



GMS

Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme



Membership Guide

This GMS Membership Guide was produced by Transport 21.
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Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL



Gloucestershire Minibus Scheme (GMS) is a Transport 21 partnership project supported by Rural Renaissance, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Rural Transport Partnership and some District Councils.

Contacts

GMS (at Transport 21)

Coordinator: Graham Stanley
Development Administrator: Rose Stanley

GMS c/o Transport 21
17 George Street
Stroud
Glos GL5 3DP

Tel: 0800 389 0046
Fax: 01453 767771
E-mail: office@glosminibusscheme.co.uk
Web: www.glosminibusscheme.co.uk

MiDAS Training

To claim free training, contact GMS. For further training, contact one of our partners who provide MiDAS training:

Gloucestershire County Council:

Jordon Neininger
Integrated Transport Unit, Environment Department, Shire Hall, Gloucester,
GL1 2TH.
Tel: 01452 426286
Fax: 01452 425995
E-mail: jordon.neininger@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Newent Association for the Disabled:

Lynne Mayo and Alys Mayo
'Sheppard House', Sheppard Way, Newent, GL18 1TL.
Tel: 01531 821227
Fax: 01531 820078
E-mail: transport@newentbb.co.uk

Cotswold Council for Voluntary Services:

Bryan Griffiths
23 Sheep Street, Cirencester, GL7 1WQ.
Tel: 01285 658802
Fax: 01285 659337
E-mail: bryan@sc-vs.com

Welcome to GMS

GMS is a not-for-profit minibus brokerage scheme which aims to help community organisations in Gloucestershire with affordable minibus transport. We provide a link between groups who own minibuses and groups who don't but would like to use one:

- Borrowers can access minibuses at a significantly cheaper price than commercial rates
- Lenders receive payment towards minibus running costs from borrowers
- All members benefit from free nationally accredited MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) training for one volunteer driver

GMS is funded by the Gloucestershire Rural Renaissance, Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucestershire Rural Transport Partnership. The scheme is coordinated by Transport 21.

This booklet is split into 4 sections:

1. Joining and using GMS
2. Requirements of the scheme
3. Costs
4. Practicalities of minibus hire

If you have any questions about the scheme after reading this booklet, please contact GMS at Transport 21 (see back of booklet).

1. Joining and using GMS

Who can join GMS?

GMS is for not-for-profit groups based in Gloucestershire, such as:

- Charities
- Clubs and societies
- Community organisations
- Voluntary organisations
- Schools and colleges

We ask for a copy of your group's constitution and recent accounts as proof that you are not-for-profit. If you don't have a constitution, please contact GMS at Transport 21 on 0800 389 0046 and we can offer you advice and a draft constitution outline. The only exceptions to these requirements are:

- Groups set up very recently do not need to supply accounts – please tell us on your application if this applies. A constitution is still required
- Schools and colleges do not need to supply a constitution

GMS membership is currently free. Once you have requested your application pack from GMS at Transport 21 you should receive:

- Membership application form
- Driver application form
- Vehicle application form (if you own a minibus)
- GMS Membership Guide (this booklet)
- Section 19 permit application form

To join GMS, please return your signed, completed **membership application form** along with a copy of your constitution and accounts. If you want to lend a minibus owned by your group, please also return the **vehicle application form** with photocopies of your minibus insurance, recent servicing/safety check history and MOT certificate.

When we receive your application, GMS will send you your membership number and a Loan Request Form. If you'd like to e-mail your loan requests, you can ask us for an electronic copy via office@glosminibusscheme.co.uk.

We will also send you a copy of the paperwork you have signed for you to refer to.

Need help or advice? Call GMS on **0800 389 0046**, we're here to help you out.

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Refuelling

For short trips, the lender should hand over the minibus with sufficient fuel in the tank. The borrower does not need to refuel. The cost of this will then be included in the mileage rate at 40p per mile.

