



Newsletter No.65

Edited by John Atkins (Principal Consultant). Published April 2026. Please send us any news items, stories of interest or press releases.

Graham Lightfoot – Tribute. Longstanding transport & mobility activist, practitioner and consultant Graham Lightfoot died at Limerick Hospital, Ireland on 11 November 2025 at the age of 75. A tribute to Graham - which has been put together by Richard Armitage and includes Graham's enormous contribution to the community transport sector over many years – follows at the end of this newsletter. Just a few of the community transport projects and organisations that Graham had been involved with over the years include Manchester CT, Milton Keynes CT, Preston CT, Community Transport Association, Go Car & Clare Bus.



UK – Law Commission undertake a review of the current legislation on transport accessibility. The legal position on passengers' rights and expectations is to be investigated by the Law Commission on behalf of DfT following the 2025 report Access Denied which presented the findings of the Transport Select Committee. The Select Committee concluded that "...there is still a very substantial gap between the rights and obligations that exist in theory, and the daily experience of people who rely on pavements, buses, taxis, trains and planes to get to work, to access services or for leisure."

The Law Commission states that "the 'overly complicated and fragmented' legal framework was identified as one of the factors contributing to this situation. The current 'patchwork' of laws makes it harder for disabled travellers and transport operators to understand their rights and obligations and makes redress harder to access. This gets in the way of the policy aspiration of providing equal access to transport for disabled people."

The review will “consider the laws governing the accessibility of transport for disabled people in England and Wales and the wider frameworks in which they are contained. The objective of the review is to make recommendations aimed at simplifying and consolidating the legal framework and supporting end-to-end journeys by disabled people across Great Britain.

The review will assess whether the different mechanisms for enforcing and promoting compliance with the law are working effectively and are sufficient to cover all transport modes. In doing so, the review will consider:

-) whether the law needs to be strengthened and made more consistent;
-) the adequacy of current remedies;
-) whether enforcement bodies have sufficient powers; and
-) how to reduce the need for individual enforcement.”

The terms of reference for the review are available here:

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/publication/accessibility-of-transport-for-disabled-people-terms-of-reference/>

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/accessibility-of-transport-for-disabled-people/>



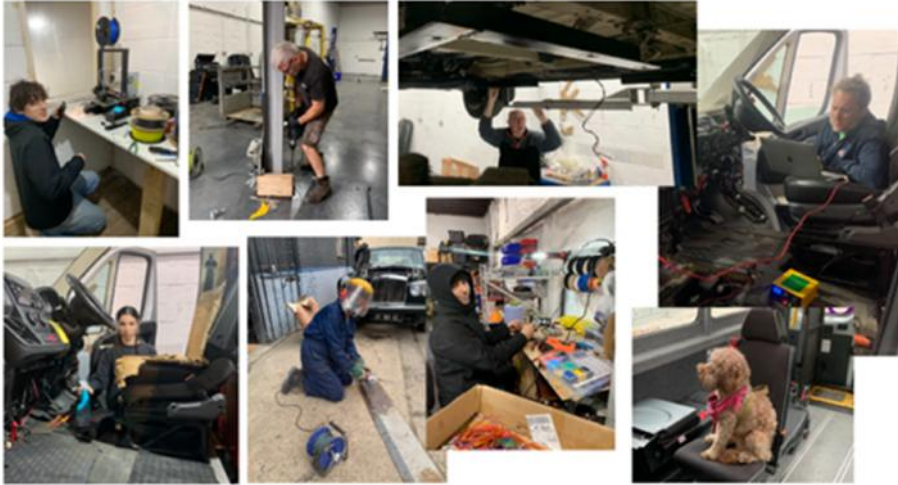
UK - Clipper EV Minibus Progress Report & Investment Appeal. A new CT minibus is in development from Clipper Automotive following an initial order by Waverley Hoppa. Dr. Alexander Howard of Clipper Automotive writes:

We’re delighted to share an update on the great progress being made with the Clipper minibus conversion, as well as details of a targeted fundraiser to help us complete the final stages. Can you help by joining this last push to secure the funds we need to get to market. Progress highlights:

-) We have just successfully passed R100 Test!
-) The Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA), tested the electrical and functional safety of our conversion. The onboard isolation resistance monitoring is working well, and we are compliant with UK and EU electric vehicle standards next step is DVSA IVA.
-) The drivetrain and battery are now fully installed and performing well in tests. We are currently fine-tuning the drive settings through our upgraded Vehicle Control Unit (VCU) to optimise performance.
-) See the links below to one of our workshop test-drive videos specifically validating battery mounting clearance and brakes.

