

020 7501 8989  
020 7501 8999  
bookings@lascot.com  
www.lascot.com  
www.hctgroup.org



**Lambeth and Southwark Community Transport**  
**10 Somerleyton Road**  
**London SW9 8ND**



**LaSCoT**

**Group Transport**

**Essential Guide**

## Introduction

HCT Group was founded in 1982 by a group of local community organisations. Our aim, then and today, is to provide public transport for all. We provide a range of quality services and involve service users in all aspects of the organisation.

HCT Group today is a rapidly expanding network of organisations that operate a variety of services all over London and in the north of England. We are a group of social enterprises. This means that the surpluses we generate are re-invested in running our services. We are proud to be a not for profit organisation.

We also aim to provide quality employment and training opportunities for local people as well as a diverse range of transport services. We firmly believe in the principal of equality of opportunity in the provision of transport services and will always try and provide new and innovative solutions to the mobility barriers that people face. More information about us can be found at our website ([www.hctgroup.org](http://www.hctgroup.org)).

## LaScOT

LaScOT itself was established in 2001 to provide community focused passenger transport services for the residents of the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. On 1 April 2006 it joined HCT Group to enable it to diversify its services and expand its operation. It is an experienced provider of collective transport for local third sector organisations, transport for children with special educational needs, adult day centre transport, needle bus transportation and fleet management.



## EXPERIENCE

### Key services include:

Contracting Authority	Service	Length of Contract
Lambeth Council	Vulnerable Adults / Older People's Homes to Day Centre Services	5 years
Lambeth SEN	Education transport for college	Ongoing
Dial A Ride	2 buses, 2-3 runs per day Lambeth / Southwark and other areas	Ongoing
Camden Society	Maintenance and fleet management for a fleet of 18 buses	Ongoing
Charlie Chaplin (Lambeth Council)	Transport services for disabled children	Ongoing
Group Transport	Over 260 members	Ongoing
Lambeth PCT	Needle exchange service	2 years
Southwark PCT	Needle exchange service	Ongoing

## Service Users

LaScOT works with a range of vulnerable adults. We currently provide transportation for the elderly with dementia and/or mobility problems, children with special educational needs and third sector groups whose members include disabled persons.

## Inter-Agency Working

LaScOT has over 7 years experience of working with a range of agencies including local schools, day centres, Lambeth Family Link and Southwark Health and Social Care Teams. We have established positive working relationships with these organisations which have resulted in effective service delivery and service improvements. For example, we worked with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to design a new transport system for day centre services which is service user focused. As a consequence we have introduced a mixed fleet of vehicles including a pool of small vehicles which are used across the borough for ad-hoc journeys. This has meant that service users can attend hospital appointments when they need to and can return home at different times if they are feeling unwell.

## Staffing

LaScOT has an experienced team of managers, drivers and passenger assistants. LaScOT is also supported by HCT Group's corporate departments

of finance, training and engineering based at Ash Grove, Hackney. Driving staff are PCV or Minibus Driving Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) trained. The MiDAS course curriculum covers the legal, practical and safety issues of driving a minibus, how to deploy and use tail-lifts, safely secure wheelchairs and identify the needs of clients who have special requirements. Driving staff are also presently undergoing an NVQ in Road Passenger Transport to enable them to assist passengers with disabilities and be able to identify and meet the needs of the passenger. They will be able to identify different types of disabilities, manual handling tasks and how to reduce risks. All frontline staff are subject to enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. To assess a driver's fitness LaSCoT will arrange for a medical screening to be undertaken. LaSCoT carries out bi-annual checks on all its drivers' licenses and scheduled random checks are carried out to ensure that all drivers carry their licenses with them.

Within HCT Group we use both our in-house engineering staff and sub-contractors to service and maintain our fleet. We currently use The Keen Group to service our existing medical bus. On a daily basis our staff work to a nil-defect reporting system where vehicles are checked each day and appropriate remedial action taken where necessary. The Group is a member of the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and the Community Transport Association (CTA) which enables the organisation to keep up to date with best practice and changes in legislation and regulations affecting licensing and vehicle maintenance.

## What is Community Group Transport?

Our Community Group Transport is a service that provides very low cost, safe, clean and fully accessible minibus use for voluntary, community and 'not for profit' organisations, groups and clubs located or working within the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark

Our fleet of 16-seat and 12-seat fully accessible minibuses offer excellent value for money and can be used to travel anywhere within the UK.

Vehicles can be booked with or without a driver for as little as a few hours or as long as a few weeks and are available to any groups that join our membership scheme.

## Who is Eligible to Use the Service?

Our Community Group Transport Scheme is operated within the terms of a permit held by HCT, issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. To meet the requirements, minibus use is restricted to non-profit 'Educational, Religious, Recreational or other activities of benefit to the community'. Minibuses must not be used for private gain or profit making activities.

