



Newsletter No.49

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

UK – DVSA Update on Driver CPC reforms. “The reforms include:

-) introducing a National Driver CPC that will cover driving a lorry, bus or coach in the UK;
-) allowing training courses to be done in blocks of 3.5 hours rather than the current 7 hours to allow greater flexibility;
-) decoupling e-learning from trainer led courses;
-) speeding up the process for drivers whose Driver CPC has run out to return to driving a lorry of bus coach in the UK;

This work is still ongoing; these changes aim to be introduced in late 2024 or early 2025.”

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/3b9b488>

UK – CTA Celebrates 30 Years of MiDAS. At a special event at Aintree Racecourse on 9 October, CTA commemorated the 30th anniversary of the driver training standard. Awards were presented to key individuals and organisations who have made outstanding contributions to MiDAS.

🏆 Gareth Jones from Dial A Ride Denbighshire Ltd.
New Driver of the Year Award sponsored by TBC Conversions;

🏆 PACTO - Organisation of the Year Award sponsored by Dawson Group;

🏆 Kenny Duncan from LCTS - Outstanding Contribution to MiDAS and the Community Transport Sector Award sponsored by PHVC Minibus Leasing & Fleet Suppliers;

🏆 John Taylor of The TAS Partnership - MiDAS Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by CTA;

🏆 Karen Gibson MBE - Outstanding Contribution to MiDAS and the Community Transport Sector Award sponsored by Maxus;



🏆 Kevin Ings of Hampshire County Council - Outstanding Contribution to MiDAS Award sponsored by Passenger Lift Solutions Ltd.
<https://ctauk.org/event/midas-30th-celebration-event>

UK – CTA Gains £10,000 Grant Award from WRS Insurance Brokers. The WRS Movement for Good Awards has donated £10k to the Community Transport Association towards the training of drivers in supporting the needs of disabled passengers. The money will be used to provide inclusivity and accessibility training for drivers. This will be person-centred and launches in spring 2025. Chief Executive of CTA Victoria Armstrong said “The grant will significantly contribute to the transformation of our accessible driver training and ensure that it is contemporary, user led, and up to date. It will mean that more disabled people travelling via Community Transport experience safe, legal, and comfortable journeys across the UK in years to come.” <https://www.charitytimes.com/ct/insurance-firm-awards-grant-to-improve-community-transport-for-disabled-passengers.php>

UK – CTA Updates

- J Scotland Conference 2024: Takeaways – “Our sector faces a funding crisis. The future of Community Transport is on the line. But CTA’s Scotland Conference 2024 was the start of our fightback.”
<https://ctauk.org/news/scotland-conference-2024-takeaways>
- J CTA website is given a new look <https://ctauk.org/news/welcome-new-look-cta-website>
- J CTA as part of the Sustainable Transport Alliance “is asking policy and decision makers across the political spectrum and at all levels of government, to recognise the environmental imperative and socio-economic benefits of shifting journeys away from private cars, and the change in approach needed to enable this.”
<https://news.railbusinessdaily.com/transport-ngos-say-its-time-to-get-a-shift-on-to-advance-sustainable-travel/>
- J Upcoming CTA events include:
 - o Working Well with Each Other (17 October)
<https://ctauk.org/event/working-well-each-other>
 - o Community Building Session: MiDAS Transformation Update (23 October) <https://ctauk.org/event/community-building-session-midas-transformation-update>
 - o Working Well with Volunteers (14 November)
<https://ctauk.org/event/working-well-volunteers>
 - o CT24 The Voice of the Passenger (27 November)
<https://ctauk.org/event/ct24-voice-passenger>
 - o Working Well with those living with Dementia (12 December)
<https://ctauk.org/event/working-well-those-living-dementia>

Scotland – Barrhead Meeting to Discuss Transport Problem.

