

Community solutions for transport in the Chew Valley

For anyone in the Chew Valley without a car, transport to get anywhere is a nightmare. At the least there is a lot of planning and time wasting involved and at the best, you may manage to find a lift with someone else. But what happens when you need to get somewhere and you just can't manage any of those possibilities? People with hospital appointments in Bristol, Bath or Paulton have to resort to expensive taxis so suddenly you have the worry of the cost added to the stress of a hospital visit. Even local journeys are not easy whether that is to the local surgery, to the bank, post office or a hair appointment. So rather than spend more time bemoaning this sorry state of affairs, Target 80 is now offering local solution for local transport needs. The community project based at Tunbridge Mill, Chew Magna have secured funding from B&NES Council to run a pilot community transport scheme. This will provide an umbrella insurance policy that will cover the use of private cars for community benefit and means that volunteer drivers are covered for all journeys.

Denise Perrin of Target 80 would like to hear from anyone who would be prepared to offer their services for a few hours a week as a volunteer driver. "We already have a handful of people in the Chew Magna area who have been waiting for our funding to come through and now we would like people from Chew Stoke to form a team of local drivers" says Denise. "We also have a 6 seater people carrier with wheelchair access that will be used to optimise journeys and be available for groups who would like to arrange journeys for other purposes. So if you have a volunteer who is prepared to drive a small group for a shopping trip then let us know ". It is hope that the new initiative will start a wave of positive thinking about how transport around the Chew Valley can be tackled. Many people need to travel only short distances or to Midsomer Norton and Keynsham. Contact Denise on 01275-333430 or denise.perrin@target80.org.uk

In North Somerset there are several very successful volunteer car schemes that allow people to have transport to an appointment at a cost that covers the petrol and a small admin fee.