## Using a Minibus with Your Own Driver

We encourage groups wherever possible to use our vehicles and provide their own driver. We can provide driver training and we can assist groups to find volunteer drivers if required.

Entitlement to drive HCT Group minibuses is partly determined by the date when a driver passed his/her UK manual car driving test. Drivers who passed the test before 1st January 1997 have an automatic entitlement (until the age of 70) to drive a minibus with 9 - 16 passenger seats. Drivers who passed their driving test after 31st December 1996 are required to pass a further driving test in order to gain entitlement to drive this type of vehicle.

If you want to use your own driver they will also need to hold a current up to date MiDAS certificate. If they have not got one already, they will need to undertake a MiDAS training session and a brief on-road assessment. Once qualified, the MiDAS certificate will be valid for 4 years.

## Vehicle Bookings

Bookings must be consistent with the aims, objectives or rules laid down by the Management Committee, which are in line with the terms and conditions of the section 19 permit we hold.

Bookings will only be accepted from the nominated or authorised contact people of the group as stated on the application form.

Due to the size of the fleet and the number of registered member groups we have, groups are advised to book minibuses as far in advance as possible to ensure availability.



## Booking Process

One-off bookings can be made over the telephone, by email, via our web site or in writing. Requests for regular or multiple bookings **MUST** be made in writing by email, via our web site, fax or by post.

**Booking Line** 020 7501 8989  
**Email** bookings@lascot.com  
**Fax Number** 020 7501 8999  
**Website** www.lascot.com  
**Address** LaSCoT, 10 Somerleyton Road London, SW9 8ND

Whichever method of booking is used, we require the following information:

- The name of the group
- The person making the booking
- The type of minibus required
- The number of passengers
- The name of the driver (if supplying your own)
- A request for a driver if not
- A request for passenger assistant if required
- Dates and times you wish to collect and return the minibus

One of our Booking Coordinators will then be able to let you know if we can accommodate your request, let you know the full cost and give you a booking reference number.

## Booking Overview

How does my group book a minibus?	Call our Group Transport booking line on 020 7501 8989 Our booking lines are open between 10:30am - 16:00pm Monday to Friday
Can we book on-line?	Email us on bookings@lascot.com
How far in advance do we need to book a minibus?	A nominated contact person, or other persons authorised to make bookings identified on the application form or in writing to us, can make bookings on behalf of the group
What information do we need to give at the time of booking?	The name of the group The person making the booking The type of minibus required The number of passengers The name of the driver (if supplying your own) A request for a driver if not A request for Passenger Assistant if required Dates and times you wish to collect and return the minibus
Can we make block bookings for different days or regular usage?	Yes. We would require block booking information in writing preferably by email with the required dates / times
Is there a charge for cancelling a booking?	Only if the cancellation is made within 48 hours of the planned vehicle usage.

## Driver Training

### Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS)

MiDAS is the national standard for minibus drivers in the voluntary and public sectors. All drivers using or wishing to use HCT Group vehicles must register for MiDAS and complete the assessment and training programme. Once qualified, a driver will be able to drive vehicles operated by many local authorities and voluntary organisations in the UK, without the need for their competence to be re-assessed.

**There are 3 parts to MiDAS:**

#### 1. Pre-Assessment Procedures

This is where we check and photocopy your licence, collect your assessment fee, clear up any queries about insurance and explain the process of MiDAS.

#### 2. Theory

This is where we take you through your legal responsibilities and passenger safety responsibilities as a driver and cover HCT Group procedures. This will take up the morning session.

The afternoon session consists of the use of passenger lifts and safety equipment requirements for passengers in wheelchairs. A multiple choice test will be given at the end of each session.

#### 3. On-road Driving Assessment

This is booked on the day you attend the theory sessions and will take place up to 2 weeks later depending on availability. This lasts about 1 hour and will consist of driving a minibus with one of our Driving Assessors.

## Certification

MiDAS drivers are given a certificate, which lasts for 4 years.

## Booking Training

Phone our training department on **020 7501 8988** for information and to book your place. Please give at least a fortnight to complete your training in advance.



## Our Vehicles

Our Community Group Transport fleet consists fully Accessible minibuses.

These are equipped with an electric rear passenger lift, a maximum of 13 seats can be fitted which are easily removable if wheelchairs are to be carried. For every wheelchair on board, two seats need to be removed. The passenger lift is fully automatic and is operated at the touch of a button. All wheelchair accessible vehicles come equipped with webbing to secure wheelchairs and all of our vehicles are supplied with first aid boxes and a fire extinguisher.

