



Newsletter No.50

Edited by John Atkins (Principal Consultant). Published January 2025.

UK – DVSA Updates to the Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness (GTMR). The main implication here is around safety inspections and repair facilities – as many CT’s outsource their maintenance they will need to be aware of the proposed Maintenance Provision Rating Scheme (MPRS) which will apply to workshop facilities and be launched in 2025 / 2026. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDVSA/bulletins/3c01f5d>

CTA Updates

- J MiDAS Model Casting Call – Two wheelchair users are sought to appear in a MiDAS training video. <https://ctauk.org/news/midas-model-casting-call>
- J Putting Community at the Heart of Transport Development – “the future of Welsh transport belongs to all of us” - <https://ctauk.org/news/putting-community-heart-transport-development-future-welsh-transport-belongs-all-us>
- J CT24 The Voice of the Passenger Reflections - ‘Community Transport changed my life – now I am helping change others’ <https://ctauk.org/news/ct24-voice-passenger-reflections-community-transport-changed-my-life-now-i-am-helping-change>
- J Social Value Research Project - We need you! CTA and ECT Charity are partnering to help Community Transport (CT) operators measure and communicate their impact using ECT’s Community Transport Social Value Toolkit 2.0. <https://ctauk.org/social-value-research-project>
- J CT Week Report - 14th to 18th October was Community Transport Week– a week-long celebration of the amazing work done by Community Transport Operators across the UK. https://ctauk.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/CTWeek24%20Report_1.pdf



Merseyside – Veg CT Needs New Bus. BBC Radio Merseyside has announced that Queen of Greens a “non-profit service which aims to get more fresh fruit and vegetables into people’s diets on Merseyside has appealed for help to source a new bus...the converted Ford mobility bus the service uses to get into the community is out of action, meaning it has resorted to hiring a bus each week at great cost.”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c07n7n545vro>

Derbyshire – Derbyshire CT Set to Cease Trading. Following difficulties with financial sustainability, Derbyshire Community Transport was placed into creditors’ voluntary liquidation on 31st October 2024. 60 members of staff have been put at risk of redundancy. Its priority has been to maintain continuity of services by seeking operators who can take over its bus routes. CT4N has now taken over two of the former DCT services in areas including Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. Steve Chu, of Bakewell & Eyam CT, was appointed by DCT in March to advise its board on the day-to-day running of the charity. Steve said: “DCT had some financial issues going back a number of years, which became tougher and tougher... I was really optimistic until the end and liquidating was the last thing we wanted to do...We had long-term liabilities that we would have to pay off for years into the future.” <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cm27l33vzl6o> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c86q7450qzqo>

Greater London - Westway CT Welcomes Transport Minister. Westway Community Transport and the Community Transport Association welcomed Local Transport Minister Simon Lightwood to its depot in West London on October 17th - the penultimate day of Community Transport Week. He met with passengers, volunteers and staff to hear first-hand about the impact our services make on their lives. Together they discussed the lifeline community transport offers, allowing people to shop, socialise and attend appointments. The minister commented "Everyone deserves to travel confidently, which is why we're ensuring community services are included in our bus overhaul plans." The Government currently makes up to £3.8 million available annually to community transport operators to help support these vital services. As plans to hand back control of bus services to local authorities gather pace, the Government is exploring how this initiative can include the community transport sector.



Sandra has worked at Westway CT for 20 years and is now a driver on the Dial-A-Ride service. She said "We're not just drivers, we're carers, we're problem solvers, we're comedians. Community Transport is so important, sometimes we're the only person a passenger sees all week." The minister chatted to staff and passengers, exploring the role community transport plays, saying "Community transport services are a lifeline for so many people, which is why I was delighted to visit Westway today to celebrate the incredible work of operators up and down the country. We're committed to improving our local networks, to make them more inclusive and enable vulnerable people to travel safely, confidently and with dignity. Community transport plays a vital role in providing these services, so we are working to ensure they are part of the solution." The minister also spoke to Westway Community Transport CEO, Kathleen Lyons, she said, "We were delighted to welcome Simon Lightwood to Westway CT. It's never been more important to showcase the work of community transport. We're an essential part of the local transport mix – particularly for those who find public transport difficult to use – and a key component in any plan to tackle loneliness and social isolation."

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/transport-minister-celebrates-community-transport-in-west-london>

Northern Ireland - Down Armagh CT Ministerial Praise.

