



Community & Voluntary Transport at



The TAS Partnership Limited
Passenger Transport Specialists

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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 – DVSA Advice on Record Keeping. Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency: "We are often asked what a driver must record when they have not been using their vehicle for some time. This might be for a short period such as a holiday or where they have not driven an in-scope vehicle for a few months. This could be because a driver is returning to the industry or where somebody has been working in another part of a transport company. Advice is here: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/348b036>

UK – Health Care in Rural Areas Report. House of Lords published a report Health Care in Rural Areas. The report noted that access to services was "a particular challenge, with the remoteness of some populations making access to health services more difficult. The committee stated that whilst community transport schemes did exist, 'they are not able to respond at short notice to assist all patients in need of transport, meaning many people are dependent on taxis'. <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/health-care-in-rural-areas/>



UK – National Centre for Accessible Transport Opens. Over £20m funding has been provided by Motability for the National Centre for Accessible Transport at Coventry University. This is described as “a UK first in inclusive transport, with the aim to make future and existing modes of transport accessible to all... The Centre’s research and agenda will be led by disabled people, building upon the user-centred approach...The Centre aims to make transport accessible for all through innovation and by engaging with disabled people: To better understand their experiences and co-design solutions; Amplifying the voices of disabled people in all decision making; Collaborating widely with all transport stakeholders; Demonstrating good practice and impact to influence policy.” <https://www.motability.org.uk/motability-news/national-centre-for-accessible-transport-launches-in-uk-first/>

UK – DRT is the way to Solve Driver Shortages. Addressing the Europe-wide problem of driver recruitment and retention, an article by Padam Mobility has suggested that the need for full ‘D’ driving entitlement is a deterrent. It argues that “demand-responsive transport (DRT), which makes it possible to employ drivers who ‘only’ have a class B driving licence, could improve the situation in the long term.” The article also suggests that DRT services provide “pleasant working conditions of the drivers and the often personal relationship with the passengers contribute to a very good working atmosphere.” https://futuretransport-news.com/driver-shortage-transport-on-demand-can-improve-the-situation/?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=futuretransport-news&utm_term=Padam



UK – CTA Continues its Campaign for Mileage Rates to be Increased. The long-running campaign for volunteer mileage rates to be reviewed continues in its attempts to pressurise the Government. Community Transport Association said: “The CTA-led campaign backed by nine other organisations representing over 20 million volunteers, including the National Council for

Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS), submitted a formal proposal for change to HM Treasury ahead of the Spring Budget on 15 March. It calls for a ‘fair, transparent and regular review’ of the AMAP, which is the maximum level at which an employee or volunteer driver can be reimbursed for driving a personal vehicle without any impact on their tax obligations or benefit entitlements.” <https://ctauk.org/cta-coalition-call-on-chancellor-to-review-the-rising-costs-of-motoring/>



UK – CTA asks ‘Do Seatbelt Buckle Guards Compromise Safety’? Following the DVSA advice last month that seatbelt buckle guards were illegal (then subsequently backtracking on this), Community Transport Association has explored the issues more fully here: <https://ctauk.org/do-seatbelt-buckle-guards-compromise-safety/>

England – CTA and Tackling Loneliness through Transport. CTA’s England Spotlight newsletter reports: “The Tackling Loneliness Through Community Transport Pilot Programme is coming towards the end of its delivery phase, so far it has supported 1,173 individuals to access transport and 114 volunteers. Collectively they have travelled over 103,000 miles, that’s 4 times around the World. While there is still time to go our initial data is showing that the services are having a positive impact on people’s feelings of loneliness. Along with delivering transport the pilots are continuing to engage in peer to peer sessions and training to support the sustainability of their pilots and organisation. We are currently developing our online presence and training platform in the coming months, to support other CT operators to support people experiencing loneliness. The results from the pilots will be launched at a virtual conference at a date to be confirmed in May.”

