



**Community  
Transport at**



## Community Transport Newsletter No.10 July 2021

TAS has provided expert advice, guidance and support for the CT sector for over 30 years. This general newsletter follows from our well-received COVID-19 coverage between April & September 2020. Please let us know of any items that might of interest to the wider CT sector.

### Karen Gibson, MBE

Congratulations to Karen Gibson, who has been awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. The official citation reads "For services to Safety in Transport" – reflecting Karen's long-standing work as a driver and passenger assistant training practitioner in the CT sector and her pivotal role in developing the MIDAS and PATS training schemes.

Karen has recently "retired" from running her much in demand training business. Last year she celebrated 40 years involvement in the passenger transport sector, having fallen into it by chance in 1980 with a summer job as a cleaner for Grey-Green Coaches in London which had the perk of free PSV driving training. She passed her test and went on to do an extended gap year as a coach driver to raise funds for her postgraduate studies.

During this time, she hired a van from Haringey CT for the Women's Housing Co-operative where she lived and in the process discovered that the CT was short of volunteers and in particular women volunteers to drive their minibuses. They

obtained a grant in 1985 from the Council to run familiarisation, training and confidence building sessions for volunteers and employed Karen to deliver these, with a view (successfully) to grow and even up the numbers of men and women volunteers. This approach spread across other CTs in London with Karen working for Hackney CT, Brent CT, Camden CT and others. An increasing proportion of the vehicles involved were accessible and safety and comfort for wheelchair users became a major issue for Karen.

In 1987 Karen got involved with the nascent Community Transport Association in developing a driver training pack for Camden CT, which had received a grant from LB Camden. It became clear that there was a national need for this product and after a lot of research and consultation and a series of pilot training sessions, this was launched by the CTA as the Community Transport Driver Assessment and Training Pack (the DATpack) in 1989. Over the next few years Karen was a regular at regional and national CT events running workshops on how to use the Pack. She was also commissioned by Hampshire County Council to deliver hands on sessions for the county's CTs and worked on the CTA's Minibus Safety Charter launched in 1990.



The CT DATpack and the Minibus Safety Charter were key to the Mobility Alliance persuading the EU Commission to change their original proposals on driver licence harmonisation so that the UK could allow 'grandfather rights' for existing minibus

drivers and for new minibus drivers who are volunteers (i.e. no requirement to take a second test). The Pack and the Charter demonstrated that the CT sector was implementing effective self-policing. In 1991, to continue this process, Karen helped set up a CTA working party looking at how to achieve quality driver training which would be both appropriate and affordable. By this time Karen had moved back to Yorkshire and spent two years with Sheffield CT before moving to the CTA in 1993 as Commercial Director to develop their training and events programmes.

In that year, she and John Taylor were asked by Cheshire County Council to develop a school transport safety assessment and training programme focusing on the needs of children with special educational needs. This required creating a formal needs assessment framework leading to individual specifications for the vehicles and equipment and the associated driver and passenger assistant training. Over 150 children were assessed, and both in-house and contractors' vehicles were checked and measured, resulting in a full clean sheet replanning of the arrangements. All frontline staff were required to undergo a two-day modular training programme which Karen and John developed and delivered at the Council's transport HQ. The system was published as national guidance by ATCO (the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers).

The need for improved safety standards came into sharp focus in late 1993 with five serious coach and minibus accidents in October and November including the M40 Hagley School crewbus accident with eleven fatalities. Whilst the key issue was the absence of seatbelts (in the final accident in Cobham all fifteen schoolboy passengers survived a high speed crash into the back of a petrol tanker because, in contrast to the other accidents, seatbelts were fitted and worn) the incidents also raised driver training issues. This stimulated Hampshire County Council to formalise their approach and Karen, John Taylor and John Burnell (an experienced local ADI (Advanced Driving Instructor) were commissioned to invest in the cascade/'Train the Trainer' model. This overlapped with the work of the CTA working party and after trials in

Hampshire the model was rolled out as MiDAS (Minibus Driver Assessment Scheme) in 1995, going national through the CTA. Since then, Karen has been ever present in delivering the high level Training Agent courses for MiDAS (and subsequently PATS for passenger assistants).

Through her training business Karen has delivered frontline courses to hundreds of DATS and thousands of drivers and passenger assistants working for public authorities and third sector groups across the whole of the UK. About this work Karen says: "One of the things I've most valued about working in the not-for-profit transport sector is that CT and Local Authority Drivers and PA's didn't need me to remind them that their passenger is the most important person in the vehicle.

What I've most enjoyed is the variety of the work and learning from the people I've worked with. Although MiDAS and PATS and 5 STEPS training are 'packages' their great value is in how people take what they learn and make it their own. I have learned something from every course I've delivered.

Because I don't run my own training centre I've had to travel to where the training is needed. It has been my privilege to be invited into clients' workplaces and communities to deliver their training.... School classrooms, School staff rooms, Bus Depots, Town Halls, Church Halls, Village Halls, Community Centres, CT Projects' offices and Drivers' rest rooms, CT Hon Treasurer's farmhouse kitchen, Portakabins old and new, National Trust stately homes (all old 😊) and so on and so forth."

TAS Director John Taylor paid this tribute to Karen: "I've known Karen as a friend and colleague since around 1985. Although she will say that this award is for community transport, the fact is that her personal efforts to improve passenger safety have gone well beyond a conventional career. In short, she has been responsible for saving lives and reducing injuries. I don't know anyone who is such a careful and meticulous professional in approach. When I have been working on minibuses with Karen I have sometimes stood back simply (and very enviously) to observe how effortlessly and smoothly she goes about

her work. She radiates competence which provides an assured atmosphere to her passengers and her co-workers. In reality, the MiDAS 'trickle-down' model involves trickle down from Karen so we can all benefit from this.

Karen has been my 'go-to' person for advice on all aspects of the frontline job of delivering safe, friendly and consistent passenger transport. This award is richly deserved and I have no doubt that a lot of people who have benefitted from her help will join me in sending her congratulations, personal thanks and, finally, best wishes for the new challenges she is taking on in this new stage of her life."



### West Berkshire Volunteer Centre Handybus celebrates 35-year partnership with West Berkshire Council

Newbury Today: "A West Berkshire charity has celebrated a 35-year partnership with the launch of two new community buses to its fleet. Driven by Volunteer Centre West Berkshire's (VCWB) volunteer drivers, Handybus is one of the district's community transport services supporting older people and those with disabilities, who would otherwise struggle to get out and do their own shopping. The service enables people to maintain their independence and provides important social interaction that helps to reduce isolation. The launch of the two new Handybuses marked 35 years of Handybus's partnership with West Berkshire Council. The service started in 1986 with Newbury District Council, now West Berkshire District Council, first

investing in community transport – establishing a partnership with Newbury Volunteer Bureau, now Volunteer Centre West Berkshire. The keys to the first bus were handed to Kath Harding, then chairman of trustees of the bureau, by the late councillor Keith Lock who was council chairman at the time. The service now undertakes around 10,000 passenger trips each year. VCWB's chair of trustees Brien Beharrell said: 'The Handybus service operating in Newbury and Thatcham is the perfect partnership of statutory and voluntary sectors, with West Berkshire council providing funds for the hardware and Handybus recruiting and training its volunteers. Newbury and Thatcham Handybus coordinate the needs of the passengers, insure and maintains the three-vehicle fleet and buys the fuel.' The council works with VCWB to invest in community transport – providing almost £48,000 this year to enable the charity to purchase the two new fully accessible Peugeot Boxers. One of the two new buses is called 'Fred the Bus' to commemorate a long-serving driver. West Berkshire Council chairman, Clive Hooker (Con, Downlands) met passengers of a new Handybus, along with retired council transport officer Mike Blackshaw, who initiated the community transport scheme in the district. Mr Hooker said: 'It is an achievement to be celebrating what could well be one of the most enduring partnership the council has had with the voluntary sector, and it's great to have the opportunity to meet a volunteer driver and some of the people who enjoy and benefit from travelling on Handybus. The fact that the service is run by volunteers ensures that it can be run at a low cost and the council is very grateful to the drivers, other volunteers and the coordinators who give up their time to support local people.' For more information about the Handybus service call (01635) 37111 between 9am and 1pm, Monday to Thursday."

