

The TAS Partnership Limited
Passenger Transport Specialists

TAS is currently supporting the CT sector at a time when unprecedented demands are being placed upon it. Our initial information sheet was circulated on 6 April – this newsletter provides updates.

CT Driver Tributes

At least two CT operators have tragically lost drivers to COVID-19: **Nadir Nur** of **Hackney CT** and **Andrew Howe** of **CT4N** (trading subsidiary of **Nottingham Community Transport**), both of whom were drivers of local bus service routes. Cause of death has been confirmed as Coronavirus in both cases.



Financial Support for Voluntary Sector

The Chancellor announced on 8 April that financial support would be made available to voluntary sector agencies to the tune of £750m. This is aimed at "frontline charities...providing vital services" which the Govt. says "will benefit from direct cash grants to ensure they can meet increased demand as a result of the virus as well as continuing their day-to-day activities supporting those in need".

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Edited by John Atkins

This consists of:

- £360 million direct from government departments
- £370 million for smaller charities, including through a grant to the National Lottery Community Fund
- Government will match donations to the National Emergencies Trust as part of the BBC's Big Night In fundraiser later this month – pledging a minimum of £20 million.

Transport charities are not mentioned in the Govt. information but in principle should be eligible.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-sets-out-extra-750-million-coronavirus-funding-for-frontline-charities>



Community Transport Association (CTA)

TAS has worked with **CTA** to produce operational guidance. **CTA** is providing regular information updates here:

<https://ctauk.org/covid19-guidance/>

The third Coronavirus Advice Drop-in Session was held on 3 April and covered:

- communication with local authorities;
- shopping payments from service user to supermarket;
- furloughing staff in the third sector.
- <https://ctauk.org/coronavirus-drop-in-03-april/>

The second drop-in session on 29 March included a download of a letter that **Ealing CT** had prepared to designate key workers – this has now been replaced with a version more suitable for adaptation by other CT operators: <https://ctauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-key-worker-letter.docx>

Financial Support for Gloucestershire CTs



Gloucestershire County Council has provided £100k each to six CT operators in Gloucestershire, including the long-established **Cotswold Friends**. This is in addition to a £500k annual grant allocation. The Council is concerned to ensure that its CT sector is able to continued its operations during the crisis and remain sustainable for the future.

<https://www.wiltsglosstandard.co.uk/news/18363958.cotswold-friends-share-100k-funding-boost/>

Notable CT Responses around the UK



Community Transport CEO Jo Beaumont reports: "having spent years trying to divert items from landfill, we are now transporting refuse collectors behind the refuse vehicle so that they can maintain social distancing. Also doing food deliveries, have linked up with farm shops that are generally not geared up to deliver to more than a few customers, are delivering for food banks in new areas, and maintaining contact with older isolated passengers."

<http://www.communitytransport.org/>



Woking Community Transport (Woking Bustler) Managing Director and CEO **Guy Padfield-Wilkins** says: "We are adapting to the situation, which is changing daily, by making available as many vehicles and drivers as possible across a diverse range of tasks. Importantly, we are not charging for any of these additional services, and although we are continuing with a reduced dial-a-ride service (doctor's appointments and essential food shopping), we are only transporting one passenger at a time and

we are not collecting money from customers." Services include:

- Emergency Food Box Delivery
- Foodbank Collection and Delivery
- NHS Patient Transport – Non-emergency journeys servicing specific sites plus vehicles on call for the CCG if required
- Vehicle Service Station - Woking CT's garage has remained open throughout the lockdown, providing a vital support service for its own vehicles, whilst ensuring that key workers have a reliable garage to use should they need to.

<https://www.wokingbustler.org.uk/>



Worcester Wheels has been singled out for supported by Worcester's mayor **Allah Ditta**. As well as continuing to provide essential journeys for vulnerable persons, the CT operator has volunteered its staff and vehicles as part of the **NHS GoodSAM Initiative**. **Worcester Wheels** actively engaged with the county council's **Happy to Help** project, coordinating volunteer resources to support those in need across the wider community.

<https://worcesterwheels.org.uk/>



Keep Mobile Accessible Transport

(Wokingham) has issued a Coronavirus emergency plan, which indicates to passengers the measures (in three stages) that affect the kinds of journeys that might be undertaken.

<http://www.keep-mobile.org.uk/index.php/14-news/31-keep-mobile-coronavirus-emergency-plan>.