England – CTA Mapping CT in England. Following its similar work in Scotland, CTA has invited local authorities to contribute towards a database of CT provision in England which “aims to provide a better understanding of the whole community transport sector in England.” Entries can be added here: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/F675H8D?utm_source=CTA+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=81a74015a6-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_12_07_09_06_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-0377e6713b-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D

Northern Ireland – DVSA’s MOT History Service Extended to Northern Ireland. The ability to check the MOT history of a vehicle through an online search has now been extended to Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency in partnership with NI’s Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA). <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/347c789> Democratic Unionist Party member Phillip Brett MLA has added his concerns here: <https://mydup.com/news/dup-expresses-concern-on-future-of-community-transport>

Northern Ireland – Dial-a-Lift Services Threatened. Key funding for Dial-a-Lift has not yet been confirmed for the next financial year by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and services are not now assured beyond the end of April. Dial-a-Lift is delivered across NI by the 11 Rural

Community Transport Partnerships, delivering around 200,000 trips per year at a cost of £2.2m. CTA's Director for Northern Ireland Noeleen Lynch said: "If we lose this service it will cause severe and irreversible damage to disabled people who live in rural areas with no public transport nearby. Elderly and disabled people rely on this service for medical appointments and basic food shops, so you're talking about an impact on peoples' lives and livelihoods should funding be reduced or discontinued." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-64804115>



Wales – CTA's Director for Wales Argues that CT can Bring Social Justice. Investment in accessible and inclusive transport makes sense for everyone, writes Gemma Lelliot. "Accessible, inclusive and integrated transport systems are the gateway infrastructure of vibrant and thriving communities, and they are key to tackling both the climate emergency and

the cost of living crisis." Full article here:

<https://www.transportextra.com/publications/parking-review/news/73041/why-it-makes-sense-to-invest-in-accessible-and-inclusive-transport>

Scotland – CTs benefit from Plugged-In Communities Grants. CTA reports that 18 Scottish CT operators are to be the recipients of a total of £1.6m funding for electric vehicles: Annandale Community Transport (Dumfries and Galloway); Buchan Dial a Community Minibus (Aberdeenshire); Coalfield Community Transport (East Ayrshire); Connect Assynt (Highland); Forres Osprey Bus (Moray); Galloway Community Transport (Dumfries and Galloway); Island of Hoy Development Trust (Orkney); Larkhall and District Volunteer Group (South Lanarkshire); Lismore Community Transport (Argyll and Bute); Ross of Mull and Iona Community Transport (Argyll and Bute); Sanday Afternoon Club (Orkney); and Transport for Tongue Ltd (Highland).

<https://ctauk.org/celebrating-scotlands-plugged-in-communities/>

Scotland – Age Scotland Urges Local Authorities about Budget Cuts. The Chief Executive of Age Scotland, Mark O'Donnell, has warned against the consequences of vital services being cut by local authorities needing to make economies. He said: "With services such as public and community transport, social care, in-person service points and community groups on the chopping block, Age Scotland is urging councillors across Scotland to do everything in their power to protect those most vulnerable to significant change, such as those without digital access who already face significant inequalities and financial barriers." <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/latest-news/2023/february/council-budget-cuts-could-spell-catastrophe-for-older-people/>

Scotland – CT Budget Threatened in Midlothian. Support for community transport has been under review by Midlothian Council, which is seeking to cover a £14m budget shortfall. CT was one of many services threatened with funding cuts. Lothian Community Transport Services joined a protest at the cuts at the Council's headquarters. A last minute deal saw the authority opt to increase Council Tax by 5%.