Information about other community transport services can be found at  
<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/communitytransport>  
<https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/charity-marks-35-years-of-supporting-people-around-the-distr-9202794/>



**Ealing Community Transport welcomes new Chief Executive**  
 Ealing CT website: "ECT is 'in a terrific place' to provide more support, develop new partnerships and expand our impact for local communities. That's the message from John Chesters as he takes up his position as new CEO at the charity, following the retirement of Anna Whitty in April. 'As we all emerge from the uncertainties and in far too many cases the personal grief of the last 12 months, I have little doubt that the need for ECT Charity is going to be greater than ever,' said John this week. 'Community Transport is so much more than just a physical journey. It is a lifeline, a connection to the outside world, and a route to an experience for many of the people we support.' In a message to the charity's team and partners across the three areas in which the charity operates in Ealing, Cheshire and Dorset, John said his aim 'will not be to make great changes to the services we provide'. He continued: 'What we do is already exceptional and admired wherever it has impact, or wherever we become known. Our social value brings so much more than just a few pounds saved by a local authority.' John paid tribute to the work of his predecessor Anna Whitty, saying she had 'left ECT in great shape'. He also praised the work of all the charity's team during the Covid pandemic, keeping core services running but also stepping in with essential support such as food delivery and transport to vaccination centres. As the pandemic subsides and the world readjusts, there would be new opportunities for ECT to 'do more to help the communities we work with, but also to see what else we can bring to the places we work,' he said. 'ECT is exceptionally well positioned to help ensure we are there to provide support but also to

develop new opportunities and partnerships to expand our impact. Because that is the culture of ECT – to go the extra mile. To say I am looking forward to the job is definitely an understatement. ECT is doing so much already, and it will be an honour to lead the charity as we enter our next phases. ECT is doing so much already, and it will be an honour to lead the charity as we enter our next phases." John officially started at ECT on 24th May, with deputy CEO Becky Casement having served as interim CEO after Anna Whitty retired at the end of April. John was formerly CEO at Emmaus Hertfordshire, and also worked for a number of years with The Forward Trust (Blue Sky), supporting ex-offenders to find employment and in various operations focused roles. He also knows Ealing very well, having worked as General Manager for ECT Recycling between 2001 and 2006. ECT Chair Patrick O'Keeffe commented: 'We are delighted to welcome John as he takes up this key role at ECT. John will bring a wealth of experience to the organisation, including an excellent track record in the charity sector and extensive experience of working with local authorities. We look forward to working with John as he builds and expands on the solid foundations and strong values that have been developed at ECT.'"

<https://ectcharity.co.uk/news/story/new-ceo-john-chesters-says-ect-is-in-a-terrific-place-to-build-on-exceptional-work-in-our-communities>



### USA - Jefferson Transit Authority board discusses bus service for homeless

Peninsula Daily News: "Emergency bus service for people without homes, the shortage of bus drivers and plans for expansion over the next five years were all

discussed during the Jefferson Transit Authority board meeting this past week. Having proposed a homeless encampment on Cape George Road — the topic of heated conversations among local officials and the public — Jefferson County Commissioner Greg Brotherton has asked Jefferson Transit's staff to research how buses could serve the camp. A dial-a-ride bus is one option, mobility operations manager Miranda Nash said during Tuesday's meeting, while another possibility is to deviate an existing fixed route to pick up campers. All of this has yet to be figured out, but Jefferson Transit general manager Tammi Rubert promised the agency would continue to help in any way possible. It's the transit agency's responsibility to provide public transportation for all county residents, she said. The board meeting also brought forward the 2021-2026 Transit Development Plan, a 28-page document outlining Jefferson Transit's expansion priorities....Jefferson Transit's mission is to provide reliable, safe, friendly, comfortable public transportation service in Jefferson County, the plan notes, adding that service should be cost-effective, reduce energy consumption and contribute to the cultural and economic betterment of the county's people. 'Jefferson Transit remains committed to obtaining zero-emissions vehicles,' the plan continues, while noting that for much of the county, electric bus technology isn't viable 'due to the rural nature of the service area.' The exception is the No. 11 downtown shuttle, for which the agency has proposed an electric trolley-style bus, 'an idea which was met with great support.' Jefferson Transit will keep monitoring evolving technology, the plan says...A more pressing issue: drivers. Jefferson Transit has been advertising those job openings nonstop, said finance manager Sara Crouch. A transit operator must be 21 or older, have a clean driving record and pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol test. Just as important, said fixed-route operations manager Nicole Gauthier, is a liking for people. 'We can train you to drive,' she said, but 'we really are looking for people who are excited about working with the public.' Gauthier said she's seeking to hire three drivers, so county Commissioner Heidi Eisenhour joked that she, Brotherton and Commissioner Kate Dean could apply. 'We

might consider it with the week we've had,' Dean said."

<https://www.peninsuladailynews.com/news/jefferson-transit-authority-board-discusses-bus-service-for-homeless/>



Tributes paid to Val Stokes, pioneer of Worcester Wheels  
Worcester News: "Tributes have been paid to a tireless advocate of support for the elderly in Worcester. Val Stokes, who died on Monday, June 7, was the longest serving trustee of Worcester Wheels, a community transport service in the city and a former CEO of Age UK Worcester & District. 'It is with deep sadness that I pass on the news about our longest serving trustee, Val Stokes,'" said Graham Heath, chairman of trustees at Worcester Wheels. 'Val had been an enthusiastic supporter of Worcester Wheels having first served as a volunteer and later as a trustee. Having spent many years involved in charitable works in Worcester, Val was CEO of Age Concern – now Age UK – for some 20 years and was instrumental in the setting up of Worcester Wheels as a separate operation from the Worcester Volunteer Centre. I am sure I express the sentiments of all of us at Worcester Wheels that she will be sadly missed and we extend our sincere condolences to her family.' A statement on behalf of the trustees of Age UK Worcester & Malvern Hills said: 'Val was CEO of Age UK Worcester and District for a number of years before her retirement. During that time she was instrumental to the development of Age Concern as it was then, expanding the services we provided and the development of our shops in particular. She and her late husband Peter, who was our handyman, were both very committed to our charity and to our

volunteers. We would also like to send our condolences to her family.' Mrs Stokes had always been proactive in garnering media support for projects and frequently came forward to appeal for help with a wide range of services, including those enabling the delivery of meals to the elderly. Mrs Stokes was also recognised for 25 years of service to Worcester Wheels back in December 2017. She offered her voluntary support in a range of roles from working in the office through to providing advice as part of the finance and human resources committee. At the time, vice-chairman John Warham presented Val with a bouquet of flowers and commented: 'Val's commitment to this very worthwhile community facility is commended.'

<https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/19371503.tri-butes-paid-val-stokes-pioneer-worcester-wheels/>



Aberfeldy locals can learn more about sustainable travel as new community transport hub opens  
The Courier: "Aberfeldy folk can borrow an electric bike or book a community lift, thanks to the opening of a new hub in the town. The Upper Tay Community Transport Hub also gives information about public transport, cycling or walking in the area. The service, which aims to reduce private car use, opened at the Square on Friday afternoon. Its opening was marked with John Swinney MSP cutting the ribbon followed by a tour of the building. The Upper Tay Community Transport Hub was officially opened by John Swinney MSP.

The hub will offer locals a range of services, all of which promote sustainable travel. Development Officer for Upper Tay Transport Emma Burtles said: 'The community now has a place where everyone can go to get everything they need to know about transport in our area.

You can loan an electric bike or book a community lift or find out about public transport or bus and car hire. You'll also be able to discover more information and ways in which you can actively travel, including extensive cycling and walking information and inspiration. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to help and advise you about the different ways you can get around our beautiful Tay Valley area.' The hub comes following numerous organisations and volunteers working together to plan and provide funding. Chairperson of the Steering Group for the Upper Tay Transport Group, Cindy Brook said: 'I would like to take this opportunity to thank Griffin and Calliachar Community Fund, the Lottery Community Fund, Perth and Kinross Council and Smarter Choices, Smarter Places, as well as all our fantastic volunteers. The opening of the hub is a testament to everyone's efforts and the resilience with our community.' Upper Tay Transport – the organisation behind the hub – is a community project that works to improve transport in the Aberfeldy area and to encourage sustainable travel. It aims to reduce private car use while promoting use of public transport or shared travel. The hub is open from 10am until 2pm on Monday to Friday."