John O'Dowd (Infrastructure Minister) has noted the "valuable contribution" of CT when he visited Down Armagh Rural Transport (DART) in Portadown. The operator had delivered 11,300 trips across all its services in 2023-24. O'Dowd commented that "I appreciate this opportunity to see first-hand the hard work and commitment of those involved in delivering community transport in your local community; from the staff, drivers, volunteers, Trustees and, of course, members. I hope my visit today gives an indication of my support and commitment towards community transport to continue to deliver dependable local transport to those who need these services the most."

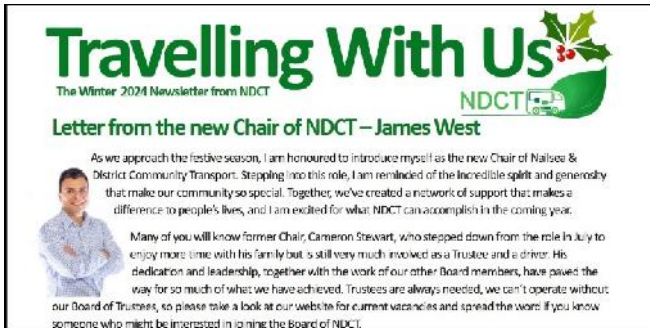


<https://armaghi.com/news/craigavon-news/valuable-contribution-of-down-armagh-rural-transport-recognised/255213>

Somerset - Stowey Shuttle Listens to the Community. This service, which takes residents of Nether Stowey and Over Stowey to appointments, held an open meeting for people to learn more about the operation. Stowey Shuttle, which is run by volunteers, started in 2016 and

has made more than 1,100 return trips. <https://www.wsfp.co.uk/news/stowey-shuttle-holding-open-meeting-to-tell-villagers-more-about-community-transport-737196>

Somerset – Nailsea CT wins National Lottery Grant. The National Lottery Community Fund has granted £115,000 to Nailsea and District Community Transport to purchase a fully accessible electric minibus. The new vehicle from by GM Coachworks is one of three electric minibuses in the CT's fleet. Chairman James West said: "We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way.



Now, thanks to National Lottery players, we will be able to improve and continue supporting those who need it most. This funding is not just about a new vehicle; it's about improving lives, reducing social isolation, and helping our community become more connected."

<https://www.northsomerstimes.co.uk/news/24841121.nailsea-community-transport-group-wins-100k-funding/>

Yorkshire – Two New CT Services in East Hull CT. East Hull Community Transport launched two new pilot services recently:

-) Marfleet Community Minibus Service carries passengers to shops and medical appointments, runs on a scheduled timetable and is operating twice-a day on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
-) Medibus takes patients to Castle Hill Hospital in Cottingham Monday to Friday, between 07:00 and 17:00.

CEO of East Hull CT Rob Foster, commented that medibus will "provide an essential passenger transport service". However, the long-term viability of the services was uncertain beyond March 2025. Hull City Council commented that the buses would only continue to run beyond next year if there was demand for the services, which would allow further funding from the government's Bus Service Improvement Plan. <https://news.hull.gov.uk/04/11/2024/new-community-minibus-services-to-support-passengers-in-east-hull/> Also <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx24qpwyq8qo>

Oxfordshire – CT Grants Confirmed. Oxfordshire County Council is to provide total funding of £106,530 over two years shared between Volunteer Driver Service; OurBus Bartons; Vale Community Impact; Cholsey Volunteers; West Oxfordshire's Volunteer Link-Up; Didcot Volunteer Drivers; Yarnton Care Committee; Wallingford Volunteer Drivers; and Weston-on-the-Green Parish Council.

<https://cbwmagazine.com/106500-of-grants-awarded-to-support-community-transport-in-oxfordshire/>

Nottinghamshire – CT Volunteers Celebrated. During Community Transport week, Nottinghamshire County Council celebrated the value of the volunteers involved in several services across the county, including Bassetlaw Action Centre, Ravenshead Community Transport, Newark and Sherwood Community and Voluntary Service and Rushcliffe CVS.



<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/newsroom/news/cheers-to-the-volunteers-in-community-transport>

Wales – Pembrokeshire CT Workshop. An event was hosted by Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations which was attended by the Eluned Morgan, First Minister for Wales. Titled Building Tomorrow: Our Pembrokeshire Community Transport Model, the workshop “enabled PACTO to update their partners and key stakeholders on the progress the sector has made since October 2023, when they launched their three-year Pembrokeshire community transport transformation project- which has been funded by the Motability Foundation and UK Government.”

