



Newsletter No.41

Edited by John Atkins (Principal Consultant). Published January 2024

UK – DfT Announces Changes to Driver CPC Standard.

Following consultation, Department for Transport has now published its response in the form of new proposals for Driver CPC: “The proposal to reform DCPC, if implemented, will mean drivers in GB, and NI if authorities there agree, could choose between 3 types of DCPC for periodic renewal that will run in parallel: 2 types of N-DCPC and 1 type of I-DCPC. Within the N-DCPC, there is proposed to be an option of a reformed training route and a periodic test route...” <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/driver-certificate-of-professional-competence-dcpc-changes/driver-certificate-of-professional-competence-dcpc-changes>

UK – Safeguarding Children Guidance. UK Government has just published new guidance document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children. The guidance emphasises the need for effective information sharing: “The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) support the sharing of relevant information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children...all organisations and agencies should have arrangements in place that set out clearly the processes and the principles for sharing information. The arrangements should cover how information will be shared with their own organisation/agency and with others who may be involved in a child’s life...” This is of especial relevance to CT operators who undertake school contract work.



Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children

December 2023

in

to

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

UK – CTA Updates

-) Reflecting on Trustees Week: Exploring Growth in Community Transport
<https://ctauk.org/reflecting-on-trustees-week-exploring-growth-in-community-transport/>
-) Empowering Equality: WiBC's Role in Reshaping the Bus and Coach Industry
<https://ctauk.org/empowering-equality-wibcs-role-in-reshaping-the-bus-and-coach-industry/>
-) ConneCTing England Conference 2024 Locations - alongside the CTA UK-wide conference in Newcastle, there will be two in-person conferences, locations being decided by poll
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HT8WNVZ>
-) Championing Gender Equality: Women in CT Working Group Inspired by the Women in Bus & Coach mission, CTA is launching the Women in Community Transport Working Group. This is your opportunity to join forces with like-minded CT professionals dedicated to gender equality in our sector. <https://member.ctauk.org/form/sign-up-for-women-in-community-t>
-) Funding Support in England – details here <https://ctauk.org/fundraising-for-community-transport-in-england/>
-) Could Student Volunteers Support Your CT Org? – survey here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M32PXXY>
-) CTA Community Building Session - Wednesday January 17th - 11am – Zoom <https://member.ctauk.org/civicrm/event/info?id=27&reset=1>
-) Mapping England survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YDTJMMY>
-) Information on Volunteer Driver Insurance
<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers/volunteers-and-the-law/volunteer-drivers/>



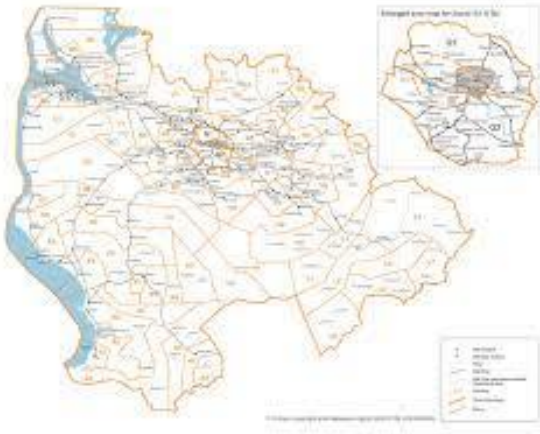
Gloucestershire - Community Connexions Seeks New Drivers.

Operating a car scheme across areas of Gloucestershire (apart from the Forest of Dean), Community Connexions is needing to recruit new volunteers. Manager Lisa Stearns said: "Many volunteers were unable to return to us after the lockdown period. We are constantly looking to attract new volunteers to better serve the needs of our passengers...Owner drivers with time to spare should contact the charity and register their interest by calling 0345 6805029 or emailing info@communityconnexions.org.uk. <https://www.punchline-gloucester.com/articles/aanews/community-connexions-transport-charity-looking-for-volunteers-gloucester-tewkesbury>