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/perth-kinross/2320450/aberfeldy-locals-can-learn-more-about-sustainable-travel-as-new-community-transport-hub-opens/>



Community transport goes electric under **ReFLEX Orkney**  
ReFLEX Orkney website: 'Hoy and Eday residents now have access to low carbon, electric community transport services. The Hoy Development Trust and the Eday **Partnership** have both received two electric people-carriers which are owned and operated by each community group to provide transport for locals. Support was provided by Community

Energy Scotland (CES) via the ReFLEX Orkney project, funded by UKRI through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. The vehicles form part of the project's overarching aim to decarbonise Orkney's transport sector, along with electricity and heat networks. Each community has been set up with access to two Nissan eNV200 electric vehicles: one with a seven seat capacity and one five seat capacity vehicle with wheelchair access. Local residents can benefit from the flexible, on-demand nature of the transport service provided by the community groups operating the new vehicles. The vehicles have been in use since last summer and have proven particularly valuable during the coronavirus outbreak. Deborah Jaques, Chair of The Island of Hoy Development Trust said: 'The vehicles have been put to use alongside the existing community bus, which was running a scheduled service between Longhope and the ferry terminal at Lyness before the pandemic. Since the vehicles were delivered last March they have supported various community activities during lockdown. The vehicles have provided another transport option for those with particular health care needs or with limited mobility as part of the Development Trust's dial-a-bus service. This has included the delivery of prescriptions and essential supplies to islanders including, but not limited to, those who have been shielding for the duration of the outbreak.' Similarly, the electric vehicles on Eday have been used by Directors and volunteers from the Eday Partnership since June to ensure that the Eday community remains connected and well looked after. Services have included food box deliveries, hot meals, parcels, shopping, prescriptions and even school work. Mellissa Thomson from The Eday Partnership said: 'Eday Partnership reaches out to the whole of the island's community, responding to the needs and interests of local residents. The vehicles allow us to continue playing an active role in supporting and strengthening the local community, while enabling improved mobility, responsiveness and flexibility in delivering these services. Since August, we have been using the vehicles to provide the school bus run, picking up the island's children. More recently, as part of our wellbeing project, we have been using the vehicles for transporting our residents

around the island and this is something that we are looking to make into a regular service. Mobility is a big issue on Eday and now that we have a vehicle that is wheelchair accessible, this really has the potential to improve the lives of our residents. At Eday Partnership, we are always looking to how we can best serve the community that we represent, and these vehicles go a great way to help us achieve the aims and objectives of our Development Trust.' The collaboration between these community groups and the ReFLEX Orkney project demonstrates one way to make innovative, low carbon technologies, such as electric vehicles, more accessible to the public. The community-owned and operated electric vehicles will ensure that all residents have the opportunity to take advantage of low carbon transport on their doorstep..." <https://www.reflexorkney.co.uk/news/community-transport-goes-electric-under-reflex-orkney>



### Readibus service reduced to two days a week following council's funding cut

Reading Chronicle: "An ongoing dispute over a 'gagging clause' between a charity and West Berkshire Council (WBC) has reduced an important bus service for elderly and disabled people in Newbury to just two days a week. Readibus provides elderly and disabled people with transport across the county, including in Reading and Woodley, but says it has been forced to greatly reduce its bus services in West Berkshire due to a lack of funding from the council. The charity stopped providing five-day-a-week dial-a-ride bus service in Newbury and other parts of West Berkshire on April 16 after six months without WBC funding and being asked to sign a 'gagging clause'. The clause in the proposed grant

agreement – that Readibus refuses to sign – reads: ‘The Charity shall not, and shall take reasonable steps to ensure that staff shall not, make any press announcement or publicise the Agreement or any part of the Agreement in any way, except with the prior written consent of the Council, which will not be unreasonably withheld’. Professor Sophie Bowlby, chair of the Readibus board, said this means the charity must obtain the prior written consent of the council before making any press announcement, which ‘enshrines the right of censorship by the council’ in law and is a ‘non-reciprocal gagging order’. The charity’s trustees told the council they are happy to sign the agreement with this clause removed but the council has rejected the request. WBC says the clause is not a ‘gagging clause’ but ‘merely ensures that the service provider notifies the council before any information concerning the agreement is put in the public domain’. It says this is a ‘standard clause on confidentiality that the council would expect from its service providers’. However, the clause states the written consent of the council is needed rather than simply asking for notification. WBC says it has been clear in discussions with Readibus and other community transport operators that any grant funding in excess of £5,000 from April 2020 onwards would be subject to a service level agreement (SLA). It says all its other community transport operators have agreed to the SLA apart from Readibus. WBC has withheld half of the budgeted grant to Readibus for 2020/21 due to the charity not signing the contract, totalling £6,566.93. It comes after Readibus provided an uninterrupted service throughout the pandemic and covered the extra costs associated with running the service such as cleaning and PPE. This means Readibus has not received any funding from WBC since September 2020. Professor Bowlby said it costs more than £50,000 a year to provide Readibus services in West Berkshire. For now, it is only able to provide services two days a week in Newbury and to existing customers only in the eastern parts of West Berkshire – such as Calcot and Purley – after receiving £1,500 in public donations. But the charity needs to raise another £4,000 to continue offering a two-day-a-week service in Newbury for the whole of 2021/22. Readibus’ funding was already

reduced by 68 per cent in 2019/20 without public consultation, going from £45,761 in 2018/19 to £14,580 in 2019/20. WBC says it has not reduced overall community transport funding since 2019/20, with Readibus’ share of the grant going down because they are delivering less passenger journeys compared to other providers. However, the funding is based on journey numbers from two years prior and so funding was cut by 68 per cent for 2019/20 but journey numbers had only fallen by 12 per cent. A spokesman for WBC added: ‘We are very keen to work with Readibus to understand the impact on its client base and we are grateful to Readibus for the service provided. Whilst this is regrettable for passengers who use Readibus services in Newbury and Thatcham, we wanted to ensure that those passengers are aware that there are other community transport groups providing services for local residents who are unable to use public transport and need to attend medical appointments or make shopping trips’.”

[https://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/19343870\\_readibus-service-reduced-two-days-week-following-councils-funding-cut/](https://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/19343870_readibus-service-reduced-two-days-week-following-councils-funding-cut/)



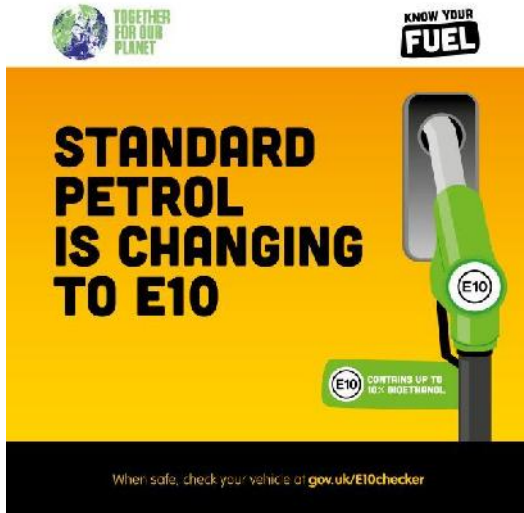
## Standard petrol is changing to E10

DVLA: “This summer the standard petrol grade in the UK will become E10. Currently, UK petrol is E5, meaning it contains up to 5% bioethanol. E10 petrol will see the amount of bioethanol increase to 10%. Petrol cars manufactured after 2011 and most modern motorcycles are E10 compatible. However, around 5% of petrol vehicles made before 2011 will need to continue to use E5 petrol which will remain available as the super grade petrol option at the pumps. Using E10 fuel in an incompatible petrol vehicle will not cause immediate harm but continued use could



damage your engine's parts. If in doubt about the compatibility of your vehicle, you can use the online E10 vehicle checker or seek further advice from the vehicle manufacturer or garage."

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVLA/bulletins/2e3e2a1>



### Community car goes out on the road in Oswestry

Shropshire Star: "Oswestry company, Aico is helping its employees support charities and schools, with the help of Community Car. The fully electric vehicle will be used to get out into the community for volunteering and other projects. Aico, which specialises in fire safety, says its community work was stunted during the pandemic and had to be done in a different way with virtual fundraisers, marketing support to smaller charities and online educational encounters with several schools. The new car is part of the company's pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030. Jane Pritchard, Community Liaison said: 'We are delighted that Aico has provided us with this fantastic car. This will give us the chance to help even more in our communities, whether that is charitable volunteering or the educational support we are able to provide in schools and colleges. We are really looking forward to getting back out on the road.' All colleagues at Aico are encouraged to get involved in community work and are granted three days outside of the regular working schedule in order to volunteer, giving their time and supporting in various ways. 'With the pandemic having a significant impact on fundraising and support to charities and

organisations, Aico is keen to get back out into the community and increase support through education, business enterprise, charity and volunteering, To find out more about Aico in the Community, visit

[www.aico.co.uk/in-the-community](http://www.aico.co.uk/in-the-community)."

