



**Community
Transport at**



Community Transport Newsletter No.5 January 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.

DfT Publishes Guidance on s19 & s22 Permit Operations

DfT has finally issued its revised guidance on use of Permits but states: "This guide isn't a legal document and doesn't provide a definitive interpretation of the legislation. Only the courts can do that. DVSA staff can help you to find out if you're eligible for a permit, but they can't advise on the legality of your operation once the permit is granted. You should seek your own legal advice if you're in doubt about this." That said, DfT has certainly listened to Mobility Matters and CTA. One troublesome addition to the regulations, however, reads: "Operators are not permitted to hold an 'O' licence and a Section 19 or 22 permit" TAS will be producing an independent commentary. We are also able to assist any CT that might require advice and support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport>

Guidance

Section 19 and 22 permits and obligations: not for profit passenger transport

Updated 30 December 2020

CT & Travel during New Year Lockdown

Many CTs will already have been working under Tier 3 or Tier 4 restrictions and the English national lockdown announced on 4 January will additionally affect home to school transport with the majority of schools reverting to remote learning, although a wider range of 'key workers' defined this time has meant that numbers still attending school are much higher.

Travel restrictions for individuals within England are now as follows: "You must not leave your home unless you have a reasonable excuse (for example, for work or education purposes). If you need to travel you should stay local – meaning avoiding travelling outside of your village, town or the part of a city where you live – and look to reduce the number of journeys you make overall. The list of reasons for which you can leave your home and area include, but are not limited to:

-) work, where you cannot reasonably work from home;
-) accessing education and for caring responsibilities;
-) visiting those in your support bubble – or your childcare bubble for childcare;
-) visiting hospital, GP and other medical appointments or visits where you have had an accident or are concerned about your health;
-) buying goods or services that you need, but this should be within your local area wherever possible;
-) outdoor exercise. This should be done locally wherever possible, but you can travel a short distance within your area to do so if necessary (for example, to access an open space);
-) attending the care and exercise of an animal, or veterinary services.

If you need to travel, walk or cycle where possible, and plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. This will allow you to practice social distancing while you travel."

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#travel>

Reasons for travel in Scotland are broadly similar but much more detailed:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-travel-and-transport/>

In Wales acceptable travel is defined here:

<https://gov.wales/leaving-your-home-and-seeing-other-people-alert-level-4>

and NI is here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you>



DfT has issued further instructions to taxi & private hire operators which will also apply to CT services offering pre-booked transport for individuals: "Aside from the driver, a passenger is not permitted to share a taxi or private hire vehicle with someone from outside their household or support bubble unless their journey is undertaken for an exempt reason. For example, if sharing the vehicle is reasonably necessary as part of a passenger's work, you do not have to refuse to carry them." The guidance also reiterates the measures that need to be in place in providing transport in smaller vehicles. It includes this instruction: "Show passengers your face while socially distancing so that they can identify you as their driver." We assume this means drivers should lower their mask when they first see the passenger (at a distance i.e. stood back from the door) so that they can see the driver's full face, then pull it up again.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-taxis-and-phvs>

Meanwhile, DVSA has issued this: "Vocational driving and theory tests. The Government has confirmed that vocational theory and practical test services will be suspended in alert Tier 4 areas from 20 December. Vocational trainers will be automatically refunded for practical tests. Candidates who booked their own test will receive a new test time and date by email. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/2b22501>

Charity Commission Guidance Update

The Charity Commission has produced some updated guidance around meetings during lockdown: "These restrictions mean if you can, you should hold trustee or member meetings online or by telephone. However, if you cannot do this, you can hold trustee or members' meetings in person if this is necessary to provide voluntary or charitable services."

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=58b7600b-a0d5-4734-84bd-6a150e1b6826&utm_content=weekly#history

COVID-19 Vaccination – A Guide for Older People

Public Health England has produced a guidance leaflet for older people and the vaccination process. It may be useful for CTs involved in transporting passengers to vaccination centres to have copies available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-guide-for-older-adults>



Connecting Communities in Wales

CTA writes: "On Tuesday 15 December, we were joined by members and friends from across Wales to celebrate the impact of CTA's Connecting Communities in Wales (CCiW) project. The project, which is drawing to a close at the end of December, was set up in 2017 and over the last three years the team have been working with partners and stakeholders across Wales to create new partnerships, bring new funding into the sector and to create new transport networks that are already having an enormous impact in connecting communities to the people and places they care about. During the event we heard from Alison Owen, CCiW's Project Manager, who reflected on the successes of the project which include working with communities and community transport providers to bring in close to £2 million in funding for the community transport sector in Wales, as well as delivering training, providing support and guidance and increasing the profile of community transport across Wales. We were also joined by Meleri Davies, Chief Officer at Partneriaeth Ogwen who was supported

by the CCIW team to secure significant funding to make their Green Valley/Dyffryn Gwyrdd project a reality, as well as Rod Bowen, Development Manager at Dolen Teifi, who also received support from the project in setting up new services in areas of Wales that needed the provision of community transport...We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been a part of Connecting Communities in Wales over the last three years – the team at CTA, our members, stakeholders and funders for all their work in supporting communities all over Wales to access amazing community transport services. Your impact has been enormous.”

<https://ctauk.org/recap-celebrating-cciw/>



Okehampton CT in the Van for Vaccinations

Calstock Today reports: “It was an exciting day at Okehampton Medical Centre on Tuesday when the first vaccines were given to local people over 80. The combined effort to vaccinate 975 people has been a joint effort by staff at the medical centre, the health centres in Chagford and Moretonhampstead and Blake House Surgery in Black Torrington. Okehampton Community Hospital provided car parking and a shuttle bus was laid on by the Okehampton and District Community Transport to transport people from the hospital car park to the practice.”

<http://www.calstock-today.co.uk/article.cfm?id=439816&headline=First%20Covid-19%20vaccines%20given%20in%20Okehampton§ionIs=news&searchyear=2020>



The Good Neighbours of Ilkley Noted in the Ilkley Gazette: “Nearly 90 local residents enjoyed a surprise Christmas treat, when volunteers from a local charity delivered the present of either a hamper or a potted plant to them in their homes. Organised by Ilkley and District Good Neighbours, the Christmas Parcel Project, which began some 25 years ago, has always brought an annual touch of seasonal good cheer to a number of the area’s older and less able residents; some of whom might feel lonely and isolated during the festive period...So, volunteers of Ilkley Good Neighbours, with the help of other local organisations in the town, set about making new arrangements to overcome the potential difficulties of delivering during the Covid Pandemic...the charity is grateful to Ilkley Community Transport who delivered the contents of the parcels to the hall on the day.”

<https://www.ilkleygazette.co.uk/news/18942464.charity-overcomes-covid-deliver-christmas-cheer-ilkley-residents/>



Nottingham CT Driver is Missed this Xmas

Nottingham Post has reported the plight of the partner of the CT4N driver who died last March: “The heartbroken partner of a Nottingham bus driver has described his first Christmas without the man that filled his heart with smiles. Andy Howe, from Nuthall, was one of the first casualties of the coronavirus pandemic in Nottingham when he passed away in March. The 48-year-old, who worked for CT4N, the operating arm of Nottingham Community Transport, drove the Medilink service which took NHS workers to hospital. His long-term partner, Kevin Whelan, 38, said the pair had made plans to marry next year and couldn’t wait to spend the rest of their lives together. The 38-year-old butcher told Nottinghamshire Live: ‘I have all his boxes

of things that I can't face opening. It is surreal. All our plans have been sunk...I am still trying to get my head around what has happened; I still don't know what I am going to do in the long run. It is a journey that no one has a road map for. I could not see Andy at the Chapel of Rest because he had Covid so it was a closed coffin. I have not been able to say goodbye or had closure. There is a part of me that thinks this is a bad dream and I will wake up. You just keep going as best you can."