<https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/last-minute-deal-saves-midlothian-26295301>

Scotland – North Ayrshire to Fund Community Transport Pilot. As part of its 2023/24 budget, North Ayrshire Council has responded to the cost of living crisis with the launch of an Early Intervention Fund. The authority announced that "as part of the £1.4million investment to support the work of the Child Poverty and Cost-of-Living Board, it is proposed that £100,000 of this is earmarked for a community transport pilot, which aims to help those who are cut-off and suffering from social isolation." <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/news/North-Ayrshire-Council-approves-202324-Budget.aspx>

Scotland – Community Rail Partnerships Campaign to Reduce Car Use. Scotland's Community Rail Partnerships have been urging people to leave the car behind in a 'Let's go for 1 in 5' campaign in support of Transport Scotland's aspiration to cut car use by 20% by 2030. The Community Rail Partnerships are "working with communities and rail partners to make it easier to combine travelling by train with walking, wheeling and cycling, buses and community transport." <https://www.railadvent.co.uk/2023/03/community-groups-launch-campaign-to-cut-car-use-by-20-across-scotland.html>

Scotland – New Dornoch CT Service to be Launched. After some doubts that it would be possible, Dornoch Area Community Interest Company, has now secured funding from Highland Council to commence the service. <https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/funding-breakthrough-for-dornoch-projects-304690/>

Buckinghamshire – BART and the Buckingham Pancake Races. Two vehicles from Buckingham Area Rural Transport – Bart and Bernadette – attended the annual Great Pancake Race at St. Peter's and St. Paul's Church in Buckingham. BART was promoting its CT services and also seeking new volunteer drivers "for local or longer trips, with a choice of day or evening slots to suit people's availability. Contact Ashley Waite on 07977 401548 for more details." <https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/news/people/community-hire-vehicles-bart-and-bernadette-put-in-an-appearance-at-buckingham-pancake-races-4037070>

Buckinghamshire – Cinema Runs Launched with Winslow Community Bus. Following a move by local Buckingham community cinema The Film Place to a new location at the Vinson Centre, Winslow Community Bus

provides film night runs each Friday. Pre-booked tickets are £4.50 and the bus can call at Great Horwood and Padbury on request.

<https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/news/people/movie-night-new-bus-service-launches-to-take-winslow-film-goers-to-buckingham-3992301>

West Sussex – Arun CT Receives Donation from Local Developer. A donation of £1,500 has been made by David Wilson Homes to Arun Community Transport. The contribution has been sourced from the Community Fund initiative, managed by the Barratt Foundation.

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/yapton-housebuilder-drives-fundraising-for-arun-community-transport-with-ps1500-donation-4045695>

East Sussex – Name the Mascot Competition. Community Transport Sussex has posted on Facebook: “Help us name our new mascot and win two tickets to see the fabulous Miriam Margolyes’ sold out show in Brighton!

All you have to do is like our page, follow us, and comment with your best name ideas for our adorable new mascot. The winner will be announced on 31st March, so get your creative juices flowing and join the fun! Don’t miss your chance to win this unforgettable experience and help us give our new little friend a name to remember. Good luck!” <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/arts-and-culture/help-name-sussex-community-transport-mascot-and-win-tickets-to-see-miriam-margoyles-4051986>



East Sussex - Volunteer Drivers were Captured on Camera for Horsham Film Project. Volunteer drivers at Horsham District Community Transport Forum were filmed talking about their roles. “It was great to have Silvertip Films 🎬 at the Horsham District Community Transport Forum today, filming volunteers talking about why volunteering for a community transport service is so vital 🚌. Find out what roles are available here: <https://orlo.uk/sxq9A>.” and <https://www.facebook.com/myhorsham>

East Sussex – Local Hailsham Residents Protest at Bus Cuts. Residents of Deanland Wood Park, near Golden Cross have been campaigning to save the 143 bus service into Hailsham which is to be curtailed under the East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). East Sussex County Council reported that only 16 passengers were using the county council-funded service and that it was not financially viable. They added: “A bus service will continue to be provided for Deanland Wood through the introduction of a new community bus service which will run to Hailsham and Eastbourne two days a week, alongside a demand responsive transport (DRT) service for the area. These services would provide links to the wider conventional bus network. The DRT service would be available for residents to book Monday to Saturday from

7am to 7pm with comparable fares to a normal bus service.”

