



volunteering opportunities: minibus drivers



bristolcommunitytransport.org.uk/volunteer



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Bristol Community Transport (BCT) is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales. Company number 4749030. VAT number 609582421. Our registered office and main correspondence address is: 181–189 Easton Road, Easton, Bristol BS5 0HQ

We rely on having a strong team of dedicated volunteers to drive our fleet of minibuses. We are looking for more people to join the team.

you'll need...

- to be aged 21 +
- full UK driving licence (ideally "clean" but talk to us if you have any endorsements)

we offer...

- flexible volunteering opportunities (there is no need for a regular commitment)
- training to a nationally-recognised standard
- opportunity to learn new job skills
- opportunity to meet new people, and make a positive difference to their lives
- working in a friendly, supportive environment
- something worthwhile to do in your spare time
- expenses paid
- opportunity to work with a not-for-profit organisation that supports thousands of people across Bristol
- uniform provided

You will be helping community groups across Bristol to carry out their day to day activities. This will include shopping, bingo, lunches and many other social activities. Many of our member groups wouldn't be able to operate without our central pool of volunteer drivers. You will also help individuals with mobility problems to access key facilities, and to attend appointments etc.

Trips and hours vary, so we're sure to have opportunities available to suit your availability. You may want to volunteer on a fixed day(s) each week, you may be available odd evenings, or you may be available on a much more regular basis. We provide services 24 / 7, so we're sure to be able to fit your availability around our requirements.

Volunteers are never 'just the driver'. Volunteers are either supervised / assisted by a responsible person from the member group hiring the vehicle or by the BCT staff team. The group (or BCT) should include suitable breaks during the day, meal arrangements, pick up lists and times, provision of a passenger escort if necessary and an agreement over extra mileage (i.e. a driver taking a vehicle home for lunch break).



about BCT

BCT is a not-for-profit social enterprise. BCT is the largest community transport operator in Bristol (in terms of both size of fleet and number of passengers carried). We operate a fleet of 33 minibuses and cars for use by community groups, not-for-profit organisations across Bristol, by the users of our many community bus services and by individuals we support with their transport needs.

The BCT fleet of minibuses provides accessible transport for a network of independent organisations, each of them meeting the needs of their respective members.

BCT strives to meet the transport needs of community groups in and around Bristol. Minibuses in our fleet range from 11-seater to 16-seater, the majority of the vehicles have been adapted to carry wheelchair passengers.

BCT has been awarded the Social Enterprise Mark. This is proof that we are a thriving social enterprise. BCT was the first community transport operator in the country to be awarded the mark, and was the first organisation in Bristol to be awarded the mark. (Further information at www.socialenterprisemark.org.uk)

BCT is part of the HCT Group. The HCT Group is a social enterprise in the transport industry, safely providing over 12 million passenger trips on their buses every year. HCT deliver a range of transport services – from London red buses to social services transport, from school transport to Park and Ride, from community transport to education and training. HCT reinvests the profits from their commercial work into further transport services or projects in the communities serve by HCT companies. CT Plus, a HCT Group subsidiary, operates Park and Ride services and commercial transport contracts in Bristol.

who uses BCT vehicles?

During the 2011/2012 financial year BCT vehicles carried over 230,000 passengers and travelled nearly 250,000 miles. There are a wide range of organisations that use BCT vehicles including faith groups, elderly groups, and youth groups. Over 600 not-for-profit organisations in and around Bristol rely on BCT for their transport needs. Many of these organisations rely on the pool of volunteer drivers that we make available. We are seeking more volunteer drivers so that we can meet the transport needs of even more people.

training

All drivers receive training to the national 'MiDAS' training scheme; the training covers legal requirements of driving as well as customer care. The training also includes the carriage of wheelchair users and use of passenger lift. Full information on the MiDAS training is available at www.midastraining.info

Our training and driver manager provides on-going support for our team of volunteer drivers.

Each new driver also 'shadows' one of our experienced drivers for a while so that the practical skills and experience of minibus driving can be shared. The on-the-job training compliments the class room based training. This familiarisation period also enables the CRB process to be completed before a new volunteer driver operates solo.

We very much value the contribution from our volunteer drivers and plan to make further training available.

The following pages cover the bulk of questions we've been asked.

Still got a query or question?

Call us on **0117 902 0157** or e-mail **office@bctgroup.org.uk**
alternatively, you can make an appointment to visit our offices for an informal chat.



frequently asked questions



Q: What is the salary?

A: These are **volunteer** opportunities and there is no employee / employer relationship and no salary. (See below for information on expenses.)

Q: Do I need any training?

A: All those that drive BCT minibuses are trained to the national 'MiDAS' driving standard. BCT provides this training free of charge to those in our Central Pool of volunteer drivers. Drivers also receive practical on-the-job training as well as ongoing support.

Q: Do I need a PSV / PCV licence?

A: No.

Q: Do I need 'D1' on my driving licence?

A: Category 'D1' is useful as it enables a wider range of vehicles to be driven. Those without category 'D1' will be able to drive our minibuses but only the smaller (lighter) vehicles.

Q: Are there any age restrictions?

A: New drivers should have two years driving experience and be aged 21 plus. Additional restrictions apply to those aged over 70; please contact us for details.

Q: I'm only available to drive weekends or evenings. Is that any help to BCT?

A: Yes. We have vehicles operating evenings and weekends, and need volunteer drivers for these trips.

Q: I have some endorsements on my driving licence. Can I still volunteer to drive for BCT?

A: This depends on what the endorsements are, and how long ago. Please telephone our Driver and Training Manager to discuss this.

