PHOENIX
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

A proposal, not yet a service. No Phoenix bus runs yet. The route and times below are a draft, and we are gathering support, volunteers and funding.

How it would work

A community bus, run as a not-for-profit

Phoenix would be set up as a **Community Interest Company** registered with Companies House. A CIC has to use its assets and any surplus for the community it serves, so money from fares goes back into keeping the bus running.

It would operate under a **Section 22 community bus permit** (Transport Act 1985), issued by the Traffic Commissioner. That lets a not-for-profit run a registered local bus service open to everyone, with the route, stops and timetable registered in the usual way.

Fares and bus passes

Passengers without a pass would pay a cash fare. Holders of an English National Concessionary Travel Scheme bus pass would travel under the national scheme, with the operator reimbursed in the normal way.

Drivers

What a driver needs depends on the size of the vehicle.

- **The main bus.** A full-size bus, as proposed, needs drivers with a full bus licence (category D), so it would be driven by **professional drivers**, and we expect them to be paid. If the main bus turned out to be a smaller vehicle, this would be looked at again.
- **The village feeders.** These are small minibuses, driven by **volunteers** from the villages. Many people who passed their car test before 1997 already hold a minibus (D1) entitlement.

If you're interested in either, get in touch and we'll help check what your licence covers.

The bus

The proposal is for a **heritage single-decker** in a distinctive community livery, adapted with a rear wheelchair lift and space for mobility aids, pushchairs and shopping — a bus the villages will recognise as their own.

It is planned to run on **waste cooking oil** collected from local pubs and restaurants and filtered for use. The carbon released when that oil burns was taken from the air by the crops that produced it, so its lifecycle emissions are far lower than fossil diesel's.

Paying for it

Running costs would be met from fares, bus-pass reimbursement and grants, with the possibility of a small contribution from the parish councils served, to give the service a secure base. Detailed figures will be published once they have been checked.

Keeping it safe and legal

The vehicle would have regular preventive maintenance inspections and an annual MOT, and the service would meet the conditions of its permit and registration.

Phoenix Community Transport — a proposed not-for-profit community bus from Paddock Wood, Nettlestead and Wateringbury to Maidstone, with minibus feeders from the villages around.

Contact: hello@phoenixbus.co.uk

phoenixbus.co.uk/how-it-works.html · draft of 29 September 2026