<https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/oswestry/2021/06/11/community-car-goes-out-on-the-road/>



### Happy tears as Honiton 'vital' transport service tackling loneliness funds first-of-its kind electric vehicle

East Devon News: "A deputy manager of a Honiton transport service dedicated to reducing loneliness has cried happy tears over the generosity of donations made to fund a new electric vehicle. TRIP has been granted £7,500 from East Devon District Council, and £5,000 from Devon County Council to help achieve its Crowdfunding goal of a total of £35,000. The transport group believes the wheelchair-friendly electric vehicle will be the first of its kind to be used by an East Devon community organisation. Councillor Mike Allen, EDDC ward member Honiton St Michael's, said he 'wished' they could add another nought to the sum being granted to the 'vital' community service. Sharon Thorne, Honiton TRIP deputy manager, said: 'It's been amazing to hear the wonderful comments the community have made about TRIP and this fundraising project. To see the support in terms of donations, well this is completely overwhelmingly and wonderful. I will admit I have cried a few times as well, as it was hard not to become emotional when someone you know is "only just managing" and they insist on donating £10, or also when someone calls to offer £500. They all mean so much to the team, knowing people care about support TRIP and the environment with this project...Also, knowing we had had support

from EDDC has been fantastic.' Councillor Mike Allen, EDDC ward member Honiton St Michael's, said: 'TRIP is a vital part of the Honiton and district community and the volunteers have worked beyond any expectations and during the pandemic to ferry people and food to so many places of need. I wish we could put another nought on the end of the cheque we are sending.' Cllr Phil Twiss, EDDC ward member for Honiton, said: 'TRIP is an inspirational organisation that we are fortunate to have based in Honiton. It provides unrivalled and invaluable community transport services to very many residents, many with mobility issues. Purchasing a new one-hundred per cent electric vehicle with wheelchair access will not only help continue to operate vital services but also demonstrate a commitment to operating it with zero carbon emissions.' TRIP, which has spent has more than 20 years working in East Devon's communities, helping to reduce loneliness and isolation with services such as transport and befriending, launched a Crowdfunding campaign to replace its 17-year-old vehicle with a 100 per cent electric version. The community group, which carried out more than 35,000 journeys a year prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, said the new vehicle will be better for passengers and the environment. A TRIP spokesperson said: 'Our vision is to be the first community groups to embrace technology and provide an electric wheelchair vehicle. This innovative e-vehicle will replace the current 17-year-old vehicle and join our fleet to help provide over 35,000 transport requests a year.' Grants given by the EDDC and DCC helped raise the final £20,000 needed to help buy the £35,000 vehicle, and keep the service's phone lines running. Councillor Jack Rowland, EDDC community grants panel chairman, said: 'We were very pleased to be able to support TRIP in view of their successful crowdfunding effort. As I have in the past been a volunteer driver for TRIP, I'm fully aware of the help that is given in so many ways to residents across a wide area of East Devon who would otherwise struggle to find alternative help.' Cllr Roger Croad, DCC cabinet member for communities, said: 'During the pandemic it was groups like TRIP that made such a difference to people's lives, supporting those in the community who felt isolated and lonely and needed to hear a friendly

voice. I'm happy to be able to support this project, it's exactly the kind of community project Crowdfund Devon was set up for..." <https://eastdevonnews.co.uk/2021/06/07/trip-honiton-crowdfunding-success/>

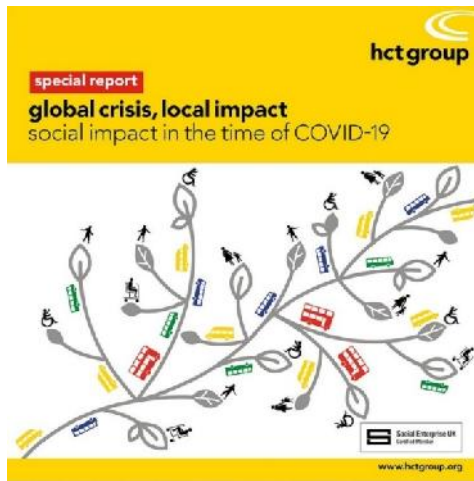


## Hackney Community Transport launches COVID themed Social Impact report

HCT website: "The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone, everywhere – and HCT Group is no exception. As the pandemic took hold, many of our service users needed to shield for their own safety – so we could no longer provide many of our community services. We responded by re-imagining many of our services: changing them from taking vulnerable people to things – to taking things to vulnerable people. HCT Group has produced a social impact report every year since 2010 – they are an important part of how we stay accountable as a social enterprise. Our usual reports use rigorous measurement and user research to explore the difference we've been making. The pandemic has prevented our normal research-based approach – but we still have a story to tell. Our special report, 'Global crisis, local impact: social impact in the time of COVID-19', aims to tell those stories. It explores how we have responded to the crisis in each of our regions, working with our partners. From 750 delivery runs to socially isolated older people in Yorkshire, to 11.6 tonnes of food delivered to vulnerable people in Bristol, to 1200 laptops delivered to home-schooling

children in London – HCT Group has been active in our communities, delivering on our social mission. The report also highlights the work of our mainstream bus services. We have come to appreciate the vital role played by these services as never before – connecting key workers with their jobs to keep our communities going during lockdown.”

[http://www.hackneyct.org/1813/HCT+Group+launches+social+impact%3A+special+report/hackney\\_community\\_transport/hct\\_news](http://www.hackneyct.org/1813/HCT+Group+launches+social+impact%3A+special+report/hackney_community_transport/hct_news)



## Queen’s Award for Fellrunner Village Bus

Cumberland & Westmorland Herald: “A volunteer bus service which has served the Eden community for more than 40 years has been awarded the UK’s highest honour for its work. Fellrunner Village Bus has been given the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service – the MBE for volunteer groups. Fellrunner delivers an essential service to its local community. It connects the many small villages and isolated hamlets in Eden district to Penrith and Carlisle. Fellrunner services were launched in November 1979 after two years of planning by the local community, Cumbria County Council and Voluntary Action Cumbria. The first bus was a 17-seater Ford Transit minibus leased from the County Council, but since 1996 the buses have been owned by the Fellrunner. In the early days the bus ran through the East Fellside villages, providing a feeder service to connect with the Ribble services from Langwathby to Penrith and Carlisle. Since the withdrawal of all commercial services, the Fellrunner itself has provided scheduled services from the Fellside to both Penrith and Carlisle. These have been

supplemented by private hire excursions. In 1999 it was decided to have two buses in order to extend the scheduled service to other villages – in the Lyvennet Valley on Tuesday and to Calthwaite, Catterlen, and Blencow on Friday. In 2004 a third bus was bought and an extra Wednesday route was added for Ainstable, Croglin and Renwick. Services have been further extended in recent years to assist in those areas where commercial services have withdrawn, for example, Skelton and Burnbanks. In 2015, the volunteers were able to add a low floor accessible bus to the fleet and it currently runs two – meaning easy access for wheelchair users. The Fellrunner is operated by The Fellrunner Village Bus Ltd. The Fellrunner Village Bus has six trustees who take responsibility for the strategic direction and day-to-day operation of Fellrunner, supported by a number of volunteers – both drivers and non-drivers – who perform specific tasks. It currently has three 17-seat minibuses, (driver plus up to 16 passengers) all owned by Fellrunner...In total, 241 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups received the prestigious award this year across the UK. The winning organisations will receive a certificate signed by The Queen and a domed glass crystal which will be presented by HM Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria, Claire Hensman. Two volunteers from each group will attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in May 2022...The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service is an annual award made to recognise and reward the most exceptional and innovative groups who provide voluntary led activities carried out by local groups in the community. It is a highly competitive and prestigious award and only about half of the nominations can expect to win...”

<https://www.cwherald.com/news/queens-award-for-fellrunner-village-bus/>



## USA - Transit to offer regular route in Pipestone

Pipestonestar: "United Community Action Partnership (UCAP), which provides transit services in Pipestone County, plans to add a regular route in Pipestone in July that will include 23 stops... The route will run seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekends. It will stop at each location at a designated time each hour and cost \$1 to ride. 'They're basically just doing laps around town,' said UCAP Transportation Operations Administrator Nick Leske during the June 7 Pipestone City Council meeting. UCAP plans to put up signs at the stops and is requesting that the city paint roughly 25-foot cross-hatched rectangles to create no parking areas and paint the curbs yellow at curbside stops. UCAP Transportation Director Cathleen Amick said it could take around 10 years to establish the route and get people used to it, and that the route could be adjusted over time if warranted. She said if it is heavily used UCAP might come back to the city council to discuss installing shelters and benches in the future. Amick said most of UCAP's service in Pipestone County now is dial-a-ride where people call to schedule rides. Dial-a-ride costs \$2 if the ride is prescheduled or \$2.50 if people call the same day they want a ride. Amick said there are at least four transit buses on the road in the county most of the time and rides are available from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the weekends. People can call during the week to schedule weekend rides and there are also scheduled weekend pick up times at certain locations where riders can board the buses and tell the driver where they want to go and when they want to be picked up. Amick said UCAP provided 26,000 rides a year in Pipestone County prior to the pandemic. 'With the current service prior to 2020, we were kind of at our max as far as resources go and providing any more trips throughout the county,' Amick said. UCAP works with local transit advisory committees and Amick said the Pipestone County Transit Advisory Committee suggested having a regular route. 'The route just kept coming up,' she said. 'Have something that's consistent and have something that people can depend on and have something that people can actually

schedule around instead of us having to schedule around their time.' Amick said UCAP developed the new 23-stop route with the Pipestone County Transit Advisory Committee's input and that of the local transit staff with the goal of maximizing UCAP's services and increasing ridership. Leske said they also looked at ride reports and where the most frequent stops are. Amick said having the regular the route will free up the dial-a-ride option for more time consuming rides. Leske said UCAP received a \$205,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Transportation to operate the route in the first year, which includes adding another bus to the fleet. He said future funding will be added to UCAP's overall transit operating budget and fares collected will go towards the required local match."

