



## Newsletter No.46

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

CTA – Bus Franchising & Community Transport. David Kelly has considered the implications for CT services from bus franchising models. In the context of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy and the approach from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), he says: “Franchising may well reduce the demand or need for some Community Transport services, if implemented properly. This should be welcomed, although this may not be comfortable for everyone and some operators will rightly have concerns. We should remember the bigger picture and keep our eyes on the prize: a world where everyone, everywhere has access to local transport which meets their needs. A modern bus network should minimise the gaps in our transport system, minimise the number of people with unmet transport needs and, ultimately, minimise the communities who have to organise their own transport solutions. However, this is not inevitable and is likely to be an uneven and gradual process across the region. Equally, there will always remain a need for and a value in Community Transport in the West of Scotland, especially for older people, disabled people and rural residents. Even in countries like Denmark or big cities like London with world-class, first-rate public transport systems, DRT services like Dial-a-Ride and Community Transport are still an essential part of the mix of modes and operators.”

<https://ctauk.org/bus-franchising-and-community-transport/>

### UK - Rural Services Network Back CTA Manifesto.

Support for the CTA manifesto has been voiced by Rural Services Network, who said: “The Rural Services Network is backing the Community Transport Association’s call for the next UK government to utilise community solutions in a hard-hitting manifesto on the state of accessible transport across the UK...”

Kerry Booth, RSN Chief Executive, added: “The Rural Services Network strongly supports the Community Transport Association’s manifesto, which underscores the vital role community transport plays in addressing our nation’s most pressing challenges. As part of our ‘Winning the Rural Vote’ campaign,

we urge all political parties to recognise the importance of community transport solutions in unlocking the full potential of rural areas. Investing in community transport is not only a step towards modernising our transport infrastructure but also a critical measure to improve access to health and social care, combat climate change, and foster greater social inclusion. By prioritising these initiatives, the next UK government can ensure a more equitable, accessible, and sustainable future for all." <https://www.rsonline.org.uk/next-government-urged-to-prioritise-community-transport-to-cut-local-nhs-waiting-lists>

CTA – Volunteers Week. CTA has been profiling the valuable work undertaken by volunteers in the CT Sector.

**Happy Volunteers Week 2024**  
to all the amazing Community Transport Volunteers who keep the wheels turning on CT!

Join us in celebrating #VolunteersWeek

**Gary Rogers**  
Gower Community Transport

"I enjoy meeting and helping people. It is one of the best things I've done since having to finish work, and I've met some really nice people, some whom appreciate the service."

**VOLUNTEERS' WEEK**  
3-9 June 2024

A celebration of the volunteers that are integral to CRIC, Dial a Ride and the Archive Centre

Angie - a gallery volunteer!

**Got a Community Transport Volunteer to celebrate?**  
Tell us their story!  
& we'll share it during #VolunteersWeek2024

**Barbara**  
Fundraising Friend

**Andy**  
Minibus Driver

**Dawn and Val**  
Passenger Assistants

**Richard**  
Trustee and Driver

CTA logo and #VolunteersWeek2024

CTA Scotland – Show and Tell with Glenfarg Community Transport Group. Nicola Mitchell writes: "Our Show and Tell series is a new platform for CTA members to share their innovative and inspirational community transport stories with other members and, boy did our first session deliver! Our guest speaker was Drew Smart, Chair of the Glenfarg Community Transport Group who explained how their Section 22 bus service went from an idea to a highly popular and celebrated service in just under 2 years..." <https://cta.uk.org/show-and-tell-with-glenfarg-community-transport-group/>

Scotland – Ayrshire Green Journeys offers Veloboxes. The Carrick Centre in Maybole has installed Veloboxes, which are shelters that offer e-bikes and include recharging facilities. Board Chair Marguerite Hunter Blair explained: “Our Community Green Transport Hub was set up to tackle local service access issues, increase active travel and encourage tourism and visitor numbers to North Carrick. We have an ideal location near train and bus services with café and toilet facilities, and we have been working with South Ayrshire Community Transport (SACT) to provide the required infrastructure. Recent reports have highlighted the health conditions and concerns that are much higher in this area than in many others in Scotland. We want to make our community a healthier more connected place to live and by helping to cut carbon emissions, improve air quality and encouraging an active lifestyle we are doing our part to improve outcomes for our community.”  
<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/ayrshire/green-journey-continues-ayrshire-community-32865427>

Scotland – Lothian CT launches two new electric vehicles.