<https://www.nottinghampost.com/news/nottingham-news/heartbroken-man-describes-first-christmas-4837336>



Easilink CT Warns 'deluge' of Health Appointments could be missed

Yahoo has a video feature which argues that a "'deluge' of health appointments could be missed next year unless community transport organisations are adequately funded." One of Northern Ireland's main service providers has warned that minibuses which carry mainly elderly people door to door in rural areas are able to run at only a third of capacity due to social distancing, yet most of the fixed running costs are the same. Paddy McEldowney, chief executive of Easilink Community Transport, is braced for a lot of pent-up demand as health services return to post-pandemic normal."

<https://news.yahoo.com/northern-ireland-community-transport-warns-000101240.html>



Ryedale CT offers Free Transport for Patients getting Covid Jab

Gazette Herald reports: "Ryedale Community Transport is offering free transport for people who are part of the phase one of the Covid-19 vaccination programme. The community charity, which supports disadvantaged people who cannot use public transport, is offering transport to surgeries. A spokesperson said: 'Our drivers have been very busy the last two days taking patients to Derwent and Pickering surgeries. The phones have been red hot and the staff have pulled together to carry out this mammoth task.' To book, phone 01653 698888."

<https://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/18952788.community-group-offers-free-transport-patients-getting-covid-jab/>

Meanwhile Ryedale CT has also won an award: "Ryedale Community Transport (RCT) has been named charity of the year. The Norton-based organisation was awarded £1,000 by the Pride of Norton and Malton Awards, which did not go ahead this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. Chief Officer Ken Gill said: '2020 has been a challenging year for everyone. We have had to make a number of changes to the way we work and the services that we offer, but we have adapted well. All of our vehicles have been fitted with screens and are fully sanitised on a daily basis. Our rural bus service ran as normal throughout lockdown to ensure those living in isolated areas were still able to come into town to do their food shopping...We also provided transport using our wheelchair-accessible vehicles transporting GPs in the Pickering and Kirkbymoorside areas on home visits. This service was carried out for 10 weeks, free of charge using a number of volunteer drivers and it is thanks to them that we were able to help the NHS. We are always looking for more volunteer drivers so we can help more people who are isolated and struggle to get out to do their shopping or to medical appointments.' For more information about volunteering with RCT, go to ryedalect.org or phone 01653 699059."

<https://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/18934899.awards-boost-charity-challenging-year/>



Royston & District CT takes its First Patient to Receive COVID-19 Jab

Royston Crow reports: "Royston & District Community Transport has taken its first patient to receive the life-saving COVID-19 jab. David Dale got in touch with the service when he was told by text message on Thursday last week he was eligible to receive vaccination during the first week it was rolled out. The 85-year-old told the Crow: 'When I got the text I was astonished. I arranged with Addenbrookes to take up their offer of the vaccine and by 9am I was ringing community transport – it was very quick. Royston and its surrounding villages are so lucky to have such a wonderful service available to them.' Volunteer driver Emma Daintrey was available to collect David from his home in Royston the following day. He said the appointment at the Cambridge hospital was well organised – and Emma got David back safely within three hours. He said: 'It's a monumental task the NHS have but from the first step I took towards the building, they told me exactly where to go and were highly organised. I was very impressed.' David has lived in the area with his wife Katherine for 60 years and has a daughter in south London and a son who returned from teaching in China when the pandemic began. 'We are looking forward to Christmas,' he said. 'We know we won't be able to have family come here but we are optimistic. We hope next year will be an improvement for everybody.' Dr John Hedges, the chair of Royston & District Community Transport alerted his team of volunteers when news of the vaccine broke. Volunteer Ron Comben, 73, said: "We contacted various parish councils and organisations to let them know we are on

standby and have capacity – including use of a wheelchair to get people to their vaccinations. We have face masks for ourselves and passengers and all drivers have to sanitise vehicles between each trip. Everyone here was getting excited about when they would be called up to get people to have their jabs. We are here – and people in the community will be pleased to know they can call on us at short notice." Call 01763 245228 if you need RDCT's help with getting to your vaccine and they will do their best to support you."

<https://www.royston-crow.co.uk/news/health/royston-transport-helps-patient-get-covid-jab-6857394>



Father Christmas uses his bus pass with FACT to drop off Hampers

Cambs Times has a video feature on Fenland Area CT: "With help from his elves and reindeer, Santa made a flying visit to Fenland to deliver Christmas hampers that had been donated by local businesses, members of the community and FACT staff. With FACT's minibus decorated in flashing lights, as well as assistance from Father Christmas, Rudolph and elves, the community transport service delivered 35 boxes and 35 festive bags to those that are vulnerable or isolated this Christmas. Nicola Christy, hub co-ordinator, said: 'The response to our Christmas hamper appeal has been fantastic and members have been left speechless and very emotional. A huge thank you to all those that donated especially Tesco, Iceland, Factory Shop, The Pet Shop, Pat Preserves, Beauty for all and all the members of the community that donated. Tesco have been so supportive so a big shout out to all their staff who have helped us achieve over 7,000 shops. It is so important to us at FACT that our members know that we are

there for them whether it's shopping, transport, prescriptions or befriending clubs. We miss seeing them come into the office for their clubs or going out and about on their trips. 2020 has been a hard year for many of us but we hoped that receiving a box will bring a little cheer to their Christmas. For FACT this year we have gone from strength to strength. A particular highlight was receiving a commendation from Cambridgeshire County Council recognising our services and the additional support to the people of Cambridgeshire during the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://www.cambstimes.co.uk/news/fact-christmas-parcel-donations-6866690>



Christmas Cheer gifts delivered to isolated older residents by Fermanagh CT and Easylink CT
 More Christmas cheer was spread according to the Fermanagh Herald: "More than 1,800 older people who will be spending this Christmas alone will receive a small gift delivered to their door as part of the local Council's 'Christmas Cheer' initiative. Earlier this month the Chairwoman of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Councillor Diana Armstrong, made a public appeal for people to nominate their family, friends and neighbours aged 65 and over who live alone or who are an informal unpaid carer to receive a 'Christmas Cheer' gift. People falling within this category could also contact the Council directly to receive a small gift. With nominations closing last week, the Council's Community Services team has been busy making up more than 1,800 'Christmas Cheer' parcels for older residents, with the gifts being delivered to households across the district by Easylink Community Transport and Fermanagh Community Transport..."

<https://fermanaghherald.com/2020/12/christmas-cheer-gifts-delivered-to-isolated-older-residents/>



TRIP Community Transport Association Assist with Project to Reduce Food Poverty in Honiton

The Midweek Herald writes: "A community group in Honiton has launched with the aim of making the town and its surrounding area food waste and hunger free. Honiton Foodsave, set up and launched in late November by Jake Bonetta, works in partnership with businesses and the Honiton community to collect and sort food, ready for distribution to other community organisations and individuals on a no-questions-asked basis. All items given away by Honiton Foodsave are free and available to everyone in the community and no referral or invitation is needed... 'It has been awe-inspiring seeing the power of the Honiton community coming together to allow this initiative to happen,' said Jake. 'Since launching two weeks ago, we have already started collections of good, surplus food from Tesco and Co-op and have many more exciting plans in the pipeline towards our goal of reducing food poverty and food waste. We are very thankful for the kindness shown by the team at St. Paul's Church, who have allowed us to use the Mackarness Hall whilst it is closed for hire. I also want to thank TRIP Community Transport Association for their help and support.'"