Upper Amman Valley Community Transport & Canolfan Maerdy Food Hub

(South Wales) have launched a COVID-19 fund raising appeal with **GoFundMe**. Co-ordinator **Sacha Petrie** says "the funds are very much needed to pay volunteer expenses and to purchase equipment and extra food items for the more vulnerable in our local area. **Canolfan Maerdy** volunteers are working tirelessly each day collecting food and producing 30 - 45 food boxes which the public can collect or delivered via the Upper Amman Valley Community Transport for free to those most in need."

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/upper-amman-valley-community-transport>.

Furloughed Staff & Volunteering



Under its Job Retention Scheme, the Govt. has made clear that staff who are furloughed are able to undertake volunteering roles: "A furloughed employee can take part in volunteer work, if it does not provide services to or generate revenue for, or on behalf of your organisation or a linked or associated organisation." This makes clear, for example, that staff drivers on furlough cannot continue to drive as a volunteer for the CT that employs them. Moreover, if they were to drive voluntarily for another CT organisation, this would likely be deemed "linked or associated". <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme#employees-you-can-claim-for>

There is some lack of clarity on how the Job Retention Scheme might relate to volunteering activities, and this has been considered by **National Council for Voluntary Services (NCVO)**, who argue that furloughed staff should be encouraged to volunteer.

<https://blogs.ncvo.org.uk/2020/04/08/volunteering-and-furloughing-what-do-we-know/>

Vehicle Safety Inspections



Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain

Under current conditions, the cycle of Preventative Vehicle Inspections (PMIs) may be disrupted. **Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain** has issued temporary guidance to PSV operators (which in this case should be taken to include s19 and s22 vehicles with more than 8 passenger seats). Item 6 of the guidance states: "PMI intervals can be extended by up to 50% with a maximum of 17 weeks, whichever is the lesser, if it's not possible to obtain the PMI under the normal inspection arrangements. This needs to take into account whether any monitored defects were reported on the previous safety inspection." The guidance gives various scenarios – CT operators do need to think about how they can ensure their vehicles are safe.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-heavy-goods-and-public-service-vehicle-operators-covid-19>

Driver Licensing & CPC



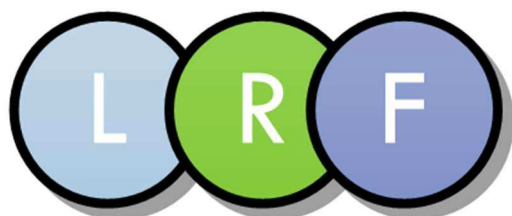
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency

This is an awkward time for any kind of licence application or renewal, especially if a medical check is required. **DVLA** has announced a fast track for key workers for general licence turnaround, stating: "It may take longer than usual for you to get your licence because of coronavirus (COVID-19). If you're a key worker, for example you work in a hospital or supermarket, or you're a lorry driver, and need your licence

urgently, call the **DVLA** contact centre.”
<https://www.gov.uk/renew-driving-licence>.
 Elsewhere **DVLA** has stated: “we are prioritising applications relating to HGV drivers and key workers to make sure they get any documentation they need as quickly as possible. We are unable to deal with any other paper applications until further notice.” We would assume that CT or PSV drivers are also classed as key workers but they aren’t mentioned as such in any **DVLA** info.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dvla-coronavirus-covid-19-update>. No specific relaxation appears to have been granted for those needing to renew entitlements following a medical check (which in most cases GPs are not currently able to offer).

Regarding the CPC situation, **DVSA** has stated that “drivers whose Driver CPC card expires in the period from 1 March 2020 to 30 September 2020 can continue driving. Drivers will not be subject to enforcement action. If you are stopped by an enforcement officer they can check to see that you have previously recently held a Driver CPC...Drivers should carry their expired Driver CPC card if they have it.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-temporary-changes-to-driver-cpc-requirements>

Local Resilience Forum



Local Resilience Forum

The LRFs are not new but they are a means by which the local planning and response services are dealing with the COVID-19 crisis. There may be a role within the LRFs for CT providers (for instance, offering spare vehicle capacity). Your local forum can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-resilience-forums-contact-details>

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Transport Workers



Official Govt. guidance for transport workers (following the WHO position) remains that PPE is not required. This has been disputed, however, by transport unions.
<https://www.transport-network.co.uk/Government-rules-out-PPE-for-transport-workers/16598>

Whilst there is still uncertainty around both usage and procurement of PPE, **Department of Health & Social Care** has published its plan (10 April) which includes details of supply to charities through the Local Resilience Forums.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879117/Coronavirus_COVID-19_-_personal_protective_equipment_PPE_plan.pdf.



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