<https://youtu.be/EWwkick6GwM>

Ongoing innovation - Technical development continues as we race to get ready for market. Current focus areas are integrating with Peugeot instrumentation (challenging, but progressing well), completing our master Battery Management System (BMS) to optimise range and charging times, and upgrading rapid charging to the CCS format.



Final raise - As development has progressed, interest from future customers has grown. We are confident that once we complete the working prototype, we will satisfy initial market requirements

and fulfil our pre-orders.

To complete the final phase and take us over the line, we are looking to raise a further £20k and are offering EIS-eligible shares at the same price as before, and remember, they are EIS shares so you get 30% back from HMRC. This money will enable us to get through the IVA and fully meet the requirements specification laid out by our first customer Waverley Hoppa. This whole project is only possible through your generous support, for which we are extremely grateful. If you would like to take part in this final push and support the project at this exciting stage, please let me know — we'd love to have you involved. Contact: alex@clipperautomotive.co.uk.

CTA Updates

-) Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has recently awarded course assurance to the CTA's Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS). RoSPA's course assurance programme independently reviews training to confirm it meets recognised standards for course design, trainer competence, and delivery. MiDAS Standard and MiDAS Accessible have now been assessed through this process and awarded RoSPA Course Assured status. <https://ctauk.org/news/midas-achieves-rospa-course-assured-status>
-) Have your say: CTA's D1 campaign gains national attention. Take part in D1 CTA Member Survey (closes Friday 24 April): <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D1Campaign>
-) Our update on X (formerly Twitter) – “we’ve taken the decision to stop posting on X (formerly Twitter), following a review of how the platform aligns with our values as a charity.”

- J Impact of Fuel Crisis Survey - DfT is actively monitoring the impact of rising fuel costs and supply pressures on community transport and has asked CTA to gather evidence from across the sector. CTA's survey closed on 2 April.
- J Scotland - Our Movement's Manifesto: Accelerate Community-Led Climate Action
<https://ctauk.org/news/our-movements-manifesto-accelerate-community-led-climate-action>
- J CT26 Awards – nominations announced
<https://ctauk.org/news/ct26-awards-shortlisted-nominees-announced>



CTA - International Women's Day: celebrating women in community transport. CTA has asked women across the sector to share what brought them into community transport, what keeps them here, and what the work means to them. The following women have all shared their experiences:

- J Alison Barron - MiDAS Trainer, Hampshire Management Services
- J Hildegard Roberts - Volunteer, Gower Voluntary Transport
- J Caroline Wilson - Manager, Green Dragon Community Transport
- J Marel Roberts - Founder, Cymrod Clwb Teithio Dwyfor
- J Claire Pearce - Co-ordinator, Eastvale Community Transport
- J Lesley-Ann Miller - Transport Manager, South Antrim Community Transport
- J Sacha Petrie - Community Development Officer, Awel Aman Tawe
- J Sian Rees-Jones - Transport Co-ordinator, We Are Plas Madoc
- J Christina Christie - Community Transport Development Co-ordinator, Swansea Council for Voluntary Service
- J Jo Hicks - Transport Connector, Pembrokeshire Association of CT Organisations
- J Kimberley Ward - CEO, Lothian Community Transport Services

CTA also highlights Lothian CT's Women's Night Bus.

<https://ctauk.org/news/international-womens-day-celebrating-women-community-transport>



Cheshire – Rebrand for Dial-a-Ride Service. Press release from Cheshire West and Chester Council: “Your Bus is the new name for a borough wide ‘Dial a Ride’ minibus service starting on 1 April 2026 operated by Changing Lives Together (CLT). The new service will replace the current Dial a Ride services. The community minibus service is available to residents who are over 80, or are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (mobility component) or the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Attendance Allowance or have a health reason why they cannot access public transport. The service is also available for residents where there is no public transport provision in their area.