<https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/community-group-aims-to-make-honiton-waste-free-6855348>

TRIP has also recently benefited from £8,000 from the Prince's Countryside Fund.

<https://www.devonlive.com/news/local-news/princes-charity-brings-christmas-cheer-4826695>



Nidderdale Plus CT helps Rural People get Vaccines at Showground

The Stray Ferret has written: "It's nearly 16 miles from Pateley Bridge to the Covid vaccination centre at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate. So for rural communities in the Nidderdale and Washburn valleys with limited public transport and a high proportion of older people, getting there can be difficult. Nidderdale Plus community hub in Pateley Bridge is playing a key role in solving this and helping the government achieve its aim of vaccinating the over 80s as soon as possible. Helen Flynn, the executive director of Nidderdale Plus, a charity that works in partnership with local authorities to provide services to the community, told the Stray Ferret: 'For some people, the prospect of travelling to and from Harrogate for their appointment could be daunting. There are those who live on their own; some have stopped driving and a number may not have a member of a family bubble to accompany them to and from the vaccination centre.'" Older people living in rural Nidderdale and the Washburn Valley can travel by minibus for vaccination in Harrogate. With Nidderdale and the Washburn Valley covering half of the total land area of the Harrogate district, a logistical issue had to be addressed. It was rapidly solved when Nidderdale Plus called on assistance from Jill Quinn, chief executive of Dementia Forward, to secure the use of a minibus that had not been used for some time because of Covid restrictions. Ms Flynn said: 'The vehicle, with its volunteer drivers, makes regular journeys from Nidderdale and the Washburn Valley to Harrogate, collecting people en-route. To ensure social distancing is maintained, the minibus takes a maximum of three people at a time for vaccination and a rigorous cleaning regime involving anti-bacterial 'fogging' of all surfaces is carried out after each use. Jill lives in Pateley Bridge and was happy to help. Our aim is to ensure that all people aged 80 and above living in this area have

no reason to worry, either about getting to and from Harrogate or their vaccination. As the vaccination programme progresses to target different age groups, the minibus will remain in use to help those aged 70 and above in the Nidderdale and Washburn valleys and others seeking assistance." Bryan Ayers, who lives in Hampsthwaite, has already used the service. He said: 'The transport service for my Covid vaccination was magnificent, I don't know what I would do without the help as I do not drive myself and I have no relatives who can help me. When I got to the site it was really well organised both with clinic staff and the volunteers were very good, I hardly had to wait any time at all. My driver was very friendly and just waited for me, I could not have asked for a better service. I have had no side effects of the vaccine at all so far.'" <https://thestrayferret.co.uk/nidderdale-minibus-helps-rural-people-get-vaccines-at-showground/>



Couple Aged 90 and 100 are taken for Vaccination by Preston CT's Community Cars Service

Lancaster Guardian reports:

"Community Cars, the volunteer lift-giving service, is supporting the region's Covid-19 Vaccination roll-out by providing transport to vaccination centres for older and disabled people without access to their own car, or who need support travelling. Its first booking was for a married couple aged 90 and 100 respectively and last Wednesday, a Lancaster-based volunteer driver picked them up and took them to the Vaccination Centre on the Lancaster University Campus. Julie Pole, who organises the Community Cars service, said: 'We are getting an increasing number of calls from elderly people who want to get vaccinated but who are worried about transport arrangements. Some of these calls have been from long-standing service users, but we are now receiving calls from would-be passengers who have been referred to us

through the voluntary sector Covid support network and who had no other means of getting to their vaccination site. Many of the centres, including Lancaster, are located and designed around a drive-through model which is fine for those with their own car or whose family can take them. But there are many people in the first group to be vaccinated (those aged over 80) who don't have their own transport, have difficulty using buses or who cannot comfortably walk to a Centre, and that's where we step in. People in rural areas face a particular challenge in taking up the vaccination offer. I understand the vaccination process went well with both our passengers reporting that they "didn't feel a thing". Our driver was able to park close to the Centre and helped them walk (one of the passengers normally uses a walking frame) onto the site where there was a well-organised reception area with socially distanced seating. Those receiving a vaccination were asked to wait for around 15 minutes before leaving as a precaution against the rare possibility of an allergic reaction. Our driver waited with them and then took them home. We have them booked in already for their second vaccination appointment.' The Community Cars service is run by Preston Community Transport and operates across the Fylde, Lancaster, Preston, South Ribble and Wyre districts. A bank of trained volunteers use their own cars to provide essential journeys for those in need and since the beginning of the pandemic all volunteers have been operating to strict Covid-19 sanitisation and safety arrangements. There is a small charge to cover the cars' operating costs. As the vaccination programme ramps up in the next few months across Lancashire, Community Cars is expecting demand to increase and so is looking to recruit more volunteers who have access to a car and can give up some spare time to help others in their local area."

<https://www.lancasterguardian.co.uk/health/lancaster-volunteer-driver-takes-couple-aged-90-and-100-their-covid-19-vaccination-3072663>



Battle Area CT suspends services due to Covid-19

Hastings Observer reports: "Battle Area Community Transport was due to resume services next Monday (January 4). But in a statement it said it was suspending its bus services until further notice. The group provides bus services centred on Battle, Burwash and Ticehurst, travelling to: Ashburnham, Battle, Brede, Broad Oak, Etchingham, Flimwell, Mountfield, Robertsbridge, Netherfield, Sedlescombe, Stonegate, Ticehurst and Westfield. In March it suspended all of its services due to the coronavirus pandemic and resumed some routes in September. In its statement, the group said: 'The Board of Directors of Battle Area Community Transport have taken the decision that all of our bus services will be suspended until further notice. This is due to the significant increase in Covid infection rates. This decision has been taken to protect our volunteers, passengers and the wider community. The planned resumption of our B67 to B79 services on Monday, January 4, 2021, will not go ahead. The situation will be monitored and the decision kept under review. We regret any inconvenience this causes our supporters.'"

<https://www.hastingsobserver.co.uk/health/coronaviruses/battle-community-bus-group-suspends-services-due-covid-19-3081691>



Recent CTA Activity

CTA has recently uploaded the following items:

- J Online Event Recap: What lessons have we learned in 2020 that will make transport networks more sustainable for the future?
<https://ctauk.org/event-recap-lessons-from-2020/>
- J Online Event Recap: Funding Application Write-Shops
<https://ctauk.org/event-recap-funding-writeshops/>
- J Report: Serving Scotland – Community Transport During Coronavirus
<https://ctauk.org/report-serving-scotland-during-covid/>

Serving Scotland: Community Transport During Coronavirus

What is Community Transport?

CT Driver Co-ordinates Ashbourne Community First Responders

In Your Area reports: "A community first responder who has been out saving lives on a daily basis during the coronavirus pandemic gave up spending Christmas with her family so she could be on duty on the big day. Linda Dutton, from Tissington, swapped Christmas dinner for community care this year to round off a busy year of volunteering for East Midlands Ambulance. The 44-year-old was furloughed from her previous job as a driver for Ashbourne Community Transport and this meant she could start to put all her spare time into responding to emergencies in the Ashbourne area. Since the coronavirus outbreak, she has put in 80 hours per week volunteering for the Ashbourne group, which she coordinates, balancing her volunteering with a part time job as a stable yard groom. And, despite making herself so busy during the Covid-19 outbreak, she was still ready to miss out on a Christmas Day with her father this year to stay on duty. She said: 'I've been so lucky to travel the world with equestrian jobs, which was great, but being a CFR is so much more rewarding. Being able to help people in my community means the world to me and I really don't mind missing

Christmas if it means I can make a difference."

