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Lothian Community Transport Services



Volunteer Policy

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1 WHY WE INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS

LCTS helps meet the transport needs of more than 250 non-profit making community and voluntary member organisations. Although we employ a number of drivers, and several of our member organisations provide their own driver, this isn't enough capacity to meet the demand for our services. Therefore, we maintain a pool of volunteer drivers so that we can provide an enhanced service to our user groups.

2 WHAT WE OFFER

Volunteering can offer the opportunity to meet people, visit new places, enhance skills and provides a valuable and much appreciated service to the local community.

We offer you high quality training that ensures you are able to fulfil your responsibilities as a volunteer and also helps develop your skills and qualifications.

We also aim to ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation and can actively contribute to the work of LCTS.

3 WHAT WE EXPECT

We are looking for three qualities:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>Professional:</i> | Whether drivers are paid or unpaid, we aim to offer a safe, comfortable and enjoyable journey to every passenger. |
| <i>Open:</i> | If you're not available or don't want to do a job, just say "no thanks" - we'll never knowingly pressure you to cover a job. |
| <i>Reliable:</i> | If you agree to cover a job, people will be relying on you for transport - it can be extremely difficult for us to find a replacement driver at short notice. |

4 RECRUITMENT

We'll discuss the type of work on offer with prospective volunteers and provide background information about the organisation and the services we provide. This is a two-way process that should also ensure you're happy to volunteer with us.

5 INDUCTION

Induction is the process of familiarising a new volunteer with LCTS. The process covers Health & Safety matters and the way your training and subsequent volunteering will be structured.

Volunteering with LCTS begins with the volunteer and relevant staff member signing a *Volunteer Agreement*. This agreement reflects the intentions of the volunteer and LCTS, and is not contractually binding in any way on either party.

6 TRAINING

We provide you with training to ensure you have the information and skills necessary to carry out your role as a volunteer. All drivers of LCTS minibuses are required to undergo *MiDAS* training. *MiDAS* is the UK national standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers, and consists of three modules:

a) “Standard” Training

This is a classroom-based module, lasting approximately 3½ hours. It covers: *Legal Responsibilities of a Minibus Driver, Passenger Safety, Child Passenger Safety, Driving for Safety & Economy, Health & Safety Awareness, Personal Safety and Breakdown, Collision & Emergency Procedures*. There is a multiple-choice theory assessment at the end of the training module.

b) “Accessible” Training

This module lasts approximately 2½ hours, and covers: *Passenger Awareness and Assistance, Wheelchair & Passenger Restraint Systems and Passenger Lifts*.

c) On-Road Driving Assessment

This takes approximately 1½ hours and ensures that a driver can drive a minibus both safely and comfortably. You will have an opportunity to practice driving a minibus beforehand and will receive advice on improving and developing your minibus driving techniques should this be necessary.

You will also be accompanied on your first few runs as a new volunteer before “going solo.”

In addition to the compulsory *MiDAS* training programme you will also be offered other optional training modules such as:

- First Aid Training
- Manual Handling
- Minibus Emergency Evacuation Procedures

All training is free to volunteers and is normally available within your first year of service.

Experienced volunteers may also become involved in the familiarisation and training of new volunteers (*e.g. accompanying them on regular runs*).

7 EXPENSES

No one should be out of pocket as a result of volunteering for LCTS. All volunteers will have agreed out of pocket expenses reimbursed (*such as travel costs to and from the office*). Volunteers working four or more hours in one day will be eligible to reclaim meal expenses up to an agreed amount.

8 EMERGENCY CONTACT

The office is normally staffed during normal office hours. Should no one be available, contact a member of staff at Sir Harry Lauder Road (0131 669 9959)

Where appropriate, a contact number for the group you are working with is written on the logsheet. Unfortunately, we cannot provide out-of-office hours cover, although all vehicles have 24hr. breakdown cover.

We will, however, try to offer you an emergency contact number in certain circumstances, such as when you are undertaking your first couple of journeys, or are involved in a potentially complex journey. It is very important that you use this number for **essential contact only**.

9 DRESS CODE

As representatives of LCTS, volunteers are responsible for presenting a good image to service users. Appropriate clothing is normally available to borrow for adverse weather conditions.

10 COMMUNICATION

Volunteers will normally have regular contact with staff, which is an opportunity to raise any issues and be kept informed of what's happening at LCTS.

- *If you're unsure about anything - ask!*
- *If you're unhappy about anything - tell us!*
- *If you've a suggestion or request - let us know!*

All volunteers are welcome to attend our team meetings (*which take place twice a year*) and will be notified of the dates, along with details of any social events. Team meeting minutes will be circulated to all volunteers, which helps everyone keep up to date within the organisation and also allows the opportunity to help LCTS improve its services. We also produce a newsletter that is sent to volunteers.

11 MANAGING CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

We recognise that volunteers have a right to be treated fairly and with respect. If you are unhappy with the way anyone has treated you, you should try to resolve this in the first instance through discussion with a Transport Co-ordinator. If you are unhappy with the resolution of your complaint, or your problem is with a Transport Co-ordinator, you can raise it, preferably in writing, with the Training & Personnel Manager.

Under normal circumstances, you will receive a written response to your complaint within ten working days. The decision of the Training & Personnel Manager will be final.

We also recognise that there could be occasions when we may need to discuss with you your conduct or performance as a volunteer. Should this be necessary, we firstly

aim to have an informal discussion in an open and supportive way. One outcome could be a need for further training, which we would endeavour to support.