Councillor Karen Shore, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways (including Waste) said: ‘I’m delighted that CLT will now be extending their Dial a Ride service to cover all the borough under the Your Bus brand. I’d like to thank Ealing Community Transport (ECT) who have been providing Dial a Ride (under their PlusBus brand) in Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston. Your Bus brings together the same easy to book services previously enjoyed, now under one umbrella, with one operator covering the whole borough starting in April.’

Your Bus is designed to help people stay connected, independent, and able to reach the places that matter most, whether that’s medical appointments, shopping trips, social activities, or visiting loved ones. There will be a fleet of eight new minibuses, fully accessible with space for wheelchair users. The service will operate, as a minimum, from 10am to 3pm Monday to



Friday. Potential users will also be able to book the buses for evening events or group outings through contacting the operator.

All users will need to register. This can be done at any time, up to and including when they board the vehicle. Multi-channel booking is available with users able to call, WhatsApp or use a website to book."

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/news/your-bus-community-transport-service>

Scotland – Perth & Kinross Support for Local CT Highlighted.

Transport Scotland reports: As of February 2026, Perth and Kinross Council has long-termed loaned three 8-seat multipurpose vehicles, free of charge, to rural community groups to deliver their own transport solutions. The Kirkmichael Community Transport Group, Muthill Community Transport Group and the Tay Valley Connections Community Group in Aberfeldy have now received these vehicles. The newly-formed Glendevon Community Transport group will be taking a fourth vehicle to commence their community transport delivery later in 2026. The groups design their own decals for the vehicle, and the Council meet the cost of providing these, to raise awareness and promote the service when the vehicle is delivering transport in the community.



Perth and Kinross Council have an in-house minibus fleet based at all secondary schools for their use. There is an online booking system and organisations with the necessary permits and Midas trained drivers can book these minibuses when they are not being used by the schools. Historically these minibuses were sent to auction when they were due for replacement by the Council. However, in 2024, elected members agreed that rather than going to auction, the minibuses were to be MOT tested, serviced, supplied with an inspection report detailing the vehicle's condition and offered free of charge to community groups and sports clubs on receipt of an application.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-fifth-delivery-plan/local-authorities-updates/>

Scotland – Coalfield CT and Local Businesses Link Up. East Ayrshire-based Coalfield Community Transport has partnered with Thistle Help in order to support residents requiring mobility aids and home solutions. Coalfield CT is looking to transform how services are delivered to those who live with a disability or reduced mobility, to raise awareness of their services and include beneficiaries in how services are delivered. Thistle Help held an opening day on March 24, and residents invited to the event were able to benefit from a 10 per cent reduction available on items over £199.



<https://www.cumnockchronicle.com/news/25940588.transport-company-supporting-people-mobility-issues/>

Scotland – Campbeltown Community Council hears of Local CT Work. Members of Campbeltown Community Council learned of the growing need for improved community transport in Kintyre. A presentation was delivered by Andrew Milne and Catherine Kennedy of Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers, outlining the vital service they provide in helping Mid Argyll patients travel to hospital appointments in Glasgow and Oban. They also highlighted increasing demand for community-based transport and suggested that a similar scheme could be required in Kintyre. Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers remain on the agenda for further discussion at the council's next meeting. <https://www.westcoasttoday.co.uk/news/community-transport-needs-highlighted-at-council-meeting>

