



Newsletter No.45

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

Cornwall – Increase in CT Use Reported During Winter Months by Age UK. A useful infographic has been produced by Age UK Cornwall & The Scilly Isles to demonstrate its response to increasing demand over the winter months. 3,409 trips were delivered for 986 individuals, and 22 volunteer drivers were trained. The report says: "Despite the difficult weather conditions across Cornwall, our volume of community bookings has increased, helping people enjoy a wide range of trips, outings, and support."

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/cornwall/about-us/news-and-campaigns/articles/2024/community-transport-figures--jan-to-mar-31st-2024/>



Kent - New Hopper Service in Faversham Area. A rural bus has been revived by Faversham Hopper Community Bus after Stagecoach ceased operation due to low patronage. The No.3 service, which operated in the villages around Faversham, will now be provided with volunteer drivers. Faversham Town Council identified demand from Newnham, Doddington, Lynsted and Oare following a travel survey. A Kent County Council Community Transport Grant of £60,000 has enabled the purchase of a 12-seat Mercedes Benz Sprinter. <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/faversham/news/new-hopper-bus-to-replace-rural-service-axed-by-stagecoach-305374/>

Hertfordshire – Royston CT Celebrates 30 Years of Service. Starting in 1992, Royston Community Transport has been enabling passengers to get to medical appointments throughout Duxford, Shepreth and

Chrishall and other parts of North and East Herts, South Cambridgeshire and Essex. The service was formed by the secretarial team at Royston Health Centre who recruited an initial team of volunteer drivers using their own cars to transport patients to hospital appointments who could not get there by other means. Since 1994 the service has been based at Royston Hospital and its pre-pandemic list of users was around 1,000 people, averaging nearly 50 bookings a day. Royston CT now has three part-time staff, a part-time driver and a number of volunteers, with two accessible fleet vehicles. The group is funded by Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire councils, as well as from Royston, Melbourn, Meldreth and other town and parish councils. Volunteer drivers are currently needed – those interested should email info@roytrans.co.uk or call 01763 245228. <https://www.royston-crow.co.uk/news/24286444.royston-community-transport-celebrates-30th-anniversary/>

Scotland – North Ayrshire CT Survey. North Ayrshire Council has launched a survey to capture feedback from local people and businesses to ascertain any potential demand for a community transport scheme. Sweco are to manage the survey on behalf of the council. The survey runs until 2 June. A North Ayrshire Council spokesperson said: “A community transport scheme could play an important role in keeping our communities connected, tackling social isolation and helping address climate change by encouraging people to use more sustainable transport options. The consultation will give us a clearer picture of the issues 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 study to tell us their views about the specific transport challenges in their area.” For further information email naccommunitytransport@sweco.co.uk or call on 07392 128199. <https://www.largsandmillportnews.com/news/24281375.community-transport-survey-north-ayrshire-launched/>

Scotland – Western Isles CT Funding Crisis is Averted. After some weeks of uncertainty during which drastic funding cuts were announced by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the council has now managed to allocate support from the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund for the next financial year. Councillor Susan Thomson said: “It is really welcome that the Scottish Government has set aside extra funding to mitigate the higher costs of living experienced by islanders. And it is entirely right that these vital transport services in rural areas should benefit from this funding. These services provide lifelines to people with health and mobility problems or those without access to other transport, whether that is for medical appointments or respite, hospital, education, shopping or social events. I am delighted this proposal was accepted by colleagues across the chamber.” <https://www.westcoasttoday.co.uk/news/western-isles-community-transport-motion-passed>

Scotland – Strathclyde CT Operators Benefit from £1m Funding. The Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has confirmed funding for a range of CT operators in the Strathclyde area. Chair of SPT's Operations Committee, Councillor David Wilson, said: "Despite significant cuts to SPT's funding, we recognise the vital contribution Community Transport operators deliver to local communities and voluntary groups, particularly the elderly, disabled and those on low incomes. These much-needed transport services are designed to promote and support the delivery of high quality, reliable and accessible transport to communities across the SPT area. Without Community Transport, it would be much more challenging for the disadvantaged and more vulnerable groups to access goods, services, and facilities within their local communities."