Residents of Barrhead, East Renfrewshire, have recently attended a meeting to discuss community transport solutions to the lack of a local bus service. Around 60 people gathered at Dunterlie Resource Centre and speakers included Lara Henderson from CTA. Corra Foundation community coordinator Neill Paton told attendees: "Today is about getting a group together, (getting people on the) mailing list, allowing people to understand the community transport context and making things happen. It's about finding out what the community wants. There needs to be a Barrhead wide group to take this forward as Barrhead needs better bus services. The action group would like as many people as possible to come forward and say they want to be part of the group and to do something about this... Getting the bus back is a long term thing and it's going to take a while, so the group also needs to think about how to help people struggling to get out and about now."

<https://www.barrheadnews.com/news/24581676.barrhead-residents-attend-community-transport-meeting/>

Scotland – New CT Service is Planned for Caithness Area. A

new CT service is due to be launched by the Farr North Community Development Trust following the gift of a new electric car courtesy of Sutherland Resilience Initiative. Volunteers are now being sought for a steering group and to serve as drivers. The Trust is now appealing for people to join the Farr Goes steering group and volunteer as drivers. Anyone interesting in assisting should contact

manager@farrnorth.onmicrosoft.com .

<https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/new-community-transport-scheme-in-far-north-named-farr-goes-360734/>



Scotland – Orkney Council Seeks Feedback to 'Fine Tune' CT

Service. "The Council's Transportation Service is seeking further feedback from South Ronaldsay residents to 'fine tune' the pilot on-demand door-to-door community transport service in the area. The trial service, due to start later this year, will be available for anyone in the community to use, providing a link to local services in the Hope and onwards to Kirkwall via the existing X1 bus.

Transportation Service Manager, Laura Cromarty, said the Transportation Service are grateful for the initial feedback from members of the community, and they are now looking at the finer details of the pilot. The operator would like to hear more on key points of interest or pick up points on the map so that they can create a base map for bookings: <https://shorturl.at/szTOP>. A new

booking App will also be trialled during the initial period with the view to extend it to other community transport services."

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/latest-news/south-ronaldsay-folk-asked-to-help-fine-tune-community-transport-service/>

Scotland – HiTrans Travel App ‘Go-Hi’ is Withdrawn. HiTrans has been running a pilot of the Go-Hi DRT app for three years but the platform is due to cease. HiTrans said: "Since the pilot project was launched in 2021, we've had 5,000 of you hop on board, and it's been an amazing ride. From exploring the stunning Highlands and Islands to simplifying your travel experience, Go-Hi was all about making mobility easier for you.



Sadly, the pilot project and funding has now come to an end and the app will be closed for any further travel bookings from 1st October 2024. However, the success of this trial has provided us with valuable insights into improving public transport for residents and visitors across some of Scotland's most rural areas. Thanks again for your support and interest in Go-Hi - it's been incredible to have you with us for the journey. Your contribution has helped shape the future of travel! Keep an eye out for future MaaS developments from HITRANS and more exciting travel innovations in the Highlands and Islands."

<https://fleetondemand.activehosted.com/index.php?action=social&chash=8f121ce07d74717e0b1f21d122e04521.325&s=1f8fffd90855d42d6093970f1447e302>

Scotland – North Coast CT Scheme Gets into Gear. A development grant has been awarded to the Farr Goes community transport service thanks to the Bettyhill, Altnaharra and Strathnaver Community Council providing wind farm community benefit funding to the Farr North Community Development Trust. The Sutherland Resilience Initiative has already provided a new electric car for the new scheme. The additional funding will now enable an administrator-driver to be employed. Ragnar Celli, the Community Council chairman, said: "We are grateful to Creag Riabhach Wind Farm through the North and West Sutherland Trust for supporting the funding of this initiative. We believe the car will provide a vital lifeline service for people, not only in our community council area but also in our neighbouring communities. Transport is a significant issue for all who live in the far north, and while only a small step in addressing this, the community car is certain to be of benefit to many." <https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/bettyhill-altnaharra-and-strathnaver-community-council-give-362739/>