<https://hailsham.news/park-home-owners-fury-over-bus-service-cuts/>

Devon – Volunteer Drivers are Being Sought in North Devon. New volunteers are being sought by Age Concern to augment its Community Car Sharing Service in the Barnstaple area. Potential volunteers should contact 01271 324488 for more information. <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/age-concern-appeal-more-volunteers-8202129>

Devon – Totnes CT is Looking for a Bus. Totnes Area Rural Community Transport is seeking to acquire a backup vehicle to support its Section 22 Scheduled Services in South Devon. It is looking for a used, 16 seat, low floor conversion on a Mercedes Sprinter. The vehicle needs to be capable of loading and accommodating a wheelchair user, be fitted with driver-operated doors and Hanover (or similar) electronic destination signs. The vehicle must be drivable on a D1 driving licence. If you are looking to dispose of a similar vehicle or know of one for sale, please contact Totnes Area Rural Community Transport via this newsletter.

Devon – Support for Bob the Bus in Totnes. Local fundraising legend Graham Walker has raised £500 for Totnes Area Rural Community Transport’s Bob the Bus in Totnes through sales of Christmas cards and calendars. <https://www.southhams-today.co.uk/news/support-for-community-bus-591388>

Herefordshire - Dore CT Driver Cops a Parking Ticket! A driver for Dore Community Transport has shared his misfortune with local press after receiving a parking fine from Hereford City Council whilst dropping off a blind passenger. Stuart Vince related that the ticket was issued by a traffic warden despite being a “clearly marked charity vehicle in the loading bay displaying a blue badge”.



<https://www.herefordtimes.com/news/23345889.caring-herefordshire-councils-parking-ticket-community-transport/>

Shropshire – Bridgnorth CT minibus theft. A Bridgnorth Community Transport Group minibus was stolen from a car park and recovered two days later in Wolverhampton in a damaged condition. Bridgnorth CT operational manager Kay Kightley said that thieves had “removed the number plates, drilled out the lock and ignition, smashed a window, ripped out the centre console, pulled out a heater vent, ripped the head lining and damaged the fuse

box panel." <https://www.expressandstar.com/news/crime/2023/02/28/charity-counting-cost-of-minibus-theft-after-damaged-vehicle-recovered/>

Shropshire – North Salop Wheelers Praised by Local MP. After spending some time with the North Salop Wheelers and its passengers, Helen

Morgan MP said: "These services provide a lifeline for many in rural communities across the county and have the added benefit of keeping market days in our towns livelier and better attended. One thing made clear to me today is that these services rely on the goodwill of hard-



working volunteers who put something back into their communities." The community bus serves the villages of Market Drayton, Wem and Whitchurch. <https://www.whitchurchherald.co.uk/news/23326072.shropshire-mp-praises-north-salop-wheelers-community-work/>

Berkshire - People to Places Launch New Fund-raising Scheme. A new fund-raising initiative has been launched by People to Places, which provides community transport and Shopmobility in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. The Friends of People to Places scheme invites people to make a monthly donation (starting at £3). Businesses are also invited to contribute and receive the option to advertise on the rear of vehicles. Contact www.people2places.org.uk/friends for further details.

<https://www.sloughexpress.co.uk/gallery/maidenhead/183969/people-to-places-launches-new-monthly-donation-funding-scheme.html>

Lancashire – Minibus Stolen from Blackpool Scout Group. Thieves who stole a minibus in Blackpool thought they had pulled a fast one by using fake number plates. However, they failed to cover the Scout logos on the vehicle which enabled it to be easily identified and recovered after an appeal on Facebook. <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/fool-put-fake-plates-on-stolen-blackpool-minibus-but-didn-t-bother-covering-scouts-logos/ar-AA18bBe0?cvid=17a93743e6e34ec0877931f4be855be6&ocid=winp2fptaskbarhoverent&ei=8>

