

Driver Safety Policy

Purpose of this Policy

Redbourn Community Group (RCG) is committed to reducing the risk of road traffic accidents when services are being delivered to clients.

This policy applies to all who drive in connection with delivering our services, whether it is in their own vehicle, an RCG vehicle or a vehicle hired by RCG. All drivers will receive a copy of this policy.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how all those who drive on RCG business must act in line with the Highway Code as well as Health and Safety Law and Road Traffic Legislation. We will review / update as needed, and any changes will be made known to all drivers.

Relevant Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- The Highway Code
- Road Traffic Acts 1988 and 1991

Main RCG Risks relevant to this Policy

E03 – Change in Government policy/legislation

L02 – Drivers driving without valid insurance or licences

O08 – Injury or health impact on clients, driver or third party causing financial or reputational damage.

Key Requirements

1. Everyone who drives on RCG business whether they use a vehicle supplied by RCG or their own, will be required to sign a declaration to agree to follow this policy.
2. New drivers must provide information using the RCG New Driver Application form. If intending to use their own vehicles, new drivers must give details of insurance cover and confirm that they will maintain their vehicle(s) in a roadworthy state.
3. All Drivers must abide by The Highway Code and comply with all relevant legislation, in particular Road Traffic Acts, when driving on behalf of RCG.
4. Drivers must produce their Driving Licence after any renewal and on request, to prove continued entitlement to drive the class of vehicles they are intending to use. D1 Driving Licences for minibus drivers will be checked annually. All drivers will be deemed to have consented to permit RCG to contact the DVLA to check for licence endorsements at any time.
5. Minibus drivers must undergo a medical prior to renewal of their Driving Licence at age 70 and prior to each subsequent renewal.
6. Failure to produce either a valid Driving Licence, evidence of adequate levels of insurance cover or a current MOT Certificate when requested may result in the driver no longer being able to provide driving services to RCG.
7. In order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of clients, it is important that drivers are fit to drive and are also physically and mentally able to undertake other aspects of the role including, when necessary,

assisting a client in and out of the car; communicating with a client about the outward and return journeys; dealing with any car accident or other emergency, including summoning help and completing an accident and incident report.

8. RCG has to be satisfied that all drivers are fit to drive and do not have mental or physical conditions that would prevent them from safely undertaking the role of driver in RCG as described. Any driver who is aged 80 or over must obtain written confirmation from their GP once a year that they are fit to undertake the role. Notwithstanding the outcome of such tests, RCG will make the final decision as to whether to permit any person to continue to be a driver, taking into account the interests of clients.
9. All drivers are required to inform the Services Coordinator or a Trustee of any Road Traffic Accidents (RTA) that occur while delivering services on behalf of RCG as soon as it is safe to do so.
10. All drivers are required to follow the procedures set out in clauses A to J below:

A. Road Safety

- Drivers must stay within permitted maximum speed limits. For the minibus, the national speed limits may be different to cars, for instance 50mph instead of 60mph on single carriageways and 60mph instead of 70mph on dual carriageways (excluding motorways).
- Seat belts must be worn by drivers and all passengers while the vehicle is in motion.

B. Parking Tickets/Fines

- RCG is not liable for parking tickets or fines issued to a driver while delivering services on behalf of RCG.
- All drivers must operate within all public and private guidelines and not contravene any parking rules or restrictions during the course of delivering services on RCG's behalf.

C. Drink and Drugs including Medicines

- RCG operates a zero-tolerance drink and drug driving policy.
- All drivers must report to the RCG Office any pending prosecutions and/or cautions immediately, regardless of whose vehicle they were driving at the time. Failure to do so may result in them no longer being able to provide driving services.
- RCG will not utilise any driver with convictions for driving offences connected with drink or drugs.
- All drivers are encouraged to report concerns about colleagues with regards to drink or drugs as soon as possible. This can be done anonymously if necessary.
- Any driver who believes that they may be over the drink drive limit must inform RCG before accepting any service delivery requests or offers. They must not drive. Should this become a regular occurrence, it may result in RCG declining their driving services.
- Any driver found to be affected by illegal drug use whilst delivering driving services on our behalf may be reported to the Police.
- Any driver taking prescription or over the counter medicines must ensure that they are still fit to drive before undertaking any driving services on RCG's behalf. Many prescriptions and/or over the counter medicines can have a serious effect on the ability to concentrate and can contribute to accidents. Such medication may include cold remedies, some cough medicines, pain relief – especially those including opiates, and antidepressants.
- No prescription or over the counter medicines are to be used/taken in front of clients or left/stored in view within a driver's vehicle while it is being used to undertake driving services on RCG's behalf. If such medicines must be carried, they should be safely secured out of sight.
- Smoking, including the use of vapes, is not permitted by drivers or their passengers in any vehicle while being driven on RCG business.

D. Vehicles that do not belong to RCG

- Anyone driving their own vehicle on behalf of RCG to deliver our services will be required to present a copy of their insurance certificate annually. They may also be asked for copies of current driving licence, evidence of Road Tax and MOT certificate (if applicable) and must ensure that their vehicle remains insured for business use and/or volunteering purposes.
- For new drivers, the New Driver Application form obtainable from the RCG Office, should be completed and submitted with evidence of insurance cover as well as a copy of their driving licence. Penalty points on a licence will not necessarily preclude drivers from providing their services as a volunteer; the Trustees will review and approve any such cases on an individual basis.
- Not all insurance policies or insurers offer cover for volunteer driver services – when enquiring with vehicle insurers for this information, it is important that drivers are clear about the nature of the volunteering to be covered. The Association of British Insurers (ABI) website maintains an up to date spreadsheet of insurers who provide cover for volunteer drivers.
- Any driver using their own vehicle must ensure that it is always kept in a safe and roadworthy condition, and that enhanced seasonal viral protection or sanitisation steps are taken in line with any guidelines that RCG may issue from time to time.

