



**Community
Transport at**



Community Transport Newsletter No.15 December 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 be of interest to the wider CT sector. Back issues of these newsletters are uploaded on our website: <https://taspartnership.co.uk/TAS-news/>

Driver and Passenger Assistant Training Transformation

CTA's Training Development Manager Dylan Gallanders writes: "Driver and passenger assistant training has been in CTA's DNA since the very beginning of our organisation. Through MiDAS (the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) thousands of community transport providers, schools, colleges, community groups and other organisations all across the UK, have received training to help them provide transport and support passengers in a safe, accessible and caring way. Developing MiDAS - Having listened to your feedback, we know that there are ways in which we could adapt and improve MiDAS so that it is better able to meet your needs. In doing this, we want to keep what works well, whilst ensuring that MiDAS offers up to date, flexible, responsive and accessibility focused training which can be tailored to the work you do and the context in which you're doing it. To achieve this, we are exploring a new partnership with Hampshire County Council and

Motability, the national disability charity. Over the coming months, we'll be telling you more about our plans and asking you to share your views so that we can draw on your experiences and aspirations and ensure that your feedback is part of what we do. In the meantime, though, anyone requiring training should train as normal – all valid certificates will be unaffected by any future changes. This is an exciting opportunity to create a transformational change to training within the community transport sector and beyond. We'll keep all our members updated, but if you want more regular updates, and to get involved in sharing your ideas, just fill in our form below and we'll be in touch in the near future. You can also email me via dylan@ctauk.org if you have any questions."

<https://ctauk.org/driver-training-transformation/>



DfT Publishes Concessionary Travel Recovery Strategy

In October DfT followed up its 'invitation only' consultation on concessionary fares reimbursement with guidance for 2022/23. It recommends that reimbursement at 2019 levels continues until 5 April 2022 (subject to thresholds on service provision) then institutes a downwards sliding scale in 2022/23 based on proportions of 2019 payments with a view to resuming payments made on the basis of actual trips made in April 2023.

-) 6 April 22 – 90%
-) 1 June 22 – 85%
-) 1 August 22 – 80%
-) 1 October 22 – 75%
-) 1 December 22 – 70%
-) 1 February 23 – 65%

Note that this document does not yet appear on the DfT website and differs from the published standard reimbursement guidance for 2022/23.

CTA Awards – Winners Announced

The CTA's annual national community transport awards were held remotely this year on 18 November and the winners in the various categories are as follows:

- J Community Transport Provider of the Year: Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport;
- J Volunteer of the Year: Ann Rodger – Larkhall and District Volunteer Group;
- J Partnership of the Year: HcL Transport, Pilton Equalities Project and Scran Academy;
- J Keeping in Touch: Bridges Community Car Scheme;
- J Volunteer Car Scheme of the Year: HMR Circle Volunteer Drivers Service;
- J Community Transport Champion: Aneurin Bevan University Health Board;
- J Commitment to Sustainability: Glasgow Community Transport
- J Lifetime Achievement: Muriel Williams (HLC Transport)

Our congratulations go to all the winners and also to the very worthy runners up!

Ceremony can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CB2z1mcwFZ8>

Additionally, CTA has produced a brochure profiling all the nominees:

<https://ctauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021-CT-Awards-Winners-and-Finalists.pdf>



Becoming More Inclusive: VAT and the Public Procurement (Agreement on Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

Note that this has implications for CTs in terms of the size of the contract – above thresholds a contract has to go through the Public Procurement process – below, could

be a grant or some procurement approach outside the standard i.e. non-competitive Note also the VAT implications – services using minibuses and larger will be zero-rated. Those using smaller vehicles could in principle be positively rated and will therefore in practice face a lower threshold.

<https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/sharpeedge/809-sharpeedge-procurement/48750-becoming-more-inclusive-vat-and-the-public-procurement-agreement-on-government-procurement-thresholds-amendment-regulations-2021>

FACT Sets up Fourth Befriending Group

Wisbech Standard: "Fact Community Transport is looking for a volunteer to run its new Tuesday befriending group. The original group started on May 25 2015 with just seven people. There's now 16 members who enjoy bingo, quizzes, sandwiches and cake together. Nicola Christy, Community Hub Co-ordinator at FACT said: 'Over time, the group's changed from knitting cushions to making birthday cards.' Today, the group were welcomed at a talk by Peter Jackman about the History of March. 'We're looking for a volunteer who's organised, reliable and able to plan activities for each week whether that be a quiz or a game,' said Nicola. If you're interested in volunteering, or are a speaker and would love to talk to the group, contact Nicola on 01354 661234."

<https://www.wisbechstandard.co.uk/news/fact-march-looking-for-befriending-group-volunteer-8455448>



Also at FACT - Calling all book lovers! Swap shed to open in Fen town

Cambs Times: "A 'swap shed' opens in March next week thanks to a project between FACT Community Transport and Healthy Fenland. 'Most people love a good book and, to that end, the idea of a 'swap shed' was created,' said a FACT spokesperson. 'From Monday October 25,

you can come along to FACT and help yourself to a book. Then, once you have finished with it, return the book and swap for another one - it's as simple as that. We have a large range of books for you to borrow and all are in alphabetical order to make it easier for you to choose. All we ask is that, when you return the books, you put them back on the shelf.'