<https://www.pipestonestar.com/articles/transit-to-offer-regular-route-in-pipestone/>



## £50m bid to level up South Yorkshire's public transport

Rotherham Business News: "The Sheffield City Region (SCR) Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) is working on a bid to secure £50m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund that is focused on improving the passenger journey experience on public transport in South Yorkshire. The competitive fund will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets. The Government has committed £4 billion for England over the next four years (up to 2024-25). Rotherham is in the highest priority list and will receive some initial money to work on bids. The fund will on

focus investment on projects of up to £20m however larger investments of up to £50m could be made in transport by exception. Combined Authorities are eligible to submit one transport bid only...In March 2021 the MCA agreed a £3.2m investment of Gainshare funding in replacing community transport buses with electric vehicles, upgrading bus shelters, and installing electronic displays at bus stops. To be discussed next week, the Levelling Up Fund bid seeks to build on this work with investment from the Government to make improvements to include...Investment in EV community transport..."

<http://www.rothbiz.co.uk/2021/06/news-7724-50m-bid-to-level-up-south.html>



Celebration of CT Volunteers  
For Volunteers' Week, CTA profiled a large number of volunteers, some of whom are featured in the captions below.

<https://cta.uk.org/volunteers-week-2021/>

**Beth Hay** Volunteer Coordinator

**Aviemore Food Share Project**

“Volunteering with Where2Today makes me feel better being able to help those less fortunate than me, and to be able in these strange times to do this is amazing.”



**The Volunteers of**

**Community Action Ledbury**

“All of the volunteers have been amazing turning out in all weathers often with very short notice to support those living in and around Ledbury.”



**Colin Birtles** Volunteer Driver

**Stockport Car Scheme**

“I still look forward to meeting those varied folks and get a feel-good sense from helping those not as mobile as myself.”



**Bill, Bill and John**

**Green Community Travel**

“A huge round of applause for Bill who helps so much to ensure we can keep running smoothly. Bill's kindness is evident for all to see - he has a smile that cheers all of us up. Passengers always comment on how friendly John is, and we love listening to his stories!”



**Stephen Smith and Bret Stone**

**Pilton Equalities Project**

“They have been involved in delivering and distribution since March 2020. Recipients express how grateful they are for the support which is always provided with a smile and professionalism.”



**The Volunteers of**

**The African Community Centre**

“Our drivers have been compassionate, dedicated, flexible and generous with their time during the last 12 months and have made a massive impact on the lives of our clients. Our organisation is so lucky to have them as a part of our team.”



**John Cronin** Volunteer Driver

**Norwich Door to Door**

“Being a volunteer, working as part of a team, gives me great satisfaction and doing something very worthwhile for the community and being able to help others is so rewarding.”



## Popular Kirkby community centre's relaunch open day to feature new charity shop

Chad: "A Kirkby centre which has provided a raft of community services from seaside trips to victim support for 40 years is to relaunch its services with a celebration and charity shop opening. The popular Our Centre – which marks its 40th birthday this year – had to cut back its services during the pandemic. But now the Pond Street organisation is to re-launch its activities and services with the opening of a thrift store, from 11am-2.30pm, on August 11. The new shop's name has yet to be decided but volunteers and staff are busy preparing the outlet to sell donated items. Angie Peppard, centre administrator, said: 'We are really looking forward to opening the new shop, and also welcoming everyone back, our friends and members. We have really missed them.' Our Centre provides everything from community transport, to social, lunch and walking groups, seaside trips, park, gardens and historic site visits, shopping buses, self-help and exercise groups, and wheelchair rental. Its community transport is fully accessible for anyone with mobility issues to access health appointments, social groups, town centres, hairdressers and activities such as swimming...The centre wants to recruit volunteers and for details contact 01623 753192 or visit [www.ourcentre.org.uk](http://www.ourcentre.org.uk)." <https://www.chad.co.uk/news/people/popular-kirkby-community-centres-relaunch-open-day-to-feature-new-charity-shop-3267437>



Bromsgrove And Redditch Network's contract to run district's community transport bus renewed until 2026

Bromsgrove Standard: "Bromsgrove District Council has selected local charity BARN to run the 'BURT' community transport service until 2026. BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network) has run BURT since 2017 and can now continue to run it for five more years, after winning the latest tender from the district council. Bromsgrove District Council's portfolio holder for strategic housing and health and wellbeing, Coun Shirley Webb, said: 'Anyone who uses BURT will tell you that the people at BARN have done a fantastic job these past few years, so I'm pleased that they can now continue to do so after securing the contract. BURT meets an important need where, particularly in rural areas, people could otherwise become isolated because of a lack of transport that's suitable for their needs.' BARN's chief executive, Gary Roskell, said: 'We really appreciate Bromsgrove District Council's faith in us to deliver this service, and it's all thanks to our amazing volunteers and team. We've been keeping in touch with our passengers throughout the pandemic to make sure they have everything they need, and we're helping them get out again as soon as they are able.' BURT, which stands for Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport, has been Bromsgrove District's local community transport minibus service since 2009. It helps residents of the district who are unable to make essential journeys by conventional transport, either because of personal mobility or disability difficulties. To find out more about the service, including how to volunteer with BARN to help run it, go to [www.burtrides.org.uk](http://www.burtrides.org.uk) or call 01527 585893."

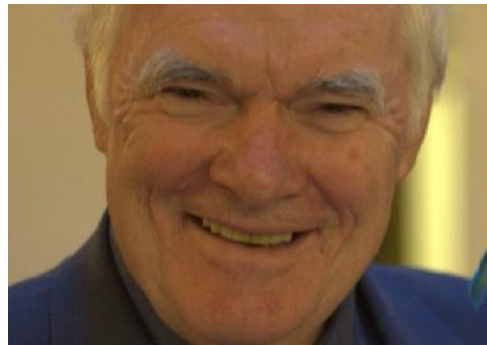
<https://bromsgrovestandard.co.uk/news/bromsgrove-and-redditch-networks-contract-to-run-districts-community-transport-bus-renewed-until-2026/>



## Tireless charity champion John Griffiths remembered with new electric minibus

Mid Sussex Times: "John Griffiths, the Chairman of Community Transport Sussex who passed away at the end of April, aged 69, will be fittingly remembered with a new zero emission electric minibus named after him. A Burgess Hill man through and through, John decided that he wanted to make a difference to the local community following a long and successful career in banking. He made quite an impact. Initially with Bluebird Community Transport, he rose to become its chairman in 2006. Following the formation and successful running of Crawley CT & Horsham and District CT, he then oversaw a complex merger to form Community Transport Sussex, becoming its chairman in 2016. His wife, Heather, said that he was never afraid to get his hands dirty, and might often be seen mending the tail gate of a minibus. At the same time, John was a tireless trustee for Burgess Hill based charity, Mid Sussex (South) Council for Voluntary Services. He became its Chairman in 2007, stepping down in 2015 following yet another complex merger. Colleagues at Mid Sussex Voluntary Action who worked with him recall a very dynamic person. John was larger than life, always with a smile and not one to be put off by problems. He was also involved with many other charities, including Mid Downs Crossroads Limited, Help at Home Plus (Mid Sussex) and St Andrews Trust. For all his idiosyncratic ways, John was a mover and shaker who certainly got things done in an inimitable style. Without his wisdom, drive, commitment and energy much of the exciting work these charities do today would not have happened. John truly had a positive impact on the lives of so many without ever seeking recognition or praise. His loss has been felt throughout the voluntary sector in West Sussex. John was a proud and loving husband, father and grandfather."

<https://www.midsussextimes.co.uk/news/people/tireless-charity-champion-john-griffiths-remembered-with-new-electric-minibus-3251634>



## Bishop's Stortford Minibus Trust says thank you as chairman Philip Demonti retires

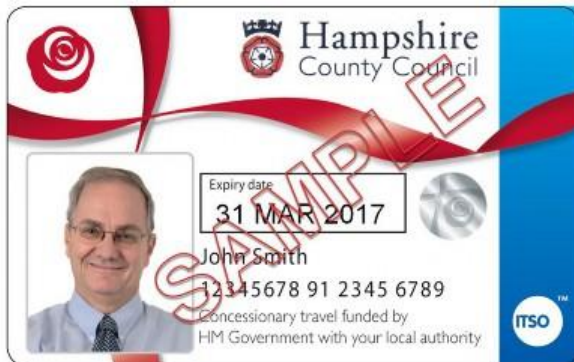
Bishop's Stortford Independent: "The chairman of the Bishop's Stortford Minibus Trust has retired after 21 years of driving the venture forward. Former town councillor Philip Demonti's contribution was recognised by colleagues who presented him with an engraved tankard last Thursday (May 27). Originally, the trust was set up to manage the hire of minibuses for charities and community groups. As a not-for-profit venture, this allowed groups to transport their members safely and economically. Latterly, self-drive hire of the buses has slowed but provision of scheduled community transport has accelerated. The trust now runs three local bus services: Stortford Shuttle, Saturday Shopper Hopper and Hadham Hopper. New chairman John Barfoot said: 'This has been a radical departure from the trust's original aims, but, overseen by Philip Demonti, the trust has taken the changes in its stride. The trustees and staff all say "Well done, Philip, you've been a steady hand on the tiller in changing times. Enjoy your well-earned retirement, put your feet up and, as you drink from your presentation tankard, enjoy the respect of your colleagues for a job well done!"'