Hampshire – Community First Expands Eastleigh Service. Following months of campaigning, led by Susan Dorsett, the Community First Route 44 service has now been expanded to run three times a weekday, linking Valley Park and Knightwood areas with Chandler's Ford, Hiltingbury, Velmore and Eastleigh, with onward connections to Winchester and Southampton via the Bluestar 1. Susan Dorsett said: "After many months of negotiations and hard work we now have a mini bus running six times a weekday reconnecting Knightwood and Valley Park with other local communities. This is just the start of a long road ahead to establishing proper public bus services that run at least six days a week, including evenings, to a regular, frequent and reliable timetable. We still need direct services to and from our hospitals too." Funding for the extended service has been secured for two years. by a combination of council funding, government-backed community transport grants and contributions from sponsors including Ampfield Meadows retirement village. "We have been



told 'use it or lose it' so please do support the service and publicise it widely," Susan said. "Let's get our communities reconnected and bring the joy and independence back into people's lives." Alex Barrett of Community First said: "The service demonstrates how community transport can evolve when backed by strong local support. The growth in passenger numbers shows how valued the route has become as people can easily access onward bus and rail services across the region." <https://www.eastleighnews.co.uk/2026/03/valley-park-bus-service-restored-community-minibus/>

Lancashire – New Dial-a-Ride Service for hilltop residents. Residents of Dales View Park on Tubber Hill in Salterforth are to benefit from a new Dial-a-Ride service to provide links with Barnoldswick. The weekly bus is operated by Lancashire County Council through its Dial-a-Ride scheme. A steep access road up the hill has made the location difficult for local buses to serve the residents. Journeys are to be pre-booked. Local councillor Chris Church reported that the service followed a final request from local representatives and residents, saying "We asked one last time, and LCC agreed to give it another try. They got on and off the estate without problems, so they agreed to give it another try." <https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/25926057.dial-a-ride-bus-service-opens-dales-view-park-residents/>

Cumbria – CT Conference at Ullswater. A gathering of over 80 delegates from community transport organisations, transport providers, charities and local authorities from across the UK gathered at the Quiet Place in Ullswater for the inaugural Cumbria Community Transport Conference. This conference was organised by the community-led transport charity Sustainable and Integrated Transport for Ullswater (SITU) and supported by ACTION with Communities in Cumbria and The Royal Countryside Fund in conjunction with The National Lottery Community Fund as part of its Supporting Rural Communities in Cumbria and Northumberland programme.

One anticipated key outcome from the event will be a working group to help develop transport policy for Cumbria's Combined Authority and the region's new mayor, due to be elected in 2027. Chair of SITU, Michael Firth said: "Today's event has shown what is possible and what is needed, not a one-size fits all policy, but a thoughtful bottom-up approach to local and regional policy based on the different needs of different communities. A feature of the conference was the level of willingness and desire, shown by

Hosted by: **SITU**
Supported by: **ACTION**, **COMMUNITY FUND**

Cumbria Community Transport CONFERENCE

10th March 2026

The Quiet Site, Ullswater

An opportunity for community groups to:

- Learn from innovative community transport groups/leaders.
- Recognise their power to create change.
- Develop ideas,
- Envision the future of community transport in Cumbria.

To find out more, and to register, use the QR code or go to:
<https://tinyurl.com/cumbriatransportconference>

Sustainable and Integrated Transport for Ullswater Charity No. 1214871. Voluntary Action Cumbria Registered Company No. 399598

everyone from different organisations with different interests, to step forward and work together to deliver transport solutions that meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.” Caroline Whitney of CTA said: “Travelling here today really highlighted the rural nature of Cumbria. A key outcome from this conference will be creating a shared vision where community transport groups, local authorities and commercial operators work together. Integration is paramount. The goal is to see these remarkable teams collaborating to shape how community transport will look in the future.”

<https://cumbriacrack.com/2026/03/13/putting-community-transport-on-the-national-agenda/>

Northamptonshire – Ability CT Announces closure. Towcester based CIC ABILITY (Northants) has announced: “After eight wonderful years of serving our community, it is with great sadness that we must share the news that ABILITY Bus Services will be closing. This has been a very difficult decision. We are incredibly proud of the service we have provided and the role our buses have played in helping people stay connected – whether travelling to the shops, appointments, or visiting family and friends. Sadly, a number of challenges mean we are no longer able to continue operating in a sustainable way. These include:

-) Reduced reimbursement from local authorities for certain concessionary bus pass journeys
-) Uncertainty around Council grant funding from April 2026 and no agreement for longer-term support
-) Rising operating costs, including vehicle maintenance, fuel, insurance and the recent increase in Employer National Insurance contributions
-) The loss of our office and parking facilities, with no suitable alternative available locally

We understand that this news will come as a shock and may be worrying for many people who rely on our services. This is a very emotional time for our staff, who have worked so hard over the years to provide a friendly and reliable service. We kindly ask everyone to continue showing them the same kindness and respect that has always meant so much to us. To everyone who has travelled with us and supported us – thank you. It has been a genuine privilege to serve this community, and we will always be proud of what we have achieved together. With heartfelt thanks from everyone at ABILITY Bus Services.”

