**INFORMATION FOR PARISH COUNCILS & GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEMES**

**IN DAVENTRY DISTRICT AREA (March 2018)**

**‘Following the announcement of Bus Subsidy cuts by Northamptonshire County Council’**

As a result of the cuts to bus subsidy by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) announced in March 2018, many people living in rural locations throughout Daventry District are understandably very concerned about the inevitable cuts to bus services. Daventry Area Community Transport (DACT) are already receiving calls from a number of concerned Parish Councils who are aware of the devastating effects this will most definitely cause in their local village/community. We are anticipating a much greater demand upon our services and as we only have limited resources, we encourage Parish Councils to contact us early to try and find ways in which we can support your local village/community.

DACT can provide tailored services to local needs but it must be understood that we cannot be ***‘all things to all people’.*** For instance, DACT cannot be a replacement for a daily scheduled bus service which you may have had in the past. For the purposes of this information guide, it will be helpful for you to understand ***‘What we can do’*** but also ‘***What we cannot do’***.

**What DACT can offer**

***1. Volunteer Car Scheme:*** DACT work across much of Daventry District and can offer volunteer car transport to those who need to access ***medical appointments* only** such as Doctors, Health Centres, Hospitals, Opticians, visit close relative in hospital etc. We provide a door to door service for individual passengers to enable them to travel to their appointments and then return home. The passenger pays a mileage charge to the volunteer car driver to defray their motoring expenses.

* ***2. Minibus Services:***  We have a fleet of fully accessible Minibuses (with a lift for scooters/wheelchairs full height access, steps) which can provide transport in various ways as listed below:-
* *Group Hire –* Local Voluntary groups can register with DACT and then Hire one of our Minibuses for any trip of their choosing. This is cost-effective and charges are based upon length of hire and mileage. Costs on application. Volunteer drivers may be available for groups within Daventry District unable to find a driver.
* *Village Travel Clubs:*We have a very good model in our ‘Village Travel Club’ concept which can provide some solutions for groups of local residents but which cannot provide a ‘daily’ individual service. We work to provide group transport (with times, days & destinations determined at local level). A Travel Club needs to have local Parish Council support and promotion and we are happy to meet with Parish Councils to work out reasonably priced solutions to their local needs. We recommend that Parish Councils do make some financial support to their local community in the form of a Village Club subsidy but that passengers should pay a major part of the trip cost. It is very easy to administer with very little administration but does need someone local to co-ordinate it. Users of the service have to be members and it is up to the Club whether this is a free membership or a nominal annual cost. Trip costs will vary depending on length of hire and distance covered and whether a volunteer driver is required. DACT can price up any trips for you once we know the trip destination and length of hire which will enable a price per passenger to be worked out. The bus capacity is 15 people, and for costings we recommend you work on a bus capacity of 10 people when working out the cost per head. This can be collected in various ways, e.g. Your Travel Club representative collects it at the departure point or on the bus from passengers travelling or you may decide to have it pre-paid. The Invoice for the cost of Hire will be sent to the Travel Club following completion of Hire for the agreed price irrespective of the number of passengers.
* *DACT Days Out trips:* This is a DACT members club (free membership) for individuals who are given a 4-monthly trip sheet to all manner of social trips such as Pub lunches, historic venues, gardens including Kew, London trips, seaside trips etc. All trips run from Daventry Town Centre. All trips individually priced.
* *DACT Dial-a-Ride –* Free bus, ***sponsored by Daventry Town Council***, offered to those aged 65 years and over for shopping trips every Tuesday & Friday. Assistance is given to help those with heavy shopping to take it to their door when necessary. Daventry Town residents only.
* *MiDAS Minibus driver training:* DACT offer volunteer drivers the Nationally approved training to gain the 4-year certificate. Details on application.

***3. DACT Mobility Shop & DACT Mobility Service/Repairs/Recycling***

* *DACT Mobility Hire:* Hire of all kinds of Scooters/Wheelchairs and mobility aids.
* *DACT Mobility Shop:* Selling all kinds of mobility aids (new and recycled)
* *DACT Mobility Service/Repairs/Recycling:*  DACT can carry out all these services at our workshop in Daventry Town Centre (collections can be arranged from Villages)

*All the above services are available at reasonable cost and deliveries/collection can be organised if necessary.*

***4. Volunteering opportunities***

* DACT offer volunteering opportunities across all of our services to suit individual availability.

We urge local Parish Councils to contact the DACT Office to discuss possible solutions to these cuts to bus services at the earliest opportunity. We are happy to discuss any proposals of how we can serve your local community and will work with you to find solutions. With 78 rural villages in Daventry District, the immense risks of isolation need to be addressed NOW.

For understanding and clarity, it is important that you understand the areas of transport provision which DACT are unable to provide and these are listed below as follows:-

**What DACT cannot offer**

1. ***Volunteer Car Scheme***

* We cannot provide car transport for social trips or shopping trips
* We cannot provide car transport for people to a place of work/training
* We cannot provide car transport for home to school transport

1. ***Minibus Services*** DACT operate under Department for Transport ‘Section 19 permits’.

This means DACT are unable to:

* Accept Bus passes for any bus trips
* Provide bus transport to any commercial or profit-making organisation
* Pick up members of the general public who are not members of a club registered with DACT and travelling with that registered club.
* Provide bus transport from Home to work/school/training.

If you are in doubt regarding any issues raised in this information bulletin, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Rob Kinning

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE 08 March 2018**