<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/first-responder-swaps-christmas-dinner-for-community-care/>



CT in Israel & Coronavirus Vaccines

Jewish Press reports: "United Hatzalah has partnered with the group Yad BeYad for the Development of Mevaseret Zion, a non-profit organisation, in a new project transporting people over 60 and the disabled who qualify to receive the Coronavirus vaccine, in cases when their access is limited due to the lockdown. Qualified individuals should call one of several local organisers who will arrange for them a ride with a United Hatzalah EMT, who will, in turn, pick up and drive the person in their private vehicle to the vaccination station, assist them with registration, and drive them home after they received their vaccination. United Hatzalah Mevaseret Region Chapter Head said: 'As the lockdown began we recognised there are many senior citizens and disabled people in the city and the surrounding area who cannot easily use public transportation. These people are in the first grouping of those who qualify to receive their Coronavirus vaccines, but many of them simply cannot get to the stations. Thanks to Yad BeYad, we have been able to contact these people and are working together to make sure that they can all get to the vaccination centres in Jerusalem in time for their appointments. This is another one of the many community services that our volunteers provide every day to the residents of the city and the surrounding area.' The project has already received a high volume of requests, and hundreds of individuals are expected to use the service in the next two weeks, while the lockdown is on. President and Founder of

United Hatzalah Eli Beer said: 'This is a terrific programme and it came from the volunteers in the field who recognised a problem and worked together with a local organisation to solve it. This is exactly what the volunteers of United Hatzalah are so successful at doing: working within the community to help build resilience and provide free services to their neighbours.'" <https://www.jewishpress.com/news/israel/community-volunteers-cooperate-to-transport-elderly-and-disabled-to-their-vaccinations-during-lockdown/2020/12/30/>



North Herts & Stevenage CT gets Passengers Vaccinated

An item in The Comet reads: "A community transport service has got around 50 people to their COVID-19 vaccine appointments, thanks to the help of volunteers. North Herts & Stevenage Community Transport service, based in Letchworth, is taking bookings to help get those who are elderly and less-mobile to their appointments. The service is managed by the charity North Herts & Stevenage CVS. During last year's lockdown, the transport scheme also started picking up and dropping off prescriptions to those who were shielding or unable to get out. Community transport manager Jon Brown told the Comet: 'As a charity we are continuing to provide our services which have been so vital. We are here to help with taking people to their vaccines. We take local residents across North Herts and Stevenage to their health and medical appointments, but we've also been here to help people get to their various social clubs and day centres.' Charities have been hit hard by the pandemic, as many rely on fundraising and donations to carry out their work. 'We usually average around 6,000 bookings a year, and we had about half of that in 2020, however it was a remarkable

year and we achieved so much as a service,' Jon continued. 'We have about 70 volunteer drivers, but quite a few have stepped down for the time being, due to the pandemic. We want to grow as a service, achieve even more and help more people. We're an ambitious service and we want to do more for the community. We're always looking for new volunteer drivers to join our special service. Do get in touch - it's such a flexible and rewarding role. There's a lot of people who don't know about the service, who are struggling.' The community transport service charges just 45p per mile, as volunteers use their own cars to pick people up to take them to their appointments and home again. The service has full COVID-19 safety regulations and guidance in place to ensure service users and the drivers are as safe as possible during the journeys. If you require the North Herts and Stevenage Community Transport service, call 01462 689402 between 9am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday."

<https://www.thecomet.net/news/traffic/north-herts-transport-service-getting-people-to-vaccine-6882004>



Beverley Community Lift Manager Reflects on the Year

Writing in the Pocklington Post, manager Fiona Wales at Beverley Community Lift says: "What a year it has been for the community sector! As a transport charity providing invaluable services through terrific volunteers, Beverley Community Lift was hoping to be able to mark its 50th anniversary in 2020 with a celebration of the acts of kindness which have led to a half century of serving the people of East Yorkshire. When BCL began in 1970 we started out as a general neighbourhood help scheme, under the name Beverley Community Care Service. Churches and community groups came together to create a service to help residents in every street in the town. The move into community

transport came after we were given our very first minibus back in 1974. It is other similar acts of generosity that have seen us expand our services into Holme upon Spalding Moor, Market Weighton and Pocklington over the course of the last 10 to 15 years. We now have our minibus shoppers and volunteer-run car services in each of these areas. Those last 50 years have seen a lot of highs, some lows and we have faced every challenge that has come our way. I think it's fair to say that 2020 has to top the list of those challenges and we wouldn't be able to continue to operate without the support of all our volunteers across the area. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their time, care and commitment. Our volunteers not only do the physical driving, but we have a team who also book the journeys and organise the administration. This year some of those volunteers also took on the task of running shopping errands too, for those of our service users who needed the extra support. One volunteer even went to the supermarket for seven clients and another was nominated for a special honour by their family on the BBC's The One Show! As a charity, BCL was proud to be shortlisted this year for an East Riding of Yorkshire Council Chairman's Award for social wellbeing. Given that the competition was so tough, it really showed how much good work we are all doing. We started the year really well acquiring a new minibus after three years of fundraising, but not a charity to rest on its laurels, the appeal for a next replacement one began straight away! It has also been the year of the grant and we thank the many funders for supporting us with the finance needed to keep services going – from paying for personal protective equipment to general running costs when our income was hit so hard. Thank you for using our services and supporting our work in 2020. Our shopping trips resumed with limited capacity owing to the Covid-19 guidelines in August and are as popular as ever. Society may have become more digital now but nothing takes away from the fact that 2020 was the year of community support, especially for those who felt isolated, as was the way we were started back in 1970 by a group of like-minded residents. Beverley Community Lift is looking forward to celebrating its achievements and belated golden jubilee in 2021, when, hopefully, social distancing will

be a distant memory and normal service has been resumed. Find out more about us at www.bclift.org.uk or follow us on Facebook/Twitter."

<https://www.pocklingtonpost.co.uk/news/people/beverley-community-lift-column-manager-fiona-wales-lets-hope-normal-service-resumed-next-year-3084183>



Bunbury woman celebrated her 100th birthday at ANZAC Cottage

Bunbury Mail in Australia writes: "On January 3, 1921 Mrs Williams (nee Porter) was born in the front room of ANZAC Cottage in Mount Hawthorn. ANZAC Cottage was built by the local community in one day on February 12, 1916 as Western Australia's first memorial to those who served at Gallipoli and as a home for returned wounded soldier Private John Cuthbert Porter and his family. Mrs Williams is one of four children and the only surviving member of the original family. She lived in the cottage until 1946, served as an air raid warden in World War II and in the Australian Women's Army Service from 1942 to 1945. Ms Williams married a serving soldier in 1945 and moved to the Goldfields where she raised four children. In 1989, she saved the cottage from demolition by using her war widow's pension to fund a legal ruling, which deemed it be vested in the State. The property fell into disrepair in the 1980s and in 1992 a group of Vietnam veterans embarked on a project to restore the cottage, enlisting the help of Mrs Williams. The centenarian's daughter Anne Chapple enlisted the help of St John Ambulance community transport team to take Mrs Williams to her birth place. 'We knew getting Mum up here for her birthday would be a challenge,' Ms Chapple said. 'While she is relatively healthy, it is a long journey from Bunbury and we wouldn't have been able to make it happen without the help of St John WA's amazing staff and volunteers. She has had such an amazing life and has so many stories to tell, so we are so pleased we're able to reunite her with the wider family and celebrate this milestone

together.' St John WA General Manager of Patient Transfer & Community Transport, Alan Clyne said St John feels privileged to be able to help Marjorie connect with her heritage safely and celebrate such a momentous occasion with her family. 'Moments like this remind us why we do what we do. We're so happy to be able to transport Marjorie to her family for what will be a celebration to remember,' he said. Ms Chapple said ANZAC Cottage had always held a special place in her mum's heart. 'Whenever I visit Mum, her first question is: "How is ANZAC Cottage?" Even after all these years, the cottage continues to be one of the most valued and important aspects of her life. Over the years she has donated money and sponsored events at the cottage to ensure its history could be shared with the greater community. The Friends of ANZAC Cottage was formed in 2006 to share the story and community spirit of the house at 38 Kalgoorlie Street, Mount Hawthorn, which is classified by the National Trust, recognised by the WA Heritage Council and on the Register of National Estate. Friends of ANZAC Cottage President Peter Ramsay BEM said Mrs Williams had been instrumental in ensuring the cottage and its story remained for generations to come. 'Her memories of life in the cottage and her historical knowledge were invaluable in ensuring that our restorations were accurate and resembled the original building as closely as possible,' he said.