In response, Conservative MP Sarah Bool commented: “The reasons cited by the operator for this closure are deeply concerning. They have highlighted a lack of certainty regarding Council grant funding from April 2026, alongside challenges related to concessionary reimbursement rates, rising operating costs and the loss of local operational facilities. Given that these services are fundamental to the council’s commitment to rural connectivity, the prospect of their withdrawal is simply not an option for our residents.”

Councillor Richard Butler of West Northamptonshire Council said: "We have been told by Ability CIC that the organisation has decided to withdraw services from April. We understand this news may be worrying for some of our residents who use these services and we are currently reviewing any impact

Ability's decision may have. The rules around reimbursement are set nationally by the Government and have not changed and we continue to apply them consistently. The Council will soon begin its annual grant funding round, and Ability CIC would be able to apply



as it has in previous years. At this stage, it would be too early to comment on any future service arrangements."

<https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/politics/pensioners-lifeline-bus-service-in-northamptonshire-makes-difficult-decision-to-close-down-due-to-rising-costs-and-uncertainty-5942401>;

<https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/politics/its-very-sad-northamptonshire-oap-bus-service-director-explains-full-reason-behind-difficult-decision-to-close-down-6381483?r=6020>;

<https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/west-northamptonshire-faces-rural-bus-service-shortages-how-the-council-plans-to-fix-it/>. And further controversy here: <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/politics/mp-blasts-wnc-leader-for-personal-attack-over-closure-of-community-bus-service-as-he-accuses-her-of-dramatic-gaslighting-of-the-public-6528371>

North Yorkshire – Community Transport Summit: More than a Journey. Over 70 delegates attended the North Yorks CT Summit in Northallerton on 24 March. The event was designed to showcase the scope and impact of local CT services for the benefit of various public sector commissioners and beneficiaries, and to stimulate a creative dialogue around how CT services could be supported and developed, and new partnerships forged. The event was organised and facilitated by Helen Flynn (Nidderdale Plus), Liz Lockley (Hambleton Community Action), Jane Evison (East Yorkshire Community Transport Ltd), Sue Vasey (Chain Lane Community Hub), Jane Owen (Humber & Wolds Rural Action) and Sarah Gill (Community Works), all of whom are CT operators and provided

valuable insight into local CT provision and challenges. Caroline Whitney (CTA) highlighted the benefits of the Social Value Toolkit to evaluate and monetise the benefits that CT brings. Delegates were invited to discuss three key topics:

-) What are the expectations of community transport within the system?
-) Sustainability and operational barriers
-) What would be the implications for people and statutory services if the community transport network wasn't available?

Examples were provided from UK and Europe of how CT can augment public bus services & networks and Wyndham Williams (PACTO) profiled the CT sector in Pembrokeshire, its unique configuration and partnerships with NHS agencies. The day concluded with action planning sessions to identify:

-) Partnership opportunities and priorities
-) Quick wins and longer term actions
-) What happens next and who needs to be involved.

It is hoped that further meetings will result in opportunities and partnerships being developed.