Cambridgeshire – Grant Support for CT Operators. A total grant value of £180,000 has been allocated to a number of organisations by South Cambridgeshire District Council including community transport operators as follows:

- J) Cambridge Dial-a-Ride - providing local transport services that are safe, affordable, and accessible to people who have difficulty accessing public transport;
- J) Royston and District Community Transport (RDCT) - offering door-to-door transport seven days a week for people who can't use conventional public transport due to age, frailty, impaired mobility or lack of public transport;
- J) The Voluntary Network - providing community transport and a befriending service across West Suffolk and neighbouring Cambridgeshire.

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/grants-boost-community-support-in-south-cambridgeshire>

Hampshire – Funding Reprieve for New Forest CT. Following months of uncertainty during which £800,000 was to be cut from its Local Bus and CT budget, Hampshire County Council has confirmed that after a “second round of public consultation [it] has considered a reduction of £587,000 instead.” Tim Houghton, chief executive of Community First, said: “It’s good news. We see it as a real positive step. We’re very grateful that Hampshire County Council has taken the time to listen to the consultation and reflect on some of the views that have been expressed through consultation. It has also taken the time to consider alternative ways in which they can protect some funding for community transport. There are still some cuts, so naturally, we’re disappointed but understand the difficulty that’s facing in Hampshire. There are some cuts around the funding for some of the other services we deliver, like ‘Wheels to Work, which is the moped hire scheme for people to get to work, and around some of the scheduled bus services we run. But the real win is that they’re going to protect the funding for community transport, which is the ‘Dial-and-ride’, the ‘Call-to-go’ and the ‘Group Hire’ services, which are the services that a lot of vulnerable people and people with disabilities rely on and what we were lobbying to try and keep.”

<https://www.advertiserandtimes.co.uk/news/rethink-on-transport-scheme-s-funding-cut-9383860/>

Shropshire - CT Consortium Gains Funding Award. Using part of its BSIP allocation, Shropshire Council has allocated £100,000 to the Shropshire Community Transport Consortium. The Consortium comprises seven individual CT operators. Shropshire Council’s deputy Leader Ian Nellins, said: “Community transport groups play a pivotal role in transport provision across Shropshire and often provide the only means of transport for many isolated and vulnerable residents who are unable to access a traditional bus



service. Currently community groups such as these are seeing increasing demand put on their services and we hope that this funding will assist them.”
<https://www.shropshirelive.com/news/2024/09/24/100000-awarded-to-shropshires-community-transport-operators/>

Shropshire – Stalwart Market Drayton Volunteer Driver Retires. 80 year-old Colin Barthorpe has stood down from driving for



Market Drayton Community Cars after 14 years of service. “Colin joked he made the ‘mistake’ of saying to the then boss of the service that he ‘wouldn’t mind doing some driving’. And now, after 14 years of dedicated service in the region, Colin, who was also Shropshire County Cricket Club’s scorer for nearly 18 years, has parked

up for the final time.” <https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/north-shropshire/market-drayton/2024/09/09/i-wish-i-could-clone-him-community-car-scheme-bids-farewell-to-80-year-old-driver-bowing-out-on-his-own-terms/>

Northern Ireland - Funding Increase for CT Operators.

“Infrastructure Minister John O’Dowd has confirmed a funding increase of 4.2% for community transport providers. The Minister has confirmed the funding rise for the Dial-a-Lift (DAL), Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS) and Shopmobility based on levels awarded in 2023/24. The additional funding has been provided to support the groups in covering rising costs, particularly staff costs. The Minister has also committed to maintaining this level of funding in 2025/26, subject to allocation of funds to the Department for Infrastructure.