Scotland – Community-led Transport Consultation in North Ayrshire. As part of its £100k Community Transport Pathfinder project, North Ayrshire Council is seeking to discover more about the transport needs of its communities. Cabinet Member for Green Environment and Economy, Councillor Tony Gurney, said: “This project is vital in keeping our communities connected, tackling social isolation and helping address climate change by encouraging people to use more sustainable transport options. It will help give us a clearer picture of the struggles people are facing when trying to access transport, and the impact that not being able to travel has on their lives. I would encourage as many people as possible to participate in the forthcoming surveys to tell us their views about the specific transport challenges in their area.” <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/news/%EF%BB%BF-Council-is-g geared-up-to-develop-a-bigger-picture-of-what-communities%27-needs-are-when-it-comes-to-transport.aspx>. Also <https://planetradio.co.uk/west/local/news/north-ayrshire-community-transport-council/> and <https://www.largsandmillportnews.com/news/23977686.community-transport-project-makes-progress-north-ayrshire/>

Scotland – Dissatisfaction with SPT’s MyBus Service. A resident of Alexandria, James Hume, has been frustrated with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport’s door-to-door accessible MyBus service. James had been a regular user of the service pre-pandemic to make a return journey from Alexandria to Clydebank on the M10 MyBus route. However, post-pandemic James has “has tried to book 19 journeys in the last six months and that only one of these was accepted, while another said the service would be able to bring him home from Clydebank but not take him there.” An SPT spokesman said: “This service does not typically support journeys outwith the respective MyBus Zone, such as Alexandria to Clydebank unless there is spare capacity to do so. As demand for the service in the Dumbarton area has grown, there is less spare capacity to facilitate such trip requests at peak times...SPT is seeking to introduce further additional MyBus resources in the Dumbarton area. However, this continues to prove challenging due to a shortage of local contractors and qualified bus drivers, which remains a nationwide issue.” James has written to Scottish Transport Minister Fiona Hyslop to make known his frustrations.



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<https://www.thenational.scot/news/23982201.im-disabled-spts-transport-services-arent-good-enough-me/>

Scotland - Chief Executive Officer Required for Borders Wheels. "Borders Wheels, a vital community transport service, is seeking a Chief Executive Officer to lead the integration of two services. This merger, guided by the recommendations of the 'What Wheely Matters' consultation project, aims to create a Borders-wide service enhancing accessibility, equality, and sustainability. The service boasts a diverse fleet, featuring specially designed vehicles for wheelchair accessibility, all operated by dedicated volunteer drivers catering to over 500 individuals and 100 voluntary organisations. From providing essential transportation support for individuals, to supporting the activities of non-profit community and voluntary groups, Borders Wheels aims to be at the heart of community connectivity. The search has begun to find a new dynamic CEO to lead the development and growth of the community transport service in the Scottish Borders. Reporting to the Board, the CEO will be responsible for strategic leadership, recommending corporate strategies, and ensuring operational excellence." Applications close 14 January.



https://www.brucetaitassociates.net/vacancy/68?fbclid=IwAR3IEgSL5AQ_v3Ao_wfT38G222h6UFxsUHRISr869kqYP8gqDi96RjVmgQ-Q

Scotland – Dornoch Area CT Stalwart Retires. The director and chair of Dornoch Area Community Interest Company (DACIC) has been given a surprise party on her retirement. During her 10 years at DACIC, Joan Bishop was a key player in the community transport service that the organisation provides. New chair Luke Watson said: "This evening we come together to celebrate Joan's remarkable achievements and dedication to our community. Joan has left an indelible mark on the modern history of Dornoch through so many contributions...What really stands out is that Joan accomplished all of this by giving up her free time without receiving a wage. Her tireless efforts and unwavering commitment demonstrate the profound impact one individual can make."