## Hampshire County Council: consultation over cuts plan that threatens services

Hampshire Chronicle: "Hampshire residents could face a council tax hike and cuts to services as county bosses look at how to save £80m over the coming years. A number of recycling centres across the county could close, some health services be axed and the amount of care and support paid for by Hampshire County Council reduced. Council tax may go up, services such as the school crossing patrols could end and free bus passes on taxi-shares and community transport be stopped. The measures are some of those that could be put in place by Hampshire County Council in a bid to save £80m by 2024...a public consultation has been launched and will run until July 18. The council said there will be further consultations on specific services and stressed that no decisions have been made."

[https://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/19368396\\_hampshire-county-council-consultation-cuts-plan-threatens-services/](https://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/19368396_hampshire-county-council-consultation-cuts-plan-threatens-services/)



## Thank you to North Somerset's volunteers

Chew Valley Gazette: "In the run-up to volunteers' week North Somerset reflects on the extraordinary community work done throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. In March 2020, when the first stay at home order was issued, volunteers across the area stepped up to help anyone left stranded by the new rules. In Clevedon alone volunteers did 14,520 support tasks, provided 5,094 community hot meals, spent more than 3,000 hours on the phone doing wellbeing calls, collected 1,637 prescriptions, delivered 1,582 items of PPE to local health care, care homes and businesses, provided 78 families with digital

devices and donated 50 more to partner groups, delivered 311 food parcels and collected 5 tonnes of Foodbank donations, and clocked up more than 4,000 miles of community transport (including taking residents to their Covid-19 vaccinations). The darkest days of the pandemic also forged new partnerships, bringing those volunteers together with North Somerset Council, town and parish councils, and other critical organisations such as mutual aid and faith groups, Voluntary Action North Somerset, Citizen's Advice and housing associations. Called North Somerset Together, the new collective made sure everyone was able to get essential supplies and no one was left isolated as a result of the pandemic. Nearly 8,500 requests for help were received by North Somerset Together during the first year of Covid-19, three-quarters of which needed voluntary support. Around 2,200 volunteers from every town and covering all the villages picked up and delivered prescriptions, did shopping, delivered hot food and provided a lifeline for isolated residents. North Somerset Council's executive member with responsibility for North Somerset Together, Cllr Bridget Petty, said: 'We cannot overstate the enormous contribution made by every member of North Somerset Together during the last year. The response of our communities to look after and support our most vulnerable residents has been inspirational and gave such encouragement during the very difficult days of this pandemic. As an organisation North Somerset Council is so grateful to each and every person who has given their time to our community and our residents. These volunteers have made a very real impact on lives, and truly made a difference. And this goes beyond North Somerset Together to every volunteer during the last year. Whether you've been finding new ways to run your clubs online, helping your neighbour with a regular cup of tea and a chat, or fundraising in new and inventive ways - thank you.'

<https://www.chewvalleygazette.co.uk/article.cfm?id=108802&headline=Thank%20you%20to%20North%20Somerset%E2%80%99s%20volunteers&sectionIs=news&searchyear=2021>





## CTA is Seeking New Trustees

CTA website: "We're excited to be recruiting for a number of new trustees. CTA has an active Board made up of trustees from CTA member organisations, and co-opted trustees who are external to CTA and its membership. The Board has recently appointed a new Chair and, with a number of trustees coming to the end of their term in the next 12 months as well as some existing vacancies, we are now looking to appoint 2 new co-opted trustees and 4 new member trustees...Application Deadline: Friday 16 July 2021."

<https://ctauk.org/cta-trustee-recruitment-2021/>



## Northampton Community Transport Seeks Volunteers

Northampton Chronicle & Echo: "A Northampton charity that provides medical appointment transport for elderly and vulnerable residents is urgently seeking more voluntary drivers. Northampton Community Transport takes people who are unable to drive or walk to bus stops to medical and wellbeing appointments. Prior to the pandemic and several lockdowns, the charity facilitated around 12,000 return journeys each year with a pool of 36 volunteer drivers working at least half a day a week. Now, due to the effects of the last year, driver numbers have dropped to 14, which is why bosses are urgently appealing for more volunteers to come forward so passengers are not let down. Sally Jones, community transport manager, said: 'During Covid our driver numbers have reduced dramatically. I think some are nervous, quite rightly, some have

been ill and can't come back, some have rethought what time they have. Most of our passengers have mobility issues and will need a taxi to their appointments as they can't walk to the bus stop, but they are expensive and do not offer the level of support we do. We're a lifeline and we don't want to let people down. We want to keep going but we just need drivers to be willing to help their community.' The charity's longest serving volunteer has been driving passengers to medical appointments for 21 years and even worked five days a week during the pandemic also turning his hands to prescriptions deliveries and more. Although passenger journeys dropped to around 6,000 last year, numbers are now rising again as non-urgent appointments are restarted. So Sally is hoping the recruitment push will grow her team to include around 40 drivers. She added: 'We do things for mental health too, like day centres, fitness groups, mindfulness art classes and anything else to help their wellbeing. Now we just need more drivers to be a friendly face and a listening ear. Some volunteering is very flexible, but we need a bit of commitment. We need half a day a week as a minimum. Drivers are giving something back, but they also get to meet wonderful, different people everyday and hear their stories. It's really rewarding and a really good way to help people.' Some drivers do five days a week and others do half a day a week, but Sally says the volunteering can be flexible around other commitments. The requirements are that drivers need to have been driving for five years and have their own car. They will be subject to a DBS check and doctor's fitness check and will be paid 45p per mile completed for a passenger's medical appointment. Insurance premiums should not increase for charity driving. To find out more and volunteer your time, email [carscheme@voluntaryimpact.org.uk](mailto:carscheme@voluntaryimpact.org.uk) or phone 01604 628234." <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/people/we-re-a-lifeline-northampton-charity-urgently-appealing-for-more-voluntary-drivers-to-take-residents-to-medical-appointments-3277301>



Meanwhile, Northampton CT has produced an infographic detailing its activities during the pandemic. <https://twitter.com/NNCommTransport/status/1399697234078277636>



### 'Vital' volunteer car scheme helps hundreds of vulnerable people from Seaford to Saltdean access jobs

Sussex Express: "When the pandemic hit last year, mobile hairdresser Sarah Lowton from Newhaven found herself unable to work and at 'a bit of a loose end'. She was already doing what she could to help her elderly clients, checking up on them regularly and picking up prescriptions. When she heard that the volunteer car scheme Havens Community Cars was looking for drivers, she realised she could contribute to the national effort to beat the virus by taking them to get vaccinated. In April alone, volunteers helped ferry 108 people who are not able to use public transport to their job appointments. Sarah said the elderly people she picked up in her car were 'so grateful'. 'They're so pleased to see you,' she said. 'Some of them probably should have had the vaccine given to them at home. Lots are in the nineties, one lady was in a wheelchair. A lot of them

hadn't left the house for any other reason, and they were really quite nervous. I think it helped because they knew me, it helped them feel a bit more confident in going out.' Far from being just a taxi ride, Sarah would chat to the clients and even go and sit with them while they got their jobs done to keep them company. 'They didn't feel like they were doing it completely on their own,' she said. Even though Sarah is now back at work, she is continuing to volunteer with the group in her spare time. 'It makes me feel I'm doing something worthwhile,' she said. Before the UK's vaccine programme was even launched, Paula Woolven, chairman Of The Board Of Trustees at Havens Community Cars, was concerned about how people in the coastal towns would access the vaccine. 'I kept asking the question, where are the vaccine centres going to be? How do people get there? I never got an answer,' she said. Havens Community Cars was officially launched in September last year after Paula noticed a large demand for community transport in the area. Designed to help people attend medical appointments or social groups, it would soon become vital to the vaccination drive. In January, it was announced that people living between Seaford and Saltdean would need to travel to a centre in Eastbourne or in Brighton for their jab. Paula said: 'I still can't get my head around it. We decided we could do what we could to help.' A massive recruitment effort was launched, boosting the number of volunteer drivers from 10 to 25. 'So many people from the community came forward and said, let's get people there to save their lives,' Paula said. Volunteers use their own vehicles to transport people to the centres and are reimbursed for petrol. Clients are charged around £10 for a return journey – much less than the cost of a taxi. Paula also set up a fundraising page 'Fuel Injection' earlier this year to subsidise the cost of a journey for those that cannot afford to pay. Within a week, it had raised £1,200, thanks to people being 'so generous'. And since the end of March, the NHS has also been contributing funding towards journeys for jobs. The service has been busy all year so far, but last month was particularly manic, said Paula, as second doses were delivered and more routine medical care started to take place again. 'Some drivers were going out several times a day,' she said. 'We need to get people back to their medical

appointments as soon as possible. We don't want missed appointments, wasted appointments.' Paula said the care shown by the volunteer drivers was 'incredible'. 'All our drivers are local and they care so much about providing this vital service,' she said. Going forward, the scheme will keep transporting to people for their jobs and to medical appointments of all kinds, as well as helping them readjust to the 'return to normal'. 'The mental health impact of people coming to terms with life going back to normal is going to be massive...You can't repeatedly tell people the world is dangerous, then lift the lid off and expect everyone to be OK with that.' Find out more about the scheme or volunteer to be a driver by visiting the website here."