There will also be occasions when the shed has puzzles and games for people to borrow. 'Thank you to our lovely volunteers Chris and Heather Ley for organising the shelves into a logical order and a huge thank you to U-Wood Bespoke for putting the shed up and donating the shelves and brackets,' added FACT. The 'swap shed' is located within the FACT compound just inside the entrance gate and is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4pm."

<https://www.cambstimes.co.uk/news/fact-fenlanbook-swap-shop-to-open-8432864>



Walkies in Aid of Staindrop Community Bus Fund

Teesdale Mercury: "A normally closed section of Raby Castle's parkland is to open for a charity dog walk next month.

The Bath Wood area of the deer park is usually closed to the public, but Raby Estates will allow access for those who sign up for the fundraising dog walk which will help pay for a community bus for Staindrop. Morris Race, who is part of the group trying to start the community transport scheme, said people without dogs are also welcome to take part in the event on Sunday, November 7. He said those taking part should meet at the castle car park at 10.30am. He added: 'We will go through to Lady Wood and up to Bath Wood, which no-one else is allowed in, and then come back to the car park to complete the route. There is a cottage in Bath Wood that always reminds me of Hansel and Gretel.'

Mr Race warned that not all sections of the route are Tarmac and people should wear comfortable walking boots. He said: 'It will be a lovely autumnal walk before all the leaves disappear.

Raby is allowing us access free because we are a charity and they are providing a guide to lead the way. The walk will be about an hour long.' Tickets for the walk cost £8 and are available from Staindrop's Wheatsheaf Inn or from the village Post Office.

About £1,400 has been raised for the transport scheme with much of the cash being generated through a beer and music festival held at Staindrop Masonic Hall in August.

Mr Race said: 'We raised £1,100 thanks to our sponsors and those who attended. I was amazed how many people turned out, we were lucky. I go to an open mic in Newton Aycliffe once a week and it is empty. There is a lot of nervousness out there, and rightly so.' With the help of the County Durham Community Foundation the group is currently being registered as a charitable organisation at Companies House. Once this is completed the committee can start applying for funding for the transport scheme."

<https://www.teesdalemercury.co.uk/news/walkies-in-aid-of-staindrop-community-bus-fund>



Neston Angels are Celebrating the Amazing Contribution Befrienders make to Individuals and our Community

AboutMyArea: "The Neston Angels Befriending project has been supporting isolated older people across the CH64 area since 2014, and during Befriending Week

it's celebrating the tremendous impact befrienders have had on individuals and communities, especially through the last eighteen months.

As one grateful son said to his dad's befriender: 'Thank you for the friendship and kindness you showed my dad throughout his later years. You were a ray of sunshine to him.'

Befrienders are trained volunteers who visit one or two local older people at home on a regular basis to provide companionship and support.

Some of Neston Angels befrienders have been volunteering for more than six years, and collectively they have supported more than 400 people to feel less lonely and more connected to their community. Neston Angels befrienders come from all walks of life and are all ages. Some of Neston Angels volunteers are older than the people they support...

A raft of new volunteers took on specific befriending duties during the first COVID lockdown, shopping weekly for those who were shielding and had no one else to help. Seventy-eight shopping befrienders did shopping and deliveries to more than a hundred people to a value of more than £14,000. Working in partnership with Ellesmere Port and Neston Community Transport, Local Pharmacies and the Neston and Willaston Primary Care Network, we supported 792 people in total to access shopping, medicines and other practical support. If you would like more information on becoming a befriender, or know someone who would benefit from a regular visit, go to the Neston Community Youth Centre's website, telephone 0151 336 7805 or email zaria@nestoncyc.org.uk."



'It's a Great Honour' – Exmouth Woman Receives Queen's Award for Political and Community Service in the Town

East Devon News: "The Queen has recognised the efforts of a woman from Exmouth who 30 years ago founded a community transport lifeline to help combat loneliness.

Jill Elson, who set up the Exmouth and District Community Transport Group in November 1990, last month received the royal recognition when she was presented with an MBE by the Lord Lieutenant of Devon, David Fursdon – thanking her on behalf of the Queen for her political and community service in the town.

Jill, who received the award at a specially-organised ceremony held at the Lympstone Commando Training Centre after the pandemic halted a 2020 planned presentation, said it was a privilege to work for the community. She said: 'I feel it was a great honour for working in the community to try and make a difference to many peoples' lives.'

When in 2019 it was announced Jill had been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the Queen's New Year's Honours, she said it was 'a real surprise' and had no idea who nominated her. At that time, Jill celebrated the news by going out for lunch with her sister Lynne.

Jill said: 'I founded the Exmouth and District Community Transport Group in November 1990. It was in partnership with Devon County Council to provide transport for those unable to use public transport – either because they have a health problem or there is no public transport service.' She added: 'We need to raise over £100,000 per annum to make sure the fares are affordable, pay our staff, and maintain the vehicles. We do have to have special fundraising to replace the vehicles before the end of their life.' The pre-booked 'ring and ride' service, using wheelchair-accessible vehicles, picks people up from their homes in Exmouth, Budleigh Salterton, and the surrounding villages, and offers affordable transport in a host of different ways.