Worcestershire – Appeal for Drivers in Wyre Forest. Volunteer drivers are being sought by Community Transport Wyre Forest, both using their own vehicles or to drive fleet minibuses. Chief Officer Beverley Coldrick commented: "Our service is vital to our passengers, enabling them to live independent and fulfilled lives. We are committed to well over 1,000 journeys a month and are gaining, on average, 10 new passengers a month." Any potential volunteers should contact Wyre Forest CT on 01299 405820 or visit

www.ctwyre.org.uk. <https://www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk/news/23363972.c>
[all-drivers-help-community-transport-wyre-forest/](https://www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk/news/23363972.c)

Northamptonshire – CT Manager Nominated for Inspirational Women’s Award. The 2023 Inspirational Women’s Awards are organised by the Women’s Forum at West Northamptonshire Council. On this year’s business award shortlist is Lynn Hinch of ABILITY CT: “Lynn, alongside husband Nigel, set up ABILITY Community Transport in 2018, a not-for-profit community interest company with the primary goal of reducing social isolation and loneliness. Since it first started, ABILITY has expanded enormously and now has hundreds of members, helping local communities stay connected and improving people’s mental and physical wellbeing. It has been described as a social club on wheels and a lifeline and friend to many people within the community.” <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/news/inspirational-womens-award-2023-shortlist-announced>. The ABILITY Community Transport project is profiled here: <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/people/its-a-social-club-on-wheels-says-ability-community-bus-director-from-south-northants-4003451>

North Yorkshire – Community Anchor Fund. In North Yorks, community transport services have been targeted as potential recipients of a new fund to boost post-COVID community resilience. The Stronger Communities Achieve Together programme aims to support about 30 different organisations as Community Anchors over a three-year period. North Yorkshire County Council said that “the money could...be employed to help develop projects such as community transport services, running social enterprises and delivering skills and education.” <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/community-anchors-be-given-funding-support-new-council>

North Yorkshire – Otley Action for Older People Received Grant to Tackle Loneliness. One of the recipients of a Department for Transport grant via CTA was Otley Action for Older People, which was awarded £24,000 towards a men’s support group for the over 60’s, focussing on trips and outings to support mental health. “The group welcomes new members aged 60 plus living in LS21. Please call Otley Action on 01943 463965 for more information.” <https://www.wharfedaleobserver.co.uk/news/23371222.transport-grant-helps-otley-action-older-people-tackle-isolation/>

South Yorkshire – Four CT Operators to Receive Electric Vehicles. As part of a £44m package of transport funding, South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority is set to replace 11 diesel minibuses with electric vehicles for community transport groups in Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley at a cost of £1.4m. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-64867477>

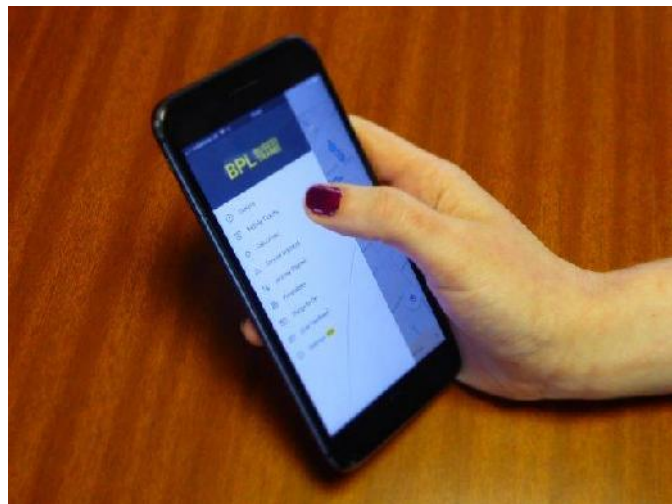
Lincolnshire – New Pilot Hopper Bus between Bisbrooke and Uppingham. A new community bus service has been launched to serve Bisbrooke residents who need to get to amenities in Uppingham. This is a one month pilot operated by the Uppingham First Community Partnership and CPRE Rutland, and will connect passengers with Uppingham Surgery, Uppingham High Street, the weekly market, and with commercial bus services to Oakham, Stamford and Leicester.

