



Newsletter No.55

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

UK – DVLA Changes to Driving Licence Entitlement for Zero Emission Vehicles. From 10 June 2025, holders of a B category licence can drive an electric or hydrogen-powered vehicle with a maximum authorised mass (MAM) of up to 4,250kg. The vehicle must be a zero emission vehicle. B category licence holders can also drive an electric or hydrogen powered minibus up to 4,250kg MAM (5,000kg if fitted with additional specialist equipment for disabled passengers).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/driving-an-electric-or-hydrogen-powered-vehicle/driving-an-electric-or-hydrogen-powered-vehicle>

UK - Nominations Sought for Best Women in CT! Women in Bus and Coach has announced its annual awards, due to take place as part of its annual summit sponsored by BT in Birmingham this September. Now in their second year, the awards shine a spotlight on the exceptional contributions and achievements of women across the bus, coach, and community transport sectors. Building on the success of last year's event, the 2025 ceremony introduces a new category aimed at recognising emerging talent: the Rising Star Award for Women, celebrating women making an early and impactful contribution to the industry. This year's categories are:

-) Best Woman in Bus: Honouring a woman who has shown outstanding performance, leadership, and dedication in the bus sector.
-) Best Woman in Coach, sponsored by Dawsongroup Bus and Coach: Celebrating excellence and significant contribution to the coach industry.
-) Best Woman in Community Transport, sponsored by IntSol recruitment: Recognising dedication and impact in community transport services. The Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill Best Ally Award, sponsored by the Go-Ahead Group: Highlighting an individual who has been an exceptional ally in supporting and advocating for women across the sector.

-) Rising Star Award for Women (new for 2025): Acknowledging a woman who has shown promise, passion, and progress in her early career in bus, coach, or community transport.

<https://womeninbusandcoach.org.uk/news/news/women-in-bus-and-coach-announces-second-annual-awards-ceremony-nominate-your-colleague/> and <https://highways-news.com/women-in-bus-and-coach-announces-second-annual-awards/>. A profile of Bev Mather, Chief Executive of Dial A Ride Denbighshire is here: <https://womeninbusandcoach.org.uk/news/spotlight-on-allyship/spotlight-on-beverley-mather-chief-executive-officer/>

CTA Updates

-) Join us in London for ConneCTing England 2025! – “We’re bringing the community transport sector in England together for a one-day conference on Tuesday 16th September at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in London.” <https://ctauk.org/event/connecting-england-conference-2025>
-) New Pilot CT Initiative in Sandwell – groups invited to get involved - “Walsall Community Transport has secured £130,000 in BSIP funding from Transport for West Midlands to support group travel in Walsall — and to pilot a new community transport model in Sandwell.
-) Celebrating the Driving Force behind Community Transport: Volunteers’ Week 2025 – “a time to celebrate the thousands of dedicated individuals who give their time, energy and compassion to help others through community transport.” <https://ctauk.org/news/celebrating-driving-force-behind-community-transport-volunteers-week-2025>



-) Supporting Safer Journeys: Coalfield Community Transport’s Experience with CTA’s Insurance Partners – “Coalfield Community Transport, an independent charity in East Ayrshire, has grown from a small volunteer-led initiative to operating a fleet of 22 vehicles serving local

residents. But in recent years, soaring insurance costs and poor service from brokers became a major challenge."

<https://ctauk.org/news/supporting-safer-journeys-coalfield-community-transport-experience-ctas-insurance-partners>

- J) Cyber Challenges in the Charity Sector: Insights and Strategies – "In our increasingly digital world, the work of charitable organisations often relies on the safe storage and handling of sensitive information. As more and more charities transition to digital platforms for fundraising and outreach, the importance of robust cyber security measures and Charity Cyber Insurance cannot be overstated..." <https://ctauk.org/news/cyber-challenges-charity-sector-insights-and-strategies>

Nottinghamshire – Bassetlaw CT Welcomes New Minibus.

Bassetlaw Action Centre was delighted to take delivery of a new community minibus on Tuesday 6th May. The minibus was funded by a Motability Foundation grant and topped up by the local charity's reserves, enabling it to be purpose built for their clients' needs. Bassetlaw Action Centre will be using it for their popular lunch and day trips and have a new programme of events available. CEO Lynn Tupling said: "This new fully accessible minibus will allow us to help even more people in Bassetlaw to get out and about and reduce their isolation. Almost 3.4% of adults report feeling lonely 'often or always' but that rises to 13.3% for people who have a disability. We are determined to reduce transport inequalities experienced by disabled people in Bassetlaw and our minibus trips are a great way to create connections and forge new friendships. We are

proud that we can help more people with disabilities within Bassetlaw." Lisa Jones, Chief Operating Officer at the Motability Foundation, said: "We're delighted to award Bassetlaw Action Centre with this grant to expand transport services for disabled people in North Nottinghamshire and

the surrounding areas. 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 Bassetlaw Action Centre helps us to make an immediate difference to the transport needs of disabled people."