The Exmouth and District Community Transport Group works in partnership with Devon County Council, East Devon District Council, town and parish councils,

who part-fund the service. 'It is a pre-booked service using wheelchair accessible vehicles that pick people up at their front door and return them there, with help from the driver,' said Jill. 'We provide transport on a timetable for shopping in addition we provide transport to medical appointments, lunch trips, flower festivals or garden centres, charging a return fare. It is to ensure people can be as independent as possible to do their own shopping, etc. During the pandemic we collected prescriptions and shopping from their lists. We have three vehicles; two eight-seater minibuses with passenger lifts and one single wheelchair-accessible vehicle.' Jill, who served as a district councillor representing the Exmouth Halsdon ward for 36 years, was first elected to East Devon District Council in 1979 and lost her seat in May 2019. She said her work with housing – helping vulnerable people – and the community transport scheme were her proudest achievements."

<https://eastdevonnews.co.uk/2021/11/19/who-has-received-a-queens-honour-in-exmouth/>



Future of Wokingham Buses as Council Spends £2m on Service

Bracknell News: "The future of bus services in Wokingham and the surrounding area has been discussed as the amount the council spends on bus services has been revealed. Bus services in the area was a big topic that came up at Wokingham Borough Council's executive committee meeting on Thursday, October 28. The amount of money the council spends on bus improvements was revealed in a document outlining the council's bus strategy, called the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The council spends £2.48 million in total on bus services per year, according to the

document. Of that, £810,400 goes towards supporting bus services, £920,400 is spent on concessionary fares and £103,000 goes towards community transport and volunteer services. Additionally, £166,200 is spent on Real Time Information (RTI), and the council spends £380,000 of money it acquires from Section 106 agreements on supported bus services. Section 106 agreements are contributions paid by developers to support local infrastructure..."

<https://www.bracknellnews.co.uk/news/19683014.future-wokingham-bus-use-council-spends-2m-service/>



New Dedicated Foodbank up and Running for Badenoch and Strathspey

Strathspey Herald: "A new, independently-run service 'tailored to the specific needs of those in need across Badenoch and Strathspey' has been launched. The move comes after local unspecified differences with the Trussell Trust. Strath-wide volunteers are now focussing specifically on the ongoing challenge of food poverty through the new dedicated locally-run initiative called the Badenoch and Strathspey Food Hub. It will be the central point for all food hub activities, operating from a base in Aviemore but delivering across the area with stores of food held in local villages. There are close links to local organisations, churches and existing community food tables in Grantown, Kingussie and Aviemore.

A collection and delivery service will be provided working with Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company and the Rotary Club of Spey Valley. Donations will be gratefully received at St. Andrews Church Hall on Fridays between 11am and 1pm and by the community transport team. The hub team did not wish to go into the precise reasons for the split with the Trussell Trust, preferring to look to the future, but the Strathy understands the main sticking points involved transportation links and associations with other charities. Treasurer Gavin Stewart confirmed that pick up of donations would be possible: 'Anyone who

wants to help can contact us directly by calling 07393718320 or emailing info@bsfoodhub.org.uk – or visit our website at www.bsfoodhub.org.uk or find us on social media. Any organisation who would like to make a referral to the hub should contact us directly. We're here to help build food resiliency and address food poverty, working closely with a wide range of organisations and community groups, including Highland Council, to ensure no-one is left hungry in the area.'

Local council area committee chairman Bill Lobban told the Strathy: 'Highland Council has always supported the foodbank in any way we can and will continue to do so now that they are operating independently.

While the tremendous work they do has to be applauded the simple fact that they have to be there is a national disgrace. In one of the richest countries in the world no one in this country should have to rely on handouts from a foodbank but thankfully they are there to make sure none of our vulnerable residents go hungry.'

Maggie Lawson, project development manager for BSCTC said: 'Many in this area are already struggling and we feel that access to food is something that should not come with any further financial burden or social stigma attached. We are delighted to be part of this initiative and hope that we can help as many people as possible throughout the area. Food delivery should be easy and stress-free for those who need it'.

President of Rotary Club of Spey Valley Ronnie Dunn said: 'We have supported the fight against food poverty here for many years and look forward to being actively involved with the Food Hub.' Efforts are already under way to organise the now traditional delivery of Christmas Bags to lend seasonal cheer.

Jaci Douglas, chair of the new group, said: 'Hundreds of the special holiday bags have been distributed in past four years and the numbers nominated are increasing annually. We believe that the need will continue to rise especially this year, with the ongoing effects of the pandemic and we would like to urge any organisation, school or local group to get in touch with details of those who might benefit this year, even on an anonymous basis. There is a specific list of the treats which we are looking for to fill these special deliveries on our website.'

<https://www.strathspey-herald.co.uk/news/new-dedicated-foodbank-up-and-running-for-badenoch-and-strat-255372/>



Also in Badenoch this month...

Popular Community Car Scheme in Desperate Need of Drivers in Badenoch

Strathspey Herald: "A long running and well-used community transport scheme is appealing for drivers to return as volunteers after struggling to recruit in the Badenoch area in particular. The Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company based in Aviemore hopes that it can attract more volunteers as it looks to get back on track after the Covid restrictions. BASTC development manager Maggie Lawson said: 'Due to Government guidelines we had been unable to operate our community car scheme for some time. Now things have opened up again and we are keen to see that our most vulnerable people are able to access services they require. Many of these are health appointments which are critical for people. We desperately need drivers to support the scheme in Kingussie and Newtonmore. Volunteer driving can be so enjoyable. It enables folk to meet people and make new friends, and it provides a sense of satisfaction by helping others in your own community.