Lothian Community Transport Services have taken delivery of two new electric minibuses as a result of a successful bid to the Plugged In Communities Fund, CEO of LCTS Kimberley Ward said: “this funding has given our fleet a significant boost. Having two brand new electric vehicles will help us become more sustainable as an organisation, as we look to build a more energy efficient fleet in the

longer term. We will be using the buses for our member runs with a driver and so far, the feedback from both members and drivers has been overwhelmingly positive. We are grateful to Plugged In Communities Fund for allowing us to further expand our services with the new buses we have. At LCTS we are keen to reach as many people in the community who need us as possible and these buses will help us do that whilst keeping the costs as low as we possibly can.” The buses are able to operate in the City of Edinburgh Low Emission Zone.

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/environment/lothian-community-transport-services-looks-to-a-green-future-4650393>. Also here: <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/lothian-community-transport-services-looks-to-a-green-future/ar-BB1nuj2U?ocid=BingNewsSearch>

Scotland - Clydebank and Drumchapel CT ceases operations. After seven years of operation, G15 Buses closed in April. One of the founders of the CT service Will Thomson reflected on the demise of the service: “The idea was not to make a profit but to provide a service that the people needed.

If a different service was put in place at that time [2017] it would have been three times what we charged because a profit margin is involved. The core organisation had four people working for it. However, members left over time which made things more difficult. Eventually there were only two of us working on the project. We managed like that for a while but when it became clear the bus was going to need a lot of money spent on it then we decided it couldn't continue...We ended up not having enough passengers to keep the initiative going. When the fuel prices went up we managed to get through that, then when we didn't have outside funding for a year we managed that but it just became too much. It took a real mental toll on the volunteers. I had sleepless nights worrying about it all which is not healthy. It became a struggle. I went from loving being able to give something back to the community to it then becoming very difficult. It was obvious in the end we had to stop it. We couldn't continue on. The feedback we have received since announcing the closure has been heartwarming. I really appreciated the comments on Facebook and it is some comfort to know we played a role in helping those within the community."

<https://www.clydebankpost.co.uk/news/24311492.g15-buses-volunteer-opens-emotional-charity-closure/>

Leicestershire – Lutterworth CT acquires new WAV. A new

Wheelchair-Accessible Electric Vehicle, converted by Brotherwood, has been introduced to the service offered by Lutterworth Community Transport, which is operated by Lutterworth Volunteer Centre. The operation provides a car and minibus service for the Lutterworth



and Broughton Astley districts of Leicestershire. Graeme Thomson, of Lutterworth CT, commented: "We already have a WAV converted by Brotherwood that we are very happy with. Over time we have taken on more and more wheelchair transport and realised that we needed a second one to meet demand. This led us to reviewing how the new vehicle would be used in addition to the wheelchair option. Many of our clients are frail and find it difficult to climb into the back of an ordinary car, and we also transport more than one person at a time. We chose to go for a larger vehicle, hence the Vauxhall Vivaro, which means that there is more room to manoeuvre once the passenger is in the vehicle. As the van is higher than a normal car, we then incorporated an automatic step to compensate. For those that still cannot access the rear but do not need to travel in a wheelchair we invested in the 'BEV Turny' chair at the front that enables a person to transfer from a walker or chair outside the vehicle and then be lifted inside. We now have an

incredibly versatile vehicle that caters for multiple needs that is used daily on our shuttle run to transport passengers with dementia to the Academy for Dementia Research and Education, also based in Lutterworth."