<https://www.bunburymail.com.au/story/7074602/a-century-of-life-celebrated-at-birth-place/> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_Cottage



Community Transport Glasgow & Food Pantry Service

Glasgow Times reports: "A new bus service will provide door-to-door transport for people using Glasgow's food pantries.

The Scottish Pantry Network has teamed up with Community Transport Glasgow and the city council to improve access to pantries in Ruchazie, Parkhead, Govan and the north west of the city. Food pantries offer good food at a low cost under a community membership model, with items not individually priced. Customers pay a £2.50 membership each time and can pick up £15 worth of food. Glasgow councillor Mandy Morgan is chair of the Scottish Pantry Network and has worked with Fareshare, a charity which redistributes surplus supermarket food, to develop the pantries. A pilot bus service has been running in her ward, the North East, since October, taking customers to Ruchazie. It has now been expanded, with funding from Glasgow City Council, to support all the pantries in the city. Ms Morgan said the new routes, along with a delivery service, make the pantries 'all inclusive'. She added the pilot scheme in Ruchazie has 'made a huge difference. Public transport, particularly for Ruchazie, is not great,' the councillor said. 'We've got people from Easterhouse who can't get down. With the bus, we've had people coming from as far away as Balornock.'" She said although Parkhead is on the main bus route, the new service will help people with mobility issues get to the pantries. The expanded service 'will mean the whole of the East End should be able to access Ruchazie and Parkhead', Ms Morgan added. 'We've got a small-scale delivery service too, mostly for people who are shielding and housebound.' Services will be running in Parkhead and Govan this week, with details still to be finalised in the north west. The buses need to be booked at least 24 hours in advance due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Anyone who wants to find out more about the service can contact the pantries directly or speak to Community Transport Glasgow on 0141 778 2402. Community Transport Glasgow, a registered charity, aims to increase the transport options available to communities across the city. The buses provided will be electric. The Parkhead pantry is on Westmuir Street while the Govan shop is on Govan Road. In Ruchazie, the pantry can be found on Gartloch Road and the north west facility is on Dumbarton Road. There are plans to open two more pantries in Castlemilk and Wester Common this year.

<https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/19005826.new-bus-service-take-customers-food-pantries/>



South Central CT Supporting Bereaved families to get to Funerals

Liverpool Echo reports: "A community transport company based in Dingle, which was the base for an award-winning over-50s activity hub before the pandemic, has now moved from transporting people to events across the city to helping bereaved families access funerals. South Central Community Transport, on Mill Street in Dingle, came up with the idea in May after members of staff, experiencing the death of loved ones, realised first hand some of the challenges brought about by the restrictions around funerals. With their fleet of minibuses no longer able to transport people to the many events, activities and classes to help people over 50 combat loneliness and social isolation which were run by Wheel Meet Again, based at the transport hub, managers decided to put the vehicles to good use to help grieving families instead. Wheel Meet Again project manager, Lynn Richardson, told the ECHO: 'There are several of us here who have lost people during the pandemic so we know how horrible the funeral situation is at present with all the restrictions in place. It's so hard for people anyway, when you are at the funeral, people are socially distanced, you can't stand and talk outside afterwards, I thought as a family you want to be together as much as you can and not everyone drives either. Not many people are doing funeral cars because of the restrictions, it's often just the hearse. So we decided, let's offer transport to people, it gives people some time together as a family.' South Central Community Transport have a fleet of six minibuses and they are offering families up to three, completely free, if needed to transport people to funerals.

Each minibus normally has a capacity for 16 passengers, but due to restrictions, five people are allowed to travel on board and the vehicles are fogged before and afterwards to ensure there is no contamination. Lynn says that people can contact South Central Community Transport on 0151 703 0007 if they need any support with funeral transportation and they will do their best to accommodate people city-wide. It's not the only pivot in activities that has taken place at South Central Community Transport since the start of the pandemic. As Wheel Meet Again and the minibuses are often used as transport for those over 50, Lynn says it became clear to her very early on in the coronavirus crisis that it would not be possible to continue normal activities. Realising that the biggest issue for those using the hub's services were around access to food, especially during the shortages in early March, they moved quickly to get food and hygiene parcels out to those shielding at home." <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/bus-companys-poignant-journey-helping-19617155>



Bus Operators step in to help with Vaccination Transport Effort

Route One: "Alpine Travel and Xelabus are among operators that are doing their bit to expedite the coronavirus COVID-19 vaccination process by providing transport. In North Wales, Alpine is offering complimentary transport to anyone in the community in and around its home of Llandudno and the surrounding rural areas who finds it difficult to get to their local vaccination centre, or who may be worried about using conventional public transport because they are shielding. Xelabus is undertaking a similar project in and around

Eastleigh. However, it is 'reaching out far and wide to Housing Associations, sheltered housing schemes and high-risk vulnerable citizens.' If leaders within those groups contact Xelabus, it will make all efforts to provide free transport to and from vaccination points. 'Groups need to be a minimum of eight passengers that can be socially distanced on buses,' says Managing Director Gareth Blair. 'We feel that this is a way we can give something back to the community. We all want to get back to a form of normality and if this helps us to reach that goal, then all the better.' For Alpine Travel, providing transport to and from vaccine centres represents a relaunch of its Here to Help campaign. Strict hygiene rules will be observed by drivers and for vehicles and the company's operations team will be coordinating the effort. Managing Director Chris Owens says that Alpine expects to see an uptake of its offer very soon. 'Our intention is to help our community as much as possible. Although we do not want to take away from our commercial colleagues who offer transport solutions, we believe that there is a need for help with transport to get to vaccination clinics. We have been making some difficult decisions this year, but I am confident that as the troubled times pass, our business will go from strength to strength. I hope in some small way this offer of free services for the community will help.'" https://www.route-one.net/news/operators-step-in-to-help-with-vaccination-transport-effort/?utm_source=routeone+Master+Subscribers&utm_campaign=20cc062e5c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_01_14_10_36&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_584b65a2d5-20cc062e5c-102224281



Uttlesford Community Travel are Transporting Residents to Covid Job Appointments
 Saffron Walden Reporter writes: "An Uttlesford charity is providing a shot of support to the Covid vaccination programme. Uttlesford Community

Travel is transporting residents to appointments at Stansted Health Centre, the Lord Butler Leisure Centre in Saffron Walden and Basildon Hospital. The transport service is being used by the over-60s, the disabled, those unable to access public transport, or those with no public transport because of rural isolation. UCT is also available to take people to other medical appointments and other transport needs such as shopping and transporting key workers. General manager Malcolm Barrell said: 'We don't want people worrying about getting to their appointments, so our minibuses are standing by to provide transport for our residents. We are here to help in these unprecedented times.' Minibuses have been converted to ensure passenger safety, with features such as screens. For further information and to book your journey call 01371 875787 or 01799 519008." <https://www.saffronwaldenreporter.co.uk/news/traffic/minibuses-transport-residents-to-covid-jabs-6893074>



Transport Scheme Set up to Help Residents in and Around Warwick, Leamington and Kenilworth get to Vaccination Hub

The Leamington Spa Courier reports: "A community transport scheme will be rolled out to help people get to one of the three vaccination hubs across Warwick district. Warwick District Council leader Cllr Andrew Day (Con, Bishop's Tachbrook) made the announcement during the full council meeting on Thursday (January 7) in a bid to ensure those who didn't have access to a car could get to the sites. While the sites at Lisle Court Medical Centre in Brunswick Street, Leamington and the Rehab Hospital in Heathcote Lane, Warwick, are fairly accessible, the third hub is at the more remote Warwickshire Golf Club in Leek Wootton."

