



**Border Rambler  
Rural Transport Services C.I.C.**

**HANDBOOK**

SP Training SCAFELL BUILDING Airport Business Park Carlisle CA6 4NW

Email [info@borderramblerbus.co.uk](mailto:info@borderramblerbus.co.uk)

[www.borderramblerbus.co.uk](http://www.borderramblerbus.co.uk)

V4 20102017

## Getting Started

As a new volunteer you will be contacted by the Training Co-ordinator (**Bob Rose**) and a meeting will be arranged so that you can see and get to drive one of the buses.

You will be required to fill in a registration document (*Appendix 1*) and supply Border Rambler with some personal details. (This information will be held on record whilst you remain a member and will be used to contact you when necessary and to monitor that your driving licence remains valid). This process ensures that you are okay to drive a Border Rambler mini bus and also places you on the Border Rambler insurance cover.

The Training Co-ordinator will examine your driving licence to ensure you have the correct classification – D1 for minibuses – and will also check your eyesight by getting you to read a registration plate at the required distance.

You will be given a demonstration drive and then allowed to drive the vehicle yourself under supervision. At the end of the meeting you will be asked if you wish to commence training and if you are reading this, then you did!!

Training consists of working through the Border Rambler training programme alongside your allocated BR driver/trainer. The trainer will cover all aspects of the Border Rambler operation. The training finishes with a Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) assessment conducted by the Cumbria County Council . This has two elements, a theory session which lasts about 2-3 hrs and an assessment of your driving which takes about 1 hr

On average it takes new drivers 1 month to complete the training. Once you have successfully completed the MiDAS assessments you are eligible to be included on the driver's rota and you are off on your own.

## Keeping safe

### **Never use the telephone unless parked safely, engine off, at the side of the road**

The safety of all our volunteers, passengers and the general public is at the heart of what we do. We have developed a simple Health and Safety Policy. (*App.2*) It's an ever changing document and as issues are identified and measures are put in place to reduce the risk, so the document grows.

Please read it and make sure you understand the risks and control measures. Let us know if, you think, we have missed any key risks. Health and Safety policy is only ever as good as the people working to it. We aim for our policy to be a partnership between the Directors and our volunteers, so please play your part.

## **Driving Rota**

Driving duties are scheduled on a rota (*App.3*) by the Rota Secretary, (**George McGarr**). Rotas are issued at least a month in advance or when changes have to be made. You will be asked to complete a pro forma in advance by email of any new rota to indicate what days you would like to drive, how often you would like to drive and to show any days when you are not available.

Please reply to this email form promptly as this allows the new rota to be circulated in good time.

Inevitably, changes need to be made after publication. If you find that you can no longer fulfil a drive on the rota, then it is your responsibility to find another driver to cover for you. You can use the contact list (*App.4*) to either telephone or send an e-mail. In an emergency you may not have time to make contact for a replacement yourself and in these circumstances you should contact the Rota Secretary or one of the Directors who will be happy to help.

You may offer to drive as much or as little as you like but we ask for a minimum of one day per month.

### **On the day...**

On your day of duty you are wholly responsible for the bus until the keys are returned. If you don't arrive, the bus doesn't run, so please check the rota carefully for your allocated dates.

For obvious reasons you are not allowed to let any unauthorised person drive the vehicle at any time.

Although drivers don't have a uniform we would ask that you turn up for driving duty looking tidy/ casual. We want to offer a professional service to our passengers and your appearance should reflect that.

On completion of your training you will be provided with a name badge, please wear this when driving.

### **Location of keys and buses**

Keys, drivers' forms, cash floats and mobile telephone are held at the Reception at SP Training, SCAFELL BUILDING, Airport Business Park, Carlisle, CA6 4NW.  
Telephone, 01228 530552. Reception opens at 8-30am and closes at 5-00pm (4.30pm on Friday)

## Daily Checks

The bus is located at the rear of Scafell Building in an allocated space which is signed. We operate 3 different runs BR1, BR2 and BR3; please be sure which you are schedule to drive prior to arriving. Any change to this will have been notified to you either by e-mail or telephone in the days prior to your driving turn.

You must check the minibus at the start of your duty. Please never assume that it is in good order simply because someone else checked it yesterday. Our system relies on you conducting a daily check in accordance with your training and there are no exceptions.

A copy of the MiDAS walk round check sheet is kept on the drivers' clipboard.  
( App.5)

If you discover a safety critical fault – something that would make it illegal or unsafe to drive, phone Breakdown Assistant FTA Recovery. The card is in the drivers' box. Then report the problem to the Maintenance Co-ordinator (**George McGarr**), Bob Rose, Mike Fox or Keith Meller. Contact details are on the bus phone.