<https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/she-has-left-an-indelible-mark-surprise-retirement-party-338495/>

Wiltshire – Community Transport Funding Threat in Swindon. Due to the critical state of its finances, Swindon Borough Council is considering a range of financial cutbacks, and it has been proposed – amongst other measures - that ceasing support for community transport would save it £182,000, towards "a total of £32.9m in savings needing to be delivered next year..." Swindon Borough Council has been a long-standing funder of Swindon Dial A Ride. <https://swindonlink.com/news/finances/>

Kent – Compaid CEO is Awarded the BEM. The New Year Honours list has recognised the work of Compaid CEO Steven Eldsen “for services to charity and to disabled people”. Compaid’s community transport provision has for many years been a vital part of their service offer. Compaid’s website says: “We are the leading provider of accessible transport for disabled people in Kent, making over 30,000 journeys a year. Our transport services take hundreds of disabled and frail elderly people on essential journeys each week, including to hospital and health appointments, visits to community centres and social gatherings, or simply a trip to the local supermarket or to see family and friends...Compaid’s fleet of wheelchair accessible minibuses and smaller adapted vehicles is driven by a team of trained and experienced drivers, covering a wide area across Kent and East Sussex, with more distant destinations available on request...” We understand that Steven has now retired from his role as CEO. <https://www.compaid.org.uk/news/new-years-honour-for-compaid-chief-executive/>

Hertfordshire – Christmas Run in Support of Royston CT. A fund-raising run in Christmas outfits was held in Bassingbourn in aid of Royston & District Community Transport. The Royston Runners raised £328 for the transport charity. <https://www.royston-crow.co.uk/news/23983388.royston-runners-hold-annual-christmas-run-bassingbourn/>

Hertfordshire – Watford’s ArrivaClick DRT Proves Too Expensive. A Freedom of

Information request to Watford Borough Council has revealed data that suggests that the ArrivaClick service subsidy since its launch was £1,533,996, and that it had carried 88,344 passengers, which indicates a cost per trip of £17.36. The Council had already decided to withdraw the DRT which councillor Asif Khan described as “a pricey mistake” and a “drain on resources”.



<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/cars/news/council-paid-17-36-per-ride-for-arrivaclick-latest-data-reveals/ar-AA1ISZft?cvid=de4f7c1e2fc04fb2923b61a44bc8bb15&ocid=winp2fptaskbarhoverent&ei=51>. Watford’s Mayor Peter Taylor has subsequently announced that “in the new year, we are launching a new Shopper Bus service for two days a week. This will support Watford residents in getting to their local shops, with volunteers helping people carry bags, fetch items, and get on and off the bus.” <https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/24007837.watford-mayor-reacts-ending-arrivaclick-service/?ref=msn>

Greater London – Community Spirit Grant Award To Westway CT. “Westway CT were thrilled to be awarded a Community Spirit grant of £1,000 from The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation which saw us take K&C Over 50s forum members on a festive trip to Winchester Christmas Market on December 15th. The criteria for the grant was projects that bring joy in the community. Across Kensington & Chelsea Westway CT is helping residents to stay part of their community.



All community transport providers know that access to affordable transport is critical for many individuals and groups, often making the difference between doing more and feeling better, or staying in feeling disconnected and alone. This grant helps us to continue to fight social isolation by reaching more people who haven't used our service before. Our borough while one of the wealthiest in London is not immune and Kensington & Chelsea score in the lowest 20% of local authorities for mental health, with isolation and loneliness a significant issue for many. Everything we do helps people feel more connected with their community. Being a member of Westway CT is a route back into that community and we aim to champion that.” www.westwayct.org.uk.

Greater London – Waltham Forest Newham CT's 'Charabancs and Cadillacs' Project. This initiative is supported by a £140k Heritage Fund grant to Waltham Forest Community Transport Limited. “The funding will enable Community Transport Waltham Forest to create a unique collection of reminiscences and oral histories in Newham, gathering travel and transport stories from Newham residents across all communities. The project will also include the creation of a unique travel quilt filled with memories and bespoke travel trunk to house the collection.”



The CT Newham website reports: “'Charabancs and Cadillacs' first Community Travel Quilt workshop was held with Katie Anderson, who shared stories from Newham Archives and the introduction to the making of the Travel Quilt. Jane Grell delivered wonderful stories and songs to get everyone talking about their memories of travel and holidays. The following 5 sessions consisted of small workshops with Katie. She taught the

attendees the art of textiles, patterns, and similar mediums. The group had fun trying their hand at sticking and planning their patterns for the future sessions.

