

How to set up a taxishare service

What is a taxishare service?

A taxishare runs to a timetable like a bus, but operates using a taxi.

- Most taxishare schemes are open to the public, but users must register for the service.
- Passengers book a seat for a specific journey time and pay a fixed fare.
- If nobody books to travel, the service does not operate.
- A taxishare service does not need to follow a set route.
- A taxishare can pick up from anywhere in a specified area, or provide a door-to-door service.

When to use a taxishare service

- Replacing a local bus service that is no longer financially viable.
- For communities spread across a wide rural area.
- For journeys with a maximum of eight passengers at a time (depending on taxi operator).

Typical costs

The taxi operator charges the contracting organisation the same amount as for an individual taxi booking. If you know the price of an individual booking, you can work out the maximum annual cost of the service (price × number of journeys).

In a typical arrangement, the taxi operator keeps the collected passenger fares and charges the contracting organisation the net cost of the journey.

- The more passengers who share a journey, the more cost-effective the service becomes.
- If a service is not booked, the taxi operator does not charge for that journey.

Resources

Any organisation can commission a taxishare service. The taxi operator must be a licensed Hackney Carriage or private hire taxi firm.

The contracting organisation will need:

- to draw up a service specification
- to arrange a contract with an appropriate operator
- someone to take registrations, liaise with the operator and inform passengers of changes
- someone to track and review operations, manage user feedback and process operator invoices

Next steps

- Identify demand (number of people, journeys needed)
- Draw up and agree a timetable (days/times)
- Calculate costs, budget and funding sources
- Draw up a service contract, including if the service needs to be accessible
- Tender or seek prices from operator(s)