East Riding of Yorkshire – Bridlington CT Launches Car Scheme. A car scheme has been identified as a valuable service for Bridlington residents and those of surrounding villages by Bridlington Local Community Lift (BLCL) It had become clear that some residents were missing vital medical appointments each year due to a lack of suitable transport and so a small group of community-minded individuals came together to explore a practical solution alongside the existing ERYC Medibus. Jane Evison from East Yorkshire Community Transport said: "Lack of transport can be a huge barrier for many people in East Yorkshire, and my role is to help find solutions that make life easier for those who need support. Getting to medical appointments is extremely important, but for some, finding transport can be very difficult. BLCL is now ready to start offering help, and we have enough brilliant volunteer drivers to deliver this service." Two volunteer drivers Geof Traves and Colin Oliver said: "We had some spare time and were really pleased to be able to join the team at BLCL and offer transport to others in our community who couldn't get to appointments. We hope we will be able to help more people as the scheme gets better known." Those interested in volunteering should contact Jane Evison via email at jane.evison@eyct.co.uk or call 07815 489682.

<https://www.thescarboroughnews.co.uk/community/community-lift-set-to-transport-residents-to-medical-appointments-6568387>

Dorset – Shaftesbury Car Link faces closure. After running Shaftesbury Car Link for the last 7 ½ years as full-time volunteers, Martin and June Hull have decided it's time to hang up their hats and retire. This is not something that they have taken lightly and despite advertising for help over the last 18 months and asking for someone to look at taking over the scheme nobody has come forward. Therefore, Shaftesbury Car Link will close its doors on the 31st July this year. Martin and June have met with Dorset Volunteer Centre and Dorset Council who have both said that there is no magic wand which can be waived but they are hopeful that at some time in the future a phoenix may arise from the ashes. Martin and June appreciate that this will be very disappointing to some residents who have come to rely on the service to get them to their vital medical appointments but hope that some appreciation will be given to



them for literally putting their own lives on hold for such a long time. If you feel you can take on the scheme on and keep it going then please contact Shaftesbury Car Link on 07763 426664 or by email to shaftesburycarlink@gmail.com. <https://www.shaftesburycarlink.co.uk/>

Wales - Digital Transformation continues for Community Transport in Pembrokeshire. Facebook post from Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations: "The Motability Foundation-funded Community Transport Transformation Project has taken another major step toward digital transformation within the community transport sector in Pembrokeshire. We are delighted to announce that Sharon Stace-Smith, Founder and Manager of Manorbier Minibus has become the first CTO in Pembrokeshire to implement the new OPTiMiSe booking and scheduling system.



With support from the transformation project, Manorbier CT has also received new IT equipment and digital infrastructure to help streamline the coordination and delivery of their services. What this means for Manorbier Community Transport:

- More efficient booking and scheduling of passenger journeys
- Improved communication and coordination with drivers and volunteers
- Better data collection to demonstrate

community impact

- Reduced administrative time and more focus on supporting passengers
- A stronger foundation to grow services and meet future transport needs

This is an important milestone in the project's ambition to modernise and strengthen community transport across Pembrokeshire. Next steps: Staff from Bloomfield House Community Centre NDCSA and The VC Gallery Pembrok Dock have already begun training with the Transformation Team and will soon be implementing OPTiMiSe and new IT infrastructure as part of the next phase of this digital transformation journey. Together we are building a more resilient, connected and future-ready community transport sector for Pembrokeshire." <https://www.facebook.com/PACTO2004>

Wales – David Chadwick calls for government action to protect rural community transport schemes. Welsh Liberal Democrat press release: Welsh Liberal Democrat MP for Brecon, Radnor and Cwm Tawe David Chadwick has called on UK Government ministers to urgently update outdated mileage rates for volunteer drivers which haven't been updated since 2011, warning that community transport services across rural Wales are under growing pressure from rising costs. Speaking in a debate on support for voluntary groups and community centres, Mr Chadwick highlighted the vital role community transport plays in keeping rural communities connected, particularly for older residents and those without access to a car...During the debate, Mr Chadwick also stressed that community transport is increasingly filling gaps left by wider pressures on public services,

with providers often offering informal support and acting as a first point of contact for vulnerable residents with social care services under strain.

He warned that without proper support, the loss of community transport would have serious consequences, leaving many people isolated and cut off from vital services.

Commenting, he said: "Community transport is not a luxury in rural areas like ours, it is what keeps communities going.