<https://www.havenscommunityhub.co.uk/community-carshare-scheme>

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/people/vital-volunteer-car-scheme-helps-hundreds-of-vulnerable-people-from-seaford-to-saltdean-access-jobs-3239320>



### Hand sanitiser donation to Wyre Forest dial-a-ride

Kidderminster Shuttle: "A Kidderminster charity is among groups to benefit from free donations of hand sanitiser from a leading food chain. Wyre Forest Dial-a-Ride, which offers door-to-door transport for people struggling to use public transport, received the handouts from the Midcounties Co-operative chain. The

company has distributed 15,600 tubes of sanitiser to more than 100 of its stores across the Midlands and beyond. Stores then chose where they wanted the donations to go, with Laconchild Primary School, Cleobury Mortimer, also benefitting. The sanitisers were donated by health and beauty product manufacturers the DCS Group Limited. Phil Ponsonby, Midcounties Co-operative chief executive, said: 'Our ongoing commitment to support our local communities means we have established strong connections to help many of those most in need. We are very grateful for the kind donation from DCS Group Ltd and know our community and charity partners will really appreciate the gesture to help keep them safe.'"

<https://www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk/news/193477-15-hand-sanitiser-donation-wyre-forest-dial-a-ride/>



### Car club Co Wheels aims to increase environmental impact with pitch to businesses

Business Live: "A national car club based in the North East is aiming to increase its environmental impact by helping individuals and businesses reduce car use. Co Wheels, which based in Newcastle, is on a mission to grow its membership and bring down the number of privately owned vehicles over the next 12 months, through the introduction of a number of sustainability and community driven initiatives. The social enterprise works to improve more sustainable car use, by giving members access to shared cars. Members book cars through a location map on the Co Wheels app or website which shows where the nearest one can be found. They are emailed 15 minutes before the hire with the exact location of the car and keys aren't needed because those signed up to Co Wheels are provided with a smartcard to access the car. The company's ambition to bring new members on board

follows the latest survey data from CoMoUK – the charity for the public benefit of shared cars, bikes, e-scooters and rides – showing rapid adoption of car share schemes across the UK. The CoMoUK Car Club Annual Report for Great Britain 2020 revealed there are more than 600,000 car club members in the UK, who are making cost savings against car ownership as much as £1,000 in a year. Richard Falconer, managing director of Co Wheels, said: 'Co Wheels was one of the first car clubs in the UK back in 2008 and we have remained at the forefront of innovation in the sector ever since. We were set up to provide an environmentally friendly, socially just, community-based alternative to car ownership and it is these values which are going to propel the business forward in 2021. 'Our growth will be achieved through engaging with our communities across the UK to understand their specific needs and provide transport solutions which work for the real people living and working in those areas. Alongside this we are looking to work with businesses, property developers and local authorities who share our principles and vision for a greener future for communities. We are actively pursuing wider mobility partnerships – from working with community, transport and environmental groups and councils, as well as other green transport providers such as e.bikes and e.scooters to provide more sustainable and joined up transport solutions. "If we work together with other likeminded groups and individuals, trying to integrate apps, are smarter about collaboration on promotional initiatives then we are being more than just a car club, we add real community value.' Studies have shown that every car club car takes 18.5 private cars off the road in the UK, amounting to a reduction of almost 100,000 vehicles a year. As car club cars are generally newer and offer more electric and hybrid options, they also give off around 25% less CO2 emissions than an average private vehicle in the UK. Richard Dilks, chief executive of CoMoUK, added: 'The 2020 CoMoUK research shows that this set of interlocking virtuous circles – lowered emissions, decreased cars on the roads and more affordable and sustainable access to electric vehicles than purchase or lease - are what the future of transport emissions in Britain will need to look like if our national legal limit of net zero greenhouse

gas emissions by 2050 at the latest, plus our forthcoming legal target of a 78% emissions cut from 1990 levels by 2035, are going to be met."

<https://www.business-live.co.uk/enterprise/car-club-co-wheels-aims-20822486>



### Drumchapel's G15 Buses first pick-up in Clydebank a 'historic moment'

Clydebank Post: "A Drumchapel charity has carried out its first pick-up of a Clydebank resident as part of a new community transport service. The chairman of G15 Buses says the milestone comes 'after four years of hitting the brick walls of bureaucracy' – and has been achieved without the support of any major funder. The charity says it picked up one of its members, who lives in the G81 postcode area in Clydebank, and took them to an event in the G15 zone before returning them home afterwards using its 'Drumchapel Connector' minibus, which began operating last month. It comes after the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) approved funding last month of £16,000 for a community transport pilot scheme in West Dunbartonshire – but the money for that scheme will go not to G15, or to a provider in the Clydebank area, but to a company based in Nitshill on the south side of Glasgow. G15 Buses' chairman, Peter McGillion, said: 'Our fully voluntary small charity has, in a time when services are being reduced, managed to introduce new services for G15 and G81, with no major funder. We have always said the boundary between the districts is only in the mind of politicians and modern historians, and are especially pleased to show this belief by offering this service to the residents of Clydebank as a warm up for the roll out of the SPT-funded services, managed by the

local Community Transport Action Group, whose ambition is to deliver services to those in transport poverty throughout West Dunbartonshire. Both organisations welcome members from around G15, G81 and the wider District of West Dunbartonshire.' Funding for the Drumchapel Connector initiative has come from the Glasgow area partnership for Drumchapel and Anniesland, the Robertson Trust, and from Glasgow Airport's Flight Path Fund. It comes after funding for a planned G15 Buses service between the area and the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital was withdrawn in 2018. Mr McGillion said the charity would keep local politicians old and new, as well as its own members, up to date on developments, and that it 'would obviously welcome the support of faces old and new for this rollout of services by local people, for local people and managed by local people, who appreciate and understand the levels of local transport poverty'. For more information about community transport in the area, text your postcode to 07927 897199 and G15 will put you in touch with the most appropriate team."

<https://www.clydebankpost.co.uk/news/19390568.drumchapel-g15-buses-first-pick-up-clydebank-historic-moment/>



## UK's first " accredited mobility hub" unveiled in London

Intelligent Transport: "The UK's first 'accredited mobility hub' has been unveiled in London today, bringing together sustainable transport options with community facilities. The site in South Woodford, Redbridge, reclaims an on-street car parking space with a design aimed at connecting the area and helping the environment. The Redbridge mini hub is the first in the UK to meet the standards set by national shared transport charity Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK), working in collaboration with the London

Borough of Redbridge, EB Charging, Ubeeqo and Meristem Design. CoMoUK says plans are underway for more hubs across the UK, brought forward by a range of organisations, including local authorities, community groups, housing developers and train operating companies. The Scottish Government has also identified them as a strategic transport priority for the future. The hub concept brings together public transport with shared transport options, such as bike share schemes and car clubs, together with walking and cycling provision and urban realm improvement. This can potentially be alongside community facilities such as cafés, fitness areas, green space, package collection points and wifi and phone charging, with features such as covered waiting areas, real-time journey planning information, walking areas and disabled access. In the South Woodford hub, there is an electric car club bay, a community-led café, and an outdoor seating area with bar stools and coffee tables, trees and plants, designed by Meristem Design. It includes a fast EV charger from EB Charging and space for an EV car from car club Ubeeqo. The hub also provides wider transport connections through the local Underground station and bus stops being a few metres from the hub. 'We're delighted that our mobility hub in South Woodford is the first to receive accreditation in the UK from CoMoUK,' said Cllr Jo Blackman, London Borough of Redbridge Cabinet Member for Environment and Civic Pride. 'We're keen to promote active travel in Redbridge, as well as supporting the transition from diesel/petrol to electric vehicles, and providing more street space for residents and local businesses. Our mobility hub provides a perfect way to combine these aims and we're hoping to deliver more across the borough in the coming months.' 'As we recover from the pandemic, we must ensure we build in the sustainable transport options we need in a way that makes them easy and attractive for people to use, building in alternatives to car ownership,' added Richard Dilks, chief executive of CoMoUK. 'Mobility hubs are increasingly popular worldwide and it's time for the UK to embrace this idea to improve air quality, decarbonise the transport sector, support more active travel, and revitalise town centres for local communities. We are encouraged that local authorities and

housing developers are actively considering mobility hubs. We're delighted to formally accredit our first hub here in Redbridge, and hope this sets a trend that will be adopted right across the UK."