Sometimes the lender and borrower may wish to negotiate a different arrangement for refuelling (particularly for longer journeys where the borrower will have to refuel). In these cases the lender and borrower should agree on the level of fuel in the tank beforehand on the **Vehicle Condition Form**; the borrower should return the minibus with the same level of fuel. If this is not possible, the borrower and lender will need to negotiate an appropriate charge and let GMS know. The mileage rate for journeys where fuel is not included will only cover wear and tear, at 10p (excl. VAT) per mile.

Returning the minibus

The driver will need to agree with the lender a convenient arrangement for dropping off the minibus and keys. Upon return, both parties need to sign the **Vehicle Condition Form** to agree that the bus has been returned in a satisfactory state.

If the lender is unhappy with the condition their minibus has been returned in, GMS should be informed immediately. If the lender and borrower are unable to come to an agreement, GMS will do its best to find a satisfactory solution. The Vehicle Condition Form will be key in solving any disputes.

Breakdowns, accidents and damage

GMS provides lenders with a disc for their minibus window. This disc will give the borrower information on who to call and what to do in the event of an accident or breakdown.

- If damage is caused to the minibus as a result of an accident, the borrower must pay the lenders' insurance excess or the full cost of repairs, whichever is less. If a successful insurance claim is made against a third party, this could be refunded.
- If the minibus is damaged through misuse, the borrower is liable for the full repair costs. If the minibus is returned to the lender in an unclean state which can't be reasonably attributed to road conditions or similar, the borrower must pay for full cleaning costs.

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4. Practicalities of minibus hire

Checklist before hire

Borrowers:

- **Loan Confirmation Agreement** has been received, signed and returned to GMS
- **Section 19 permit** for each minibus with 9 or more passenger seats
- **School bus signs** (if applicable)
- **Driver**, who is registered to GMS and has MiDAS certification
- **Accessible MiDAS** certified person travelling on bus if disabled passengers are present

Lenders:

- **Loan Confirmation Agreement** has been received, signed and returned to GMS
- Minibus is **registered** to GMS scheme
- Minibus is **roadworthy** and has a **current MOT certificate**
- Borrower is covered on lender's vehicle **insurance**
- Minibus has **breakdown cover**
- **GMS has been given copies** of current insurance, breakdown cover and MOT certificate
- **Vehicle Condition Forms** have been received and are brought to the handover

Collecting the minibus

When the loan confirmation agreement is sent out to the borrower and lender, contact details for all parties are provided. The driver should contact the lender to arrange collection and drop-off of the keys and vehicle.

When the minibus is collected, the driver and lender need to agree on the condition of the vehicle to avoid any later disputes. The lender will be provided by GMS with 2 or 3 identical **Vehicle Condition Forms** which should be completed and signed by the driver and lender (a third copy is for use by a borrower representative **only if** the driver does not belong to the borrower organisation). These should be kept safely for reference.

Booking a minibus

You must first become a member of GMS to borrow or lend a minibus through the scheme.

When you want to book a minibus, we'll need at least **two weeks notice*** – it can take time for us to find a suitable vehicle and agree the loan with the owner group. You can post, fax or e-mail us a completed loan request form; alternatively, we can take your booking over the phone on 0800 389 0046.

When we've found a suitable vehicle we'll send the lender and borrower groups a short agreement to sign. This should be returned to us as soon as possible to confirm the booking.

Information on requirements for drivers, insurance and small bus permits is given in this booklet.

If you are borrowing a minibus:

Unfortunately GMS cannot guarantee that a minibus will be available for your trip. All the minibuses used in the scheme belong to community groups and not to GMS. However, we will do our best to find you a minibus and we will let you know as soon as we can if the booking is not possible.

* It is often very difficult for GMS to locate an available minibus at short notice. During busy periods, sufficient notice is essential.

