



Community & Voluntary Transport at



The TAS Partnership Limited
Passenger Transport Specialists

Newsletter No.30 March 2023

Edited by John Atkins (Principal Consultant)

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/>

UK – Core Trustee Duties come under Charity Commission Spotlight. The Charity Commission has “developed a collection of short and engaging guidance on issues ranging from safeguarding people to managing conflicts of interest. Dubbed the ‘5-Minute Guides’, the collection serves as a basic toolkit for trustees who are managing the many demands of running a charity. The latest phase of the campaign, running from 2nd February to 16th March, aims to raise awareness of, and boost use of, the 5-Minute Guides. The regulator hopes this will increase knowledge and understanding of essential trustee duties. This comes as charities face additional challenges due to cost-of-living pressures.” <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/here-to-help-commission-launches-new-push-on-trustee-guides-as-sector-faces-challenging-year>



Being a charity trustee

UK – Seven Concerning Challenges Facing Community Transport – Article. As part of its product marketing, transport software providers Road XS have produced a substantial article which argues for the importance of community transport and the role appropriate software should play in its survival and development. <https://www.roadxs.com/7-concerning-challenges-facing-community-transport>

UK – CTA Advice Drop In Sessions. These useful sessions are now being held on a monthly basis. CTA says: "We've received tremendous feedback on how valuable this meeting has been in tackling community transport issues that matter the most." Sessions scheduled are:

-) Friday 24 February
-) Friday 17 March
-) Friday 21 April
-) Friday 19 May

Contact CTA if you would like to join a session: advice@ctauk.org or speak to one of the CTA development officers on 0161 351 1475.



UK – CTA Calls upon the Government to Review Volunteer Mileage Allowances. CTA has been a leading member of the ReviewAMAP coalition which has been campaigning to have the 45p per mile HMRC threshold increased. CTA has recently been pushing for this to be addressed in the Spring Budget. <https://ctauk.org/amap-campaign/>
https://twitter.com/hashtag/ReviewAMAP?src=hashtag_click

UK – DVSA warns against use of Seatbelt Buckle Guards. DVSA has pointed out that the fitting of buckle guards to a seat belt breaches the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, regulation 48 (4). "Avoid disruption to your operations, do not use buckle guards. Not only do they pose a significant safety risk, but if examiners encounter these at the roadside, you will face enforcement action." Buckle guards are sometimes fitted to vehicles carrying passengers who are at risk of unclipping their seat belts mid-journey.



<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/34637b8>

However, DVSA then subsequently modified its position:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/3496836>

Suffolk – Urgent Appeal for Volunteer Drivers in Waveney. Bungay Area Community Transport (BACT) urgently requires new volunteer drivers in Waveney, having seen its roster decline by half over the last five years. Anyone who would like to get involved should contact the project on 01986 896896 or email info@bactcommunitytransport.org.uk.

<https://www.becclesandbungayjournal.co.uk/news/23245127.waveney-transport-charity-needs-volunteers-urgently/>

Derbyshire - Ashbourne Community Transport Minibus Caught in Floods. Crossing a ford at Tissington, the driver of an Ashbourne CT vehicle got stuck as rushing water flooded the engine. The vehicle had to be hauled out by the fire brigade. Luckily the driver was unhurt and there were no passengers on board. Extreme wet conditions and Peak District routes mean that Ashbourne CT has to operate in challenging circumstances.

<https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/motoring/driver-gets-minibus-stuck-flooded-8016198>

<https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/minibus-gets-stuck-flooded-ford-8018429>

Northern Ireland – Easilink Volunteer Drivers are Praised. The crucial role played by Easilink volunteer car drivers and paid minibuses in getting passengers to health appointments in Derry & Tyrone has been highlighted. 9,000 trips have been delivered during 2021/2022. "Our volunteer car drivers are going that extra length to ensure that people in their local community get to health appointments and other essential trips. Without their support we would not be able to operate," said Easilink CEO Claire Russell.