He had previously committed to protecting community transport funding despite financial challenges for his Department and has met with representatives from all parts of the community transport sector since resuming his post as Minister.” O’Dowd commented that “Community transport is a valuable frontline service and I appreciate the important role it plays in connecting people and complementing the wider public transport network. Community transport ensures that some of the most vulnerable people in our society are able to access essential local services and more actively participate in society. This increase is not as much as I would like to provide but it’s certainly a significant increase along with my commitment to maintain the funding into 2025/26. I hope this will help alleviate some of the pressures faced by service providers and support the workers in receiving a proper pay rise.”

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/odowd-confirms-funding-increase-42-frontline-community-transport-providers>

CTA has commented on the NI funding situation here <https://ctauk.org/cta-responds-ct-in-northern-ireland-to-receive-4-2-funding-boost/> and here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cpv22p3zvz9o>

Northern Ireland – Out & About CT Celebrates 25 Years of Serving the Magherafelt District Area. Since 1999 Out & About Community Transport has

offered services in the Magherafelt area. The operator commented “This September we are celebrating 25 Years of serving the community. Out & About makes a huge contribution to complementing the wider public transport network, but



we are helping connect communities and ensuring that some of the most vulnerable people in our society can access essential local services and more actively participate in society...Our mission is to provide Accessible and Affordable transport to Individuals and Groups living in the Magherafelt District Area. For 25 years we have been transporting beneficiaries from the community to much needed hospital and health appointments, essential shopping, and other necessary trips to keep members of the community living independent and active lives. We will continue to reduce isolation and promote social inclusion, funding permitting!”

<https://www.derrynow.com/news/home/1608327/out-about-community-transport-celebrates-25-years-of-serving-the-magherafelt-district-area-with-essential-transport.html>

Herefordshire – Dore CT Benefits from Insurer’s Donation.

NFU Mutual Agents at Wormbridge Agency nominated local charity Dore Community Transport to receive a donation of £6,509. Roger Bradley, Chair of Dore CT said: “We’re so grateful to the Wormbridge Agency of NFU Mutual for nominating our charity to receive a donation from the NFU Mutual Agency Giving Fund. The money has gone a long way to helping with the cost of a new vehicle and will ensure that we can continue to provide an essential service to people who without us would be very isolated in this beautiful but sparsely populated part of Herefordshire.”

https://yourherefordshire.co.uk/all/featured-articles/news-local-insurer-shows-support-for-dore-community-transport-with-a-major-contribution-towards-the-cost-of-new-vehicle/#google_vignette

Derbyshire – Derbyshire CT at risk of closure. Derbyshire Community Transport operates a range of demand responsive and scheduled services across the county but is currently struggling to keep services running. A spokesperson from the operator said: "We haven't given any staff members any notice at the moment, we are consulting on the risk of redundancy. Unfortunately, the trading environment is very tough for community transport organisations. Many of our services are contracts commissioned by Derbyshire County Council, who are seeking alternative providers for those services.". Derbyshire County Council's cabinet member for highways assets and transport, Councillor Charlotte Cupit said the authority was attempting to "retender services to new operators as soon as possible. DCT are a private organisation so we have an advanced partnership board where we meet regularly. I think the public transport network has really suffered with the pandemic, and smaller private operators like DCT have felt that in a much bigger way. Our public transport team are doing all they can to find operators for all of these services. We do understand how important these services are to the community." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvgd0d6wxw1o>

Greater London – Free Bus Services Launching in Roehampton. Wandsworth Borough Council: "Starting 23 September, two new Roehampton bus services are launching as part of council efforts to improve transport links between Roehampton and the rest of the borough. This forms a key part of the Alton Renewal Plan which sets out how the council will invest in the estate, working together with residents to help this part of Wandsworth to thrive...The council's pledge to enhance local transport options has led to the introduction of two new and free bus services for the public: one in partnership with the University of Roehampton, and another which extends the existing relationship with Wandsworth Community Transport. Cllr Jenny Yates, Cabinet Member for Transport said: 'These new services will provide more transport options for anyone travelling to and from Roehampton, and are designed to improve the quality of life for those who live and work there.'

