

Seend Shuttle Bus

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 16th May 2023

After the difficult years during the pandemic things are now looking up for the Seend Shuttle bus. Passenger numbers have mostly increased for the regular shopping trips and covered a total of 3724 miles in the year catering for 1491 passenger trips. The school bus run is popular collecting children from Seend, Bulkington and Bowerhill and covering 2871 miles catering for 3876 passenger trips. We have to keep a meticulous record of the figures to meet the criteria of our licenses and to reclaim bus fares for bus pass holders from Wiltshire Council. There were 55 private hirings of the bus, many of them from youth groups, schools, clubs, scouts and guides.

Other community transport groups have not fared so well. Holt had to merge with Melksham so at least their bus can still be used and Trowbridge Guild, who had several vehicles to maintain, has folded completely.

Happily we have found two new drivers to share the Thursday Shuttle to Devizes from Seend and Bromham and a new driver for our monthly trips to Salisbury. All our private hirers are asked to find their own driver who must have D1 on their license. When drivers need to renew their licenses at 70 this is removed unless they pass a medical. If this is needed for our regular drivers the bus fund will pay for it. Robin Thornton has done a great job organising the school runs and his team of drivers. Happily he can now rejoin them on the rota having regained his D1 license.

We have had to replace the automatic step on the bus, much to the relief of some of our passengers, so maintenance costs are going up. However, with a very healthy bank balance, the much appreciated donation from the Parish council and our annual though reduced grant from Wiltshire council, we have paid the deposit on a new 16 seater Mercedes bus. Having looked into the possibility of an electric or hybrid one we found nothing that would fit our needs. However, our new diesel will be even greener than the present bus.

With the continued support of all our volunteers the future looks good for your village bus.