<https://www.derryjournal.com/lifestyle/travel/volunteer-drivers-go-extra-mile-to-get-people-to-appointments-in-derry-tyrone-4017869>

Scotland – Aberdeenshire Council's Ready2Go DRT is Axed. The Ready2Go service which has served Aberdeenshire's rural communities since August 2021 is to be withdrawn in favour of a timetabled service between Inch and Inverurie. Ready2Go delivered 1,100 passenger trips per week across five minibuses that were operated by Watermill Coaches. The council quotes high costs per passenger, inability to book trips and low occupancy as reasons for its demise. <https://www.aberdeenshirelive.com/news/aberdeenshire-news/aberdeenshire-bus-service-ready2go-being-8025236>

Scotland – Community Regeneration Funding in Sutherland to Benefit CT. A £698.6k funding package has been allocated to various community projects in Sutherland, including the Dornoch Area Community Interest Company who are to receive £4,800 towards a community transport project, and £36,273 for the Farr North Community Development Trust towards establishing a community transport service for Farr.

https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/15074/6986k_worth_of_funding_bids_approved_in_sutherland

Devon – Holdsworth CT Announces Service Cutbacks. Following the expiry of three Big Lottery grants, Holdsworth Rural Community Transport has subsisted on reserves and is needing to reduce its services levels from 31 March. Devon County Council is continuing to support the project. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-64294982>

Devon - Okehampton CT Appoints New Co-ordinator. There is a new member of the team at Okehampton District Community Transport Group in the person of Sarah Packer who has joined as co-ordinator. The project has also appealed for volunteers in the Lewdown/Lifton and Chagford areas. Anyone interested should call 01837 55000. <https://www.okehampton-today.co.uk/news/community-transport-has-a-new-coordinator-587199>

Somerset – Appeal for More Volunteers at Atwest. More volunteer drivers are required for the community car scheme operate by Accessible Transport West Somerset in West Somerset. Anyone interested in assisting should call 01984 709701. <https://www.wsfp.co.uk/news/community-transport-scheme-in-desperate-need-of-more-volunteer-drivers-588366>

Somerset - Bristol Minibus Arsonist is Jailed. After pleading guilty to setting fire to 20 minibuses in the north Bristol area, including those of Four Towns and Vale Link Community Transport, Daniel Cron has been jailed for three years. <https://www.bristolworld.com/news/crime/how-the-strength-of-community-won-the-battle-against-a-callous-arsonist-3985761>

Somerset – Insurance Costs Push CT Provider to the Wall. Operating out of Fishponds, Accessible Transport 4 U is to cease trading due to costly insurance premiums. AT4U director Martyn Hancock was quoted as saying: "It is with deep regret that as of February 1st 2023 we and our partner charity, Disabled Travel Service can no longer provide our transport projects: Candyfloss Outings, Wheel 2 Learn, Out 'n' About and Forever Remembered." <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/accessible-minibus-service-bristol-scrapped-8073257>

Somerset – Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Show Planned for Sparkford. This event is scheduled for 19-20th May at the Haynes Motor Museum and is hosted by Brotherwood: "the Brotherwood WAV Show gives wheelchair users and their families, carers, occupational therapists, community transport providers and local authority representatives the opportunity to explore and test drive a wide range of vehicles converted for wheelchair access in one place."



<https://thiis.co.uk/brotherwood-to-host-exclusive-wav-show-for-wheelchair-users-to-test-drive-vehicles/>

Bath and North East Somerset – Age UK Calls for Increased Support for North East Somerset CTs. Changes to bus services in North East Somerset

with most council-supported bus services replaced by demand-responsive services have caused concerns from Age UK Bath & North East Somerset. CEO Simon Allen has called for increased funding for CTs such as SWAN Transport, Midsomer Norton and Radstock Dial a Ride and Keynsham & District Dial-a-Ride to ensure that older people are not left isolated. He said Whilst the organisation supports the introduction of demand responsive transport, he said it must be "accessible to all, not just those who know how to use a computer or app". <https://www.mnrjournal.co.uk/news/age-uk-ceo-calls-for-more-funding-for-local-swan-transport-and-dial-a-ride-services-through-open-letter-593272>

North Somerset – Nailsea CT Set to Benefit from New Electric Minibuses. A new initiative by Nailsea Town Council has confirmed the purchase of two new vehicles from GM Coachwork Ltd at a cost of £177,060. The vehicles are to be leased to Nailsea & District Community Transport to augment its local services.

<https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/23313135.nailsea-residents-enjoy-two-brand-new-electric-buses/>

Wales – Demand-responsive Services Withdrawn in Aberystwyth Area. Three demand-responsive services running in Ceredigion ceased operation at the end of December, due to very high subsidy per passenger and rises of 30% in costs of supported bus services.

<https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/resident/news/2022/changes-to-bus-services-in-ceredigion/>

Wales – Plas Madoc CT Service Benefits from Lottery Grant. Funding to the tune of £44k has been awarded to Wrexham-based We Are Plas Madoc to assist in the delivery of a transport service using an electric vehicle.