"The university shuttle bus operates between Roehampton Vale Asda, Barnes Station, and Putney Bridge Station during term time only, and will be free for the public to board at designated TfL bus stops. The new Roehampton Transport Club minibus (operated by Wandsworth Community Transport) must be booked in advance and provides a door-to-door service around the borough to designated locations for those who find it difficult to use public transport." <https://wandsworth.gov.uk/news/news-september-2024/free-bus-services-launching-in-roehampton> Also: <https://www.putneysw15.com/default.asp?section=info&page=conbuses015.htm>

Greater London – Westway CT & Dementia Support. Westway CT writes: "Throughout September World Alzheimer's Awareness Month gave us all the opportunity to reflect on the importance of Alzheimer's support

services and the vital supporting role they can play. It's a difficult diagnosis to navigate, and it can be hard to know when and how to step in to support those we love and care for without compromising their independence and dignity.

There is no doubt that community and contact come into their own here. Connection for you and your loved one is crucial. Community transport is one of the things that can be helpful here.

Dementia-friendly services, can make all the difference for those diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia. At Westway CT, we provide community transport for older people or those with mobility issues, and some of our members with dementia use our Shopper Bus for their weekly trips to the shops, helping them to stay connected and independent. Having a dedicated driver and a passenger assistant on board ensures everyone feels supported.



Westway CT works closely with Age UK and The Creighton Centre in Kensington & Chelsea supporting their members to visit amazing places like Kew Gardens – and recently Tim our volunteer driver at Westway CT escorted Age UK members with dementia from Kensington & Chelsea to the Beyond Fashion exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery, safely, reliably, and comfortably. A dementia diagnosis doesn't mean life stops; it means finding the right support to continue. Friends, family, and community are vital in this journey and community transport is a lifeline."

<https://westwayct.org.uk/westway-at-the-saatchi-gallery/>

Essex – Braintree CT Seeks New Volunteers. New volunteer drivers are required at Braintree Community Transport which works in partnership with Braintree Council and Essex County Council. Volunteers undertake the bulk of driving duties using either 12-seater minibuses or their own vehicles. A Braintree Council spokesperson said: "We are currently experiencing difficulties meeting demand for our Community Transport service due to no longer have the level of assistance from volunteer drivers we previously enjoyed. Despite our best efforts we have been unable to attract sufficient new volunteers. We urgently need the support of volunteer drivers to drive our minibuses or their own cars to help people, in our communities who need help, to get out and about. Anyone who is interested in volunteering can find out more on our website or by calling our Community Transport team on 01376 557883."

<https://www.braintreeandwithamtimes.co.uk/news/24613686.braintree-community-transport-service-needs-volunteers/>

Wales – O Ddrws i Ddrws Driver is Nominated for Award. Providing a service in the Llŷn Peninsula area of Gwynedd, an O Ddrws i Ddrws driver Patrick McAteer (from Morfa Nefyn) is one of only four drivers

from across Wales and England who have been invited to the MiDAS 30th Celebration and Award Ceremony at Aintree in October, where the Driver of the Year award winner will be revealed.

Liz Saville Roberts MP said: "I am delighted that Patrick has been nominated for this coveted award. It is testament to his years of service with O Ddrws i Ddrws and his high standard of driving, going above and beyond to ensure that those who use the service and who lack accessible travel options are provided for – extending their independence...Drivers such as Patrick embody all that is special about O Ddrws i Ddrws, always ready to offer a friendly ear and willing to go the extra mile to help those who rely on the service such as taking the elderly and vulnerable to hospital appointments and social activities. I wish Patrick the very best at the awards."

<https://www.northwaleschronicle.co.uk/news/24607992.pen-llyn-minibus-driver-running-national-award/>

Cornwall – CT Service in Liskeard Calls for More Volunteers.