<https://www.harboroughmail.co.uk/community/accessible-electric-vehicle-tackles-loneliness-in-rural-community-4635983>

Suffolk – GoStart CT launches new EV minibuss in Sudbury. David Martin (trustee and treasurer of GoStart Community Transport) writes: " GoStart has just taken delivery of its brand new, fully electric, adapted minibuss. This is an important step towards the reduction of the Charity's carbon footprint. We believe it is also the first community transport electric minibuss in Suffolk. To help thank our funders who made this possible, we were delighted to present the vehicle to the public at the Eco Market event, organized by Sudbury Town Council. This new vehicle was made possible by the tireless efforts of our late, lamented Founder Trustee, John Phillips, after whom we have named the Vehicle "Johny Boy", a family nickname from his childhood. John and his fellow Trustees spent some two years organising the funding for the customised vehicle, specifying and procuring it, and overseeing the build and delivery. GoStart gratefully acknowledges the support of our funders, who financed the purchase completely: Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council and Edward Gostling Foundation." <https://gostart.org.uk/>



Northern Ireland – New manager promotes Lagan Valley Rural Transport service. A new manager Richard Dougherty has joined Lagan Valley Rural Transport as the service clocks up 20 years of successful operations in the rural areas between Belfast and Lisburn. "We have found that people don't really know about the service we provide so we are trying to let people know more about it," said Richard. "The services we run help people get into town, to meet friends, socialise, do shopping, or get to medical appointments...It is for people who live outside an urban area that isn't well serviced by public transport or that have difficulty accessing it....We cover urban areas including Ballymacash, Hillhall, Old Warren, Tonagh, Knockmore,

and even Colin, Lagmore and Poleglass which used to be part of the old council area...We are always looking for drivers to give us more options. We currently operate 8am-6pm during the week Monday to Friday but we want to open that opportunity up further." To find out more about Lagan Valley Rural Transport, email [admin@LVRT.co.uk](mailto:admin@LVRT.co.uk), or contact 028 92 62 2030.

<https://www.northernirelandworld.com/news/people/a-vital-transport-service-for-local-people-looks-forward-to-its-20th-anniversary-4641664>

### Northern Ireland – Future funding for CT still uncertain.

Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd has announced that funding for the NI CT sector is not certain. Although interim funding has been allocated for Dial-a-Lift (DAL) and the Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS) from April to June. Minister O'Dowd said that the overall budget allocation for 2024/25 has yet to be decided: "I fully recognise the importance of community transport and how both rural Dial-a-Lift and urban Disability Action Transport Scheme services continue to help improve access to local health appointments, shops and facilities, voluntary groups, friends and family. These services enable people to be independent and remain connected to their local communities. In the absence of an agreed budget at the beginning of the financial year, I have approved interim funding for both DAL and DATS for April to June 2024 based on 2023/24 funding levels to support continued provision of community transport. My officials provided this update to those organisations on 1st May 2024. The overall budget allocation for 2024/25 is currently being considered. The value of our infrastructure cannot be overstated, and I will continue to work with Executive colleagues to ensure appropriate investment is made."

<https://www.impartialreporter.com/news/24358105.community-transport-funding-still-undecided-minister-says/>

However, a subsequent press release by Department of Infrastructure has stated that "Concessionary fares, community transport funding and planned improvements to the Coleraine-Derry rail line are among the areas being protected by Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd following consideration of the department's budget allocation." There is an Equality Impact Assessment consultation underway which can be accessed here:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/consultations/dfi-budget-2024-25-equality-impact-assessment>

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/odowd-protects-concessionary-fares-and-community-transport-indicative-budget-allocations>

