

## Paul Healey's Volunteering Experience



Having owned a static caravan near Bassenthwaite for a number of years, we decided to move from Cheshire to Cumbria in 2022. Our aim was to be able to continue to enjoy fellwalking, whilst integrating into a new community and taking advantage of all there was on offer. Once I moved to Aspatria, I learned of the volunteering opportunities from the librarian. It was appealing as I can drive, and I like the idea of enabling a social activity. It's very flexible on days/times.

My first trip was via Bowness-on-Solway to Carlisle with a fascinating ex publican, and since then I have driven a wide range of lovely people with diverse backgrounds. Sometimes I can be fairly busy, and some weeks may just feature one trip. Occasional trips to the hairdressers are interspersed with regular outings "to see mum" or fortnightly Lidl visits, but reassuringly I can (reluctantly) turn them down if I have prior commitments.

When my last Co-ordinator stepped down, the scheme reached a critical point where I stepped in, and now combine both roles. It's not too onerous, people generally plan transport in advance and the other drivers in the area are generous with their time and help to cover when we are off on holidays.

Could we do with more drivers in the area? Of course, then we could offer more help. Being isolated in a small village makes life so difficult, it's hugely rewarding to make a difference. "Customers" have become friends and I know so much more about Aspatria than I ever thought I'd need to know. But on balance, I'm sure I benefit more than I contribute... which isn't a bad deal really!

These volunteering roles are supported by Cumberland Council.

### Want to find out more?

Please contact:

#### Voluntary Transport Officer

t: **0333 240 69 65 (option 5)**

m: **07788 396194**

e: **integrated.transport@cumberland.gov.uk**

w: **cumberland.gov.uk/voluntarycarscheme**

Facebook: **cumberlandcouncil1**



# Connecting people in your local community

Time on your hands?

Like to help your neighbours?

Find out more at [cumberland.gov.uk](http://cumberland.gov.uk)



November 2025

## Volunteer Coordinators

The Voluntary Social Car Scheme needs coordinators to support the scheme to provide transport to members of the community who cannot make their journey by public or private transport. By giving a little time, you could help us:

- Receive requests for transport;
- Arrange a driver for the journey;
- Collect and check drivers claim form's which are then sent to Cumberland Council for reimbursement;
- Recruit drivers;
- Publicise the scheme (material provided by Cumberland Council).

## Volunteer Car Drivers



We also need volunteers who enjoy driving to:

- Pick up neighbours in their own car;
- Collect cash fare and offer a receipt
- Reimbursed to cover expenses  
Cumberland Council provides insurance against loss of no claims bonus and excess payments;
- Personal accident insurance is provided up to the age of 80.

## Volunteer Benefits

Volunteering with our Voluntary Social Car Scheme offers a wide range of personal and practical benefits:

- **Home-based coordinator roles** – Enjoy the flexibility of volunteering remotely.
- **Flexible hours** – Fit volunteering around your lifestyle and other commitments.
- **Errand-friendly driving** – Drivers can run personal errands while out, helping cover fuel costs.
- **Local discounts** – Access exclusive offers from participating local businesses.
- **Meet new people** – Connect with a variety of individuals in your community.
- **Feel good** – Make a real difference by helping your neighbours get where they need to go.
- **Boost your CV** – Demonstrate initiative, reliability, and community involvement.
- **Develop a variety of new skills** – Such as communication, coordination, computer skills, time management and driving skills.
- **Be part of a team** – Join a supportive network of like-minded volunteers.
- **See your impact** – Your time and effort directly improve lives in your area – we cover around 5000 journeys a year!
- **Support** – Receive guidance to help you succeed in your role.
- **Recognition and appreciation** – Enjoy shout-outs, events, and other forms of thanks.