<https://pembrokeshire-herald.com/101750/first-minister-attends-community-transport-operator-workshop/>

Wales – Work of Dolen Teifi is Highlighted. The value of Ceredigion CT operator Dolen Teifi has been reported recently by the BBC: “John and Joan Barrington Powell need to go often to Prince Phillip Hospital in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, from home in Llandysul, Ceredigion, with each journey lasting more than an hour. ‘Since the bus services got worse, we have to use them [Dolen Teifi],’ he said. ‘It’s either that or a private taxi which would be more expensive.’ A Dolen Teifi driver collects the couple, takes them to Llanelli and waits until the appointment is finished before returning them home. Both said they could not manage without the service...This year Dolen Teifi has made nearly 50,000 journeys, of which 10,000 were for health reasons. But it was unable to undertake more than 2,000 requests in the year and half of those were to do with health. John Hands, one of its 783 volunteer drivers, said: ‘Since they’ve cut the buses over the years, the demand for this kind of transport has gone up.’ He has been volunteering with Dolen Teifi for more than 20 years, travelling across Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Swansea. He said that now most of his journeys were hospital appointments, including John and Joan’s trips to Prince Phillip Hospital...” <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1kezzw4eeop>

Wales – Hay & District Dial-a-Ride Celebrates 30 Years of Service.

Reporting on its 30 year celebration event, Hay & District Dial-a-Ride reports that "On 12th November 2024, the entire Dial-a-Ride team was invited to attend a two-course dinner and drinks reception at Hay Castle, kindly funded by Lindenleaf. This was a lovely opportunity for everyone to enjoy delicious food and each other's company whilst celebrating 30



years of our amazing charity. The event was also a way of thanking all of our volunteers for the time and help they give to us, without whom we wouldn't be able to offer what we do. A big thank you must go to CTA Wales's Gemma Lelliot who spoke so passionately about just how vital services such as Dial-a-Ride are for local communities throughout the country...All in all, it was a very special event and a perfect way to mark 30 years of Hay Dial-a-Ride.

<https://www.brecon-radnor.co.uk/news/hay-district-dial-a-ride-celebrates-30-years-of-service-754365>

Suffolk – Two New CT Services Launched in Mid Suffolk. "The new services have been funded by Mid Suffolk District Council's Rural Transport Grants Scheme, after £820,000 was ring-fenced for rural transport provision as part of the council's 2022/23 budget. The two new services will provide community transport options for residents wanting to travel to and from Stowmarket from surrounding villages, and also connect communities in Debenham, Eye and beyond... From 1 November, Mid Suffolk Taxi Bus operated by Swift Taxi Cabs will provide transport services across central and south Mid Suffolk...From 4 November, the Rural Connect community bus service operated by Communities Together East Anglia will provide transport services across north Mid Suffolk..."

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/new-community-transport-services-to-better-connect-mid-suffolk>

Wiltshire – New CT Minibus hits the Road in Trowbridge. A new minibus has been put into operation with Trowbridge Area Community Link. The vehicle will be driven by volunteers and offer a range of journeys for local people. Nicola Blackmore, of Trowbridge Area Community Link, said: "We are very pleased to have the new minibus exactly two years on from when we started after taking over from the Guild of Community Service... [we] have been providing a community service for over 30 years thanks to all our volunteers. After taking over from the Guild, I am pleased to report that we have successfully been able to expand the services we provide and help so many more elderly and disabled residents in Trowbridge."

<https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/24708734.trowbridge-community-transport-scheme-takes-delivery-new-minibus/>

Wiltshire – CT Minibus Involved in Serious Accident. A minibus operated by Urchfont Community Bus was involved in an accident on 9 January, leaving 9 people hospitalised. It is understood that the minibus was involved in a head-on collision with a delivery van on the A343 south of Devizes in the Stert area. The road was closed for 10 hours.

<https://www.wiltshire999s.co.uk/nine-hospitalised-serious-community-bus/>

Devon– 25 Year celebration at Holsworthy CT. First launched in



1999, Holsworthy Rural Community Transport has recently held a 25 year celebration event. The operation offers “a ring and ride service across eleven zones covering the area from as far south as St Giles on the Heath, as far west as Widemouth, Shebbear in the east and West Putford to the north.” A spokesperson said: “As a charity Holsworthy Rural Community Transport relies

upon volunteers, grants, funding and sponsorship from local businesses to continue to provide this vital service. In our rural community if you do not have access to your own transport it can feel isolating. Including the young, the elderly, and those with mobility issues, access to services and facilities is a very real challenge.” <https://www.thepost.uk.com/news/holsworthy-rural-community-transport-celebrates-25-years-of-connecting-its-community-734518>

Devon – Dawlish CT Driver is Recognised with Certificate of Appreciation. After 12 years of service, Dawlish Community Transport has honoured driver Paul Cooper with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of his support and dedication as an employee. “As well as driving, Paul checks the vehicles every week, keeps the fleet vehicles clean and maintained, takes charge of the Shopmobility service, does gardening, repairs and much more.” A spokesperson for Dawlish CT said: “Paul has worked alongside the team over the years and seen many changes and remained a stalwart supporter throughout...He’s one in a million, he turns his hands to most things. There is no one like Paul and this award represents just a small token of our appreciation. He is our rock.”