Westmorland & Furness – Appeal for Volunteers. An appeal for volunteers has been made for Volunteers Week by Westmorland and Furness Council whose Community Transport Service "has a team of 122 volunteer drivers and co-ordinators delivering around 17 voluntary social car schemes throughout Cumbria, providing journeys for people who need to do the weekly shop, see the doctor, or just to visit friends. These volunteers help

customers with their transport needs every year, with over 5,600 trips provided during 2023-24. The council is on the look-out for more people to give up some of their spare time to be volunteer drivers or scheme co-ordinators, with all expenses reimbursed. As well as learning new skills and providing a lifeline for people without access to transport, signing up as a volunteer is a good way to meet new people and give something back to the community. Volunteer co-ordinators are needed in the following areas:

- Sedbergh / Dent
- Ulverston / Dalton-in-Furness
- Greystoke
- Rural Barrow

Volunteer drivers are needed in the following areas:

- Alston
- Ambleside / Windermere / Coniston
- Appleby
- Grange-over-Sands / Allithwaite
- Kendal
- Kirkby Stephen
- Lowick, Blawith & Oxen Park
- Penrith
- Sedbergh / Dent
- Shap / Tebay / Orton
- Skelton / Lamonby / Greystoke
- Ulverston / Dalton-in-Furness
- Rural Barrow

Anyone interested in finding out more should contact Katy Wood, Voluntary Transport Officer, on 07788 396194.

<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/news/2024/call-more-community-volunteers-westmorland-and-furness>. The remaining parts of Cumbria are also wishing to recruit volunteers here:

<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/news/2024/volunteer-and-support-your-community-cumberland>

East Sussex – Chamber of Commerce highlights CT Sussex Succession Planning. An article in Sussex Chamber of Commerce’s Business Edge magazine looks at succession planning and leadership legacy, areas not often properly addressed in the CT sector. CEO of Community Transport Sussex Matt Roberts outlines in the article how the operator has been planning for his successor as a longer-term process: “Matt acknowledges the need for continuity beyond his tenure therefore starting early to find his successor is a priority. This is something he



feels all charities and businesses should prepare for early..."

[https://x.com/ct\\_sussex/status/1792516983889522852/photo/1](https://x.com/ct_sussex/status/1792516983889522852/photo/1)

CT Sussex has also recently attended the Steyning Electric Car Parade & Horsham Electric Car event, engaging with the community about their Henfield Electric Community Car Club.

[https://x.com/ct\\_sussex/status/1795763118628307242](https://x.com/ct_sussex/status/1795763118628307242)

East Sussex – New community bus in Ashdown Forest. A new Saturday bus service The Ashdownlink 262, has been launched by Wealdlink Community Transport, and provides four return journeys to Ashdown Forest from Uckfield, Maresfield, Buxted and Hartfield, with request stops at Pooh Bridge, the Enchanted Place, Gills Lap, and Hundred Acre Wood. A spokesperson for Wealdlink said: "The service allows visitors to alight at their chosen location, take a healthy walk, a leisurely stroll, or just soak up the view, and then board the next bus either at the same point or somewhere else along the route. Where there are no defined stops passengers can flag down the bus for a pick up wherever it is safe, in order to enjoy a great walk on the forest. Enjoy the Ashdown Forest in a more environmentally friendly way than using private cars, and help to reduce vehicle exhaust emissions which threaten the ecosystem of the forest." A timetable can be found at

<https://www.wealdlink.co.uk/wealdlink-services/scheduled-services/ashdownlink-262/>. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/24281881.new-ashdown-forest-bus-service-running-every-saturday/>

Devon – New call for volunteers at Mid-Devon Mobility. New volunteer drivers are sought by Mid-Devon Mobility, which operates in Crediton, Tiverton and all of the parishes in Mid Devon. Other volunteer roles are available as well. Anyone interested in volunteering should email: [volunteer@middevonmobility.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@middevonmobility.org.uk) or telephone the office on 01884 242099 during opening hours, 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

<https://www.creditoncourier.co.uk/news/volunteers-wanted-by-mid-devon-mobility-692017>