Once the participants planned out what they wanted to sew, they have made great progress with their stitching. Some members sewed a memory of their holidays, and some sewed about their first memories of coming to England. The different types of memories sewn onto the fabric were a pleasure to see and learn about. By the end of the 6-week workshop sessions, all the participants had created a motif of stitching on their fabrics, each piece telling a story. All the pieces will be kept safe with Katie until the time comes for the quilt to be assembled. Members of the public will have the opportunity to sew their own little pieces onto the fabric as well."

<https://communitytransportwf.co.uk/community-transport-waltham-forest-receives-a-grant/> and <https://ctnewham.co.uk/our-events/progress-at-arc-in-the-park/>

Wales – New Electric Vehicles for DANSA. "Working with the Community Transport Association (CTA) Wales, DANSA has secured Welsh Government funding of £468,000 which will enable it install two EV charging points in the Dulais Valley, to buy two electric Multi-Purpose Vehicles (MPVs) and two fully accessible electric minibuses, as well as creating solar panels and battery storage and an electric food vehicle able to deliver nutritious meals throughout the area. DANSA (Dulais, Afan, Neath, Swansea and Amman valleys), which has its headquarters in Crynant, Neath, is a membership based not for profit organisation backed by a number of organisations including Neath Port Talbot Council, Swansea Council and the Welsh Government. The project will use fully accessible community transport to support people and families living on low incomes across Wales, through the £25m Household Support Fund. The CTA has worked with four of the main operators delivering services in the target communities across the Western Valleys region, of which DANSA is one, to explore ways in which the original proposal could be adapted and developed to support communities as they recover and move beyond the impact of Covid 19..."



https://www.npt.gov.uk/1410?pr_id=7336

Wales – Christmas Concert Raises Funds for Hay Dial-a-Ride. An annual Christmas carol event at St Mary's Church in Hay has raised more than £900 for Hay Dial-a-Ride, thanks to a performance by The Wye Border Singers, led by Val Whiston.

<https://www.brecon-radnor.co.uk/news/record-turnout-at-hay-dial-a-rides-christmas-concert-655577>

Wales - Cellan and Llanfair Community Bus Seeks Funding. A crowdfunding initiative has been launched to raise £500 to keep the Cellan and Llanfair Village Community Transport bus in operation as its pilot phase closes. Volunteer driver Martyn King said: "The initial pilot service has

been operating four services each Saturday for around one month, and this has been well supported, with local residents able to take advantage of Christmas late night shopping, local Lampeter Saturday Market, allow people to pick up prescriptions and to allow isolated elderly residents the opportunity to socialise with friends and family, and younger residents to get to work - all this helping to support local businesses." The fundraising page here <https://www.gofundme.com/f/cellan-and-llanfair-village-community-transport> indicates that the £500 target has already been exceeded. Martyn added: "We are blown away by the extremely generous donations we've received so far. We have exceeded our goal in less than 24 hours! This is absolutely amazing, and means we can secure the pilot service for our communities for months to come." <https://www.cambrian-news.co.uk/news/community-bus-service-seeks-funding-to-continue-operating-658627>

Northamptonshire - Northampton Community Transport's Lifeline Service. The important work done by the CT service operated by Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire has been profiled in the local press.



The service includes a volunteer car scheme and a door-to-door minibus service. Development Manager Becky Thornton said: "We have a lot of people say it is a lifeline...It may be the only way to get out and about. They have peace of mind, security and safety...It's been very well-received. People find it valuable and give us good feedback...People's health is often worse in the winter...It's more difficult for people to get out and about on their own. There are more medical appointments and an increase in need."

<https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/people/lifeline-community-transport-initiative-sees-more-need-at-this-time-of-year-across-northants-4444851>

Yorkshire – York Wheels Set to Close Amid Pleas to Save Service. The York Wheels CT service closed on 31 December but former York transport boss Andy D'Agorne had "pleaded with the city council to try to find a way of saving York's vital 'Dial and Ride' service..." Chair of York Wheels, Rob Atkinson, said "The Dial and Ride service has become unsustainable in recent months. Put simply, we have reached the point at which as a result of problems with maintenance and third-party suppliers, our fleet is not up to the standards required to maintain the quality or reliability of the service." A volunteer car service, however, will continue whilst options to continue a minibus service are explored with other providers.