<https://www.leafingtoncourier.co.uk/news/people/transport-scheme-set-help-residents-and-around-warwick-leafington-and-kenilworth-get-vaccination-hub-3090396>

Selsey Woman Organises Army of Volunteer Drivers to Help Vulnerable People Attend Vaccinations

From the Chichester Observer: "News that more vaccination clinics are being set up in the district has been welcomed – but as locations were announced, questions about how vulnerable people would be able to get to their appointments began to be raised. Patients in Chichester will be vaccinated at one of four GP surgeries – the Selsey Centre, Tangmere Village Centre, Pulborough Medical Group and Riverbank Medical Centre. But with no site in the city centre, it means some people will face a journey to get to their appointment. Julie Fullick from Selsey was inspired to act after seeing concerned posts on Facebook about vulnerable over-80s who might not have a car or anyone to help them with transport. So the mother-of-two, who has been busy home-schooling her children while also home-working for her job at a pharmaceutical company, decided to set up a transport network to serve people attending The Selsey Centre herself, joking: 'If there's one thing I'm good at it's spreadsheets and coordinating people.' After an appeal online, she received dozens of offers from individuals who work as drivers and community transport organisations willing to volunteer. 'It's been really positive,' she said. Julie now has collected an army of volunteers who are ready to help out as soon as vaccinations begin later this week. With around 300 jobs expected to be booked in per day, she said it was going to be 'a steep learning curve...It's going to be chaotic, it's all a bit short notice,' she said. Julie is asking people not to request transport until they are given an appointment – which means she has 'no idea' what the uptake will be. However she is confident they have enough volunteers to help everyone in need. Julie has been supported by the Selsey Community Forum, which has helped carry out risk assessments and help with insurance cover. Chairman Mike Nicholls said safety advice had been given to all drivers, who had also been checked out from a safeguarding point of view. He said

there has been 'a good offer' from drivers eager to help out. 'People are being very willing, there's a community desire to get as many vulnerable people vaccinated as quickly as possible,' he said. 'Whatever can be done to help that is being done.' However he stressed that the service being provided was not a 'taxi service' but was aimed at people who had no other means of getting to the centre. 'We don't want to be overwhelmed,' he said. Anyone in need of support to attend their vaccination at the Selsey Centre should contact Julie once they have the details of their appointment on 07590 060 234. A spokesperson for the Sussex COVID-19 vaccination programme said: 'We recognise that some people will have to travel further than others to get their vaccination depending on where they live in the local area. We have had incredible support from community transport providers and other groups in the Chichester District which can offer transport to people attending one of the GP led vaccination services for their vaccine appointment. If anyone needs support with getting to their appointment, please speak to the booking team when they contact you to arrange your appointment and they can share details of transport to help you.'"

<https://www.chichester.co.uk/news/people/selsey-woman-organises-army-volunteer-drivers-help-vulnerable-people-attend-vaccinations-3094965>



Calls for Easier Access to Covid Vaccine in Seaford and Newhaven

Sussex Express reports: "East Sussex County councillor Carolyn Lambert has called on the Sussex Resilience Forum and local NHS providers to work with the community to find local vaccination centres in Seaford. She said many residents in her

Seaford South ward had raised concerns about their ability to access vaccinations under the current setup, as many had been told they would need to travel to Eastbourne, Hailsham or Lewes. Peacehaven and Newhaven residents, meanwhile, would need to travel to a vaccination centre at Brighton Racecourse, which is to begin operating this week. However, this arrangement has also come in for criticism from a number of local councillors, who say the centre would be too difficult to access for the most vulnerable residents, particularly those without access to a car. Among those to raise criticism was Paula Woolven, an independent Newhaven town councillor who is also the chair of trustees of the community transport group Havens Community Cars. Cllr Woolven said: 'I emailed the CCG before Christmas, anticipating the need for transport for the first wave of people to be listed for the vaccination. As these were people in the oldest age bracket, it stands to reason that lack of mobility and transportation would be a big issue and I could not understand why community transport operators were not being contacted to "join the dots" to ensure the highest take up of this vaccination roll-out. Despite being assured that someone would be in touch in due course, the mass centre for the Havens has been opened today with no further contact to us regarding transport for the most vulnerable and isolated residents. We are trying to reach as many people as possible ourselves, telling them about our support, but most of those being called will not be on social media or the internet. It's a very disappointing lack of joined-up thinking.'

The CCG was also approached for comment in connection with Cllr Woolven's comments but has not replied prior to publication.

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/health/calls-easier-access-covid-vaccine-seaford-and-newhaven-3094536>



The NHS must Harness the Strengths of Districts

Cllr John Fuller OBE is chairman of the District Councils' Network comment the following in The MJ: "The vaccination programme is ramping up at pace, it's a national strategy needing local delivery, needing partnership in place. District councils working for their 20 million residents are key players on the vaccination programme pitch. We're trusted deliverers, we're rooted in the communities across our villages, towns and cities. We can harness a breadth of our physical and social assets, from our football teams to village halls, from our community and faith groups to street champions. As a recent report from Grant Thornton demonstrated, Districts are practical collaborators, delivery agents and system leaders. Where big government and centralised control have struggled under challenging circumstances, Districts have continued to be the first line of local accountability, support and protection for the communities and businesses they serve. Ministers have often recognised this, asking we play the lead role in making sure rough sleepers access vaccinations. These are among the most vulnerable in our communities, we know them, we can reach out to them, supporting and encouraging them to receive the vaccine. The NHS must now also harness our strengths. While it delivers the vaccinations, we can shape the ecosystem, build trust through familiar settings, bring in hard to reach communities, mobilise voluntary groups, set up community transport, and more - a partnership in place. Collaboration is communication. The NHS must help us help them, sharing with us their aspirations, plans and, crucially, the data, so that we can get our communities to rally behind them to make the greatest success of the vaccination programme. The future of the country depends on it."

<https://www.themj.co.uk/The-NHS-must-harness-the-strengths-of-districts/219508>



Ashbourne CT Keeps Up its Essential Lifeline Services

In Your Area writes: "Bosses at Ashbourne Community Transport said its drivers are geared up to carry on providing essential door-to-door services during the latest lockdown. The Blenheim Road-based charity, which will be open every day from 8am until 5pm, will be running buses to get people to work, to the shops and to healthcare appointments. Its Derbyshire Connect service will continue to run between Wirksworth and Ashbourne and its Moorlands Connect service will link villages with Leek, Ashbourne and Buxton. Connections with scheduled bus and train services will also continue. Derbyshire Connect Shopping buses, which are supported by Derbyshire County Council, will also continue to provide a weekly service for essential shopping from all villages across West Derbyshire and the charity will be providing its regular shopping runs in East Staffordshire – in and to Uttoxeter and Burton – for those with no other means of accessible transport. The service can also ferry passengers to hospital and GP appointments, including on trips to Covid-19 vaccination appointments and can arrange prescription collection transport in partnership with local dispensaries and GP services. A spokesman for the charity said: 'For your safety since the start of the pandemic we have adopted a high standard of regular bus sanitisation using the recognised X-mist sanitisation system. This process, along with other safety measures, will be continued. Call 01335 300670 or email enquiries@ashbournect.org.uk for information or booking. Please give as much notice as possible in order to ensure that we can meet your appointment times.'"