<https://www.stamfordmercury.co.uk/news/service-will-keep-villagers-connected-9298957/>

Hampshire – Romsey Bus Cuts and CT Solutions. The 36 bus service from Lockerley to Romsey has been cancelled by Hampshire County Council due to its subsidy being too high. Cllr Nick Adams-King said “We’re talking to the local community bus service to provide a stop in Awbridge and also one possibly at Stanbridge Earls, which would be an enhancement to the service the number 36 used to run. Community transport is I think the way forward for the rural areas, and we are looking at a similar solution for the 39 service which is being removed from Wellow and Nomansland.”

<https://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/23360266.romsey-bus-service-axed-due-increased-running-costs/>

West Midlands – An App is Being Developed for Users of Dial-a-ride and Community Transport. The smart mobility platform provider Liftango is partnering with Transport for West Midlands to create what is described as “the largest digital demand-responsive transit service in the UK.” The App is designed to serve passengers of the Ring and Ride door-to-door service for anyone living in the urban areas of the West Midlands who struggles to use conventional transport.



<https://www.smartcitiesworld.net/mobility-as-a-service/mobility-as-a-service/liftango-digitises-west-midlands-dial-a-ride-service-8663>

National Lottery Community Fund & Community Transport – Some Observations by John Atkins

From the very beginning of the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) in 1994, grants have been made available to community transport operators. The relationship between the various grant-awarding panels and the CT sector has been generally positive and the grants themselves have exceeded in value and scope almost all the other sources of charitable trust support that is available to CT. The NLCF policies and criteria – requiring quantifiable output data to measure against tangible social outcomes – are well aligned to how CT works, and the various grant programmes have targeted the ‘left-behind’ individuals and communities that are at the core of many CTs’ charitable objectives.

There is no doubt that over the last 30 years NLCF funds have enabled many CT trips (in the millions?) and provided for hundreds of vehicles and staff salaries. I don’t know if anyone has troubled to quantify these figures, but it would make interesting reading.



If the NLCF support for CT has any drawback it is that it is very generous for two or three years and then cuts off entirely. Many Lottery-funded CT projects have grappled with the dreaded ‘exit strategy’ and then foundered somewhat. Levering-in funds from elsewhere, tapering revenue support, raising fares and recruiting more volunteers are familiar ploys that are often not so successful in practice as they looked in the business plan at the start of the project. Another drawback of the funding is NLCF’s preoccupation with funding something new, which almost devalues long-standing, core CT activities as unworthy. Do CTs have to apply more than a little guile and ingenuity in passing off an old, long-standing service as something new?

NLCF is transparent about what it provides funding for and so it is possible to look at funding trends for CT services. What we do not know, however, is anything much about bids that are rejected. This makes it difficult to anticipate any odds of success, knowledge of which could be useful when deciding

whether or not all the work to complete a bid (which is considerable) is worthwhile. What are the chances of success? Overall (i.e. not just transport-related applications) we know that from bids received between 2016 and 2022, on average 54% were successful – a figure which should be encouraging although the percentage of successful applications has fallen significantly over time. (This refers to all bids and awards; the successful rate for CT bids cannot be isolated).

Although different funding programmes have emphasised specific outcomes criteria, CT has always been able to align its bids with one or other programme at any time, and so each year has seen community transport projects in the list of successful bidders. A brief study of these successes would be worthwhile, as there are many approaches to analysis that could be taken (what is the equity of funding between different service types and locations, for example?).