<https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/23993853.andy-dagorne-flick-williams-say-save-york-dial-ride/>

Suffolk – BACT Appeals for Volunteers. Bungay Area Community Transport has celebrated a successful year in 2023. Beth Adams, Assistant Manager, said: "Throughout 2023 we have completed over 37,000 passenger trips across an amazing 330,000 miles. This is using a mixture of volunteers and a handful of paid drivers in their own cars and our accessible vehicles. It's an amazing operation we run with a fantastic team." New volunteers are being sought, however, for services in Lowestoft, Beccles, Bungay, Loddon, Harleston and the surrounding villages. BACT manager Debbie Blowers said: "We could do so much more if we had extra volunteers. Would you be able to spend some time helping us in the New Year and beyond or do you know someone that may have some time on their hands, you could send our way? Could you contribute to your local community in a worthwhile and valuable way? Our volunteers are so caring and look after the passengers so well, but we just don't have enough of them and we really want to help more people by not refusing trips that people so desperately need." Potential volunteers should contact BACT on 01986 896896 or info@bactcommunitytransport.org.uk. <https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/24002821.bact-community-transport-appeals-volunteer-help/>

Devon – Seachange CT Receives Grant. A grant of £14,917 has been awarded by Claire Milne Trust to Seachange Community Transport to support its service in the Woodbury, Exmouth, and Budleigh Salterton areas. Emma Roberts, of Seachange said: "As a charity, the community transport service cannot survive without support from donations, volunteers, and grants. The recent donation from the Claire Milne Trust will go a long way in helping the service continue to provide invaluable support to those in need." <https://www.exmouthjournal.co.uk/news/24004774.seachange-receive-grant-continue-community-transport/>

Devon – Dawlish Community Transport Concert Fundraiser. The Back Beach Boyz shanty singers have raised £250 for Dawlish Community Transport, who are still recovering from their multiple vehicle loss in an arson attack last year. A Back Beach Boyz spokesman said: "The band was horrified by the arson attack and wanted to help fund the reinstatement of normal services." <https://www.dawlish-today.co.uk/news/singers-hit-right-note-for-transport-charity-658640>

Oxfordshire – Political Debate Rages over Funding for CT Operator. Councillors at Witney Town Council have debated their 2024/25 budget which included a proposal to cut the £21k funding of West Oxfordshire Community Transport. It was noted by the Council that "in each of the previous three years West Oxfordshire Community Transport has recorded a surplus in their annual accounts totalling £101,660", which has promoted the council to review its support. Some members opposed the motion, however, arguing that such a cut would threaten the service.

<https://www.witneygazette.co.uk/news/24005197.witney-labour-conservatives-lock-horns-budget-row/>

Dorset – Axe Valley CT Service Continues Thanks to Donation. A local benefactor Alan Williams has made a key donation to the struggling Dorset service of Axe Valley Ring & Ride, which has enabled the service to continue until the end of March. Mr Williams said the donation was not a long term solution: “The idea is that the people that run it sort it and see if they can continue ideas on how to replace the service. The important thing is they’re not under pressure to fix the situation within six weeks. It will also give a peace of mind to people that use the service.” Ring & Ride director Sandra Ward said: “I am overwhelmed with the generosity of Alan Williams which has so saved the day for so many of our lovely customers. In this season of good will, it is nice to know that there are individuals that put their hands in their pocket to support charities such as ours.”

<https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/23964828.axe-valley-ring-ride-west-dorset-service-extended/>

Northern Ireland – Fermanagh CT Requires Volunteers. A

fresh appeal for volunteers has been made by Fermanagh Community Transport as it increases capacity following funding from Motability Foundation that is expected to enable 1,000 return journeys per year to be delivered. Manager Jason Donaghy said: “At the moment, the demand for our service means that we are at full capacity. We have secured additional monies to run an out of area hospital health and wellbeing service for folks who are elderly and those with disabilities. That would be running for the next three years. What we really, really want to achieve is to recruit a team of 15 volunteers to help us make that a reality. Volunteers who are compassionate, have some time and are interested in helping to make a difference such as helping people get to life-critical appointments with health professionals outside of Fermanagh.