Bassetlaw Action Centre's three transport schemes; Bassetlaw Community Car Scheme, where drivers use their own vehicles; Car Scheme Plus, where drivers use a specially adapted mobility car enabling passengers to travel in their wheelchair; and Bassetlaw Community Minibuses are all driven by volunteer drivers. These volunteers make the scheme possible by donating their time and have all expenses paid which prevents financial constraints from stopping people volunteering. MS is one of the valuable volunteer drivers who is excited to try the new vehicle, "As a volunteer driver, I see and really appreciate the benefits the Action Centre's transport services bring to the local community. It's great to see the arrival of the new minibus which has been built specially to accommodate the exact needs of our users. Whether it's days out, medical appointments or lunch clubs, I know the Action Centre provides an invaluable service and the new minibus will be key to maintaining and expanding this." The new minibus will be running in addition to the current one which will continue to offer the same fun trips but enable a greater take up. These trips are open to anyone who resides within Bassetlaw and a full schedule is available at www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk or by calling 01777 709650. To find out more about Bassetlaw Action Centre and its services and volunteering opportunities please visit www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk email enquiries@actioncentre.org.uk or call 01777 709650.

Northern Ireland – CT Sector Demands Multi-year Budgets and Warns of Growing Fears Service may not Survive.

Following Infrastructure Minister Liz Kimmins' announcement last month that funding for CT operators would be increased, representatives from the NI CT sector have contributed to a committee hearing on 'Funding Implications on the Community Transport Sector'. The message that emerged was that uncertainty is causing instability. Testimony was provided by Frances Campbell, director of CTA NI, Jason Donaghy, managing director of Fermanagh Community Transport, Ian Wilson, Director of Down Armagh Rural Transport Partnership and Michael McNulty, the transport director of the charity Disability Action. Frances Campbell warned that "ageing fleets and rising costs are putting both our services and passengers at risk. And the reality of this is that each day, our operators are forced to make difficult decisions. They have to decide who can travel, who's needs take priority. The facts of the funding crisis in 2023 are still being felt, and there's a growing fear, among those who really rely on us, that this service may not be here in the near future. From our perspective, that's simply not acceptable." The other witness also reports the difficulty and unsustainability of current funding shortages against mounting costs and increasing demand. A Department for Infrastructure spokesperson said: "The minister recognises the importance of longer-term planning and the need for multi-year budgets to support this. Budget periods are determined by Treasury as part of the Spending Review process and it is expected that multi-year budgets will be in place from 2026-27 which will assist community transport providers in planning this valuable service." <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern->

[ireland/community-transport-providers-demand-multi-year-budgets-and-warn-of-growing-fears-service-may-not-survive/a1974144469.html](https://www.strabaneweekly.co.uk/news/2025/06/08/gallery/councillors-welcome-community-transport-funding-boost-57862/) and <https://www.strabaneweekly.co.uk/news/2025/06/08/gallery/councillors-welcome-community-transport-funding-boost-57862/>

Staffordshire – Newcastle CT Receives Funds for New Vehicle.

Newcastle Community Transport has been awarded £2,200 from Staffordshire County Council's Local Community Fund to help to purchase a small wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) and to help with the maintenance costs. Chair Barrie Swift said:



"We're extremely grateful for the funding and I'd like to thank those councillors who contributed. The funding towards the smaller bus has made a huge difference to us in terms of being more accessible for our customers. This means we're able to get people closer to drop off points, which makes it easier for them. As a small local charity, which has been in existence for 50+ years, we rely heavily on volunteers to drive the buses. This smaller bus can also be driven by more volunteers and anyone interested in joining the charity as a volunteer should get in touch." Victoria Wilson of Staffordshire County Council, said: "This is a wonderful community service that provides vital transport to those unable to easily access public transport and for those who do not have a car to enable them to get to essential appointments and to access other shopping or social activities..." John and Chris Yarwood from Newcastle are one couple who use the bus on a regular basis. Chris said: "This really is a brilliant service and without it we'd be totally lost. John is a wheelchair user, so the new bus is perfect for getting us around the town for hospital and GP appointments. I'd like to thank Barry and the team and all the volunteer drivers who are great. I'd also urge other people with a disability who struggle to get out and about to try the service for themselves."