Safety critical faults would include

- Tyres worn to less than 1mm, cord visible
- Horn not working
- Reversing alarm not working
- Defective speedometer
- Washer/wipers not working
- Headlights, tail lights, reversing lights or indicators not working
- Passenger door not capable of being opened/closed
- Emergency door not capable of being opened/closed
- Steering fault
- Brake fault including ABS warning light on
- Suspension fault
- Broken or obscured windows

Please use your own driving experience and common sense to decide.

Once on your duty bus, please switch on the mobile phone as this allows contact if there are any last minute changes to make you aware of. For example, on some routes we only go to certain places on the request of an intending passenger and this is how such requests would be notified to you if they came in at the last minute. (Please take the mobile with you over your break in case you need to be contacted).

Please keep the phone charged.

Once you have checked your vehicle in accordance with your training, completed the defect book, you are ready to go.

### **Routes and timetable**

All routes and times are given on a single colour coded sheet. Copies of these are kept on the bus clipboard and are available on our website [www.borderramblerbus.co.uk](http://www.borderramblerbus.co.uk)

You will be familiar with the route from your training, but if you are new to a route then don't hesitate to ask a member of the team or another more experienced driver for help and advice.

You need to be aware

.

### **Timetables**

Our timetables give the earliest possible departure time from the various villages and stops along the route. You must not leave early so please check the actual time, against the timetable before departing. Remember our passengers rely on us for getting to appointments etc and don't want to miss an early running bus.

It is very common to run late. The nature of our routes and our passengers throw up many challenges! You may be able to catch up time at some point on the route but this must never be at the expense of the **safety or comfort of our passengers**. If you find you are running very late – say 20mins or more – please use the mobile to contact one of the directors who will use our passenger contact list to let passengers ahead of you know that you are running late.

It is important that you keep within the speed limits applicable to our vehicles at all times. The limits for minibuses are :

- Single carriageways 50mph
- Dual carriageways 60mph
- Motorways 70mph (Our buses are speed-limited to 62mph)

If at the specified departure time for a return journey an expected passenger is missing, please ask the other passengers if they know of any reason for this. You may exercise reasonable discretion, for example delaying departure by 5 or 10 mins.

However, experience shows that whilst a passenger may have intended to make a return journey things do change, meeting friends, getting a lift, etc. As a guide it is useful to ask passengers, if they intend to use the bus on the return journey.

If you have reasons to be concerned about a passenger for any reason, one of the directors to discuss what to do.

## **Route Deviation**

You are **not** permitted to deviate from the published route or times on the journey to the end destination *except* where the normal route is impassable by virtue of accidents, road closure or adverse weather conditions.

## **Fares**

Fares are listed on the Driver's Route Instruction Sheets.

Fares are in price bands based on the distance travelled

Half fares are for children who have started school and not yet reached their 16th birthday.

Many of our passengers will have a NOW card (bus pass) entitling them to free travel after 9.30am on weekdays and all day Saturday/Sunday and Public Holidays.

Bus Passes **must** be registered on the ticket machine **each time** the holder travels this is how our income is formulated.

## **Seat Belts**

Seat belts are fitted on all seats. The law requires drivers and passengers to wear seatbelts. It is our policy that the driver will be responsible for advising our passengers of this requirement. For 14 years and under, it is compulsory for the driver to enforce.

## **Community Bus Regulations**

**In our case the Border Rambler has seats for 14 passengers**

**Two seats have been removed for wheelchair access**

**We must not carry more than 14 passengers.** If we have more than this number on the bus, we are breaking the law.

You would have no valid insurance, your driving licence would not cover you and the Border Rambler would be in serious trouble. The minibus could be impounded and we could lose our permit to operate.

## **Tickets**

All tickets are to be issued via the ticket machines. Data from the ticket machine is downloaded daily to claim the concessionary fare rebates from Cumbria County Council.

## **Concessionary Fares (NoW Card Holders)**

Generally, all concession fares are for single journeys. That is “single out” (from bus stop to named destinations) and “single in” (return journey) NOW cards are valid after 9.30 Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.

Full fare paying passengers can be issued with return tickets.

## **Float**

A float in mixed change is carried on each bus. Please check the float is correct at the start of duty. At the end of the day after deducting all the money collected in fares you should be left with the original float amount. Please try to leave the mix of change the same as listed. If the fare money is incorrect **do not** make it up from the float, just note the discrepancy.

Put cash fares collected in the red striped pouch check and sign for sums handed back to SP Training Reception

## **Donations/Tips**

A Donation box is located in each bus for passengers to use if they wish, this will be emptied and banked periodically.

It is Border Rambler policy that drivers do not accept tips for themselves but treat any such tip as a donation to Border Rambler.

## **At the end of the day... Fuelling and Fuel Card**

When ( usually Friday return journey ) the diesel tank is less than quarter full, fill up at Crosby Moor Garage using the fuel card kept in drivers' box and sign for it on the appropriate record sheet.