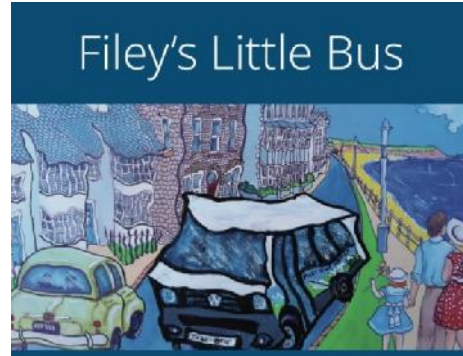
Devon – Okehampton CT needs volunteers. Another Devon CT provider that is hoping that Volunteers Week will bring forward new drivers is Okehampton District Community Transport Group, which provides on average 590 trips a month through its Ring and Ride service and car scheme. Paula Anscomb, manager, commented that "we rely on a friendly group of professional and compassionate volunteer drivers who drive for our community car service and lifestyle trips. If you would like to support people when they are in need of transport please contact us to find out more. It is a rewarding role fulfilling needs where public and private transport is not viable and which covers a wide range of circumstances...Every day we hear how much the service means to our clients. Our drivers not only get them to their destination, but will also provide a guiding hand to clients when they arrive, helping them



find their way to where they need to be. Our drivers go the extra mile to put clients at ease and share a chat and a smile. Our volunteer drivers and the service they provide make a real difference in their communities. They really are the heart of our organisation." Would-be volunteers should email [manager@odctg.co.uk](mailto:manager@odctg.co.uk) or see [www.odctg.co.uk](http://www.odctg.co.uk) to find out more.

<https://www.okehampton-today.co.uk/news/volunteer-drivers-needed-for-vital-lifeline-service-694315>

Yorkshire – Filey Little Bus Revival? Talks are being held between councillors in Filey around the possibility of re-introducing a community transport scheme in the town. The Filey Little Bus ceased operations last year but support for a new service has been noted following a public meeting. Filey Town Council, however, does not have funds to relaunch the service at this time. Councillor Houlden-Banks said that “the Town Council will be open to hearing from any groups that are established to try and bring back a community bus.”



<https://www.thisisthecoast.co.uk/news/local-news/filey-little-bus-talks-continuing/>

Cambridgeshire – Huntingdonshire Community Car Scheme. The work of Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre has been profiled along with an appeal for volunteers to assist with the services, and also information for potential users. The volunteer centres are based in four areas: Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots. Collectively the car scheme delivered 7,742 journeys last year, covering 89,077 miles.



<https://www.huntspost.co.uk/news/24218587.spotlight-volunteers-huntingdonshire-volunteer-centre/>

Gloucestershire – New Community Transport service launched in Tidenham. A new group transport service has been launched Tidenham Parish Council for community groups in the parish, near Chepstow. It has been funded through Section 106 money distributed by the Forest Council. Councillor Chris McFarling said: "Community transport offers enormous social and economic benefits and plays a vital role in fulfilling the travel needs for many people. Offering transport options with little or no emissions, and which enable journeys to be shared, brings additional environmental benefits by reducing mileage and improving air quality. We hope projects like this will inspire others to look at opportunities for



sustainable transport and the benefits that can be delivered." Groups interested in joining Tidenham's Community Transport Scheme should register to make online bookings. The new vehicle will be based at Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall, and could save up to 7,000 car journeys per year. Interested community groups should email

[clerk@tidenhamparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@tidenhamparishcouncil.co.uk).

<https://www.monmouthshirebeacon.co.uk/news/new-electric-van-drives-greener-and-cleaner-community-transport-694328>

Gloucestershire – Lydney Dial-a-Ride Funding Award. Forest of Dean Council has granted £63,000 to Lydney Dial-a-Ride to purchase an electric minibus as one of five projects to benefit from Rural England Prosperity Funding. Cllr Johnathan Lane said: "it will help people access local shops, services and training or employment locations," said cabinet member for economy. It's fantastic news that Gloucestershire County Council has been successful in their bid for funding from the Department of Transport and that we're able to provide some additional funding to help provide zero-emissions travel in the Forest of Dean. To do this with a zero emissions electric vehicle is another step towards our end ambition to be a carbon neutral district by 2030." <https://www.theforestreview.co.uk/news/dial-a-ride-service-gets-electric-minibus-funding-692604>