2. Requirements of the scheme

Members will need to consider the requirements for:

- Drivers
- Carrying disabled passengers, i.e. Accessible MiDAS
- Insurance
- Small Bus (Section 19) permit
- School Bus signs
- Minibus maintenance (lenders)

Drivers

All drivers who drive another group's minibus through GMS must have a MiDAS certificate. MiDAS is the nationally accredited minibus driver training scheme. We require MiDAS for the safety of borrower groups and because we want our lender members to feel secure that they are lending their minibus to a competent driver. **There are no exceptions to this rule.**

All groups who join GMS can have one volunteer driver trained through MiDAS for free.

To arrange free training, please return a completed **driver application form** with a photocopy of the driver's licence (both parts, if applicable) to GMS at Transport 21.

For the majority of minibuses registered with GMS, drivers **must** have a D1 entitlement on their licence.

If you do not have a D1 entitlement on your licence, but you are over 21 and have held a full UK driving licence for at least two years, you may be able to drive some of the minibuses registered to the GMS scheme. Please call us to discuss this.

MiDAS

MiDAS training is delivered through our partners, e.g. Gloucestershire County Council. MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) certification is valid for four years.

Need help or advice? Call GMS on **0800 389 0046**, we're here to help you out.

3. Costs

GMS does not intend to compete with commercial hire companies; the scheme provides a transport option for groups who simply cannot afford commercial hire rates. Our prices are broken down below. These are the maximum charges that will apply; however, some lenders may choose to charge less.

GMS charges for minibus loans	Cost (£) exc. VAT	Cost (£) incl. VAT
Basic hire (half day = up to 5 hours)	20.00	23.50
Basic hire (1-2 days)	30.00 (per day)	35.25
Basic hire (3+ days)	25.00 (per day)	29.38
Mileage rate per mile (including fuel)	0.40	0.35
Mileage rate per mile (not including fuel – only applies to longer journeys when the borrower will refuel the minibus themselves)	0.10	0.12
Admin	10.00	
Volunteer driver expenses (no charge if driver available within borrowing organisation)	10.00	n/a

Total cost = Basic hire + Mileage rate + Admin

If your organisation has requested a volunteer driver, an additional £10 will be charged for the volunteer's expenses.

Promptly after the loan, the lender organisation should invoice GMS for the amount owed to them. This will consist of the basic hire charge and the mileage rate charge.

GMS will then invoice the borrower. This will consist of the basic hire charge, the mileage rate charge, the admin fee (for our time spent organising the loan for the borrower) and the volunteer driver expenses charge (if a driver from outside the borrower organisation was used). GMS will pass on the volunteer driver expenses charge to the volunteer driver, if applicable.

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Minibus maintenance

GMS requires the lender to ensure that the vehicle they lend is roadworthy. Because the driver has a legal responsibility for the roadworthiness of the vehicle, GMS needs proof from the lender that their vehicle is safe to borrow.

GMS should be provided with updated copies of proof of:

- **Annual service**
- **Two safety checks per year**
- **Tail lift checks every six months (where applicable)**
- **Valid MOT certificate**

GMS requires the following maintenance checks to be undertaken:

- Walk-round check

This should be completed by the driver when the vehicle is collected. Drivers will be provided with a checklist to help them, either by the training provider (if Gloucestershire County Council) or GMS. Superficial damage should be marked on the Vehicle Condition Form. If the driver identifies more serious problems with the vehicle then the loan should not go ahead.

- Regular servicing and safety checks

Minibuses must have an annual service and two safety inspections, i.e. a garage check every four months. The garage should provide you with a service checksheet. Please supply GMS with a photocopy of this proof of servicing for our records.

If your minibus has a tail lift, it must be serviced every six months. This is a legal requirement. Please supply GMS with a photocopy of your proof of servicing for our records.

- Valid MOT

All vehicles requiring a Section 19 permit need to be tested annually from the end of their first year. Please supply GMS with a photocopy of your MOT certificate for our records.

Training is delivered through two modules:

- Standard MiDAS
- Accessible MiDAS

All drivers must take the Standard MiDAS module to gain the MiDAS certificate. Drivers who will be taking disabled passengers should also take the Accessible MiDAS module.