<https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/23254430.plas-madoc-receives-43-500-national-lottery/>



Wales – Addressing Rural Needs with CT. Welsh Government has issued a Written Statement by Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change. This includes the following: "Community transport is an important part of our transport system in Wales, supporting vulnerable people to access essential services. We will, through Transport for Wales, work with our Community Transport partners to look at ways we can best support both the people who use this vital service and those who give their time to run it."

<https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-rural-transport-wales>

North Yorkshire – Ryedale Charities Welcome New Minibus. The collective fundraising group Ryedale Charities Together – which includes Ryedale Community Transport – have been provided with a new accessible minibus from the Kirkby Foundation.

<https://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/23260362.minibus-boost-ryedale-charities-together/>

North Yorkshire – New Helmsley Hopper Service is Launched. As a part of a new Ryedale Rover Service, residents of the villages around Helmsley in the North Yorkshire Moors are to benefit from the Helmsley Hopper, operated by Ryedale Community Transport, which will provide journeys into Malton. The service has been supported by National Lottery Community Fund.
<https://www.darlingtonandstocktontimes.co.uk/news/23259951.helmsley-hopper-launched-improve-rural-transport/>

North Yorkshire – Craven CT Provider Closes Down. After 40 years of activity, Skipton and Craven Action for Disability has closed down, citing the pressures caused by the COVID pandemic. The charity had operated a CT service through the Yorkshire Dales for many years. Councillor Greg White of North Yorkshire County Council said: "Our stronger communities and integrated passenger transport teams have worked with Skipton Step into Action (SSIA) to provide a replacement community transport service. The charity will launch a volunteer car scheme on Monday, February 13, which will cover the same area. We are sure that those who previously relied on the service will welcome the news."
<https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/23309286.collapse-long-standing-charity-blamed-covid-pandemic/>

North Yorkshire – Tackling Loneliness in Nidderdale. With funding from the government's Tackling Loneliness through Transport fund via CTA, Nidd Plus have launched 'Day trips out 2023' for local isolated people. The service offers "fun days out to places like Whitby, Salt's Mill, the Marks and Spencer "Marks in Time" Archive in Leeds, and Piece Hall in Halifax."



<https://www.harrogateadvertiser.co.uk/whats-on/things-to-do/nidd-plus-release-day-trips-2023-in-bid-to-tackle-loneliness-in-nidderdale-4010443>

North Yorkshire – Spotlight on Stokesley and District Community Care Association. In a profile of Stokesley and District Community Care Association, North Yorkshire County Council has highlighted the success of its wide range of services, including community transport, a day centre and visiting and befriending services. "One of the vital roles they fulfil is operating a car scheme, providing transport to hospital appointments and similar trips where public transport would be difficult and taxis an expensive option. Costs for a trip to hospital, regardless of distance, are capped at £20 through an arrangement with the county council, which helps to fund the scheme. The car service works alongside the association's two minibuses, which provide

services for those in remote communities who would otherwise struggle to get out." <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/volunteers-make-community-care-association-success>

East Riding of Yorkshire - Time2Volunteer Website Celebrates Community Transport. Volunteering opportunity online resource Time2Volunteer (a partnership of Hull CVS, HEY Smile Foundation, Hull City Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council) has highlighted the value of volunteering as a driver for local CT operators Beverley Community Life, Goole Go Far and Holderness Area Rural Transport.



<https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/hull-east-yorkshire-news/hull-live-community-news-updates-8066409>

West Yorkshire – Honiton CT Service in the Spotlight. A profile of South Pennine Community Transport is featured in Huddersfield Hub. The CIC operates around 40 rural bus routes in Yorkshire with a fleet of 20 vehicles and 36 staff members. The article states that “while the big bus operators, such as First and Arriva, are struggling with a shortage of drivers and have been forced to cut services, South Pennine Community Transport has found a niche, and passengers love them.” <https://huddersfieldhub.co.uk/into-the-spotlight-how-south-pennine-community-transport-has-built-a-community-on-the-buses/>



Sussex – Community Transport Sussex Scheme to Combat Loneliness Backed by Esther Rantzen. Dame Esther Rantzen has given her support for the Travel Buddy scheme that has been launched by Community Transport Sussex.

