

Could you be a volunteer driver?

If you could be, or even if you would just like some more information please contact the service

Optio Voluntary Car Service
Riverside, The Quay
Newport, PO30 2QR

Helpline: 01983 522 226

Optio is a not-for-profit project run by Community Action Isle of Wight.

The Island's Council for Voluntary Service
Registered Charity No. 1063737
Company Limited by Guarantee Registration No. 3340032



optio
Voluntary Car Service

DRIVERS INFORMATION

Optio's volunteer drivers use their own cars to help the frail and elderly maintain their independence.

Telephone: 01983 522 226

Optio Voluntary Car Service

Optio, the Island's voluntary car service, needs car owners, to provide essential transportation for members who are unable to access public transport. Volunteering as a driver for Optio is an opportunity to help members of your community to get to and from medical appointments, shopping or visiting family and friends.

Trip details

All trips are booked through our office or the area co-ordinator.

When we have a trip request we contact drivers in the area to identify someone who can take on their trip.

If you are able to take the trip, you will be given details of where the member is to be collected from and taken to, along with their appointment time.

If it is a return journey it is usual to allow up to an hour and a half for the appointment before returning the member home.

If the wait is likely to be more than an hour and a half then it will be classified as a double trip meaning you will be reimbursed for going home and coming back again.

What next?

If you are interested in becoming a driver please contact the:

Optio helpdesk on 01983 522226

We will make an appointment for you to come in and meet us for an informal chat and to complete some paperwork.

We will need to see your driving licence, car insurance certificate and MOT certificate if applicable.

As our members are vulnerable adults we are required to carry out a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check on you. This will not cost you anything, we just need to see some specific documents but we'll discuss this with you when we have a chat.

We also like to take up two character references so you might like to think in advance of two people who are not family members who know you.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **I'm only free on certain days, can I still volunteer?** Before volunteer drivers agree to start they usually want to know what sort of time they will be needed to give. That's an easy one: you tell us what days or times of the day you would prefer to offer. It doesn't even matter if you can't commit to a regular time or if you often go on holiday - your commitment is only on a trip by trip basis.
 - **What about the fuel I'm using?** Obviously we are aware that petrol and diesel is expensive and there is also wear and tear on your car. You will be reimbursed at a rate of 45p per mile from your home for the whole journey until you return home. This will be paid to you by the member you are transporting.
 - **Will I have to drive right across the island?** It is very unlikely we would ask you to do a trip right across the island, and if you do, you can turn down any trips you don't wish to do. We always try and find a driver who lives near the member requesting a trip to cut down on driving distances, helping both the environment and our members paying for the trips.
 - **Am I too old to drive?** There is an upper age limit of 79, and as long as you have a valid driving licence and are fit to drive we would welcome you as a volunteer driver.
 - **What about my car insurance?** That's an easy one too. You must tell your insurance company you are going to do some voluntary driving but your insurance company will acknowledge that you are not 'driving for gain or reward' and they are usually happy to write to you or the car scheme to confirm this.
 - **Will my bad back mean I can't help?** Generally, passengers must be able to get in and out of a car unaided. If a member needs extra assistance they will be accompanied by a friend or carer. Volunteer drivers are not - as a matter of policy - allowed to lift or carry their passengers.
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