<https://www.intelligenttransport.com/transport-news/126087/mobility-hub-london/>



### Day trips and befriending clubs as FACT gets back to 'normal'

Letter from Nicola Christy to Cambs Times: "As restrictions are being lifted, FACT is starting to return to "normality". Now that most of the community has received their two vaccinations, people are being encouraged to get out and about more. And FACT members will again be able to access the 'Dial-A-Ride' transport to access essential shops and services. Throughout the last 15 months, volunteering has been a key part of the success of FACT Community Transport in being able to deliver a successful shopping and prescription delivery service. We have completed just under 10,500 shops and 3,500 prescriptions and, with effect from July 5, this service will be continued for the very vulnerable. As we return to the new normal, there have been some changes to the timetable. The fully timetabled service now goes to designated destinations, enabling us to provide more journeys for more people. Members are still able to use their bus passes on these routes. Please contact the office if you would like a copy of the new timetables. Our day trips for members will be announced soon and will hopefully recommence in late July. This is of course all subject to further restrictions being lifted. Please look out for news on dates and destinations. Additionally, our befriending clubs will restart in August, again restrictions allowing. FACT recently launched the first community fridge within the Fenland area, designed to reduce the amount of food that would normally be thrown away by supermarkets. In 2019, 20 tonnes of edible food was thrown away by

supermarkets. Following its launch in March, FACT has saved 2,428 kilos of food waste from going to landfill. We now have secured regular surplus collections from Aldi, Lidl and Farmfoods. The community fridge is open to the whole community and is not means-tested. Food donations (that have not passed the use by date), are very much appreciated. The FACT Community Fridge is currently open Monday & Friday from 10am to 12noon at the FACT office on Martin Avenue (opposite Ridgeons in March). Keep a look out for news on our new projects in the pipeline. The whole of the FACT team would like to say a massive thank you to the community that supported us during the last 15 months."

<https://www.cambsimes.co.uk/news/fact-community-transport-lockdown-shopping-service-success-8085856>



### Portsmouth Councillors exempt CT Vehicles from Clean Air Zone charge

About My Area: "Some drivers and operators of specific vehicles may not need to pay to drive in the government mandated Portsmouth Clean Air Zone (CAZ) when it launches in November 2021, once details are confirmed at a Full Cabinet meeting. Portsmouth City Council will discuss a full list of exemptions for local vehicle drivers and operators who would normally be charged to drive in the CAZ at the cabinet meeting taking place on Tuesday 22 June. These proposed exemptions are being considered following requests from members of the public...Drivers and operators of vehicles eligible for a local exemption will need to apply for their vehicles. This application form will be launched in July 2021, and can be accessed at [www.cleanerairportsmouth.co.uk](http://www.cleanerairportsmouth.co.uk)...The City Council's Cabinet has already agreed to grant an exemption to Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles that are classified as Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) travelling in the Portsmouth CAZ for the

first six months after it launches, and school and community transport will be exempt for two years after the CAZ launches. The council requested additional funds from the government to support WAVs, due to the important role that these vehicles play in providing mobility services for disabled people in Portsmouth..."

<https://www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/Hampshire/Portsmouth/PO6/Business-Talk/News/332302-Councillors-to-discuss-making-some-vehicles-exempt-from-Clean-Air-Zone-charge>



## Celebrating Clean Air Day in Guildford

Guildford Borough: "We celebrate Clean Air Day today, Thursday 17 June, with a renewed commitment to improving air quality in our beautiful borough. In addition to our work to reduce air pollution, we are excited to confirm that Sunday 26 September will be Guildford's first Car Free Day, a community event to put people first on Guildford's streets, revive our town centre and encourage residents and businesses to make travel more sustainable and reduce congestion...We are awaiting delivery of 10 new electric minibuses to form part of our Community Transport fleet. These will increase the percentage of electric vehicles in our Light Commercial Vehicles fleet to 20.84%, and are part of our commitment to ensure our LCV fleet is fully electric by 2030. This follows the introduction of nine Park and Ride buses, which are the largest fleet of electric buses outside of London, built locally by Alexander Dennis Ltd..."

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25472/Celebrating-Clean-Air-Day>



## Six figure commitment agreed to pursue Suffolk bus improvement strategy

East Anglian Daily Times: "Agreement has been given for Suffolk County Council to pursue a Government plan to overhaul bus services, which aims to significantly improve public transport provision. Suffolk County Council's cabinet on Tuesday afternoon agreed to pursue the 'enhanced partnership' model of delivering bus services - effectively a set-up where the council and bus providers will jointly deliver improved services. The scheme, called Bus Back Better, aims to enhance the availability of rural services, created simplified ticketing options, provide environmentally friendly buses, as well as ambitions for 'multi-modal' tickets, expanded Park & Ride services and a daily cost cap. The decision means that costs of between £270,000 and £375,000 will now be met to undertake work on proposals, with a bus service improvement strategy to be published by October 31. In the meantime, the council will engage with bus operators and transport groups on what measures are needed. Richard Smith, Conservative cabinet member for transport strategy, said: 'This national strategy provides a real opportunity for Suffolk to rejuvenate local bus services, to increase the use of sustainable transport, to improve rural services and to lead a shift towards zero emission vehicles. This is an opportunity to relook at everything, and start freshly with optimism.' Mr Smith said the scheme will 'deliver improvements to all areas of bus travel, for example fully integrated ticketing'. Concerns had been raised about how much community transport providers would be involved, which often deliver some of the key services on the most rural routes, but Mr Smith confirmed that community providers would 'play their full part in the discussions'..."

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/local-council/suffolk-county-council-bus-back-better-agreed-8061140>



**SuffolkCommunityTransport**

Driving change, improving lives

## New patron appointed at Tenbury Transport Trust

Charity Today: "A charity which provides a transport lifeline for people in parts of Worcestershire, Shropshire and Herefordshire has appointed a new patron. Angela Brinton served as Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire for a number of years and has extensive experience in charity work. The appointment is a key move by Tenbury Transport Trust as it raises its profile and awareness of the service it provides to the local community. Tenbury Transport has been providing a safe, reliable and professional transport service for people who don't have adequate transport of their own for more than 21 years and later became a charity in 2014. Mrs Brinton's service to the community has included being Chair of Kidderminster Hospital, County Commander of St John Ambulance and Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire. She was instrumental in raising £1m for Macmillan for a palliative care unit at Evesham Hospital, worked on the Air Ambulance Help Appeal and still devotes time to helping at a local hospital and hospice. She said: 'I am delighted to be joining Tenbury Transport Trust and look forward to helping out in any way I can. The trust is local to me, and I am only too aware that there are a lot of people in and around Tenbury who need this valuable service. The trust is essential in the lives of many people, providing a lifeline for those who don't have the benefit of a car in a rural area which also has little or no bus service. If you are in this situation and need to get to an appointment at the hospital, dentist or elsewhere, then you've got a problem. Some people don't drive, and as we get older, not everyone is able to, so providing that service is vital for people to get about and do what they need to do in their everyday lives. There is little public transport available and where it does exist it doesn't suit individual needs whereas the trust tailors itself to its customers. I would love to help raise the profile and people's awareness of the trust and the work it does. These days I much prefer to work with smaller charities who are doing an equally good job but are slightly more unseen and unsung.' Mrs Brinton said the trust has some wonderful people all doing wonderful jobs and appealed for anyone who has a little bit of time on their hands to volunteer as a driver. She added:

'Hopefully, people will give some thought to getting involved. For example, taking people shopping who just can't get to the shops or other appointments – there's a whole load of things that we can do to help. Our drivers may also be the only contact some people have during the course of a week, someone to talk to which is good for their mental health, something I feel very strongly about. It's good to offer a befriending attitude, and people get so much out of helping others. All the voluntary organisations I work for are really happy because people get more pleasure from doing things for others than in doing things for themselves – it's very cathartic in many ways, and I'm pleased to do my bit to help.' Wendy White, chair of Tenbury Transport Trust, said: 'Mrs Brinton has earned the highest respect for her service to the community over many years, and we are delighted that she accepted the invitation to become our patron. Having such a high profile figure associated with the trust can only benefit the ongoing work we are doing in providing an essential lifeline service to the community we are committed to.' Tenbury Transport is hosting a barbecue for all its volunteers at the Green Meal, Oldland Common, as a thank you for their ongoing hard work and dedication when restrictions allow. Tenbury Transport is looking for volunteer drivers, office staff and Trustees, so anybody who thinks they could contribute to the work of this amazing team of people, contact Kay in the office on 01584 810419 or call into the office at 34 Teme Street Tenbury Wells 9am to 1pm Monday to Friday to talk about the difference you can make to members of your community. Please visit:

<http://www.tttrust.org.uk/> or follow them on Facebook @TenburyTransport for more information."

<https://www.charitytoday.co.uk/new-patron-appointed-at-tenbury-transport-trust/>







If you require any advice or support please  
contact us on 01772-204988 or email  
[john.atkins@taspartnership.com](mailto:john.atkins@taspartnership.com)