Oxfordshire – West Oxfordshire CT has two new buses. A grant from the National Lottery Community Fund has enabled West Oxfordshire Community Transport to purchase two new low-floor 15 seat minibuses costing more than £120,000. Chair Mike Parker said: "We provide vital links for people living in many of the estates of Witney and Carterton and

some local villages who otherwise have no other means of accessing the main shopping centres, their doctor, their college or place of work or even meeting friends over coffee. We thank the Lottery for making it easier for residents particularly those on low incomes, pensioners who can't drive and students to get where they want – and need - to go."

<https://www.witneygazette.co.uk/news/24370775.witney-community-transport-group-gets-120k-lottery-funding/>

Hertfordshire – Fund raising for Bishop Stortford Community Transport. A new fund raising campaign hopes to raise £500 for Bishop Stortford CT. Victoria Bateman has launched a crowd funding effort, saying "Without this charity's transport, life would be extremely difficult for many people. The transport they provide is a real life-line for those who use it, and really need it. Many of these people find it incredibly hard to get out-and-about. These people would become very lonely and isolated from their local community and unable to access the healthcare/public services they need without this charity's help. This is why the community transport this charity provide is crucially important, and that is why I hope you will show them your support so that they can continue to help those in need."

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Stortford-Shuttle>

Leicestershire - Lutterworth CT launches new EV. Lutterworth Community Transport is a part of Lutterworth Volunteer Centre and operates a car scheme and minibus service driven by volunteers for residents of the Lutterworth and Broughton Astley districts in Leicestershire. It has now added to the fleet a five-seater electric Vauxhall Vivaro converted by Brotherwood. The vehicle can accommodate a wheelchair user. Graeme Thomson of Lutterworth CT said: "The aim of our charity is to prevent loneliness caused by rural and social isolation. Many people cannot access mainstream public transport due to lack of availability, or lack of ability to walk to a bus stop, and then inability to get on and off the vehicle. We offer a door-to-door service using a range of adapted vehicles to meet this need. We already have a WAV converted by Brotherwood that we are very happy with...Over time we have taken on more and more wheelchair transport and



realised that we needed a second one to meet demand...We now have an incredibly versatile vehicle that caters for multiple needs that is used daily on our shuttle run to transport passengers with dementia to the Academy for Dementia Research and Education, also based in Lutterworth."

<https://attoday.co.uk/wheelchair-accessible-electric-vehicle-service-tackles-loneliness-in-rural-community/> Also

here: <https://thiis.co.uk/brotherwood-supports-accessible-electric-vehicle-scheme-in-tackling-loneliness-in-rural-community/>

Northamptonshire – Volunteers needed for Towcester Car Scheme. Brenda Woolf writes:

“Towcester Area Door to Door (TADD) community transport service provides transport to medical and well-being related appointments for the elderly and disabled in the South Northants area. The service is a lifeline for those struggling with mobility, helps them retain their independence, combats isolation and eases the stress of travel with a friendly and helpful face. As we emerge from the pandemic, the healthcare sector



is trying to catch up and demand is back to normal with appointments now being offered over extended hours and at weekends. Over the last couple of years, many of our older volunteers were shielding and some have not returned to volunteer driving. We urgently need more drivers in to meet demand and have sadly had to put membership on hold until more drivers are recruited. If you would like to find out more about become a volunteer driver, please get in touch: <https://www.towcesterareadoor2door.com/>. 01327 810300 [tadd@btconnect.com](mailto:tadd@btconnect.com).”

<https://www.aboutmyarea.co.uk/Northamptonshire/Towcester/NN12/News/Local-News/335372-Urgent-appeal-for-Volunteer-Drivers>



If you require any advice or support please contact us on 01772-204988 or email [john.atkins@taspartnership.com](mailto:john.atkins@taspartnership.com)