However, if there is no sustained improvement in conduct or performance, or in cases of gross misconduct, we reserve the right to terminate the *Volunteer Agreement* with you. In the case of such termination, you have the right to appeal, in writing, to the Managing Director within five days.

At any meeting to discuss your conduct or performance you are entitled to be accompanied by a friend.

12 INSURANCE

Whilst driving any vehicle operated by LCTS on authorised business you are covered by our fully comprehensive motor insurance policy, provided you meet our conditions concerning your driving licence, your motor accident history and your medical history. These conditions will be explained to you as part of the recruitment process.

Unauthorised passengers may affect our insurance, so any friends or family members may only accompany you with prior permission.

LCTS also has extensive insurance cover for all areas of our work, including *Employers' Liability*, *Public Liability* and *Personal Accident*.

13 GENERAL

We consider that volunteers are as important to our organisation as paid employees.

Whilst this does not provide you with any employment rights, it does mean that you are covered by our *Health & Safety Policy* and our *Protecting Vulnerable Groups Policy*. There is a copy of the *LCTS Health & Safety Policy* on display in each of our offices: a further copy is available on request. The *LCTS Protecting Vulnerable Groups Policy* is in Appendix A of this *Volunteer Policy*.

LCTS VOLUNTEERING OUTLINE

Title:	Volunteer Minibus Driver
Duties:	To drive LCTS minibuses ensuring that all passengers have a safe, comfortable and (<i>wherever possible</i>) enjoyable journey
Responsible to:	Transport Co-ordinator(s)
Hours:	By mutual agreement

- Carry out appropriate checks before any vehicle is taken out.
- Report any vehicle defects.
- Be responsible for the safety and comfort of all passengers and be aware of relevant minibus legislation.
- Use all access and restraint equipment as instructed.
- When necessary, assist passengers when entering and leaving the vehicle.
- Maintain vehicle and driver records as required.
- Maintain sensitive information in a confidential manner, advising an appropriate member of staff of any concerns.
- Be self-motivated and sensitive to the needs and wishes of your passengers and colleagues.
- Inform LCTS immediately of any changes to your health or driving record (*e.g. endorsements*) that may affect your driving licence or ability to drive.
- Notify an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible of anything that may have an adverse effect on passenger safety.
- Adhere to all relevant LCTS policies and procedures, in particular the *LCTS Health & Safety Policy*.



The Organisation:

We, *Lothian Community Transport Services*, agree to make appropriate use of the services of _____ and commit to:

- Provide adequate information, training, and assistance for the above to be able to fulfil their responsibilities as a volunteer.
- Ensure satisfactory support to the volunteer and to provide feedback on performance.
- Respect the skills and individual needs of the volunteer, and to do our best to adjust to any individual requirements.
- Be receptive to any comment from the volunteer regarding ways in which we might mutually better accomplish our respective tasks.
- Treat the volunteer as an important part of the organisation, jointly responsible for the fulfilment of the organisation's aims.

The Volunteer:

I agree to provide my services as a volunteer and commit to:

- Perform duties to the best of my ability.
- Adhere to the organisation's rules and procedures, including record-keeping requirements and confidentiality.
- Meet time and duty commitments or to provide adequate notice so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- Adhere to the *LCTS Health & Safety Policy*.

LCTS Staff Member _____

Volunteer _____

Date _____

This agreement is a statement of intent; it is not intended as legally binding and may be cancelled at any time by either party.

 Lothian Community Transport Services	<h2>VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM</h2>
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Name			
Address			Post Code

Telephone Number			
Mobile Number			
E-mail Address			

How did you hear about LCTS?	
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What is your preferred availability? (Please circle)	<i>Daytime</i>	<i>Evening</i>
	<i>Weekend</i>	<i>Anytime</i>

Please supply contact details for two referees (not family members).	<i>Name</i>	
	<i>Address</i>	
	<i>Post Code</i>	
	<i>Name</i>	
	<i>Address</i>	
	<i>Post Code</i>	

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence that is not considered spent under <i>The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974</i> ? If YES, please give details below.	No		Yes	
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Please also give details below of any charges that are pending.

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APPENDIX A

LCTS PROTECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY

As all LCTS drivers may be working with groups including children and vulnerable adults, it is important that reasonable measures are put in place to protect such passengers and ensure that drivers know what to do if they have any concerns.

References

All staff and volunteers who are likely to have regular contact with vulnerable passengers must supply at least two character references.

These references should be from someone who has known the applicant for at least five years and must not be a family member.

In addition to this, we will also conduct a Disclosure Check (formerly known as a Police Check) in accordance with *The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007* in order to confirm your suitability as a volunteer driver.

You should be aware that having a previous conviction does not automatically bar you from volunteering with LCTS: each situation will be considered on an individual basis.

Reporting Concerns

It is recognised that LCTS drivers may, from time to time, have concerns regarding vulnerable passengers they are carrying

Where a driver sees, hears, or is told something that causes them concern, they have a duty to report this.

Examples of such concerns include where they consider a vulnerable passenger to be at *“risk of harm”* - including any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Where a driver has any such concerns they should submit a written record to their line manager **as soon as possible**, based on the following guidance:

- Record anything that was said using the persons own words.
- Note the time, date and circumstances of the concern.
- Make a note of witnesses or anyone else present.
- Date and sign the report.

The report should be submitted to a Transport Co-ordinator or the Training & Personnel Manager, who then has responsibility for notifying the relevant agency. This includes the LCTS member organisation, Police, Health or Social Work Department.