18 new drivers are being sought by the Royal Voluntary Service for its Restormel Car Scheme and Cornwall Community Transport service in Liskeard.

Volunteer driver Maggie Paine said:

"Volunteering has given me purpose and brought me a lot of pleasure. As a Volunteer Driver I help people continue to live independently in their own homes by offering transport to attend appointments, return home after hospital stays, and maintain their connection with the community. This service is something which is

especially valued in my area where the bus service is limited. Seeing how much people appreciate the service and having that interaction with them makes it a very rewarding role. Volunteering makes a significant difference in people's lives, and it's a wonderful way to give back to the community".

Potential volunteers can find out more at

www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteering.

<https://www.voicenewspapers.co.uk/news/call-from-liskeard-charity-for-volunteer-drivers-to-support-older-people-in-cornwall-725904>



Dorset – Weymouth Town Council Votes Community Bus

Plans to Progress. A proposal for a community bus has been made by David Harris of Weymouth Town Council. He said that the bus would "try and enable community groups to have access to other places that they want to get to but have no chance whatsoever as they are without a bus service." The proposed service would enable passengers to get "to and from places such as Tumbledown or to other bus stops where a First Bus service runs heading to areas like Preston, Dorchester and Portland."

<https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/24563903.weymouth-town-council-vote-community-bus-plans-progress/>

Northamptonshire – Ability CT is Awarded Massive Grant!

Based in Towcester, Ability has been awarded £477,181 by West Northamptonshire Council, using funds from the Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The funds have been used to purchase four new minibuses, increasing the size of its fleet to 14 vehicles. This will enable the service to expand across the West Northamptonshire area. Director Lynn Hinch said: "I think people consider us more than a bus service. We take people from A to B of course, but it's also about the friendships people build while they're on those journeys. Our drivers are so friendly and patient, and they become part of the passengers' lives. We have regular shopping trips, and the people on those trips will often get their shopping done as quickly as possible so they can catch up over a coffee afterwards! The more we have expanded, the more need for our services we've discovered. We give freedom to people who would otherwise feel trapped. To receive this funding is a real lifesaver for us and the communities we serve – the more support we have the more places we can reach and the more services we can provide to those who need it."



<https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/community/towcester-based-lifeline-transport-service-set-to-expand-thanks-to-funding-4805123>. Also here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cpw5v5e945ro>

East Sussex - Bexhill Community Bus Carries its Two

Millionth Passenger. Known as the Bexhill Town Bus, this service has been running since 1980 offering a six day a week schedule driven entirely by volunteers. The significant milestone was reached on September 11 when the two millionth passenger was carried. This was 11 month old Tiger Foster accompanied by his



mother Jennifer. Lynn Langlands, a former mayor of Bexhill said: "This is a friendly service for everyone and travels four circular routes around the town going to places where there is no national bus service. It can be hailed anywhere out of town, and has the capacity to take a wheelchair or buggy."

For more information on the service visit www.bexhillcommunitybus.co.uk. Volunteers are always needed.
<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/people/bexhill-community-bus-transport-its-two-millionth-passenger-4780875>

Wiltshire – New Minibus for Tisbury CT. A new 16-seat accessible minibus has been added to the fleet of Tisbury District Community Minibus (TISBUS). The vehicle is the first new bus in five years, bringing the TISBUS fleet back to four vehicles. The new bus has been purchased with funds provided by Wiltshire County Council, Link, and Tisbury and Donhead St Mary Parish Councils.

<https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/24625574.tisbury-transport-service-expands-new-minibus/>

Central Bedfordshire – Dial-a-Ride Services Gain Funding Support. Three Central Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride services have been allocated over half a million pounds in grant aid as former contracts have expired. The beneficiaries are Buzzer Buses, South Beds Dial-a-Ride and Greensand Country Community Transport.