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Newsroom/Articles/2025/03-March/Council-funding-helps-charity-get-people-out-and-about.aspx>

Dorset – Lyme Link is now Launched. Serving residents of Lyme Regis, Lyme Link is now operational, bringing free community transport to the town. Operated by the town council after a successful appeal for volunteer drivers and assistants, the new service has proved a hit. Adrian Robinson commented that the new service had made an "astronomical difference" to his wife and himself: "Since August I've been carrying the shopping in all that time, and I've just become more and more exhausted. Now I can get the bus straight to my door. My wife suffered a complication in an operation recently

and hasn't been out in nine to ten weeks and I'll be taking her for a trip around the town in the bus just for something different. I've passed on my comment to the council on just how much this has affected us and how grateful we are for this new service." Lyme Regis mayor Cllr Philip Evans said: "On the day I became mayor I made a commitment to the people of Lyme Regis. I promised them we would leave no stone unturned in our efforts to find a replacement for the axed town bus. We knew it would not be easy but none of us realised how many hoops we would have to jump through to deliver our promise. The council's administrative staff have spent hundreds of hours in setting up a community bus service with our own 16-seater mini-bus costing £38,000...I must admit I felt a little bit emotional when regular attenders at the Talking Café at Hallett Court climbed on board for a trial run the day before the service was officially launched. There's no doubt they greatly missed the old service but were delighted they now have their very own community bus. Their smiles said it all..." <https://www.bridportnews.co.uk/news/25163805.lyme-regis-hail-new-lyme-link-free-bus-service-town/>

Dorset – Dorset CT Shuttle Service is Extended. After four years of operation of Service 2RN, it has been announced that a new service the Purbeck Shuttle 200, operated by Dorset Community Transport, is to run this year until August. The summer service is designed to link Wareham railway station with RSPB Arne, The Blue Pool, Purbeck Park and Norden Farm Campsite, and operates on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The service is managed by a partnership between the Purbeck Community Rail Partnership, Dorset Council's Community Transport Fund, RSPB Arne, The Blue Pool, Wareham Town Council and Dorset CT. Manager of Dorset



CT Tim Christian said: "We're delighted that these Dorset organisations have chosen to partner with us so we can provide access to places otherwise impossible to reach on public transport. When we work together, everyone benefits: local venues, tourists, residents – and the environment. We learned

from our experience with Service 2RN that passengers really value being able to make their journeys to these venues by bus – not simply because parking can be a challenge in high season, but people want to do their bit for the environment as well. For some residents, this is the only way they can access these locations. We've also been taking feedback from residents living along the route, who tell us that they've found it useful – and have even helped

name the service: the Purbeck Shuttle." <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/trial-shuttle-bus-linking-popular-040000700.html> and <https://ectcharity.co.uk/news/story/new-partnership-creates-the-purbeck-shuttle-service-200> and <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwy7je432e3o>



Somerset – Atwest CT Celebrates 20 Years of Service. Based in Minehead Atwest (Accessible Transport in West Somerset) has recently held a social event at its base for around 60 people to mark two decades of Slinky Dial-a-Ride, Shopper Bus, service routes and group travel. West Somerset MP Rachel Gilmour was guest of honour, along with Somerset

Council chair Cllr Mike Best and Minehead Cllr Mandy Chilcott. Atwest now operates 17 minibuses in the area. <https://www.wsfp.co.uk/news/minehead-social-gathering-marks-20-years-of-success-for-atwest-community-bus-services-797286>

Devon – Record Turnout for Luscombe Charity Day. Dawlish Community Transport was one of three charities that organised an open day in the grounds of historic Luscombe Castle. The event was deemed a great success. Spokesman Geoff King said: "We had a very successful day at Luscombe helped enormously by superb weather. The organising team would like to thank all those who made it happen by donating cakes, organising parking and generally helped the visitors have a good time. We had a record number of visitors who were able to enjoy the gardens and glorious weather."