Volunteers use their own cars and receive expenses in return. Anyone who can give a couple of hours a month as a volunteer driver should contact the 'Where2Today' office on 01479 810004 or email info@ct4u.co.uk."

<https://www.strathspey-herald.co.uk/news/popular-community-car-scheme-in-desperate-need-of-drivers-in-257272/>



Oswestry Town Council Grant to Help Keep up Qube Meal Delivery Service

Border Counties Advertiser: "A service delivering hot meals to vulnerable people in Oswestry is set to continue after the town council agreed to help fund it. The future of the More than Meals on Wheels service, launched by community transport scheme Qube at the start of the first coronavirus lockdown last year, looked uncertain after initial Lottery funding secured for the project came to an end. But a plea from the charity for town council funding has now seen £3,000 awarded to help see it through the next two months – with more money available if it is needed. It means 40 people will continue to receive a hot meal every week, cooked by community kitchen OsNosh and delivered by Qube volunteers along with a bag of donated groceries. At a meeting of the council's finance and general purposes committee on Monday evening, members received a letter from Laurel Roberts, chief officer of Qube – based in Oswald Road – setting out the good work the project has done since it launched. It said: 'This has been a very popular and much needed service, especially through the difficult winter months, when many older people become frailer and more isolated. These meals help to prevent people's health deteriorating further and the delivery from a friendly volunteer lifts their isolation and allows us to monitor those we know to be more vulnerable over time, ensuring they get support when they need it. As you know there has not been a Meals on Wheels service in Oswestry for some years, even though the need has been there. Now we do have a good service it would be a shame to see it end, especially going into what looks to be a difficult winter for all but particularly older and vulnerable people.'

Councillor Les Maguire said: 'I myself do a lot of work delivering food to people and I know how much it is wanted and how much of a good job they do. I think they do an outstanding job so any money the council can give them will be very beneficial.'

Ms Roberts' letter said the service costs around £9,000 to run for six months, but councillors said they wanted to be clear as to how much the council was being asked to contribute. Members voted unanimously to give an initial £3,000 to the scheme and invite Ms Roberts and OsNosh to their next meeting, when they will consider making a further contribution."

<https://www.bordercountiesadvertiser.co.uk/news/19676277-oswestry-town-council-grant-help-keep-qube-meal-delivery-service/>



Free CCTV for Transport Group Plagued by Vandalism

Oxford Mail: "A community transport group plagued by vandalism has been handed free CCTV. In June, West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT) moved to a new depot in Windrush Valley Road, however was struck by repeated break-ins and vandalism. Walls were smashed, electrical wires were ripped out and fires started.

Witney IT company, Krayma, has since stepped in to offer free installation of CCTV at the depot. Andrew Lyon, head of operations for WOCT, said: 'The offer came somewhat out of the blue, but we were absolutely delighted by Krayma's quick generosity and community spirit. Moving into our new home hasn't been without its challenges, but the warm response from the community, and particularly the support of local companies like Krayma, has been

really encouraging. It's wonderful to see local businesses going out of their way to support each other, and having the CCTV installed will give us peace of mind and allow us to keep focusing on serving our community.'

Mike Dove, one of Krayma's directors, added: 'We quickly made a decision as a company that we wanted to help out in some way. We offered to install a new CCTV system for them, which is now up and running. Hopefully this will put an end to the vandalism issues and allow WOCT to carry on providing this amazing service to the town and surrounding villages, without being constantly worried about this kind of thing happening again'."

<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/19694262.free-cctv-transport-group-plagued-vandalism/>



A National Care Service for Scotland – CTA's Response

CTA: "The Scottish Government recently concluded a consultation on its plans for a National Care Service for Scotland, which will be of significant interest to many CTA members in Scotland..."

The consultation paper does not specifically address the transport needs of people who access, provide or rely on social care.

However, we believe it is vital that the Scottish Government begins to consider these questions now and engages with the community transport sector to develop and improve its plans. The community transport sector plays a critical role in supporting the social care system and reducing barriers to access to social care for people and communities across Scotland.

The majority of community transport providers in Scotland serve older people (85%) and disabled people (53%) or

provide services to help people access health (61%) and social care (56%) – yet they are often not funded or supported by any public body to do so." CTA's response is here:

<https://ctauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/A-National-Care-Service-for-Scotland-CTA-RESPONSE.pdf>

and is summarised as follows:

- J "Community transport providers are at the heart of their communities, understand the transport needs of local people and should be key partners for the National Care Service's local delivery boards in the planning, commissioning and delivery of the transport services which people and communities require
- J Community transport services tackle exclusion, isolation and loneliness and help people to live happier, healthier and more independent lives for longer in their own homes and communities. It also reduces long-term costs for the social care system through prevention and early intervention
- J The National Care Service should define high-quality standards for accessible, inclusive transport community health and social care in Scotland
- J Accessible, inclusive transport in their local community should be considered an integral part of the holistic care needs of service users and their care packages
- J Health, social care and transport services should be aligned. A more joined-up, strategic approach is required, backed by long-term planning, stable public funding and genuine partnership working between the NHS, the National Care Service and the community transport sector."