E. Mobile Phones

- It is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while in control of a vehicle, whether it is mobile or stationary i.e. in traffic. If caught, drivers can get an automatic fixed penalty notice and a fine. The case could also go to court and lead to disqualification from driving.
- RCG requires all drivers to utilise hands-free kits if they habitually need or wish to use a mobile phone whilst delivering services on our behalf; a mobile phone should only be used when stopped in a safe place and only if it is absolutely necessary.
- Whenever possible, mobile phones should be switched off while driving and a message facility used. Messages should only be picked up and responded to when it is safe to do so.
- Drivers must not dial out or send or read texts while in motion. This includes hands free kits. They should find a safe place to stop before making any calls.
- Where there is a passenger or client of RCG in the vehicle, we do not condone asking them to be responsible for communication; all driver distractions must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- Any driver failing to adhere to this mobile phone policy section may result in RCG declining their driving services.

F. Satellite Navigation Systems

- Satellite Navigation Systems can be a useful tool for drivers; however, they can also be a dangerous distraction.
- All destinations should be entered while the vehicle is stationary in a safe place. All drivers should stop if it is necessary to take their eyes off the road to check routes.
- The systems should be positioned so as not to impair vision. They should not be positioned where they are likely to cause injuries in the event of a collision.
- All vehicle distractions should be kept to a minimum and it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that they are not likely to be distracted.

G. Journey Planning

- Drivers will be given appointment times and relevant information about client mobility and should then agree pick up times directly with clients, taking into account where clients need to be dropped off. Drivers should plan their journeys so that they do not have to take risks or break speed limits.
- Drivers must ensure that they do not drive on RCG's behalf while tired. Driver fatigue is a well-known cause of accidents.

H. Vehicle Maintenance

- All drivers are required to carry out basic maintenance on the vehicle for which they are responsible. They should check oil, water, tyre pressures, wiper blades and windscreen washer fluid on a regular basis.
- In winter months, drivers are reminded that they must have a clear windscreen before setting off. Peering through a small section while the screen de-mists is not acceptable. If unexpected bad weather is encountered after setting off on a journey, drivers should make every effort to ensure that all windows are kept clear of ice/snow etc..

I. Severe Weather

- If weather conditions are expected to be hazardous then RCG will not schedule journeys to appointments. In the event of unexpected bad weather immediately before setting off on a journey, drivers must use their discretion and not undertake a journey if they consider conditions are unsafe. In that event they should contact the RCG Office so that clients can be informed and the appointment re-scheduled.
- In the unlikely event of making a journey in unpredictable weather, drivers of all vehicles should make sure before they set off that they have adequate cold weather protection with them such as warm coats, gloves and blankets etc. in case they are stranded.
- If vehicles are stranded by snow or other severe weather, particularly on motorways, drivers and passengers should remain in their vehicle unless instructed to leave by the emergency services. Drivers should contact the Police for urgent assistance as clients may not be able leave the vehicle without help from the emergency services. Drivers should also contact the RCG Office.

J. Emergency Procedures

- Whenever a vehicle engaged on RCG duty is unable to continue its journey, for whatever reason, the safe recovery of clients is paramount. Always call the RCG Office, as soon as possible, to arrange client collection and onward transportation.
- For the minibus, other useful contacts are on the daily worksheet and/or in the minibus bag during minibus use, including the number for calling the AA which RCG belongs to.
- If as a result of an accident or an incident, the minibus must be left, the driver must ensure that the minibus bag and any client data is removed, in accordance with RCG's Data Protection Policy.
- Breakdown
 - a) If possible, drivers should avoid stopping in dangerous places such as roundabouts and corners, and switch on hazard lights.
 - b) If it is safe to do so, drivers should drop their speed, continue driving and try to pull off the road completely or move onto a straight section of road.
 - c) Drivers should not attempt to fix the vehicle themselves by the roadside. They should switch off the engine and wait in a safe place, away from traffic.
 - d) Drivers should call a breakdown service, if necessary, using the nearest roadside emergency phone. Drivers should also call the RCG Office to notify them.
 - e) If the vehicle develops a problem on the motorway, then drivers should leave at the next exit, if possible, and stop at the next service area. If they must stop immediately, they should pull onto the hard shoulder and stop with wheels turned to the left, away from traffic. If possible, the driver and passengers should then exit the vehicle on the left-hand side but only if clients are able to do so. If not, drivers must call the Police for urgent assistance from the emergency services to enable clients to leave the vehicle.
- Be Prepared
 - a) Drivers should carry a charged mobile phone (switched off and out of reach while driving).
 - b) Ideally, drivers should carry an emergency kit, such as high visibility clothing, a torch, water and a reflective triangle.

- Accident

If a vehicle being used to deliver RCG's services is involved in an accident (RTA) the following steps should be taken:

- a) Stop the vehicle in a safe location.
- b) Call the emergency services if anyone is injured or if property is damaged.
- c) If the Police attend the scene, note the reporting Officer's name, identity number and station.
- d) Note information about the accident, exchange details with third parties and take the names and contact details of witnesses. Third parties are obliged to give their name, the vehicle registration number and insurance details under section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- e) If a camera is available, photograph the scene from different angles.
- f) Take pictures of the vehicles involved and of the damage to own and third party vehicles/property.
- g) Contact the RCG Office as soon as possible and complete an incident/accident form.
- h) Drivers must prioritise
 - Their own safety.
 - The safety of their passengers and anyone else involved.
 - The safety of other road users.

This policy will be subject to review at intervals of two years.

Policy approved and adopted by all Trustees May 2025.

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