

## **Community Transport Solihull helps improve access to key services**

Community Transport Solihull received Centro's Social Inclusion Funding (SIF) to deliver the 'Skills on the Road' project. The project has gone on to improve the lives of many people across Solihull.

Community Transport Solihull, a voluntary organisation that provides transport services for voluntary and community groups, schools, colleges and the Local Authority applied for SIF to establish and provide passenger assistants and a Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS). This included a training programme for volunteer drivers to gain recognised qualifications along the way.

The key objective of the training programme is to enable Community Transport Solihull to have access to a pool of trained drivers and passenger assistants to improve services for local groups and drivers that other voluntary organisations can utilise. Furthermore, the MiDAS training and qualification provides the volunteer drivers with additional skills, experience and confidence and improves their employment prospects.

Since the start of the project in April 2006, 27 people have been fully trained to MiDAS standards and as passenger assistants. As a direct consequence, there has been an increase in the number of community groups registering with Community Transport and an increase in passenger numbers and trips being made. Community Transport Solihull has also contributed to the regeneration of North Birmingham by helping reduce social exclusion by transporting people in the area to employment and training opportunities