<https://ctauk.org/national-care-service-scotland-response/>



Australia: Community Transport was a Lifeline for Elizabeth but Underfunding has Created an 'Unmet Need' in Victoria

ABC: "Elizabeth Uding was just about keeping it together as her partner Peter clung to life in ICU. He had heart surgery in March during what should have involved a two-week hospital stay. But it didn't go to plan — the doctors had trouble restarting Peter's heart and then could not wake him. He was in hospital for six months and for some of it, on the brink of death. Even though Ms Uding is the resilient type, all of this, and the isolation brought about by COVID, was almost too much to handle. 'I fell to pieces; I had no idea and I was all by myself,' she said. 'I tried to be strong and I got there. But a few times I broke down big time in my corner because I didn't know what was going to happen.' However, support came in an unlikely form: the driver who took her to and from the hospital each day.

Provided by Eastern Volunteers' Community Transport, a car would take her to The Alfred Hospital, which would otherwise been a five-hour public transport round trip from her home in Kilsyth. It was more than just transport — Ms Uding said the drivers were always there to chat and comfort her and one driver always had a coffee ready to go. 'They were almost like family,' she said. 'Without them, I don't know where I would've been.' Ms Uding's partner is now at home and slowly regaining his strength each day, which she says is a relief. And even though they do not need to be transported anywhere, she said Eastern Volunteers continue to keep in touch, just to make sure she is doing OK. Eastern Volunteers has run a community transport program for about 43 years and has a client base of 1,400 people in Melbourne's eastern suburbs. Chief executive Vivienne Cunningham-Smith said it was mainly for people over 65 who could not use other forms of transport to get to appointments, go shopping, or participate in social activities, and was the stage before formal patient transport. She said they had paid volunteer drivers who were trained in a range of areas, including aged care and 'cultural competency'. 'This is supported transport; it's not pick up and drop off,' she said.

Ms Cunningham-Smith said a benefit of this program was their drivers were the first people to notice deterioration in their clients' health and were able to connect them with services they might need. But they have taken on a new role during the pandemic — as people were stuck at home, she said they ran an online shopping programme and regularly kept in contact with clients to check on their wellbeing. Now, as restrictions lift, they will be supporting their clients' transition back into everyday life..."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-11/community-transport-eastern-volunteers-unmet-need/100605500>



New On-demand Bus Service Launches in Leatherhead

Surrey County Council: "A digital demand-responsive rural bus service that users can book via an app, online or by telephone, launches this week in West Leatherhead.

Known as connect, the aim of the service is to increase accessibility and choice for bus travel in the more remote areas of Queen Elizabeth Foundation, Woodlands Road, Randalls Road (including the Farthings Estate), Dorin Court and Springfield Business Park where there are currently limited services.

The service allows a user or a group to request a mini-bus for a specific journey of their choice, to elsewhere in Leatherhead, Monday to Friday between 0745 and 1800hrs. Journeys are bookable from seven days in advance up to only 30 minutes in advance of travel. Passengers receive e-mail confirmation of their journey 30 minutes before they travel and then another reminder 10 minutes before the bus arrives. The minibus is fully accessible for all and can be booked as follows:

J Online: www.molevalleyconnect.org.uk

J Via the app: "Surrey connect" – available from Google Play (Android) or the App Store (iPhone)

J Telephone: 0300 123 7749

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure said, 'I am delighted that we are now able to offer this convenient, doorstep service for residents in West Leatherhead. This will help people who may be isolated due to their out of town location or have had to traditionally be heavily car dependent. This connect demand responsive transport service is open to everyone in the service area and could enable people of all ages to reach GP surgeries, attend hospital appointments, access further education and training or go shopping. We plan to expand this service to all other parts of Mole Valley in April 2022 using electric minibuses.'

Mole Valley District Council's Cabinet Member for Community, Caroline Salmon said, 'Mole Valley Life provides a crucial community transport service for older or vulnerable residents who are unable to use public transport. Now through the connect service we are pleased to extend our friendly, reliable and high quality transport services to all residents in the pilot area.'

The Department of Transport approved Surrey's bid for £660,000 to improve bus travel in Mole Valley as part of the DfT's Rural Mobility Fund. More information about the connect service is available here:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/buses-and-other-transport/community-and-hospital/molevalleyconnect>."

<https://news.surreycc.gov.uk/2021/11/08/new-on-demand-bus-service-launches-in-leatherhead/>



Crucial Coleraine Project
Celebrated in Eye-catching New
Antrim Art Installation

Ealing Times: "A Coleraine project which offers fully adapted transport for older people and vulnerable adults living in rural areas has been selected to appear in a striking new art installation at Antrim Castle Gardens.

Wheels 2 Wellbeing is one of four local initiatives represented in a unique piece of art unveiled by former Girls Aloud star Nadine Coyle and commissioned by The National Lottery. The anamorphic artwork, created from 636 lottery balls, spells out the word 'DREAMS' when viewed from a specific angle which has been created to inspire change and to encourage the public to think about how they might use some of the £30million raised for good causes each week by National Lottery players.

It is one of four pieces of artwork that The National Lottery plans to unveil this week across the UK as part of its 27th birthday celebrations and represents the 636,000 projects funded since 1994. Once all four pieces have been unveiled, they will form the message 'BUILD DREAMS, CREATE CHANGE' to bring to life the results that can be achieved through National Lottery funding.

The project, which is based in Coleraine, has created fully adapted buses and vehicles to provide transport for older people and vulnerable adults living in rural and urban areas across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough and the Ballymena area – thanks to a £500,000 grant from The National Lottery across four years.

