

# ARMAGH RURAL TRANSPORT (ART)

## INFORMATION SHEET

- Armagh Rural Transport (ART) is a not-for-profit transport organization, and not a public transport provider. As a charity we may aid only to registered members.
- Membership of ART is available to those living and active within our area of benefit, which is within the Co. Armagh area.
- Membership must be renewed every year (April – March), and members may use our services, either:
  1. Individual: Social Car service – using volunteers in their own cars, or accessible minibus with driver
  2. Group: Minibus hire for community activities (all minibuses are accessible)
- As a charity we do not make a profit, but must cover our costs, therefore we do make a charge.
- Members must be fit to travel, we will provide as much support and assistance as we can, but the driver cannot be expected to carry out any manual handling task that may have a risk attached to it, or to give attention to the passenger whilst driving.
- Members with a disability or special transport needs must advise us of relevant details when registering for membership, or as soon as the need becomes apparent, so that we can ensure the most appropriate form of transport in some circumstances.
- We only have a small number of child or booster seats – therefore when booking transport which includes child/ren please request the appropriate seat. At this time our staff will advise if they have the required number of seats. If not, the child can only travel if a parent / guardian or responsible person makes one available and fit it within our vehicle.
- We expect our staff to be courteous and considerate; and expect the same in return. We operate zero tolerance towards anyone that is rude or abusive. If you are less than satisfied with our staff or services, we would welcome your feedback. Details of our complaint's procedure are available – or contact us and ask to speak with the manager.
- We operate a strict no alcohol policy so please refrain from consuming alcohol prior to travelling with ART.
- All our drivers will be wearing appropriate ART uniform / ID Badge and vehicles marked to identify that they are operating on ART business.
- We expect all our drivers and passengers to always have an acceptable standard of hygiene to ensure a comfortable journey for all our members.

### DIAL-A-LIFT

- Dial-A-Lift (DAL) is a door to door service which is funded by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and is a **transport option** available for individuals living in rural areas.
- Membership for DAL is additional to normal ARMAGH RURAL TRANSPORT (ART) individual membership, and the criteria is that:

1. You live in a rural area within our area of benefit (one which is not served by the urban Door-2-door scheme)
2. You have difficulty accessing every day services due to a lack of transport –
  - You do not have access to a car
  - And do not have access to public transport

(If you do have access to either a car or public transport but feel that you may still be eligible for DAL membership please provide supporting information).

- The scheme is available for travel on weekdays from 8am – 6pm (but see below regarding bank / public holidays).
- Bookings can be made up to 1 month in advance, and must be made no later than 4pm 2 working days before the trip is required (i.e. trips for Monday must be booked by 4pm the previous Thursday, trips for Tuesday must be booked by 4pm the previous Friday, trips for Wednesday must be booked by 4pm the previous Monday, etc.) If you require transport inside these times, we will do our best but can't guarantee travel.
- The Dial-A-Lift service fare is restricted to 2/3 days per week depending if you can share with other members.
- Requested pick up times cannot always be guaranteed, and members are required to be flexible in order that the schedulers can make the best use of the resources we have. This may mean changing pick up and drop off times, and perhaps not going direct to or from the destinations.
- It is **not** a first come-first-served scheme. Transport is allocated only after all the bookings are in, and are **subject to available resources**, and subject to us planning the trips in the most efficient and cost-effective way. This may result in some bookings being turned down or times required to be amended at the final planning stage (on the last working day beforehand).
- If we must cancel a trip, we will not be liable for making or paying for alternative arrangements.
- We aim to ensure that transport is fairly shared out amongst all members. However, if demand exceeds supply, we may initiate a priority scheme, in the following order:
  1. Older persons (those with a 60+ or Senior smart pass)
  2. Members with a registered disability (those with a War disabled, Blind or Half Fare smart pass)
  3. Persons unable to access suitable public transport – this is considered as:
    - Being more than 1 mile from the nearest bus stop
    - Being on a route that provides less than 2 return journeys per week between the hours of 10am and 4pm
    - Being on a route that only provides services outside of the hours of 10am and 4pm
    - Persons with dependents (dependents include children under 19, older people and dependents with disabilities)
    - Others
    - If the service is still oversubscribed, then other restrictions may apply.
- Whilst DfI fund the scheme members are required to pay a contribution. However, if you have a registered Smart Pass you may be able to take advantage of the Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (see below for details). For those that have to pay, the costs per person for a single trip are:

