mental, including defective vision not corrected by glasses or hearing loss not corrected by a hearing aid) that may affect your ability to drive a minibus. In addition, details about any medication that is currently being taken, including dosage, should also be provided. Concern  
Wadebridge reserves the right to refuse any driver that they believe may be unsuitable.

## **You will need to undergo some training**

Once you have been accepted by Concern Wadebridge you will be eligible to drive the Minibus. However, because of the varying levels of equipment on different minibuses, and particularly because some minibuses are significantly longer and wider than others, a vehicle familiarisation session WILL be required before you are permitted to drive the vehicle.

This vehicle familiarisation will be pre-booked and will take place at Concern Wadebridge. It will take approximately two hours and will include a short on-road session and require the successful completion of a reversing manoeuvre. If either of the on-road components of the vehicle familiarisation, or the reversing manoeuvre, is not completed satisfactorily, you will not be allowed to drive the minibus.

If you are interested in exploring further if being a volunteer driver would be right for you please email Carol Randall at [carol.randall2013@gmail.com](mailto:carol.randall2013@gmail.com) or call on 07921 279930