The project, which is run by North Coast Community Transport, enables users to attend hospital and medical appointments, as well as other recreational activities to improve their health and well-being. In the past year, 250 new members have used the Wheels 2 Wellbeing service resulting in over 2,000 passenger journeys during lockdown. Wheels 2 Wellbeing Co-ordinator Maureen Hughes, 54, said: 'The grant from The National Lottery was absolutely fabulous. It's mind blowing to hear people's passion and the good that the project is doing for people living on the ground – people who had lost their partner in the lockdown and didn't drive and were living in really isolated areas. The transport has been a godsend for these people. It was absolutely brilliant to be selected for the installation at

Antrim Castle Gardens. They're making a bus wheel out of lottery balls to represent the Wheels 2 Wellbeing service and we're really excited to see it.'

The installations have been created by leading arts collective Greyworld and inspired by National Lottery-funded projects. Each installation has been made from more than 636 National Lottery balls, which represent the 636,000 and more organisations that benefit from the funding across the sports, art, heritage and community sectors. Included in the artwork are four unique objects that represent the following four beneficiaries from Northern Ireland that have been supported by National Lottery funding, including Wheels 2 Wellbeing which is represented by a single decker bus..."

<https://www.ealingtimes.co.uk/news/19720161-crucial-coleraine-project-celebrated-eye-catching-new-antrim-art-installation/>



Electric Cars Won't Solve Climate Emergency, say Leading Transport NGOs

Infrastructure Intelligence: "A group of the UK's leading sustainable transport NGOs is appealing to world leaders to recognise that technology alone cannot reduce transport emissions. Reducing traffic and shifting towards public and community transport, walking, cycling and shared mobility must be a major climate goal, which can unleash widespread health, wellbeing and social justice benefits, they say.

As the focus of COP26 turned to transport - the biggest source of greenhouse emissions in the UK and the fastest rising globally - the Sustainable Transport Alliance is highlighting that solely focussing on electric vehicles (EVs) would mean ignoring their social and environmental drawbacks - including a

potential 51% increase in road traffic in the UK - and the immediate benefits of shifting more journeys to existing greener forms of transport.

The group says that the UK can lead the way globally by drawing on community actions and voices to place walking and cycling, public, community and shared transport at the heart of climate ambitions. This would be in line with the UK government's commitments to make public transport and active travel the natural choice, and the Scottish and Welsh governments' targets to reduce private vehicle use.

With more than 55% of all UK transport emissions coming from cars, Sustainable Transport Alliance partners gathered on 10 November to discuss at a Green Zone event at COP26 measures that could help ensure the UK meets its net zero commitment, including:

- J Introducing progressively tightening targets to reduce motorised traffic (and in particular private car use) and the policies necessary to achieve these.
- J Setting short- and medium-term carbon reduction targets to deliver on its welcome long-term decarbonisation declarations.
- J Ensuring public, shared, community and active travel are attractive and viable alternatives to private car use.
- J Investing in social infrastructure to boost communities' ability to advocate for local needs.

Jools Townsend, chair of the Sustainable Transport Alliance and chief executive of Community Rail Network, said: 'The inspiring campaigners and change-makers from around the world who have been addressing COP26 have been underlining how we must put people, communities and justice at the forefront in tackling the climate crisis, and this very much applies to transport. The evidence is clear that we cannot put all our faith in electric cars - we need a more fundamental shift in how we get around and we have much to gain from this. By focusing on a shift towards public, shared and community transport, walking and cycling, we can create healthier, happier communities and more equal access to opportunity, without adding to emissions and environmental problems through the manufacture of millions more cars. We're proud to be coming together

with our NGO partners at COP26 to showcase action and amplify voices within communities across the UK that are working towards a greener, better, more inclusive transport future.'

Paul Tuohy, chief executive of Campaign for Better Transport, said: 'Whilst we recognise the important contribution electric vehicles will have in reducing carbon emissions in the future, we need to reduce emissions now. Persuading more people to swap at least some journeys from cars to public transport will have immediate benefits for the climate. So rather than saying it's business as usual and technology will save the day, our leaders need to be upfront with people on what each of us needs to do and provide the right investment and infrastructure to enable us to do it'."

<http://www.infrastructure-intelligence.com/article/nov-2021/electric-cars-won%E2%80%99t-solve-climate-emergency-say-leading-transport-ngos>



Bristol's Metrobus Service Could Stop at Night if Brick Attacks Continue

Bristol Post: "One of the firms that operates Bristol's Metrobus services says they may have to withdraw them from parts of the city because of an increase in vandalism attacks. One bus driver with Bristol Community Transport was left shocked after his m1 Metrobus had a brick thrown through the windscreen as he drove through South Bristol. It was one of two similar attacks which left the m1 bus service severely disrupted over the weekend and into this week.

The first attack happened on Friday evening on the Inns Court estate in Knowle West, and the second happened the following evening in the Bamfield area of Hengrove. The m1 Metrobus route links Cribbs

Causeway in the north with the city centre and down into areas of South Bristol that were traditionally under-served by regular buses.

But now, the boss of HCT, the community transport organisation that owns Bristol Community Transport, said there was a danger those areas might lose their bus services in the evening, if the attacks continued. Vandal attacks on bus services in the dark winter evenings in South Bristol are nothing new - First Bus has sporadically warned of similar issues on the 75 and 76 routes in Headley Park, Bishopsworth, Withywood and Hartcliffe, as well as the 90 service that runs into Knowle West, over the years, while Wessex Bus stopped its 51 service at night in 2017 and 2018 because of the same problem.