Q: I'm new to the UK, can I still drive for BCT?

A: We are able to accept certain driving licences in addition to UK ones. You should note, however, that non-UK licences are only valid for 12 months after residing in the UK.

Q: Do I receive expenses?

A: Yes, you will receive reasonable expenses to cover the costs of your getting to and from our depot and also to cover the costs of any meals. With some trips you may also have the opportunity to enjoy the attraction / visit / show etc that was the purpose of the trip.

Q: Is there a uniform?

A: Volunteers are provided with BCT polo-shirts, BCT fleece and a high visibility jacket. The wearing of these items helps to show to our users that we're a professional organisation. Drivers are also required to wear their MiDAS photo-ID badge.

Q: I'm not a British citizen, does that make any difference?

A: No

Q: Am I covered by insurance?

A: Yes - We have comprehensive insurance for all our vehicles, and also for our volunteers, employees and passengers, as well as public liability insurance.

Q: How will I know where to go?

A: The BCT customer services team will ensure that the driver has full details of the destination(s) and if relevant pick up points. If necessary the driver will be provided with maps or a 'SatNav' system. Some groups provide a passenger assistant to help the driver.

Q: How physically fit do I need to be?

A: Many of the volunteering opportunities involve working with wheelchair users, and this can involve pushing wheelchair users on/off vehicle lifts/ramps. Volunteer drivers need a degree of physical fitness to be able to handle this work.

Q: How do I know when I'm needed?

A: Our customer services team aim to match the needs of the users to the availability of volunteer drivers. The members of the pool of volunteer drivers are contacted by BCT when a volunteer driving opportunity arises. There is no obligation to accept any role. We know that some drivers prefer a fixed volunteering commitment and we aim to help with this.

We give as much notice as possible, but sometimes we only receive bookings at short notice.

Q: I'm receiving benefits from the state. Does volunteering impact on my entitlement to benefits?

A: This is a question you will need to refer to JobCentrePlus (or other organisation providing benefits). It may be useful to read the JobCentrePlus leaflet entitled 'Volunteering while receiving benefits'.

Q: Do I need experience of driving large vehicles, or working with not-for-profit organisations?

A: Experience would be helpful, but is **not** required. Volunteers also gain experience during their initial familiarisation period where they shadow one of our experienced drivers.

Q: What sort of vehicle will I be driving?

A: There are currently 34 vehicles in the BCT fleet. Seating capacity varies from a car, to 16 passengers plus driver. The majority of vehicles have a passenger lift or ramp to help with carrying wheelchair users.

Q: How long is a typical journey?

A: The type of driving job varies significantly. Some trips are short distances, and some can be driving as far as London, Devon etc. Some trips involve a door-to-door service whilst others are one pick up of passengers, and one drop off of passengers. Whilst other trips involve picking up passengers from a series of home addresses, taking them to their destination, and then returning them to their home again. Some drivers prefer different types of driving job, and the type of trip is explained when the driver is asked if they're available for a job.

Q: Is there any regular driving roles?

A: Some BCT member groups have a regular need for a driver. Where there is a regular need for a driver, then we prefer to allocate the same driver (this suits both the driver and the group).

Q: I have a full-time or part-time job. How does volunteering for BCT impact on the Working Time Directive?

A: The provisions of the Working Time Directive (i.e. the maximum hours you can work each week) refer to workers. Volunteering is not regarded as working, and so does not impact on maximum working hours.

Q: What if I breakdown, have an accident, have a problem etc etc?

A: All our vehicles are covered by comprehensive breakdown cover. As part of the driver training, each driver receives details on breakdown cover, puncture cover etc etc and is also provided with details of how to contact BCT over a weekend.

Q: Do I need a CRB check?

A: Yes. We work with children and vulnerable adults. All our drivers are required to submit to an Enhanced CRB check. Those with a conviction will not necessarily be excluded from volunteering with BCT; each declaration is considered on a case-by-case basis. Our priority, however, is to ensure that our passengers are not exposed to an unacceptable level of risk.

Q: Where can I find out more?

A: Please call us on 0117 902 0157 or e-mail office@bristolcommunitytransport.org.uk if you have any query that we've not answered. If you prefer, you can make an appointment for an informal chat to discuss volunteering.

Bristol Community Transport enquiry form - volunteer drivers



Please contact me to discuss volunteering for BCT ...

Surname	
Forenames	
Title	Mr / Mrs / Miss (or insert as preferred)
Home Address	
Home Tel	
Mobile Tel	
Email	
Date passed driving test	
Do you have category 'D1' on your driving licence?	Yes / No Not a requirement, but is helpful
Do you have a 'MiDAS' certificate? Yes / No, if yes when was it issued?	Not a requirement, but is helpful
Details of any driving licence endorsements	Continue overleaf or on separate sheet if necessary

What appeals to you about volunteering for BCT?

Continue overleaf or on separate sheet if necessary

What, if any, experience do you have of driving minibuses (or other large vehicles) or working for/with not-for-profit organisations? (NB: Prior experience is helpful, but is not required)

Continue overleaf or on separate sheet if necessary

It would be useful to have an indication of when you may be available to driver for BCT. For example, would this be certain days, evenings, weekends, during office hours etc etc.

Continue overleaf or on separate sheet if necessary

Please provide any other pertinent information that it may be useful for BCT to know.

Continue overleaf or on separate sheet if necessary

How did you learn about this volunteering opportunity?

Please contact me to discuss volunteering for BCT. I am aware that BCT works with children and vulnerable adults and that I will be required to submit to an enhanced CRB check.

Signature	Date