Staple the VAT receipt to the Daily Check List

We don't want to leave the fuel less than quarter full, but if this is not possible, then leave a note in a prominent place for the next driver.

Park the bus back at base in designated area and before leaving

- Check that the saloon heater is off.
- Check all windows and roof vents are closed.
- Sweep out the bus.
- Ensure handbrake is on and vehicle is left in gear
- Check seat belts and buckles are correct for next trip
- Lock all doors, check lights are off
- Depress battery guard rocker switch once
- Switch phone off and give to SP Training Reception for the next day. The phone can be charged on the bus

- All cash fares and donations should be placed in the striped pouch for that day and handed in at SP Training Reception along with the bus keys, clip board and drivers' box

## **What else do you need to know?**

### **Change of Address or Telephone**

Should you change your address, telephone number or e-mail address, please advise one of the Directors a.s.a.p. From time to time we may need to contact you urgently.

### **Driving Licence Endorsements**

You must advise the Training Co-ordinator immediately of any road collisions, criminal incidents or any points added to your licence after you commence driving the Border Rambler buses. Anything that impacts on your suitability to drive the Border Rambler buses, such as a medical condition, should also be notified. The Directors reserve the right to withdraw you from the rota at their discretion.

### **Drinking, Smoking, Taking Drugs**

You are not permitted to drive the bus if you have been drinking alcohol or taking recreational drugs. If you are taking medication please check that this will not affect your ability to drive. For example, even some "over the counter" cold remedies can cause drowsiness and make it inappropriate for you to drive the Border Rambler buses that day.

Smoking on the bus is not permitted at any time.

Please contact The Training Co-ordinator if you require further advice or guidance.

### **Illness**

If you develop an illness or injury which may affect your ability to drive the bus you must advise the Training Co-ordinator who will treat the matter as confidential. In certain circumstances the Training Co-ordinator may need to stand you down from the rota until you are fit to continue. Please do not assume your illness or disability will not affect your ability to drive, discuss it with the Training Co-ordinator to be sure.

### **Giving Up Driving**

Whilst naturally we don't want drivers to give up driving the bus, we appreciate that for various reasons this may be necessary. If you do plan to give up driving please give the Chair as much notice as possible.



There is no longer any upper age limit as long as you remain fit and healthy and can maintain the required standard of driving. Upon reaching the age of 70 you need to undertake a medical examination to retain your category D1 driving licence. This lasts for 3 years when you again have to re-apply. After age 76, you will be required to undertake an annual assessment of your driving with the Training Co-ordinator.

### **Withdrawal of Right to Drive Bus**

The Directors reserve the right to withdraw any person from the driving rota if they consider it necessary for any reason.

### **Carriage of Wheelchairs**

Only suitably trained and assessed drivers should use the wheelchair lift.

### **Highway problems**

Significant highway problems, e.g. dangerous potholes, should be reported to one of the directors who will follow up the problem with the relevant authority.

### **Picking up and dropping passengers**

You may pick up and drop off passengers anywhere along the designated route, as long as it is safe to do so. In Brampton, please only use designated bus stops.

Drivers are permitted to make minor deviations to get passengers as close as is practicable to their homes.

Please remember that if the driver leaves the bus, e.g. to assist passengers the engine must be switched off.

### **Fuel/Fuel Card**

If fuel is needed at any time and it is not possible to get to the designated garage, you should obtain enough diesel and obtain a VAT receipt to get back to Crosby Moor Garage.

If you had to use cash for the diesel the cost should be deducted from the cash fares taken and noted, or pay for it yourself and make an expenses claim to any of the Directors

### **Lost property**

This should be left on the bus and one of the directors advised.

### **Bus Washing**

The bus is washed weekly. If you think the bus needs another wash please inform one of the Directors. We have a drivers' voluntary washing rota. Please advise the Rota Secretary when you can wash the bus, when you notify him of your driving availability and this will be recorded on the drivers' rota.

Washing equipment is stored in the end working bay at SP Training

### **Vehicle faults – getting help between 8-30am and 5-00pm**

#### **Cumbria County Council Depot at Dalston -**

Telephone number is 01228 711355

#### **Low Battery**

If you cannot start up the bus engine due to a low battery, contact Dalston, immediately to get a jump start. Please make a note in the Drivers' Daily Defect Book.

#### **Breakdown**

If the bus has a breakdown and is left unattended in an unusual position or causing an obstruction, inform the police on 101.

#### **Minor fault not sufficient to stop vehicle being driven or completing service.**

Report the problem on the Daily Check List

#### **Major Fault and bus cannot be driven.**

Contact Dalston and inform the Chair or one of the Directors of which procedure you are adopting.

#### **Puncture**

Contact Dalston .

If outside the Brampton/ Carlisle area, as would be the case on Private Hires and Excursions contact Dalston.