The grants were awarded as follows:

-) £446,654 Community Transport Glasgow
-) £142,789 North Area Transport Association
-) £109,480 South Ayrshire Community Transport
-) £91,151 South West Community Transport
-) £84,760 Coalfield Community Transport
-) £61,090 Larkhall & District Volunteer Group
-) £40,000 Getting Better Together
-) £35,000 Community Central Hall
-) £30,900 Ardgowan Hospice
-) £30,000 West Dunbartonshire Council Community Transport
-) £28,000 Blantyre Volunteer group
-) £25,000 Community Transport East Renfrewshire
-) £25,750 Glenboig Development Trust
-) £25,000 Inverclyde Voluntary Council of Social Services
-) £20,360 Port Glasgow Voluntary Transport Group
-) £15,450 East Kilbride Community Transport
-) £12,360 Renfrewshire Community Transport
-) £9,000 Renfrewshire Council SOOPiR Bus

<https://www.spt.co.uk/about-us/news/spt-grant-funding-for-community-transport-2024/>

Scotland – Coalfield CT Vehicles Vandalised. Two vehicles operated by Coalfield Community Transport (CCT) have been damaged by vandals at the group's Caponacre base. An appeal was posted to identify a group of youngsters who smashed the vehicle windows on 30 April. A CCT board member said: "I firstly want to thank everyone who reached out to me, commented and shared the post, it is really heartening to know that so many care as most of our work goes on unnoticed and in the background, but is so valuable to our communities. I thought it was only fair to let you know the outcome. After the post and throughout the day most of the parents either contacted me or turned up at the unit, child in hand ready to clear up, offer apologies and will be punished appropriately. I was actually really appreciative of this, I'm human at the end of the day and understand not everything is black and white...I think the kids have learned a valuable lesson through this and perhaps, for some, needed that lesson more than others. I'm happy to say the police, parents, school and ourselves have handled the situation but most importantly the kids take full responsibility and learn this hopefully once in a lifetime lesson. Thanks everyone, from all the staff and board at CCT."

<https://www.cumnockchronicle.com/news/24294699.cumnock-coalfield-community-transport-vehicle-vandalism/>

Shropshire – North Salop CT Appeals for Volunteers. The North Salop Wheelers Community Bus (NS Wheelers) operates a weekly bus service driven by volunteers which covers rural North Shropshire, connecting villages to the town centres of Market Drayton, Wem and Whitchurch. However it needs to recruit new volunteer drivers. Secretary Robin Nelson said: "We are in a fortunate position to have secured first-class vehicles and a loyal and committed group of volunteers who are the lifeblood of our service. Due to age profile, our volunteer numbers are starting to dwindle and to ensure that we can meet the growing demand and continue to deliver for local people, it's imperative that we increase our bank of volunteers. We are also keen to recruit for a number of other roles. These include passenger assistants to travel on our buses to host customers and help with loading and unloading shopping, administrative support, marketing and public relations, and anyone with accounting experience. We are happy for people to donate as little as half a day a week timewise." Wheelers can be contacted on 07597 273959.

<https://www.whitchurchherald.co.uk/news/24282045.north-shropshire-transport-service-calls-volunteers/>

Bristol – Kingswood CT Needs More Volunteers. Bristol-based Kingswood Community Transport has appealed for more volunteers to operate its range of services. On behalf of Kingswood CT, Jo Earley said: "We rely on our fantastic team of volunteers - we wouldn't have a service without them. Journeys can be made anywhere, including to medical appointments,

leisure visits or to visit friends and family...Community transport is here to help the community. A lot of the people that we help are vulnerable, lonely, isolated. Some people, when we drop them off, will not see anybody else until we call again the following day."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-68841080>

Norfolk – Local Councillor Visits West Norfolk CT. Independent Councillor Jo Rust contributed to the Lynn News Friday Politics column: "I've recently attended some really interesting events and meetings that I'd like to share with you. I went out for the morning with the West Norfolk Community Transport team and was incredibly impressed with the service that they provide our residents. The driver I was out with, Adey, provided such a caring experience, assisting residents onto the minibus and helping them with their shopping bags and other paraphernalia. All the people who used the bus spoke so highly of him and the service as a whole. It was set up to provide a range of safe, affordable door-to-door transport services for people who are unable to access public transport due to location, age or mobility issues. The services contribute to increased levels of social inclusion, helping people meet up with their friends in town or taking them to and from medical appointments. It was commonly referred to as their lifeline, so important is it to those who use it."

<https://www.lynnnews.co.uk/news/councillor-discusses-community-transport-a-youth-project-an-9364078/>

East Riding of Yorkshire – New CT Service for Bridlington. A

Motability grant has enabled Holderness Area Rural Transport (HART) to launch a new transport service for the residents of Bridlington, following a survey which identified a number of needs. HART chair Jane Evison said: "We are constantly looking for ways to meet the needs of more people and are extremely grateful to Motability Foundation for providing funding which will make it possible to reach more



people through H.A.R.T. services." Lisa Jones, Director of Charitable Operations at the Motability Foundation said: "We're delighted to award Holderness Area Rural Transport (HART) with this grant to expand transport services to Bridlington, so that disabled people and people with mobility issues have greater access to travel. This transport can be a lifeline to passengers, by supporting independent living, reducing isolation, and improving access to

services. Awarding grants to important local organisations like HART helps us to make an immediate difference to the transport needs of disabled people." For further information call: 01964-536684.