A spokesperson for Central Bedfordshire Council said: "These contracts have expired and, as the funding doesn't cover the whole cost of the services going forward, finance will be by way of a grant. CBC wants to provide this grant support to suppliers of accessible community transport services to allow them to develop and to improve the services they offer some residents. The users may have a learning disability, be at risk of social or economic isolation or have a personal mobility or sensory impairment, which make the use of conventional bus services difficult or prevent it altogether. Operators of such services have been invited to apply for financial support from CBC to develop their services and to help the local authority in achieving its local transport objectives. By providing a door-to-door transport service, we can ensure that those who wouldn't otherwise be able to access public transport can do so. This will enable people to live active, healthy, and independent lives."

<https://www.biggleswadetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/dial-a-ride-services-in-bedfordshire-to-get-more-than-half-a-million-pounds-in-funding-to-help-keep-them-on-the-road-4813170>

Somerset – New MPs Visit West Somerset CT. The Wiveliscombe Area Partnership operates a community transport service across the constituency areas of two new Liberal Democrat MPs: Rachel Gilmour member for Tiverton and Minehead, and Gideon Amos member for Taunton and Wellington. They visited the charity to understand more of the Wivey Link service that provides door-to-door transport with all-volunteer drivers, taking people to medical appointments in Taunton and Wellington.

Pauline Homeshaw, chair of the charity, said: "We are thrilled to meet with our new representatives, not only to show them the important work that we do

in their constituencies but to hear about their interests and plans. Charities like ours have been hit hard in recent times and it is heartening to hear that Rachel and Gideon are as passionate as we are about the issues that impact our rural community." Mr Amos said: "Taunton and Wellington really benefit from the Wivey Link community transport as it plies its way bringing people in and out of town for shopping, medical appointments and for other reasons. The fact that the charity provides this at reasonable cost is vital to many local people who wouldn't be able to afford to get here otherwise. The Partnership is also saving the health authorities huge amounts of money as they would otherwise have to provide transport". <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/mps-visit-west-somerset-community-040000858.html>

Worcestershire – Malvern Hills District DRT Demand Grows.

Launched last year, the Malvern Hills Worcestershire on Demand service is now averaging over 1,000 trips per month which comprises 37% of all Worcestershire on Demand journeys. Councillor Marc Bayliss, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport at Worcestershire County Council said: "It's fantastic that we're seeing more people using the service in Malvern. Initially, we saw numbers growing steadily, but in recent months the service has become increasingly popular. This is a great service, covering many journeys across the district and beyond. The buses provide a sustainable and efficient way of getting around a rural setting and are a key part of our mission to enhance bus travel in Worcestershire."

The Worcestershire on Demand Malvern zone service is operated by Malvern Community Action (in conjunction with Worcester Wheels) and LMS Travel and is funded by Worcestershire County Council and Malvern Hills District Council. The service is facilitated by the 'Worcestershire on Demand' app, which has over 7,500 accounts created since launch.

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news/malvern-sees-rise-demand-bus-service-use>

Yorkshire – Heck Sausage Bus is Launched. Rural areas of North Yorkshire are benefitting from a new free minibus service that is funded by famous sausage company Heck Food Ltd of Bedale. The BBC reported that: "The nine-seater pink minibus made its first journey...taking passengers from the village of Kirklington for a day out in Masham. The bus has been bought by local firm Heck Food and has no set timetable, with residents able to make their own travel bookings...

residents can book the pink bus service and either drive it themselves, or request a driver. Heck is offering to pay for the fuel from its community fund. Becky Keeble, from Heck Food, said the bus 'already had quite a few



bookings and we are just working on the dates".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cj9j8yyplzwo>. See also video here: <https://www.heckfood.co.uk/blogs/whats-new/heck-pink-community-bus> and story here: <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/people/yorkshire-business-heck-to-provide-free-bus-rides-to-tackle-loneliness-in-rural-areas-and-is-hailed-a-lifeline-by-the-yorkshire-vets-peter-wright-who-travelled-on-first-trip-to-masham-4816539>



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