#### **Mechanical Breakdown whilst in service**

Contact the Operations Manager (George McGarr) or one of the other Directors for assistance – it may be possible to get another bus to you. If not, we may arrange taxis to get passengers to their 'destinations'.

If outside the normal localities you will need to give your exact location, the type of bus you are in the number of passengers they will have to take to their destination(s) and what appears to be the problem with the bus. Then one of the directors.

## **Collisions**

Collision procedures are similar to those for vehicle faults, with the addition of recording actions and information.

### **First actions**

In the event of an accident your first priority must be to your passengers.

- There is a first aid kit and a fire extinguisher in each vehicle.
- A high visibility jacket is provided in each bus, which should be worn to provide a greater protection for yourself.
- A red triangle is available in each bus which is to be put out to warn other traffic.
- Contact the emergency services, if required, followed by contact with the Chair or other Director
- Your Mobile phone doubles as a camera for photographing accident scenes when it is appropriate and safe to do so. It is important to record the position of each vehicle and anything else of relevance, but
- Make a note of the contact details of any witnesses.

### **Reporting collisions/damage**

Minor bumps and scrapes on walls, where no insurance claim will be made, must be recorded on the Drivers Daily Check List and reported to a director.

Collisions involving injury to people, livestock or significant damage to a third party's vehicle or property must be reported to the police as soon as is reasonably possible using the mobile telephone on the bus. The Chair must also be informed.

Collisions must be recorded for insurance purposes. This must be done on every occasion, even if the other party admits liability, as they may deny things later! We may ask you to make a written statement in the same format as the Accident Claim Forms kept on the bus. The Border Rambler buses are insured under a block policy through Cumbria County Council.

### **Bad weather**

De-icer is kept in each bus. Please replace if you empty a canister using cash from fares, (make a note of this), or claim repayment expenses.

In bad weather (ice/snow) it is up to you as Driver to decide whether you are prepared to operate the service. Remember passenger safety takes priority and do not take unnecessary risk. Always err on the side of caution as a damaged bus or worse still, an injured person, is not worth the risk.

If you decide not to operate the service, or decide to abandon the run when part way round, you must inform the Chair as soon as possible. The Chair will attempt to advise all the relevant passenger contacts and arrange for a message to be broadcast on Radio Cumbria. If you have already picked up passengers you should arrange that they be returned to the location that you picked them up.

Regular passengers have been invited to provide their names and telephone numbers so that they can be informed of bus cancellation/delay. We update the lists as and when required.

## **Unruly Passengers**

Passengers must always be treated with courtesy however demanding they are. If you feel a passenger is being a nuisance to other passengers, endangering the bus or is suffering from an excess of alcohol you are perfectly at liberty to ask or insist on the removal of said person from the bus irrespective of whether they have paid their fare or not. You may ask the police to assist. Ensure that if you do have to do this that you advise the Chair a.s.a.p. and make a written report.

### **Mobile phone problems**

Loss, damage or faults to phones should be reported to a director. If the phone needs topping up please note on the Daily Check List

## **Excursions and Private Hires**

You may volunteer for excursions and private hire on the rota request pro forma.

In advance of any trip, you will receive an instruction sheet and invoice by e-mail from the Private Hire Co-ordinator that will give times, date, route, contact information and the hire charge.

Thereafter, you should do all the things you do on any other occasion when taking a bus out.

### **Discipline Policy (Appendix 7)**

We hope you will not encounter any difficulties (or indeed cause any problems yourself). Should you have a problem with another volunteer at any time then please bring the matter to the attention of the Chair and we will deal with it as quickly as possible. We always aim to deal with issues informally but if this proves impossible or is not appropriate, we have a discipline policy.

## **Communication**

There is an up to date contact list in each bus and you will receive an e-mail copy each time it is updated.

You are welcome to contact the Chair or one of the other Directors on any issue at any time. The Directors meet once a month so anything you wish to be discussed can normally be considered in that timescale.

In addition, we hold a number of drivers' meetings during the year at which the Directors will provide updates on their area of business and take questions

You may have an item of interest you wish to be added to the Agenda. We will send you a copy of the Driver's Bulletins by e-mail as they are issued. During the year we may hold ad hoc social and or training events to which you would be very welcome. If you have any suggestions that may improve the operation of the Border Rambler please don't hesitate to talk to any Director or the Chair.



***Confidential***

**Personal Details required for Volunteer Driver File**

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>Date Joined Border Rambler</b>	
<b>Date Midas Trained</b>	
<b>Date of Medical for D1 Renewal</b>	
<b>Address Line 1</b>	
<b>Address Line 2</b>	
<b>Address Line 3</b>	
<b>Address Line 4</b>	
<b>Post Code</b>	
<b>Home Telephone Number</b>	
<b>Mobile Number</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Next of Kin Details and Contact Details</b>	

## Appendix 1