Our entire vehicle fleet is maintained and safety inspected every 6 - 8 weeks in HCT Group's own engineering workshop.

We also provide smaller vehicles ideal for individual transport, with capacity for 1 wheelchair and 2 passengers as well as non-accessible vehicles with maximum capacity of 16 seats.

## Collecting & Returning Vehicles

When collecting a vehicle from LaSCoT, please report to the office. A member of staff will ask to see a copy of the driver's MiDAS certificate or card and current driving licence.

Once these have been produced, a vehicle log sheet and vehicle keys will then be issued to the driver. Drivers should inspect the vehicle for damage and cleanliness before leaving the depot. All damage should be noted on the log sheet and fresh damage reported to a member of staff immediately. If the vehicle is found to be dirty, this too should be reported to a member of staff who will acknowledge this on your log sheet before you leave.

On returning to the depot, a member of staff will inspect the vehicle for damage and cleanliness and take a note of the mileage reading. This will be acknowledged on the vehicle log sheet. Once inspected, the vehicle should be locked and the keys and completed log sheets should be handed in to a member of staff. Any damage or issues with regards to the vehicle's performance should be reported to a member of staff upon return and the appropriate accident/incident form completed. A member of HCT Group staff will be happy to assist drivers to do this.

All users are expected to return the vehicle in the

same condition that it was collected both internally and externally. The following charges will be made to the account of each group if a vehicle is returned in an unsatisfactory condition:

£25.00 if the vehicle needs sweeping and rubbish disposed of.

£50.00 if the vehicle interior is dirty and requires a valet.

Charges for vehicle damage will depend on the individual circumstances of the accident.

It is important that careful consideration is given to the times at which you wish to use the vehicle, especially the return time. This is to ensure that you have the vehicle long enough to complete your journey, but also that you do not keep it unnecessarily when other groups could be using it. We try to ensure that as many groups as possible can use our vehicles so we do accept bookings fairly close to each other. Therefore if a group returns a vehicle later than arranged, it could impact on the next group. Furthermore, the vehicle may require to be fuelled or seats may need to be removed or replaced. Please note that groups will be charged for vehicles that are returned late.



## Charges & Payment

All member groups will be required to have an account. Invoices for minibus usage will be sent out fortnightly and groups will have 14 days to settle their account in full.

We do not require any payment up front for vehicle bookings and we issue invoices for the full amount of the vehicle's usage including the hourly charge, the mileage charge and any other costs incurred. Mileage and any other charges are not known exactly until the vehicle is returned, which is why we operate our charging policy this way.

A full list of our prices and charges can be found in the table towards the back of this brochure.

## Fuel

All of our minibuses have diesel engines. The vehicles based at LaSCoT will be fuelled and ready for groups at the time of collection.

The first 10 miles are included in the hourly charge (see mileage cost rates enclosed).

If a vehicle is taken on a long trip where refuelling is necessary, groups must use the fuel card on the vehicle key ring. If groups are unable to find a garage that accepts our fuel card they should pay out of their own money and obtain a VAT receipt. Attach the receipt to the log sheet on return and a credit for the amount paid will be deducted and shown on the group's invoice.

## How Does My Group Apply for Membership?

Simply complete the two-sided Group Application Form which can be found on our website and send it back to us in the envelope provided along with a cheque for the deposit and the necessary copies of driving licences (if you are providing your own driver). We will then process your application, set up an account and send you confirmation that this has been done. You will then be able to start booking minibuses for your group.

## Customer Service

Our Operations Team are on hand to take your bookings and assist you with any queries you have between the hours of 10:30am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday.

We aim to prepare your vehicle in readiness for you to use. This includes fuelling, preparing the seating to your specification and ensuring it is clean and mechanically sound, ready for you to arrive, carry out your basic vehicle checks and drive it away.

If you have any specific requests, such as assisting you with vehicle checks or printing off directions for you to reach a certain destination, please feel free to ask a member of our staff at the time of booking or when you arrive to collect your vehicle.

## User Involvement

We pride ourselves on involving our members in all aspects of our business and HCT Group is managed by a committee elected from members.

We carry out monthly telephone monitoring exercises to ensure our services are being delivered to a high standard. We produce and distribute annual customer satisfaction surveys asking our members to suggest ways we can

improve. We also hold several user events each year to encourage user involvement and feedback to enable us to continually provide services that meet the needs and requirements of our members.



## Special Offers

Details of our special offers will be advertised on the LaSCoT website at [www.lascot.com](http://www.lascot.com).



## HCT Drivers

We recognise that not all groups and clubs can provide their own driver, so in direct response to community groups' requests we are pleased to be able to now offer our minibuses with a customer-focused professional, qualified and experienced driver at low rates.

HCT Group drivers have all undergone enhanced CRB checks, MiDAS and disability awareness training.

