



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. For previous information and newsletters, please see TAS website: <https://taspartnership.co.uk/TAS-news/>

Vehicle Cleaning Measures



Operators who are continuing to provide passenger services should be aware of the need to clean vehicles to much higher standards. Internal cleaning routines need to be stepped up considerably in terms of frequency and thoroughness, and – maybe for the first time – operators need to carry out a “deep clean”. It is also essential that appropriate disinfectant is used – a bus operator in Cardiff apparently neglected to do this recently. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-52314870>

Govt. guidance on disinfectants in a non-medical setting stipulate “either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per

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million available chlorine or a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer’s instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

It is safer to work on the assumption that all vehicles are contaminated. It is suggested that operators retime the cleaning required and also the airing time - this is now taking 30 minutes (15 minutes clean / 15 minutes air) between uses (not shifts) for PTS vehicles, which are generally of similar size to those used by many CT operators. A fully disinfecting deep cleaning service can be provided by a number of specialist firms who primarily serve the ambulance sector and generally have cleaning facilities deployed all across the country.



Face Masks

While the official line on use of masks for the general public is still under debate, there are strong arguments that bus passengers wearing masks provide a degree of protection to the driver and other passengers from someone who may have the virus. Some CT operators are looking to make the wearing of masks mandatory for their passengers and drivers, with a supply on board the vehicle. This may of course become mandatory for the general public in the UK in the near future.

For some days now Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has been calling for mask wearing by passengers to be made compulsory and the Mayor of Liverpool Steve Rotherham has added his support. Grant Shapps (Transport Minister) has thus far not felt such a move is justified. Some operators are already issuing masks to drivers, and some drivers have simply chosen to wear their own protection, as reported below: <https://www.itv.com/news/london/2020-04-15/london-bus-drivers-use-own-masks-and-goggles-to-feel-safe-at-work/>



Social Distancing & Ventilation on Vehicles



On minibuses – if possible - it is a good idea to remove some seats to enforce distancing. Otherwise every other seat should be taped off as out of use. Irrespective of the weather conditions, it is recommended that windows and roof vents are opened throughout vehicles (and not just in the driver's compartment) – signs explaining why would be a good idea. Air conditioning should be turned off if there are opening windows. In cars or MPVs, passengers should where practical sit in the rear seat and not alongside the driver.

Funding Support



WRAP – many CTs have now become food distributors and the UK Government in collaboration with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) have launched a £3.25 million fund to support the operations of not-for-profit food redistributors to ensure that any surplus food can reach people in need or those considered most vulnerable.

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/resource-action-fund>

Welsh Government has announced two new funds to help charities, community groups and social enterprises affected by the Coronavirus. Grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 are available through the Voluntary Services Emergency Fund to help organisations maintain or increase activities that support the vulnerable and disadvantaged in their communities. The second fund, the Third Sector Resilience Fund for Wales, will involve a blend of 75% grant and 25% initially interest free loan to organisations who have been affected financially due to a fall in fundraising and donation income.

GrantsOnline

Grants Online has provided a useful digest of current grant funds that might be accessed by CT operators here:

<https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/coronavirus.html>



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/>

Check above also for the remote advice drop-in sessions.

Volunteering

National Care Force



The National Care Force is “a nationwide network of care providers, healthcare workers and volunteers, ready to support our social care services in looking after the most vulnerable members of society” It is primarily aimed at “recruiting qualified healthcare worker, a care provider, or a volunteer lending a hand, vulnerable locals could do with your assistance.” It is possible that CTs could gain volunteers from this platform.

<https://www.nationalcareforce.co.uk/>

The King’s Fund has provided some commentary on the volunteering situation. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2020/04/volunteering-covid-19-crisis>

Time To Spare is grappling with the potential for furloughed voluntary sector staff to volunteer elsewhere and stay within the guidelines.

<https://help.timetospare.com/furlough-swap>

Notable CT Responses around the UK



Need (Northumberland) has now classed all its staff as key workers providing essential transport to schools for children of frontline workers. It is also supporting the North East Ambulance Service and has joined forces with Alnwick Food Bank to deliver essential food parcels to those in need. <https://www.needltd.co.uk/>

CT4N (trading arm of Nottingham CT) manager Ian Combellack has called for COVID-19 testing to be made available to drivers, following an extensive review of safety measures which has put CT4N well

ahead of required minimum standards. Shortage of testing facilities in general is a current concern across many sectors where key workers come into contact with the general public.



<https://www.route-one.net/drivers/ct4n-calls-for-priority-bus-driver-covid-19-testing/>



Community Transport’s Liz Sutton has provided an update on services as follows (and launched a new logo!):

- “Transporting renal patients on behalf of the WMAS for life-saving dialysis treatment – also having picked up more routes than we did previously to ease the burden on NHS staff
- Utilising bus services that are not currently required to deliver groceries in and around Coventry
- Continuing to deliver some school contracts to assist key working parents
- Transporting the dancing refuse collectors!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbplxtKqONA>

- Changing our South Staffs connect service into a shopper service for those that cannot get out – a service that has been received by local residents as a ‘lifesaver’ and ‘second-to-none’

- In the North East, working with #Fareshare to deliver groceries to local communities

- In the North East and the Midlands, working with Local Authorities to rehouse the homeless with emergency Furniture packages”

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



Little Green Bus (Lancashire) has launched a 'Cakes for Carers' initiative. Manager Donna Atkinson tells us that one of her volunteers (who is too old for driving duties under current circumstances) is an excellent baker and together they have decided to reward carers with free, home delivered cakes.

<http://www.littlegreenbus.org.uk/>



Stockport Car Scheme, one of the biggest car schemes in the UK, has now resumed services. Manager Sue Peck says: "We are now doing essential medical appointments as well as collecting prescriptions and delivering kit for the NHS. We have been asked to deliver for the foodbank."



South Antrim Community Transport has been featured on the BBC news in Northern Ireland for its work delivering food parcels to rural residents.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-northern-ireland-52262605/coronavirus-driving-for-the-most-vulnerable-during-a-pandemic>

Driver Licensing

DVLA has confirmed that bus drivers aged 45 and over who currently need to renew their vocational licences will benefit from a temporary suspension of the D4 medical requirement.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applications-for-renewing-lorry-and-bus-driving-licences-at-age-45-and-over-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>



All DVLA business must now be done online – paper applications are suspended. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dvla-coronavirus-covid-19-update>

To AGM or Not?

This would normally be the time of year when Annual General Meetings are being arranged by CTs. The Charity Commission has relaxed its requirements and allows AGMs to be postponed and annual returns to be filed late. If there is no urgent business or decision to be settled at the AGM, then this would probably be the easiest option. However, it is possible to hold the meeting by remote means. It could be done by email, Skype or conference call depending on how many people need to be involved and whether this is not explicitly disallowed by governing documents. The key issue would be to ensure that all members are effectively communicated with and their wishes understood. Proxy voting could be utilised. What the guidance below does stress, however, is that you record or minute the decision to postpone or change the format of the meeting. In other words, make sure the board has all approved the new way of working.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector#agms-and-other-meetings-postponing-or-cancelling-meetings>



If you require any advice or support please contact us on 01772-204988 or email john.atkins@taspartnership.com