1. Up to 5 miles - £3.00  
     Up to 10 miles - £4.00  
     10-15 miles - £5.00  
     15-20 miles - £6.50  
     20-25 miles - £7.50  
     25 – 30 miles - £8.50  
     30+ miles - £8.50 + 30p per mile
2. Essential escorts travel at half fare (you must register the fact that you require an essential escort – maximum of 2 allowed)
3. Children under 5 travel free of charge
4. Children under 11 cannot book or travel unaccompanied
- DAL may be used for a variety of purposes, including:
  1. Local shopping
  2. Trips for primary healthcare (Doctor, Optician, Dentist, Local Health Centre)
  3. Local pharmacy
  4. Post office or bank
  5. Access to local training and local employment
  6. Visiting friends and family
- As we are not supposed to duplicate services, if there is suitable public transport available it should be used instead. If you require an accessible bus Translink will provide one if you give them 48 hours' notice.
- We may provide transport to and from a public transport point (Ulsterbus) to enable members to travel further afield.
- DAL cannot be used for home to / from school transport nor hospital admissions, transfers or discharges.
- Trips for healthcare outpatient appointments / treatments will be restricted to the **nearest local hospital** or treatment centre that is within our area of benefit. Health and Social Care Trust do provide their own free transport to those that are eligible, as well as providing a refund of necessary travel costs to those that qualify under the Hospital Travel Cost Scheme (HTCS).
- We do charge for late / same day cancellations or aborted trips – this will be for the full amount that the return trip would have cost, even if the member has a Smart Pass.
- We may also, at our discretion, suspend membership for a period of time if a member makes late cancellations on 3 or more consecutive occasions – or if they make late cancellations consistently (we will take account of genuine cases where cancellations are reasonable and deemed unavoidable).

## ASSISTED RURAL TRAVEL SCHEME

- The DEARA / DfI fund an Assisted Rural Travel Scheme (ARTS), allowing members with a valid smart pass, *the details of which have been registered with us and verified by the DfI*, to obtain concessionary fares on DAL trips (free or half fare).
- You must produce your smart pass to the driver each time your travel on the ARTS. If you are unable to produce it you will have to pay for the trip.
- The scheme is available until the end of March 2018.

## NON DAL, OR “OUT OF HOURS” SERVICES

- If DAL is not suitable or convenient, or if a member wants to travel when DAL is not available or to a destination outside of our area of benefit, we may be able to assist using one of our accessible minibuses or volunteer drivers in the Social Car Scheme (Out of Hours Service) – for which there will be a mileage charge.

## BANK AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

- ARMAGH RURAL TRANSPORT (ART) will take the following dates as bank or public holidays, during which the **office will be closed**:
  1. New Years Day
  2. 17<sup>th</sup> March
  3. Good Friday, Easter Monday and Tuesday
  4. May Bank Holiday
  5. Spring Bank Holiday
  6. 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July (or nearest days)
  7. August Bank Holiday
  8. Christmas Day
  9. Boxing Day
- If a bank / public holiday falls on a weekend we will take the next working day in lieu.
- There will be no DAL service on these days

## CONTACT

- The office is open weekdays – Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm
- If you can't get through, you will have the option of leaving a message on the answer 'phone and we will get back to you – please ensure you leave a clear message giving your name and contact number.
- There may be days or times when staff training takes place and the telephones are switched to answer phone – in which case you may leave a message and we will get back to you.
- Requests for transport should not be left on the answer phone at other times (over night or over weekends), but leave your name and number and we will get back to you.
- Reminder of the main telephone / text number – **02837 518151**
  - Out of Hours mobile phone contact **07850518118** – for urgent calls only – please note office times above. We do not accept bookings on this number outside of office hours.