<https://www.dawlish-today.co.uk/news/record-turnout-at-charity-day-798159>

Devon – Totnes CT Faces Familiar Challenges. Known as Bob The Bus, the CT service based in Totnes has seen passenger numbers increase by 10% over the year, but operational costs have also increased, leaving the operator with a year-end deficit. 44,700 journeys were delivered in 2024/25. Recent fundraising efforts have helped the situation, however, including a sponsored hike to John O'Groats by volunteer and local legend Graham Walker



and a generous legacy from a former regular passenger. Bob The Bus is also offering commercial advertising opportunities on its buses, both inside and out. Volunteers are also being sought: drivers with a D1 entitlement, and anyone with skills in PR, fundraising or admin. Contact: <https://bobthebus.org.uk/>. <https://www.ivybridge-today.co.uk/news/totnes-bus-needs-community-boost-796403>

Wales - Dolen Teifi CT Assists Local Dementia Group. Following an initiative from Caerfyrddin MP Ann Davies, the Llangathen Dementia Group had been able to improve access to group meetings and events following discussions with Dolen Teifi Community Transport and Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services. Ms Davies said: "This group is a beacon of hope, friendship, and support for individuals and families navigating the daily realities of dementia. I was incredibly moved by the stories I heard in January and was determined to take action. With the help of community partners like Dolen Teifi and CAVS, we're making sure no one is left behind - especially in rural communities where access and support can be a real challenge. It's grassroots efforts like this that truly show the strength of community and the importance of listening and responding to local needs." <https://www.southwalesguardian.co.uk/news/25204128.mp-ann-davies-takes-action-support-dementia-group/>

Wales – Brecon Dial-a-Ride Benefits from Local Fundraising. An annual coffee morning fund raising event was held recently by the residents of Gwenllian Morgan Court in Brecon who nominated Brecon Dial-a-Ride as the favoured charity. £500 was raised for the CT and accepted by manager Lisa Marsh, who emphasised how essential every penny is to the charity, and praised the care and dedication of the Dial-a-Ride volunteers. <https://www.brecon-radnor.co.uk/news/gwenllian-morgan-court-residents-raise-ps500-for-dial-a-ride-792685>

West Midlands – Ring and Ride Fares Increase. The West Midlands Combined Authority is considering increasing the fares for the Ring and Ride service to ease cost pressures. If agreed, the fares will increase for the first time in 8 years. The proposed increase will see the majority of users (over 16 years) having to pay 55% more from £1.30 to £2. With rising demand the service has delivered 2,487 trips in the last six months. The authority currently provides a subsidy of nearly £6.5m per year to run the service against which the fares generate around £250,000 per year. A report states that "fares are now significantly lower than the standard single bus fares despite the significantly higher level of customer service. The current scenario could also potentially drive people who don't need this service to switch to it rather than using fixed route bus. Without any fares adjustments the service will become increasingly unsustainable and place further pressure on the transport levy." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn05e6egp5ro>

Suffolk – Severe Shortage of Drivers at BACT CT. Lack of volunteer drivers has become so acute at Bungay-based BACT Community Transport that they have been forced to turn away new membership requests. The group has posted on Facebook: "Unfortunately due to a severe shortage of volunteers, we have had to make the hard decision to temporarily suspend new passenger registrations. This means that for the foreseeable future anyone not already registered with us to use our service, will be unable to.

It has become increasingly difficult to cover the 100s of journey requests we receive each week. We are having to refuse transport to medical and social appointments for people, as we just don't have enough volunteer drivers.

We are appealing desperately for new volunteers! Could you offer just half a day a week (or more) driving your own car or one of ours? This would help elderly and vulnerable people in the local area get to appointments and socialise. We would really love to hear from you!" Manager Debbie Blowers added: "It is concerning what will happen to people who depend upon our transport and have no alternative if we continue to struggle to recruit. It is not just our problem, but a nationwide one." If you can help or know someone who can, please call the BACT office for an informal chat on 01986 896896 or email info@bactcommunitytransport.org.uk.



<https://www.facebook.com/bactcommunitytransport1/> and <https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/25214369.bact-community-transport-suspends-new-member-registration/>

Hertfordshire – Star Volunteer at North Herts & Stevenage CT is Praised. A significant milestone has been reached by Jon Brown, who is celebrating 10 years of dedicated service with the North Herts &

Stevenage Community Transport Service. Jon is described as “a pivotal figure in this volunteer-driven initiative” and has been “instrumental in leading this essential service providing transportation for residents who face challenges accessing public transport due to age, mobility issues, or other barriers.” Hosted by North Herts & Stevenage CVS, the CT operation has over 70 volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles. “Jon’s unwavering commitment has not only ensured the smooth operation of this service but has also fostered a sense of community and support among both volunteers and passengers. Under Jon’s guidance, the service has adapted and grown to the evolving needs of the community, especially during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. His leadership has been crucial in maintaining the continuity of transport services, ensuring that vulnerable residents remained connected to essential healthcare and social services. Jon’s contributions have not gone unnoticed. In 2023 Jon was recognised as a Changemaker by The Big Issue, highlighting the impact of his work in addressing social isolation and promoting community well-being.” Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer driver or learning more about the North Herts & Stevenage Community Transport Service, call 01462 689402 or email transport@nhcvs.org.uk. <https://www.thecomet.net/news/25210477.north-herts-stevenage-cvs-celebrates-transport-volunteer/>



Scotland – Johnston Community Bus Pulls the Plug.