Jimmy Sommerville, the general manager for the HCT group in the South West, said it was lucky no one was hurt in either of the two incidents, blaming 'youths throwing bricks into the vehicles... Luckily enough no one was sitting next to the windows or they would have been injured. The driver was shaken-up with a big bang like that,' he said. Police are investigating.

In previous years, Avon and Somerset police have put officers onto some bus routes in Knowle West, Hengrove and Hartcliffe in a bid to deter the youths." A spokesperson for Avon and Somerset Police said: 'Enquiries are ongoing following two reports of criminal damage to buses in Bristol over the weekend. Thankfully no-one was hurt in either incident. We are keeping an open mind as to whether they may be linked,' she said. The attacks took two buses out of service for a number of days, and caused delays and cancellations on the m1 route this week. 'This has a huge impact on us and for the community. I've lived in Bristol for about 20 years and unfortunately it is a common thing, but it is really frustrating, it means that we can't deliver a service that we are expected to deliver,' he told the BBC. 'If the buses continued to be targeted they would have to consider whether they would be taken out of service completely, removing what can be a vital service for many people,' he added."

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/bristols-metrobus-service-could-stop-6187621>



National Lottery Funding Hailed by Community Transport Group as Campaign Reveals Vital Need to take Environmental Action

Ealing Times: "A Ceredigion community transport group has today added its support to a National Lottery campaign that highlights what some of the UK's most cherished landmarks and venues could look like if we don't start taking action against serious environmental issues and taking better care of our planet.

The National Lottery has today released a series of powerful images of the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff submerged in water if the sea level were to rise, the Shakespeare's Globe in London under mountains of plastic waste, the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland engulfed in litter, and the Falkirk Wheel in Scotland under a thick cloud of smog.

Dolen Teifi Community Transport group, based in Llandysul, Ceredigion, operates electric vehicles to help people in the community with their transport needs under Llandysul a Phont-Tyweli Ymlaen Cyf – an organisation that promotes the area's environment, local economy, distinctive culture and quality of community life.

To mark the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Dolen Teifi Community Transport group has teamed up with National Lottery-funded charities from around the UK and model and activist Daisy Lowe, to visually highlight the scale of some of the environmental and climate change challenges we face in the UK.

Dolen Teifi Community Transport received a grant of £446,168 from the National Lottery

over four years, which has enabled them to put their electric cars to good use.

The development officer for the Dolen Teifi project, Rod Bowen, said: 'There was a need in our particular area to do something for transportation issues, particularly for older people in our rural communities. We went to the National Lottery because we found that they are very open to innovative ideas. They were so open to everything we wanted to do with the transport scheme.'

The three electric vehicles - Nissan e-NV200's – are also disability friendly, allowing people with wheelchairs to be able to be transported as each volunteer trains with the Wheelchair Passport Scheme, giving them the knowledge to strap in wheelchairs safely. Bowen said: 'We were picking up in communities as well because of poverty - the cost of car ownership is a big problem. The project came about where we wanted to reduce our carbon footprint as an organisation as we're the community transport organisation and operate vehicles.

Daisy Lowe features in a series of striking before and manipulated after images at iconic National Lottery funded venues and landmarks, to showcase the potential impact on the environment if we don't act to save it now.

Along with the striking images, new research from The National Lottery Community Fund has revealed the UK's most pressing concerns when it comes to addressing climate change. When asked what they would do to address climate change if they were a global leader, UK adults are most likely to say they'd reduce single use plastics (61%), followed by supporting the circular economy (50%). Just over a quarter say they would reduce the number of flights people can take per year (28%) and the sale of non-electric cars (27%).

Committed to doing more for the environment herself, Daisy Lowe said: 'The climate emergency is everybody's business, and we all have a responsibility to protect the environment for future generations. Hopefully these images will capture people's imagination into taking action as we can all see what the repercussions might look like and it's rather terrifying. If you have always wanted to make a difference in your local community, why not

look at the funding available from The National Lottery.'

Over the last decade £2.2billion National Lottery funding has supported environmental good causes such as the Dolen Teifi Community Transport group, providing a much-needed and vital injection for our communities in the fight against climate change. In the last year alone, £60million has been awarded to 730 green projects from community groups preserving natural habitats, to art installations educating young people on climate change, to full-scale landscape restorations. Thanks to this funding, these projects are leading the way in approach, technological innovation, and engagement as we collectively work to save the planet.

Ros Kerlake CBE, Chief Executive of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Chair of the National Lottery Forum, said: 'While the world focusses on COP26, we must each focus on what we can do as organisations and as individuals to slow the rate of climate change. We ask that projects funded through The National Lottery each play their part, whether it's small changes, such as introducing community recycling bins, to large-scale environmental projects restoring precious peatlands. Across the country, we are working together with the good causes we support to lead, inspire and raise awareness of how and why we need to change our behaviours to protect the future of our planet. By us providing the electric vehicles, we were able to do both – help the community and the planet at a cheap price. The overall cost to the planet has been reduced by the very fact that we could provide a much eco-friendlier way to provide our service.'