<https://bridlingtonecho.co.uk/new-community-transport-service-launched-for-bridlington/>

Worcestershire – Redditch Dial-a-Ride’s Grand Day Out. Use of the Redditch Borough Council Dial A Ride Service, is usually limited to trips for medical or shopping purposes but a recent excursion took a group of thirteen people to Mappleborough Green Garden Centre. This idea was to bring together passengers who did not usually travel together. One of the passengers Irene said: "I enjoyed it very much and got chatting to another customer. We walked around together and had a meal. I’m very grateful for the service, I always feel safe, and the drivers are all very kind. My son feels reassured that I’m safe travelling on my own". Fellow passenger Marlene said: "It was fantastic! I really enjoyed myself and am looking forward to the next trip with my friend Betty." Community Transport Manager Alison Osborne commented that "although our service can be used by anyone who needs us, whether you’re recovering from an injury, illness, or operation, or just need a bit of extra help to get out and about, we do get a lot of more elderly customers who can be quite isolated, even those that are regular travellers. It was so wonderful to see the impact a simple trip to the garden centre can have, especially as this is something many of us would take for granted." <https://www.malvern gazette.co.uk/news/24311664.redditch-community-transport-users-treated-special-trip/>

Nottinghamshire – Bassetlaw Action Centre Backs CTA Manifesto. CT provider Bassetlaw Action Centre has shown its support for the Community Transport Association’s manifesto ‘A Better Future for Transport: National Challenges, Community Solution’ on the state of accessible transport across the UK. Bassetlaw Action Centre’s Transport Manager Paula Graham said “We know just how important services like the Bassetlaw Community Car Scheme are, especially to rural or ageing communities like Bassetlaw’s. We simply can’t run it without the support of local organisations and with their help more people are able to remain independently in their homes while still taking as active part in the community.” <https://www.worksopguardian.co.uk/news/bassetlaw-charity-driving-change-4627171>

Buckinghamshire - Risborough Community Bus Extends Routes. Following a grant from Buckinghamshire Council of £15,000, Risborough Area Community Bus has introduced new services in the Oxfordshire – Buckinghamshire border area. Chairman of trustees of the

operator Roy Page said: "We are delighted to introduce our expanded community bus routes, which will serve as vital links between Princes Risborough, Chinnor, World's End, Saunderton and Trout Hollow. This expansion aligns with our mission to provide local transport for people in the Risboroughs and nearby areas linking to essential local services such as shops,



healthcare, recreational facilities, mainline bus and rail connections. We thank Buckinghamshire Council and Oxfordshire County Council for their support in helping us develop our bus services and we look forward to working in partnership with both Council's going forwards."

<https://www.bucksheald.co.uk/news/transport/princes-risborough-community-bus-expands-to-serve-more-nearby-villages-4620118>

Devon – Totnes CT Needs New Drivers for its New Bus. A new 16-seater minibus has been delivered to Totnes and Rural Community Transport to ensure that the 'Bob the Bus' service can continue. The bus was funded by a National Lottery grant, some reserves from the project, and



a generous legacy from the late Lee Cooper, a former passenger on the Follaton service. Chair of Trustees Steve Grove said: "It's great to see our new bus on the road, but we are still working on fundraising. We're planning to approach local businesses for further donations and sponsorship. Bob the Bus is only possible with the hard work put in by our volunteer drivers. Several of our long-term drivers have retired in the past few

months, so we urgently need more volunteers to come forward. The only requirements are a D1 category driving licence, preferably with some experience of driving a large vehicle, such as a van or minibus. The organisers will provide induction, training and mentoring to ensure that our drivers are safe and confident on the road." To find out more about volunteering with Bob the Bus, get in touch via the website: www.bobthebus.org.uk, phone 07800 745332 or email the Chair of Trustees at:

totnescommunitytransport@gmail.com. <https://www.ivybridge-today.co.uk/news/drivers-needed-for-a-new-bus-686237>

UK – CTA Updates

) Manchester Conference (Monday 10th June - Friends' Meeting House - 10:00am - 3:30pm)

<https://member.ctauk.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=42>

-) Oxford Conference (Tuesday 18th June - Old Fire Station - 10:00am - 3:30pm) <https://member.ctauk.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=41>
Conferences include Unveiling of the Mapping England Report; Funding Insight Panel; Improving Access to Health and Social Care - Transport for Health Panel; Modernising for Growth - Improving Relationships & Influencing Stakeholders; Quickfire Sessions.
-) Brecon Dial-A-Ride on Supporting Deaf and Hard of Hearing Passengers
<https://ctauk.org/brecon-dial-a-ride-on-supporting-deaf-and-hearing-impaired-passengers/>
-) CTA Scotland Conference in Stirling, 9 September 2024. This year's theme: Funding Summit. Explore vital funding strategies for Community Transport. Details and registration info coming soon.
-) CTA Cymru Conference in Cardiff, 23 May 2024. To explore the future of Wales' transport network.



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