

# Think Travel & Community Transport Information



# Think Travel - Journey Planning Web Portal

Built with funding received through the Governments 'Total Transport' project fund and developed in partnership with Gloucester County Council.

The aim of the Think Travel web portal is to improve the quality and reliability of existing transport information within Somerset, notably providing information on alternative transport solutions such as Community Transport, that has not previously been available in this format.





# Key Features

- Journey Planner – An A to B journey planner with an interactive map to plot/show routes
- Access to alternative transport information, other than that of the public bus network – most notably community transport
- Community Noticeboard Area – to help facilitate car sharing within Somerset where requests and offers of journeys can be posted
- Booking facility – where customers can book journeys directly with community transport and Slinky providers when solutions have been found



# 'Access to Alternative Transport Information...'

- **Community Transport Groups** – community organisations who provide a variety of transport services, including community bus services, using a variety of vehicles (from 16 seater minibuses to 8 seater smaller accessible vehicles). Some larger schemes also offer car services using voluntary drivers.
- **Car Schemes** – Volunteer run community transport schemes, utilising volunteers driving their own vehicles to help members of their community access services.
- **'Slinky' Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service** – an on-demand transport service commissioned by SCC utilising different size accessible vehicles (16/8 seater) to provide a transport service for residents without or unable to access bus services.

# • Car Scheme Toolkit

– complete guide to setting up a car scheme.



**Car Scheme Toolkit**

**SOMERSET**  
County Council

www.travelsomerset.co.uk

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the facts and contact details are correct at the time of print and are provided in good faith, please be aware that this document is not a replacement for legal and professional advice from approved organisations. Somerset County Council cannot be held responsible for any errors, inaccuracies, omissions or changes made subsequently to this.

## COMMUNITY CAR SCHEMES

### All you need to know

**What is a community car scheme?**

A community car scheme is a not for profit organisation, usually run by volunteers, that operates a form of car sharing. Volunteer drivers using their own car and being reimbursed expenses; provide prearranged journeys to members of their community who do not have access to suitable transport to travel to essential services such as health appointments, accessing work, shopping or even visiting friends. Some schemes even offer further services such as prescription pick-ups or non-transport related services such as befriending.

All car schemes have a coordinator who takes journey bookings and matches them to available drivers, who will then provide a door to door service for the customer. Any potential passengers must first become a member of the scheme before they can use the service and will then be charged a fare each time they travel which covers the cost of the journey (driver's expenses) plus any additional costs such as parking and can also include a nominal booking fee to help cover administration of the scheme (e.g. mobile phone or printing costs).

**When would a community car scheme be suitable?**

The reasons to set up a car scheme will vary, but the first thing to establish is the need for one. Many are set up to serve members of the community that are disadvantaged in some way who for whatever reason have difficulty in accessing or using either their own vehicle or public transport. Transport needs could exist due to:

- Rural isolation - lack of public transport in the area, or where it does exist is not convenient or frequent enough to access services at specific times.
- Mobility issues - community members who are unable to access public transport where it exists
- Poverty – community members unable to afford to run a car with a lack of affordable transport alternatives

Many schemes develop with the help of town or parish councils where firstly a committee or working group is formed to fully understand the communities transport issues. Community views can be gathered in a variety of ways such as questionnaires, specific parish meetings or even door to door canvassing.

Voluntary car schemes are ideal for rural locations where public transport routes can be sparse and the regular use of taxis would be unaffordable to many residents but will equally work well in urban settings.

Updated: August 2019

1

2

# Opportunities for Development

- Opportunities through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to further improve access to public transport information through an App which could feed into the website.
- Developing a direct ticket purchasing option through the website.



# Think Travel Demo





# Slinky Demand Responsive Services

---

- Slinky is the brand name for Demand Responsive bus services across Somerset.
- These services are delivered using a fleet of 14 accessible vehicles owned by Somerset County Council
- Slinky services are available to anyone who does not have access to a public bus service, does not have access to their own transport or has a disability which prevents them from using a public bus service.
- To access these services residents must register to use them, either online or by calling the provider. Registration is free.







## Slinky Service Coverage

• Slinky services operate in the following twelve areas of Somerset.

- 
- Chard & Ilminster
  - Martock & Langport
  - South Petherton, Crewkerne & Yeovil
  - Sedgemoor North
  - Sedgemoor Central
  - Sedgemoor South
  - Taunton
  - Wellington
  - Mendip East
  - Mendip Central
  - Mendip West
  - West Somerset



# Slinky Booking Process and Fares

- The service is available to all eligible passengers which could include parents with young children, teenagers, students, the elderly, the retired and people with disabilities.
- If you are eligible you will first need to register as a member of the scheme. You must fill in a registration form and return it to the booking office before you use the service for the first time.
- Registered people can then book a journey by contacting the booking office at least 24 hours before you want to travel. Trips can be booked up to two weeks in advance.

For journeys up to 3 miles

Single: £2.50

Return: £4

For journeys over 3 miles

Single: £3.50

Return: £5

- Concessionary Pass Holders and children aged between 5-16 are entitled to a 50% reduction in the cost of the fare. Children under 5 travel free.
- You need to show your Concessionary pass every time you travel.

# Slinky Operators

- **ATWEST** – West Somerset
- **Somerset County Council** – Taunton and Wellington
- **South West CT** - Chard & Ilminster, Martock & Langport, South Petherton, Crewkerne & Yeovil
- **Mendip CT** – Mendip East, Central & West, Sedgemoor North, Central and South





# Future Developments

- New Smaller Vehicles – We currently have three VW Transporters on order, two of which are arriving shortly.
- Digital DRT – A new pilot Slinky Service which will be based around Somerton where bookings can be made through an app or more traditionally over the phone up to one hour in advance.
- Electric Slinky – The Somerton Slinky will be provided using two new Electric vehicles operated by Somerset County Council from a new purpose built depot in Somerton.
- The Somerton Slinky is due to commence in Summer 2023





# Somerset Accessible Transport

Somerset Accessible Transport is the County Council's in house fleet. We operate 94 vehicles from five bases across Somerset at Bridgwater, Frome, Glastonbury, Taunton & Yeovil.

These vehicles are operated under both permits schemes (Section 19 and 22 permits) and we also hold an operators licence for up to 25 Vehicles.

The Fleet is varied and includes Cars, People Carriers, Minibuses and five full Size Coaches.



# Varied Work

Our 94 vehicles undertake a variety of work including:

- Community Transport (in Taunton and Wellington)
- Slinky DRT in Taunton & Wellington
- Mainstream School Transport
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities SEND Transport
- Non-Emergency Health Transport for the NHS
- Social Care Transport
- Rail Replacement Services
- Local Bus Services
- Private hire for Schools and Charities





# Future Developments

Growth – The Fleet continues to grow as demand for transport, especially for Special Education Needs and Disabilities SEND Transport is increasing every year.

New Depot – A new purpose built depot in Somerton is due to open in Spring/early summer 2023. This will allow us to close our current depots at Glastonbury and Yeovil and will provide space for future expansion.

Electric Vehicles – our First two electric Vehicles arrived in March 2022, based at Bridgwater these vehicles are being evaluated with a further two for the new Slinky Digital DRT service for Somerton due to arrive in 2023.



# Questions

- Any Questions on Slinky or our in house Fleet operations?