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/dame-esther-rantzen-backs-sussex-community-transport-charity-3998949>

Sussex – Wealdlink Receives Donations from Housing Developer. The home builder Taylor Wimpey South East has donated £500 to Wealdlink CT. <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/wealdlink-community-transport-receives-ps500-from-taylor-wimpey-4025021>

West Berkshire – Efforts to Save Readibus Funding in West Berkshire. A 1,200 strong petition has been prepared by Liberal Democrats and handed to West Berkshire Council in the hope that a decision that caused the Readibus service to lose much of its funding in 2021 might be reviewed. The Council has already been criticised by the Ombudsman for not undertaking an adequate consultation before the funding cut.

<https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/we-need-west-berkshire-council-to-use-the-resources-it-has-9294490/>

Cumbria – Volunteers Required for County Car Schemes. Volunteers are required for the 33 countywide Voluntary Social Car Schemes across Cumbria. The operation already has over 200 drivers but recruitment is ongoing and more drivers are always needed. See video here:

<https://www.itv.com/news/border/2023-01-18/volunteer-drivers-wanted-across-cumbria>

Cumbria – New Community Wheels Service Launched. A new weekly Community Wheels service became operational in early February, running from Caldbeck and district to Carlisle on the first Monday of the month, followed by journeys to Wigton for the remaining Mondays of the month. Three volunteers are to



drive the 14-seat accessible minibus, which has been provided by Cumbria County Council. <https://cumbriacrack.com/2023/02/01/new-north-cumbria-community-transport-route-to-launch/>



Cumbria – Minibus Drivers Needed for Growing Well project. The mental health charity Growing Well is recruiting drivers for its new gardening project based at Tebay Motorway Services south of Penrith (as featured on TV's A Lake District Farm Shop). Growing Well provides transport for its beneficiaries from the North Cumbria area. Minibus drivers are currently being recruited for varied hours paid at £10.90 per hour, with up to four hours per day Monday to Friday to and from the site at Tebay Northbound Services (8.30am) start and at the end of the day (5.30pm finish). Routes are: Monday - Carlisle; Tuesday – Penrith & North Eden; Wednesday – Carlisle; Thursday – Appleby / Brough / Kirkby Stephen. Friday – tbc. Drivers are invited to apply for whichever

days they can be available. Full training is provided but applicants need a D1 category licence entitlement. Enhanced DBS or willingness to undertake one would be excellent. Call: 07512 316564 or email tebay@growingwell.co.uk.

Worcestershire – Community Bus in Kempsey is planned. A 13-week community bus trial is planned for the village of Kempsey near Worcester. The viability of the service is being investigated by Cllr Martin Allen, who is the Croome representative on Worcestershire County Council.

https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/23269681_plans-kempsey-community-bus-called-local-priority/

Surrey - Waverley Hoppa Offers £2 Fare. As one of the few CT operators which is participating in the Government's bus fare subsidy scheme, the Hoppa is reminding its users and local residents in Farnham, Godalming, Cranleigh and Haslemere that they can enjoy £2 maximum bus fares until the end of March. <https://www.farnhamherald.com/news/waverleys-door-to-door-hoppa-bus-gets-on-board-with-ps2-fare-cap-until-march-31-590089>

Dorset – 99-year-old Poole Passenger Makes Weekly Dial-a-Bus Trips. Approaching her 100th birthday, Mrs Rendle visits Sainsbury's in Poole every week, courtesy of the Bournemouth Christchurch & Poole Council operated Dial-a-Bus service. Mrs Rendle told the Bournemouth Echo: "It's a wonderful service. The drivers look after us, dropping us right where we need to be, helping with shopping and opening the door as I can't see very well. I look forward to going out and we all chat on the bus, it's a happy situation." <https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/23244471.bcp-resident-99-uses-bus-get-sainsburys/>

Oxfordshire – West Oxfordshire CT Service is Saved. The 210 bus service between Milton-under-Wychwood and Witney, operated by West Oxfordshire Community Transport, will now continue until August 2024 following a decision by Oxfordshire County Council to support the service. <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/west-oxfordshire-bus-service-secured/>

Northumberland – Freemasons Support for Coquetdale CT. A donation of £250 has been made by Alnwick Freemasons to Upper Coquetdale Community Transport to assist with the service to enable vulnerable people to get to warm hubs. <https://www.northumberlandgazette.co.uk/news/people/alnwick-freemasons-help-with-transport-costs-for-coquetdale-charity-4019061>

Bedfordshire – DfT Funding for Bedford Services. Socially-necessary bus services, including community transport, are to be boosted by £69,509 in DfT funding for Bedford Borough Council. <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/news/2023/bedford-borough-council-receives-ps69000-local-bus-and-community-transport-services>



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