Table 1: National Lottery Community Fund – Overall Success Rates 2016-2022

Year	Total Bids	Successful Bids	Success Rate
2016 / 2017	21,760	13,814	63%
2017 / 2018	17,033	11,037	65%
2018 / 2019	23,083	12,143	53%
2019 / 2020	?	14,003	-
2020 / 2021	41,913	20,162	48%
2021 / 2022	35,628	14,615	41%

Table 2: National Lottery Community Fund and CT Beneficiaries 2017-2021

Year	Total Grant Award Value*	Number of CT Grant Awards	Total of CT Grant Award Values	CT Awards as % of Total Awards
2017	£655m	17	£646,616	0.10%
2018	£511m	27	£721,553	0.14%
2019	£588m	41	£2,362,094	0.40%
2020	£517m	60	£2,273,540	0.39%
2021	£592m	33	£857,607	0.14%

Table 3: Scale of National Lottery Community Fund CT Awards 2017-2021

Year	Highest CT Grant Award	Lowest CT Grant Award	Average CT Grant Award	Proportion of grants that are £10,000 or less	Grant Awards over £100,000
2017	£311,276	£1,453	£34,032	82%	3
2018	£265,925	£1,500	£26,724	85%	3
2019	£495,163	£1,155	£57,612	70%	6
2020	£500,000	£990	£37,892	67%	3
2021	£203,975	£2,500	£25,988	78%	2

Some explanatory notes on the statistics:

- J All data is drawn from <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/>
- J Table 1: The data on successful NLCF bids is readily available and well publicised; however NLCF does not so easily make known the number of bids that it rejects. The figures here in column two are taken from Annual Reports and the detail is somewhat buried within a table on equalities performance. The figure for 2019 / 2020 was missing entirely. A successful bid is where NLCF made a grant award of some kind – this does not mean the amount bid for was allocated;
- J Table 2: Total Grant Award Value – * these are totalled for the financial year end, so there is a mismatch with the other figures which are given as calendar years (this is the way NLCB reports!). So figures for 2017 / 2018 (April – March) are here applied to 2017 (Jan – Dec) and so on. This is an imprecise approach but enables some degree of analysis;
- J Tables 2 & 3: CT Grant Awards – these are tallied by calendar year, and include grants that are either for a CT operator or for an agency offering wider services which include a significant stand-alone community transport component. (This omits, for example, minibuses used solely for schools, youth organisations, centres and clubs that are intended for internal use only.) CT grants can be for any number of purposes (capital and / or revenue) including staff salaries, vehicle purchases, running costs, training, software, etc. A grant award is noted only for the year when the funded project commences – it may continue over the next few years, but the full value is reflected only in the first year. The data encompasses awards in England, Scotland, NI and Wales under different fund headings.
- J General: The total value of NLCF available funds for grants is generally budgeted to be £600m each year. Various COVID measures were in place in the UK between March 2020 and December 2021 – this accounts for the high number (60) of CT grant awards in 2020, many of which were to enable CTs to deal with the impact of the pandemic. 2020 and 2021

are not representative years for this reason. 2022 award details are not fully available yet.

Some Conclusions - with the caveat that since we do not know much about the bids that were unsuccessful, these should not be considered definitive:

- J Generally the success rate for NLCF bids is over 50%, so the slightly better than even odds should be encouraging;
- J The largest grant award was for £500,000 (the upper limit) and the lowest was £990. 75% of grant awards were for sums of £10,000 or less. The chances of success would appear to be much greater if the bid is no higher than £10,000;
- J On average only three grants of over £100,000 are awarded each year – so the success rate of bigger project bids may be very limited;
- J Awards number 178 across 135 recipient CT organisations, so some operators had two or more grant awards (for different purposes). Across the five years we noted that
 - ◆ 19 operators were awarded 2 grants each
 - ◆ 5 operators were awarded 3 grants each
 - ◆ 4 operators were awarded 4 grants each
 - ◆ Of the above, 3 operators were awarded 2 concurrent grants in the same year.

This indicates that multiple bids in the same year or bids in successive years from the same bidder are not discounted nor automatically doomed to be unsuccessful. Several CT operators are indeed well-favoured by NLCF, and although this raises questions around awards policy and equity if other similar bids have been rejected, ambitious bidders are not necessarily viewed as greedy. The message here is that CT bidders should not be deterred from returning to the Lottery Fund thinking they will not be considered if they have a current or recent grant award. It is also clear that they must consider carefully what the NLCF objectives are in a given year and try to stress something 'new' contained within the bid.



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