



Policy & Procedure for use of the North Westmorland Benefice Minibus

The Benefice Minibus is a project of the North Westmorland Benefice. For legal reasons, the minibus is the property of Morland PCC (on trust for all the PCCs of the Benefice) and Morland PCC (c/o Morland Vicarage) is the registered keeper and insurer of the vehicle.

1. Purpose and Scope of this document

- **Purpose:** To define the responsibilities, procedures, and safety standards for the operation of the Minibus (WA67 DHV).
- **Scope:** Applies to all staff, volunteers, and users of the vehicle.
- **Permit:** The vehicle operates within the scope of its insurance arrangements, and those outlined within this policy and subject to road traffic law.

2. Driver Eligibility and Training

- **Licence:** Drivers must have held a full driving licence for at least three years and be legally entitled to drive a minibus with 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver. The Maximum Authorised Mass (MAM) of the minibus is 4,005kg, which means that drivers must hold a D1 licence (or a D1 licence with the non-commercial “101” endorsement, which was the licence normally granted to those who passed their car driving test prior to 1st January 1997).
- **Age:** Drivers must be over 21 years of age.
- **Assessment:** Drivers must undergo a short competency assessment with one of our authorised operators prior to driving the vehicle. This will help you to feel comfortable and safe driving the minibus and being responsible for the safety of passengers.
- **Responsibilities:** Drivers must report any health issues or driving offences immediately.
- **Log:** A list of approved drivers will be kept by the benefice minibus administrators. The list will include driver name, licence number and the name of the hiring organisation, together with contact details.

3. Vehicle Operation and Safety

- **Pre-Drive Checks:** A check of tyres, lights, indicators, wipers, mirrors, and bodywork must be completed before every journey, with any issues recorded on the record sheet kept within the vehicle.
- **Maintenance:** regular roadworthiness checks will be conducted by the administrators on behalf of the PCC before any hire, and by the hirer's lead driver while the vehicle is in their possession.
- **Load/Weight Limits:** Maximum weight limits must never be exceeded.
- **Dimensions:** the height, length and width of the vehicle are clearly displayed above the driver's seat. You must observe all limits displayed on road signs and on private

property. Please note that the vehicle is unlikely to fit in any car park with a height limit. Always plan your parking before driving into an urban area.

- **Speed:** The vehicle must be driven in accordance with the law at all times. For your safety, the vehicle is electronically limited to a maximum speed of 62 mph. This limitation should be borne in mind when considering lane choice and overtaking HGVs on dual carriageways and motorways.
- **Safety Equipment:** A fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and appropriate emergency equipment are maintained within the vehicle and must be carried at all times.
- **Seatbelts:** Seatbelts must be worn by the driver and passengers at all times. It is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that seatbelts are worn.
- **Accessibility:** If the vehicle has a ramp for disabled passengers, it must be operated according to training guidelines and should not otherwise be touched, or unsecured.

4. Journey Procedures

- **Booking:** All trips must be pre-booked through our minibus administrators.
- **Driver Breaks:** A 15-minute break should be taken every two hours. A 45-minute break is required after 4.5 hours of driving.
- **Passenger Behaviour:** Passengers must remain seated, and the driver must always endeavour to ensure appropriate behaviour.
- **Emergency Procedure:** In case of an accident, contact emergency services (112 or 999) and inform the PCC on the number provided on the sheet within the vehicle.
- **Breakdown:** In the event of breakdown, please follow the instructions clearly displayed within the vehicle to notify our minibus administrators and ensure that assistance is provided.

5. Insurance and Compliance

- **Insurance:** It is the responsibility of Morland PCC to provide appropriate insurance for the vehicle that covers its charitable/educational use. This policy, as updated, covers the requirements of the insurance policy in force from time to time. The vehicle must not be used for private or commercial purposes, as it will not be insured.
- **MOT:** It is the responsibility of Morland PCC to ensure that MOT tests and maintenance are carried out.
- **Drivers:** Must follow the letter and spirit of this policy to ensure their own safety, and that of their passengers and other road users.
- **Driver Hours:** Drivers must adhere to domestic rules (max. 10 hours driving per day) with breaks as set out in section 4 above.

6. Administration and Booking

Minibus booking requests will be recorded using an electronic calendar system. The information needed to be gathered before collection is:

- **Date of journey and destination**
- **Departure and return time**
- **Driver Name(s)** (must be on approved list) and **contact details**
- **Hiring organisation** (to whom an invoice will be sent) and **contact details**

On collection the named driver must complete a vehicle check before journey commences to include:

- Lights, Indicators, Horn
- Tyres and Fuel Level
- Oil and Coolant
- Windscreen Washers
- Clean Windscreen/Mirrors
- Fire Extinguisher/First Aid Kit present

7. Post-Journey

- **Defect Reporting:** Any defects found must be reported immediately.
- **Fuel:** The vehicle will normally contain fuel for your journey, with fuel costs built into the fee for using the vehicle. Should extra fuel (**diesel**) be needed, this will be reimbursed by the PCC (and/or deducted from your organisation's charges) on production of a valid receipt.
- **Cleaning:** The vehicle must be cleaned inside, and all rubbish removed, after use.

8. Charges: The fee table is below. All mileage must be recorded on the vehicle log kept within the minibus. Fee notes will be raised on behalf of Morland PCC in arrears

- **Benefice education partners:** £1 per mile.
- **Other Church, Education and Charitable Organisations:** £1.30 per mile.
- **North Westmorland Benefice:** Fuel costs will be allocated to the appropriate PCC and recovered in the ordinary course of ministerial expenses.