<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/transport-charity-keeps-up-its-essential-lifeline-services/>



The Ottery Help Scheme Offers Help Across the Otter Valley

Sidmouth Herald reports that "Ottery Help Scheme is pitching in to support the local community. Staff and volunteers are available to help the vulnerable during the pandemic. The services that are being offered during this current lockdown are: community transport for medical appointments, telephone befriending, bereavement support (telephone-based), carer support (telephone-based) and an advice line for people living with dementia in the local area. Ottery Help Scheme can also deliver prescriptions and shopping for people who are clinically vulnerable.

Based at Ottery Station in Ottery St Mary, the charity serves the parishes of Ottery St Mary, Aylesbeare, Talaton, Rockbeare, Feniton, Buckerell, Newton Popleford, Whimble and Gittisham. You can call the team on: 01404 813041. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4pm."

<https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/sidmouth-and-ottery-charities-support-during-lockdown3-6885882>



Red Cross in Clare Appeal for Support to keep the Wheels Moving

Clare Champion writes: "Volunteers with the Irish Red Cross in Clare completed more than 8,000 hours helping the people of Clare last year, with the organisation vowing to continue supporting those in need into 2021 despite Covid-19. However, in order to achieve this the Irish Red Cross will need the people of Clare to help them, with the organisation making a renewed appeal for support in their ongoing fundraising efforts. An online fundraising campaign has been launched aiming to raise €20,000 for the Red Cross in Clare, with just over €2,200 pledged so far. James Lafferty, Irish Red Cross Clare Area Treasurer and Community Support Officer paid tribute to the organisation's volunteers and loyal supporters as he urged members

of the public and local businesses to get behind the Red Cross. 'Despite Covid-19 which hit all of us in March 2020 and which is getting a whole lot worse at this time at the start of 2021 we plan to continue supporting the people of County Clare. In 2020 we completed a total of 256 community transport trips, travelling to all corners of County Clare and to hospitals all over Ireland free of charge to the people of Clare for medical appointments. Our volunteers completed a total of 8,119 hours in 2020 despite Covid-19 Level 5 restrictions. All our drivers and carers are volunteers giving their time in support of the people of County Clare.' Playing a "vital role" in the Irish Red Cross' work in Clare has been the community transport service carried out by volunteers. 'The number of young and old, disabled and able bodied, people just living alone, people that have no family and members of the general public that rely on our great volunteers of the Irish Red Cross Clare to get them to hospital appointments, doctors' visits, tests, and a whole range of reasons that they may need to come to us is astounding. Sometimes their day can start at 3am and not finish before midnight that same day. That same person will be brought from their door to their destination to attend their appointment and brought home to their family when all is done. The people of Clare should be very proud of the volunteers' army in Clare and especially proud of the small but ever growing army of Red Cross volunteers.' This year the organisation expect to add to their fleet of vehicles with a second community support vehicle which is been part fund by a CLAR grant of €42,685. It is anticipated this will be in place this summer and James paid tribute to all who have supported the grant application. He appealed to people to support the go fund me page set up to support the Irish Red Cross in Clare's community services alongside donating to counter top boxes which are in shops, chemists and some pubs throughout the county. He outlined that the new training unit and ambulance centre cost, including interest and charges the sum of €359,640.55. This has been reduced to €201,697.20 in two and half years through 'generous donations' from Clare businesses and the Tour of Clare fundraiser. 'In 2020 we were to complete 56 collection points, but due to Covid-19 we could only

do 14 collection points. The plan for 2021 is to start in April and work through to December 2021 provided we are not on Level 5. It is in God's hands. No matter what we have to move forward take what comes and keep to our plan to clear our debt by March 2028 with the support of the Clare public and businesses. The work of our volunteers over the last nine years has been amazing, sitting outside Clare businesses in all types of weather from 8.30am to 6pm. A special thank you to all our volunteers who have supported our new training unit and ambulance centre project. A lot has been done and there is more to do. We also plan to carry out works to our new building in line with our planning permission starting in the next two years all going well." He urged businesses in the county to show their support of the Irish Red Cross in Clare's efforts to reduce the debt on the building. The Irish Red Cross in Clare need the support of the Clare public so we can continue the good work been done on the ground supporting the people of County Clare. Please donate and keep the wheels rolling.' Donations to the organisation can be made at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/irish-red-cross-clare-area-community-services> while businesses who want to get involved in showing support can contact 086 8323456." <https://clarechampion.ie/red-cross-in-clare-appeal-for-support-to-keep-the-wheels-moving/>

Irish Red Cross Clare Area Community Services

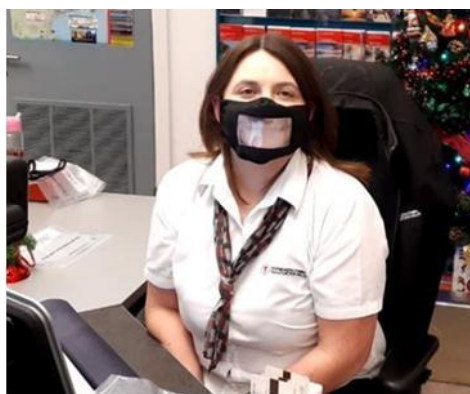


Innovative Face Coverings for Transport for Wales Staff

In Your Area states that "Front line workers across Transport for Wales' network are being provided with innovative new face coverings with a transparent window, so customers can see what they are saying. The new solution demonstrates Transport for Wales' (TfW) commitment to providing a more inclusive service, addressing concerns from the charity and community sectors over the barrier to communication that face coverings have

posed. 2,000 of the face coverings are being distributed to railway station and train crew colleagues. Dr Robert Gravelle, Accessibility and Inclusion Manager for TfW, said that multiple charities and other community groups had been stressing the importance of visual clues for effective communication. He continued: 'We all know just how important it is to wear a face covering right now, but equally, many of our customers experience hearing loss, use British Sign Language and generally rely on visual clues when travelling with us. So when Trevor from our Accessibility and Inclusion Panel suggested the windowed face covering, we jumped at the chance to develop it. The design won the endorsement of our panel and we are delighted to be rolling it out across our front-line teams.' The GL100 windowed face covering has clear advantages and benefits for staff when interacting with all communities, not just the Disabled and Deaf community. Manufactured in Newport, Wales, the mask addresses Equalities Act and HSAWR considerations and complies with ISO9001. Network Rail, the Rail Delivery Group and Office for Road and Rail have also expressed an interest in the product and are purchasing it for their staff nationally. Accessibility and Inclusion Panel member and mask creator Trevor Palmer said: 'Wearing a face covering is an important tool in the fight against Covid-19, but as we all know they are not that easy to communicate through. That's why I came up with and started manufacturing the windowed face mask which shows a person's facial expression and aids lip reading. So to provide these windowed face masks and help keep safe not only NHS front line staff, but also other front line workers is a genuine success and pleasure.'"

<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/innovative-face-coverings-for-transport-for-wales-staff/>



TAS Director John Taylor Writes...