- **Standard MiDAS** involves a half day of theory with assessment and practical driver training for 1¼ hours.
- **Accessible MiDAS** is done on the same day as MiDAS. In addition to the Standard MiDAS, this involves an extra hour in the classroom and some practical work with wheelchairs in the afternoon.

Practical assessment will be done on a separate day to the MiDAS training. You may need to hire a minibus for the assessment, depending on the training provider.

Drivers with penalty points on their licence will be accepted for training at the training provider's discretion.

Please note that medical checks are not included in the free training. Most drivers will not require a medical check. If your driver needs to have a medical check, e.g. because of their medical history or because they are over 70, this will be done by Gloucestershire County Council's Occupational Health Unit for around £25-£30. In rare cases where there is still doubt as to the health of the driver applicant, a doctor's report would be required.

If your organisation has already had free MiDAS training, additional training for drivers can be arranged for a charge. Please contact one of the training providers directly (see back page for contacts) if you would like to have additional training[†].

Some groups have difficulties providing their own drivers. It is extremely helpful if a MiDAS trained volunteer driver from another group is able to volunteer to help them. Please indicate if your drivers are happy to be

[†] If you are employed by the County Council, they require you to be trained through their Integrated Transport Unit.

contacted occasionally to ask if they can help[‡]. There will be no obligation to drive for other organisations.

Insurance

If you are lending your minibus:

You must have **fully comprehensive insurance cover** allowing **Minibus Sharing** and provide GMS with a photocopy of your current policy. Your insurance provider should be able to give you more information about this.

If you are borrowing a minibus:

You will be covered under the lender group's vehicle insurance. Borrower organisations will be required to pay the insurance excess in the unfortunate event of a claim. If a successful insurance claim is made against a third party, this could be refunded.

Please note that the vehicle insurance does not include public liability insurance for any non-vehicle related incidents that occur in your trip.

Gloucestershire County Council minibuses:

Some lender groups manage minibuses that are owned and insured by Gloucestershire County Council. These minibuses may have insurance restrictions on their use. This is why we ask for details of your trip's activities. If you have any questions about insurance, please contact GMS on 0800 389 0046.

Vehicle tax

If you are lending your minibus, we need to know whether it is taxed as Private Light Goods (PLG) or a Disabled Passenger Vehicle (DPV). If it is a DPV then it can only be hired to groups transporting disabled passengers.

[‡] Some borrower organisations (such as schools) will need volunteer drivers to have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) approval. Drivers registering with GMS are asked to provide details of CRB, if they have approval. If you'd like to volunteer to drive for other groups but don't have CRB, there may be other types of organisation who would welcome your assistance.

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Small Bus (Section 19) permit

Minibuses driven through GMS must display a Small Bus (Section 19) permit in clear view on the windscreen at all times whilst the vehicle is in use.

The permit is a legal requirement and costs £10. Section 19 permits do not expire and you can use them for different journeys. However, if you are using more than one minibus at one time, **each** will require a permit to be displayed.

Display of a Section 19 permit is legally the driver's responsibility. GMS requires the borrower organisation to provide the permit.

A Section 19 permit form is included in your application pack. Alternatively, call 01132 543261 or you can download an application from:

<http://www.vosa.gov.uk/vosacorp/repository/PSV372%20Application%20for%20a%20small%20or%20large%20bus%20permit%202.pdf>

When completed this form should be sent to: VOSA, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF.

A permit is **not** required for vehicles with fewer than 9 passenger seats, e.g. people carriers. However, most minibuses hired through GMS **will** require a permit. If you are unsure, please contact GMS on 0800 389 0046.

School Bus signs

Minibuses carrying children on a school-related activity are required by law to display retro reflective School Bus signs. Requirements are:



Front: at least 25cm x 25 cm
Rear: at least 45 cm x 45 cm

The borrower school is responsible for providing School Bus signs. Legally, the driver is responsible for displaying these signs. If you are having difficulty obtaining School Bus signs, please give GMS a call.

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