Anyone interested should call 028 6632 4260 or email info@fermanaghcommunitytransport.com. More details can be found on FCT’s website at: <https://www.fermanaghcommunitytransport.com/> <https://fermanaghherald.com/2024/01/fermanagh-community-transport-appeals-for-volunteers/>

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West Sussex – Changes to Bourne Bus Service. Operated by Community Transport Sussex, the Bourne Community Bus “has made

nearly 5,000 passenger journeys, all completely free for local residents. The bus will be travelling north into the South Downs on a new trial route each Wednesday morning.. at nine new stops at Racton, Lordington, Walderton, Stoughton, East Marden, Compton, West



Marden, Forestside and Deanlane End. Adding to their current destinations of Westbourne, Emsworth and Havant Tesco on this route will be Rowlands Castle and Stansted Park Garden Centre.” The service will no longer serve Chichester due to low demand. New timetable is here: www.bournebus.co.uk/timetable. <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/transport/free-bus-service-for-elderly-stops-chichester-routes-4470575>

Hampshire – Consultation on Future of CT Services is

Launched. Following significant budget reductions, Hampshire County Council is now canvassing its residents around how a range services might be delivered in the future. The Future Services Consultation runs to 31 March 2024 and includes the following scenario: “Passenger transport: To reduce the amount of money spent on passenger transport by withdrawing all remaining funding that the County Council is not legally required to provide. This includes funding for community transport services (incorporating Dial-a-Ride, Call and Go, Taxi Shares, Group Hire Services, and Wheels to Work), subsidies for bus routes that are not commercially viable, additional funding to extend the Concessionary Travel Scheme (older and disabled persons bus passes) and a review of the potential impact of reductions on the school transport service and social care budgets.”

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/08012024FutureServicesConsultation>. Also reported here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-67915627>

BSOG and Community Transport Operators. Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) data is a useful way of comparing the level of CT service delivery between operators based on service mileage (or Kms, as DfT prefers), although this has no correlation with actual numbers of passengers carried. In our newsletter no.26 (November 2022) we included an analysis of s19 BSOG payments between 2010 / 2011 and 2020 / 2021. We commented that over the ten years, the sums claimed had reduced by 60%. The figures now available for 2021 / 2022 can be compared to the previous year. 156 operators (40%) were paid the same sum in both years under a special COVID arrangement – this amounts to £1,001,393 (48%) of the 2021 / 2022 total. It is not possible, therefore, to gain any insight into whether these operators undertook a greater or lesser service mileage during the year, and this factor

prevents any definitive conclusion being reached. However, 233 (52%) of the claims were 'live', as referred to in the table below.

	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	Variance
Number of CT Operator Claims	464	389	-75 (-16%)
Total Sum Claimed	£2,226,272	£2,083,911	-£142,361 (-6.4%)
Average Sum Claimed Per Operator	£4,798	£5,357	+559 (+11.7%)
'Live' Claims	-	233	-
Total 'live' Sum Claimed	-	£1,082,518	-
Average 'live' Claim per Operator	-	£4,646	-
Highest Operator Claim	£237,895	£133,680	44%
Lowest Operator Claim	£11	£8	-£3 (-27%)

As the table above indicates, the total amount claimed has reduced slightly from the previous year, and the overall number of operator claims has reduced by 16%. Individual claims are 12% higher on average. 75 operators who received BSOG in 2020 / 2021 did not claim or were not paid any BSOG in the following year. It is difficult to account for this deficit – some operators may have closed down of course (or changed how they operate) but the DfT data shows some large CT operators that are definitely still active (such as Halton CT and Ealing CT) as not having been paid anything in 2021 / 2022. In any case there has been a steady decrease in the number of claimants over the last 10 years. There were 682 operators making a claim in 2012 / 2013, so the 2021 / 2022 figure shows a longer term reduction of 43%. BSOG data is taken from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-operators-grant-payments-to-english-operators-from-2010-onwards>



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