Renfrewshire-based Johnstone and Area Community Transport has opted to cease trading from June 10, citing rising costs and cash flow difficulties. Director John McBarron said: “We are incredibly grateful for the loyalty of our passengers, and hopefully, we have shown there is demand for additional local bus services. We are also thankful to Renfrewshire Council and The National Lottery Fund that together supported us with £35,000 of funding. This figure is less than half of the value that I personally contributed to this company. After working for a year without pay, I can no longer sustain the financial burden. The team of drivers, in my opinion, are the best drivers in the world. Their humility, empathy and community spirit could not be surpassed. They all demonstrated to the bus industry how to operate a bus service with recognition of people’s needs and not just treating them as revenue. The whole community supported us. We wish everyone all the best on their future journeys. Unfortunately, we will not be part of that.” <https://www.thenational.scot/news/25226710.renfrewshire-bus-operator-axes-services-enters-liquidation/> also <https://news.stv.tv/west-central/renfrewshire-bus-operator-cancels-all-services-after-entering-liquidation>

West Sussex - Hyde Community Bus is Launched. With partners Hyde Charitable Trust and Rivervale, Community Transport Sussex has launched a seven-month initiative to deliver accessible and flexible transport solutions to residents of Midhurst and surrounding areas. Matt Roberts, CEO of CT Sussex said: "The Hyde Community Bus Project is a shining example of what can be achieved when we work together to meet local needs. By providing accessible, transport, we are helping to break down barriers to mobility and foster stronger, more connected communities. This launch marks the beginning of a journey

that will empower residents to access essential services and engage in social opportunities." Sarah Owen, Hyde's Projects and Partnerships Manager, said: "This project represents a significant step toward creating a more inclusive and connected community. We are delighted to collaborate with Rivervale, CTS, and local organisations



to empower residents to stay engaged, active, and independent." A wheelchair-accessible electric vehicle which has been provided by Rivervale, whose Commercial Director Simon Fuller commented: "We're proud to contribute to this project with an electric minibus that not only reduces environmental impact but also supports vital transportation needs for local residents. At Rivervale, we're committed to providing tailored leasing & purchasing solutions for cars, vans, and minibuses to individuals, businesses, and community organisations, enabling more sustainable and accessible mobility options for everyone." <https://www.ctsussex.org.uk/hyde-rivervale-project-brings-essential-transportation-to-midhurst-and-beyond/>

Surrey – Waverley Hoppa Fundraise to Convert Minibus to Electric. In one of the more innovative initiatives in the CT sector, Waverley Hoppa has been raising funds for a project to convert a diesel minibus to electric. Clipper Automotive (based in London) offer a conversion service for the commercial vehicle market, including minibuses. Clipper CEO Alex Howard said "Converting existing vehicles is not only cheaper [than buying new EVs] but also avoids the huge carbon emissions in making new EVs." Clipper have commenced the conversion one of Hoppa's Peugeot Boxer minibuses from diesel to full battery electric. Clipper posted on LinkedIn: "This conversion will be validated by Hoppa in their normal day to day operations. Hoppa currently run a fleet of 27 accessible minibuses that could all be converted to full EV if this project is successful, delivering potential savings of over £1M in transition costs and helping to ensure the



environmental sustainability of this charity. Hoppa has been operating for over 20 years, delivering its millionth passenger last year. It delivers an enormous amount of social value in its communities and is feeling the squeeze, like many charities, to its budget due to local authority cutbacks. This project would revolutionize Hoppa's green transition strategy." The first vehicle

conversion had been costed at £60k and Hoppa are now only £16k short of the target, with an investor pledging to match fund half of that figure.

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7116099059848736768/>



TAS

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

The image shows a blue rounded rectangular box containing the logo for TAS. The logo consists of the letters 'T', 'A', and 'S' in a large, white, serif font, each enclosed within a white square with rounded corners. These squares are set against a dark blue background and are separated by thin white vertical lines. Below the logo, there is a line of text in white: "If you require any advice or support please contact us on 01772-204988 or email". At the bottom of the box, the email address "john.atkins@taspartnership.com" is written in a smaller white font and is underlined.