To conclude this newsletter, TAS Director John Taylor has contributed another 'Think Piece'. We would welcome any comments or feedback. John has been one of the pre-eminent practitioners of accessible, flexible and community-based transport in UK since 1977, with early experience encompassing the design, operational, legal and technical aspects of CT. His consultancy career stretches back to 1986; before joining TAS in 1994, John was a freelance consultant specialising in community, rural and accessible transport.

Local transport for local people - what did Brexit ever do for me? TAS is based in Preston which, in better times gives us access to good rail links for on-site meetings with customers around the UK. Preston is also the location for the development of the "Preston Model" which Guardian readers or followers of John McDonnell's plans as Shadow Chancellor, will be aware of. In essence this is a self-help economic regeneration and community wealth-building model that recognises that the local area has a 'balance of payments' problem which suppresses economic and employment opportunities. A significant annual outflow of money from the area goes to purchase goods and services without an equivalent inflow of employment income. As a mostly service-based economy (public sector, health, care, education) there are limits to the volume of physical goods that we can supply to the rest of the country.

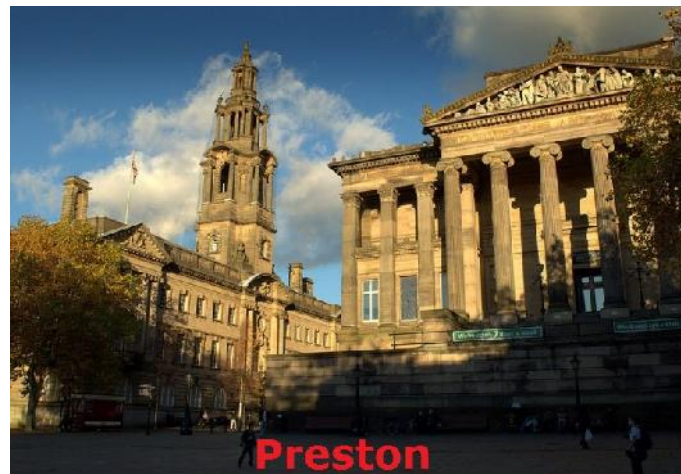
To counter this, the City Council has brought together key 'anchor institutions' (Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire

Constabulary, University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), Preston's College, Community Gateway – major housing association) who are committed to focusing their purchasing power, where possible, into the local economy. In addition, the City Council and UCLAN are working to promote development of co-operatives, primarily local worker co-ops but including launching a socially owned northwest regional bank to counter the move to centralised algorithm-based investment through City of London-based institutions. This initiative follows the successful linkage between regional banks and regional economies in Germany and the requirement for worker representatives on company boards, ironically both initiatives that were supported and facilitated by British economists as part of the immediate post-war reconstruction. As an employee-owned company, TAS has been involved in this initiative towards locally controlled employment, whether through co-ops or other employee ownership forms, as well as a project with the Mondragon Corporation in the Basque country - one of the world's largest collective groupings of co-operatives that work mutually. Lots of links below for those who want to know more.¹

This raises a number of challenging questions for community transport groups, thinking about:

-) their role within the local economy – support for local businesses, involvement in BIDs, Chambers of Trade – particularly whether they have a wider transport role e.g. last-mile delivery, recycling, running bike hubs that contribute to the wellbeing of their community (one effect of Covid has been to involve CTs in food poverty initiatives and this could continue after the pandemic)
-) a commitment to paying a local living wage – particularly challenging in the current environment for public sector procurement and endemic low pay and self-exploitation in the small PSV, taxi and private hire markets
-) effective democracy within the organisation, for both service users

and staff – lots of CTs have a nominally user-controlled constitution but in my experience very few of these work well once the scheme starts to grow. This creates difficulties for succession and innovation.



So what has this to do with Brexit? Well, a major barrier to the Preston Model has been elements of section 17 Local Government Act 1988. This is the section that prevents public authorities from taking into account any 'non-commercial matters' during their procurement activities. The list of 'non-commercial matters' includes [17(5)(a)] the terms and conditions of employment – thus it has not been possible for councils to require their contractors to pay a local living wage (but see below). It also [17(5)(e)] prohibits a local authority from taking into account in their procurement decisions "the location in any country or territory of the business activities or interests of contractors". This was introduced by Margaret Thatcher to prevent local authorities from supporting the Anti-Apartheid Movement's campaign to boycott companies that traded with the racist South African regime. But of course it also prevents councils from favouring suppliers that are based in their local area – meaning that delivering the Preston Model is a challenge. This has been reinforced by EU Public Procurement Directives requiring authorities to consider bids

¹ <https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/case-study/the-preston-model-of-community-wealth-building-in-the-uk/>
<https://www.preston.gov.uk/article/1334/Community-Wealth-Building>

<https://cles.org.uk/blog/reflecting-and-celebrating-eight-years-of-community-wealth-building-in-preston/>
<https://www.visitpreston.com/blogs/preston-guild-blog/2018/8/preston-meets-mondrag-243-n-worker-ownership-democratic-businesses-preston/>

equally from anywhere across the EU, and avoiding national discrimination.

Anticipating finally leaving the EU, in December the Cabinet Office published a Procurement Note PPN 11/20² which provides guidance as to how contracting authorities, despite s17(5)(e), may now reserve procurements for below threshold contracts for:

-) local suppliers to support domestic supply chains and promote local resilience and capacity
-) Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) / Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) - this means being able to run a competition and specify that only SMEs and VCSEs can bid.

Note that the UK Internal Market Act 2020 outlaws discrimination between the four UK nations and that is reinforced in the guidance i.e. 'local' has to be either UK-wide or a county or smaller area, so an English authority can't require an English supplier but Lancashire can require a Lancashire-based supplier.

The guidance only applies to 'below threshold' procurement because the UK is still complying with EU principles in respect of above threshold procurements.

Moreover, these thresholds actually derive from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement ("GPA") which the UK is signing up to, so they won't change. The current local authority lifetime contract value threshold that applies to most CT work is £189,330.

At the same time, I think it is worth revisiting the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. Under s1(3) of this Act, in the case of a relevant procurement, the Council must consider:

- (a) how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area, and
- (b) how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement.

There are several ways in which the procurement of passenger transport services can be undertaken in a way that might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area. For example, the Council could decide to either require or attach weight to provision of low or ultra-low or zero emission vehicles as a means of improving air quality. But it can also consider the supply chain and the local economy, as well as the added value benefits for health and social mobility that CTs can offer. Moreover, if the Council were to consider that reasonable pay is important for local economic resilience, then it can include a requirement for local living wage to be paid to drivers, passenger assistants and indeed other staff working on transport contracts. This is not well understood by authorities which leads to the hypocritical position that many authorities have signed up to be living wage employers themselves, but they don't require that from their suppliers. The reason this is legitimate is a little-known effect of the 2012 Act, only applying to 'services' contracts (i.e. not goods or works), that the Council can take into account non-commercial considerations (such as a requirement for contractors to pay the Local Living Wage) in order to meet its duties under s1 of the 2012 Act. But of course, to make this a reality, the Council would have to have explicitly considered its s1(3) obligation in respect of this procurement and determined that issues concerning the local circular economy and supply chains arising from its procurement are indeed relevant to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of its local area.

All of this is relevant to the arguments with the BCA about a level playing field and fair competition, and the latest Guidance from the DfT on s19/s22 Permits (of which, more next time). At the moment the competition 'playing field' is primarily determined by the WTO and weighted towards what one might loosely call the interests of global capital. A possibly unintended consequence of Brexit is to give us the opportunity to work with our local authorities to shift the balance towards local wellbeing and the interests of our employees.



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