Drivers are available to Community Group Transport members with vehicle bookings only. If you require a driver, please request this at the time of making your booking and simply sit back and enjoy the ride!

## HCT Passenger Assistants

We provide Passenger Assistants to groups in the same way as drivers. Please state that you require a passenger assistant at the time of making your booking.

All of our Passenger Assistants have received enhanced CRB clearance and have been trained in manual handling and the use of passenger lifts.

## HCT Driver & Passenger Assistant Charges

Both Drivers and Passenger Assistants are charged by the hour, but please note that there is a minimum charge of 4 hours.

Please also be aware that there are laws governing the amount of hours worked consecutively, which have to be observed by groups when using HCT staff members. Full details will be explained at the time of booking as/when required.



## Community Group Transport Terms & Conditions

- 1 Users must be registered with LaSCoT. Under section 19 permit rules it is illegal for non-registered users to use our vehicles.
- 2 Drivers must be registered with LaSCoT and will be subject to LaSCoT staff procedures and under the direction of the Operations Manager.
- 3 All drivers must be assessed by LaSCoT and trained for the vehicle they are going to use. Drivers must re-register every 12 months, and must notify us immediately in the event of any accidents, convictions or illnesses that could affect their driving, or of any other material fact. They must have held a full UK driving licence for more than two years and be at least 21 years of age, although we prefer drivers to be over 25 unless already experienced with larger vehicles. They must have a clean licence (some minor offences may be excepted), and have a satisfactory accident and insurance claims history. Drivers with adverse accident or claims history may be accepted at our discretion, subject to an additional insurance 'excess'. Drivers
  - 4 Users must adhere to the booking times when taking and returning vehicles.
  - 5 Drivers must record on the log sheet provided the start and finish mileage, the times the vehicle was taken and returned, inspect the vehicle prior to driving, report any existing damage
 

Where this is not possible, the cost of fuel bought will only be refunded on receipt of an original VAT invoice or till receipt.

**Accidents/Damage to Vehicle:** LaSCoT must be informed as soon as practicable in the event of any damage to the vehicle, and in any case within 24 hours excluding Bank Holidays and weekends.

**Breakdown:** All our vehicles are maintained to very high standards and are covered by 24 hours' roadside assistance and recovery. LaSCoT does not warrant providing a replacement vehicle or any cover over and above that provided by our contract with the recovery company and is not liable for any consequential losses.

- or defects and check the tyres, lights and bodywork. Drivers are liable to police prosecution if they drive a defective Vehicle.
- 6 The vehicle, keys and completed log sheet must be returned in a fit and clean condition on the date and time agreed when the booking was made.
  - 7 Any faults, defects, accidents, incidents or motoring offences must be reported immediately. Drivers must not accept liability. Any fines or excess payments incurred during a period of use are the responsibility of the user.
  - 8 The vehicle may not be used for private or individual gain or for party political purposes.
  - 9 The vehicle must not be used to carry more passengers than the number of seats or wheelchair spaces provided, except in circumstances agreed with LaSCoT.
  - 10 Minibuses can only be used to carry passengers and their hand luggage. Users must pay the charges at the current rate. The charges will be those that are in force at the time of use and not at the time of booking. LaSCoT requires that a named individual agrees to be personally responsible for the payment of all bills and charges arising from the use of our services. LaSCoT requires payment of a deposit in advance (based on your expected monthly bill) but offers 30 days credit once a satisfactory credit record has been established. Invoices must be paid in full no later than 30 days after the date of invoice; otherwise transport provision will be withdrawn.
  - 11 Inflammable liquids or gases may not be carried.
  - 12 No drugs or intoxicating liquor may be carried.
  - 13 Regular bookings are only accepted subject to the conditions laid down by the Management Committee.
  - 14 The Management Committee reserves the right to decide between conflicting applications for the use of a vehicle.
  - 15 LaSCoT cannot accept responsibility or liability for the loss or inconvenience caused by the cancellation of a booking or breakdown of a vehicle. LaSCoT reserves the right to vary or cancel the arrangements for any booking without prior notice.
  - 16 LaSCoT shall not be responsible for undertaking police checks or references on volunteers.
  - 17 LaSCoT vehicles may only be used for trips in the UK unless prior written agreement is obtained and additional vehicle cover arranged.
  - 18 Registered users are liable to pay the current insurance excesses if damage occurs to a LaSCoT vehicle within duration of use.
  - 19 Registered users must pay the FULL COST OF REPAIR, when the damage is a result of an accident involving a width restriction or a height limit.
  - 20 Users must pay outstanding balances within 30 days of the original invoice dates (LaSCoT Credit Control Policy). Penalty charges may be levied beyond this period.



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