<https://www.ealingtimes.co.uk/news/19696737.national-lottery-funding-hailed-community-transport-group-campaign-reveals-vital-need-take-environmental-action/>



Unity's Transport Service Fully Operational Post-Lockdown

Romsey Advertiser: "A free transport service has resumed its normal services now the forced lockdown has eased. Unity Transport have announced the Romsey and Southern Test Valley Dial a Ride and group hire services are now fully back up and running. After over a year of reduced services due to the Covid pandemic, Unity, the provider of Dial a ride and Group Hire services in Test Valley are now running services to pre-pandemic timetables and schedules. Due to increasing demand from existing and new passengers the fleet of modern, fully accessible minibuses are now all back in service with a team of fully trained volunteer drivers who provide an essential service to local residents to ensure they stay independent and also limit social isolation. Unity's Dial a Ride service provides transport for qualifying residents on a weekly service covering Romsey, Wellow, Lockerley, Nursling, North Baddesley and Valley Park areas. Group Hire services are also available from the charity enabling local not for profit groups to hire minibuses with or without volunteer drivers at reduced hire costs.

Stuart McAuliffe, transport manager for Unity said 'It is absolutely fantastic to see this massively important local service finally start to return to normal after such a long period of having reduced capacity and reduced services. It's thanks to the hard work and continued dedication of our volunteer drivers that we are able to offer a service that is so highly valued by our passengers and enables them to live independent lives.'

Jonathan Howells, Unity Volunteer Driver said 'I look forward to my driving day each week as I really enjoy making a practical difference as well as providing the opportunity to meet a variety of interesting people. No one week is the same, yet the work is fun. The role has given me a different perspective on life, and I feel fulfilled and enriched. I know I am helping to support an essential service in reducing isolation and loneliness, joy and laughter can be found. We can also keep a gentle eye on people's wellbeing and health, providing a wider, greater community benefit overall.' For those who would like further information on Unity's Dial a Ride or

Group Hire services call 01264 356808, email transport@unityonline.org.uk or visit www.unityonline.org.uk." <https://www.romseyadvertiser.co.uk/news/19693770.unitys-transport-service-fully-operational-post-lockdown/>



Community Transport Boss Police Probe Nears end of 3rd Year

Cambs Times: "A police inquiry – named Operation Dearborn – into the former manager of Fenland transport provider FACT is now near the end of its third year. A police spokesperson said: 'The investigation continues and enquiries are ongoing. No arrests have yet been made.' The spokesperson added: 'Anyone with information concerning this investigation should call police on 101 quoting 35/3922/19.'

Cambridgeshire Police has previously confirmed that the investigation is focused on former manager Jo Philpott and not on the current organisation. Numerous documents have been bundled up and taken by police since the investigation began. Police also took a computer from the FACT headquarters at March and have worked closely with the new management on building a picture of what happened, specifically during the years 2012-2018. Up to 20,000 e-mails have been reviewed by detectives assigned to the case. Ms Philpott built up a community transport network that included Ely and Huntingdonshire. Gary Christy, FACT chair, has led a new team which has totally transformed the organisation, focusing exclusively on community needs. One of his first actions on being appointed chair was to terminate all commercial contracts previously undertaken by FACT in respect of school taxi services.

The police investigation began on January 15, 2018 and since then FACT has worked with detectives to provide documentation

relating to the period under investigation. Early on police visited the March home of Mrs Philpott and removed various documents and a computer. Cambridgeshire County Council at one time commissioned a £200,000 audit report from specialists PKF. The report considered many issues surrounding FACT, including the potential misuse of state funding to support its ambitious fleet of mini buses used both for community and commercial activity. That report led to county council chief executive Gillian Beasley concluding that 'on the balance of probabilities these support a conclusion that false information was created and submitted with intent to support requests for public funding consistent with those findings highlighted by PKF.'

Latest accounts for FACT – to the financial year ending 31 December 2019 – shows a total income of £308,598 and total expenditure of £201,467. FACT operates as a charity serving the Fenland, Huntingdonshire and East Cambs Areas of Cambridgeshire to people who have difficulties using conventional modes of transport."

<https://www.cambsimes.co.uk/news/police-probe-into-fenland-transport-organisation-8498684>



Volunteer Drivers Needed in the Selby District

York Mix: "Car drivers across the Selby District are being asked to get into gear to help accelerate a campaign to provide transport for vulnerable people in the community who need to get to vital appointments.

Selby District AVS has seen demand for its community transport service increase tenfold in recent weeks and is in a race against time to find volunteers willing to use their own vehicle to provide a door-to-door service for passengers who need a lift to appointments or the supermarket.

'There are a lot of people in our community who for a variety of reasons aren't able to

take public transport, including the fact that in some areas there just isn't a regular enough bus service, so it means they are missing out on crucial check-ups,' says Chris Hailey Norris, Chief Officer at Selby District AVS. 'People don't always want to have to ask their families for help, especially if they are busy working, so our community transport service is important to them.

They know our volunteer drivers will have been vetted and it gives passengers the encouragement and confidence to retain an element of independence in their lives by getting out and about when they need to.' Drivers need to be over 25 and have at least 2 years' experience. Training and support is provided by Selby District AVS. All out of pocket expenses will be covered and volunteers will be paid 45p per mile. The organisation is also needing to recruit drivers for its minibus which offers affordable and accessible transport for community groups across Selby District, and will pay for a category D licence to be obtained as well as provide any additional training required. If you have a couple of spare hours, then call 01757291111 or email enquiries@selbydistrictavs.org." <https://yorkmix.com/volunteer-drivers-needed-in-the-selby-district/>