<https://www.middevonadvertiser.co.uk/news/dawlish-community-transport-shows-appreciation-to-paul-742806>

Essex – Tendring CT Loses Bus to Arson Attack. Clacton-based Tendring Community Transport has faced a severe blow when a minibus was set on fire and destroyed. Pauline Mann (chief executive officer) said: “Luckily someone spotted the fire and called the fire brigade, who arrived very quickly, saving the other vehicle. But our minibus was completely burnt out. And it’s come at a really bad time – we had just lost a vehicle two weeks earlier due to engine problems. Then this happens. So, in a very short period of time we have gone from 12 minibuses to 10.”

<https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/24747690.tendring-community-transport-minibus-destroyed-clacton/> also

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx24x4d61qjo>

Hampshire – County Council Merges School and Community Transport. In a new policy to secure savings, Hampshire County Council has decided to combine its procurement of school and CT services. An HCC press release noted the approval of “a revised approach in which both community transport and school transport are jointly commissioned and delivered together, thereby maintaining a level of service to meet the transport needs of older and disabled people whilst reducing the funding required for school transport. This would generate a further approximate saving of £500,000 per annum for the County Council.

<https://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/24740216.shake-up-passenger-transport-services-hampshire-budget-woes/>

Guernsey – Minibus Driving Rules Could be Relaxed. Guernsey’s own driving legislation does not permit non-profit bodies to drive a minibus without the equivalent of a full-PSV D1. However, a new proposal aims to bring the law into line with the UK mainland’s s19 Permit system by allowing minibuses to be driven for voluntary sector bodies by those holding a standard car driving licence. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx284rn3kr7o>

Scotland – New Electric Community Car for Lairg. Lairg has now become the third community in Sutherland to receive an electric community car from the Sutherland Resilience Initiative. The organisation has previously provided cars to community groups in Brora and on the north coast.

<https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/community-transport-scheme-for-lairg-to-be-set-up-after-deli-366175/>

Scotland – Cairngorms CT Gains Funding Boost. The Bank of Scotland Foundation had donated £60,000 to Badenoch and Strathspey Community ConnXions. This is a share of £1,440,000 which has been distributed between 24 Scottish charities. <https://www.strathspey-herald.co.uk/news/bank-injects-crucial-funds-into-cairngorms-community-transpo-370005/>

County Durham – New CT Minibus for Upper Teesdale.

An new accessible minibus has been launched in service by Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services supplied by South Shields firm Vic Young Ltd. Grace Crawford, speaking for the operator said "we have always made sure the buses are accessible, but there has been an issue with the tail-lift on the current bus that this one is replacing because it was externally stored, so it hasn't lasted as well as it should have. The other bus has a ramp access which just isn't as nice for people to use to get wheelchairs into the bus. Also, for wheelchair passengers it isn't the nicest experience. This is a lot better for accessibility and use for all. The whole project is possible because we have a fantastic team of volunteer drivers who are willing to give their time towards providing a service for community transport." <https://teesdalemercury.co.uk/news/new-community-transport-bus-hits-the-dales-roads/>



Northumberland – Lottery Win for Upper Coquetdale CT.

Upper Coquetdale Community Transport has been awarded £209,000 to buy a new minibus in order to enhance its operations west of Rothbury. On behalf of the CT Lesley Leeson said the minibus will enable people to do "essential things like food shopping as well as go on excursions so that they were not stuck in their homes all the time... As a rural community, other transport options often aren't available, especially for people with mobility issues. Our volunteer drivers, in particular, do an amazing job because they know all our clients and sometimes they are the only people they see all week." Service user Barbara Denison said it was a "lifeline... There's no buses where I live and I don't drive, so when my husband passed away, it was hard for me to get out. It's brilliant, because all the people on the bus, we're all friends and we look forward to seeing each other." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c983rz82p920>

Tyneside – Volunteer Driver Sought for Key Community Bus.

"South Tyneside-based charity Key has launched a New Year volunteer appeal as it looks to desperately fill volunteer slots at its Key to Life Foodbank and Key Community Bus. Key is needing volunteers to help it to continue supporting those in the local community who are facing hardship and hunger." <https://www.shieldsgazette.com/news/south-tyneside-charity-appeals-for-volunteers-to-join-its-foodbank-and-community-bus-4937343>



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