These volunteer-led services are a lifeline, helping people get to medical appointments, stay socially connected and remain independent. But they are under

real pressure. Fuel costs have risen, demand is growing, and yet the support available has not kept pace. Crucially, the

mileage rates used to reimburse volunteer drivers have not been updated since 2011 and simply do not reflect the real cost of

running a vehicle today. If we are serious about supporting voluntary groups and community centres, we must also support the transport networks that make them viable. Updating these rates would be a simple, practical step to help protect services that thousands of people rely on every day. Finally, I also want to pay tribute to the volunteers who keep these schemes running, quietly, selflessly, and often without recognition, because without them, none of this would be possible." <https://www.libdems.wales/news/article/david-chadwick-calls-for-government-action-to-protect-rural-community-transport-schemes>



Wales – Tywyn to get community transport scheme to aid residents. Gwynedd-based CT operator Taith is to launch a new service in Tywyn and surrounding areas. The service will involve volunteers driving their own cars for residents who struggle to access transport due to age, disability, illness, rural isolation, or financial hardship. The service will operate Mondays-Fridays, 9am-5pm, initially for health and well-being appointments only. As well as requiring drivers, Taith are also appealing for Volunteer Telephone Coordinators to answer calls from scheme members, and co-ordinate drivers. Trustees are also needed to manage the scheme. <https://www.cambrian-news.co.uk/news/community-news/tywyn-to-get-community-transport-scheme-to-aid-residents-891682>



Wales – Blaenavon Town Council to Promote CT Service. An agreement has been reached by Blaenavon Town Council to launch a publicity campaign to promote the service. The effort is aimed at the recruitment of volunteers as drivers or in other supporting roles. A promotional film is to be shown at the Heritage Centre, doctor's surgery, and via the council's website and social media. If recruitment proves successful, a part-time coordinator might be appointed to manage the scheme.

<https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25949875.blaenavon-town-council-promotes-community-transport-scheme/>



Wales - Welsh Border Community Transport Mourns the Loss of Long Serving Colleague Brian Hughes. Welsh Border Community Transport (WBCT) is deeply saddened to announce the passing of long standing colleague and community transport stalwart Brian Hughes, who lost his short battle with cancer recently. Brian dedicated 20 years to Welsh Border Community Transport and was one of its most recognisable and respected figures. Known for his professionalism, warmth, and unwavering commitment to the people he served, Brian leaves an enduring legacy within the organisation and the wider Flintshire community.

Brian began his career with WBCT as a driver, where he quickly became known for his reliability, care, and compassion. He supported countless passengers over the years, many of whom relied on community transport for essential appointments, social activities, and day to day independence. His calm manner and friendly approach made him a favourite among service users and colleagues alike. As his experience grew, Brian took on the critical role of Journey Scheduler, managing the large number of weekly transport requests received from individuals and organisations across Flintshire. His exceptional organisational skills and ability to coordinate complex schedules ensured the smooth and efficient running of WBCT's services.

Brian's leadership and deep knowledge of the community transport sector saw him progress to Deputy Manager, where he supported staff, helped guide service development, and strengthened partnerships with local groups. He was

widely known for his encyclopaedic memory of names, faces, and roles—an ability that helped every client feel recognised, valued, and truly part of the WBCT community.

Speaking on behalf of Welsh Border Community Transport, the Manager Ian McDermott expressed their profound grief and gratitude: “Brian was not only a dedicated colleague but a dear friend to so many of us. His knowledge, humour, and kindness were at the heart of this organisation. He will be greatly missed by everyone who had the privilege of knowing or working with him.”

Everyone involved with WBCT extends its deepest condolences to Brian’s family and friends during this difficult time. <https://welshborderct.co.uk/>



West Midlands – Fewer Journeys for Ring and Ride. A reduction in journeys has been reported on the Ring and Ride service in West Midlands. The door-to-door accessible service has recently been upgraded to form West Midlands

Bus On Demand (WMBOD). It was reported that between October and December 2025, there were 54,500 journeys made on the service, a fall of 2.6% from the same period in 2024. A West Midlands Combined



Authority scrutiny committee reported that the reduction of trips was due to driver shortages and "reduced reliability from increased congestion".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c78xx8w56e60>

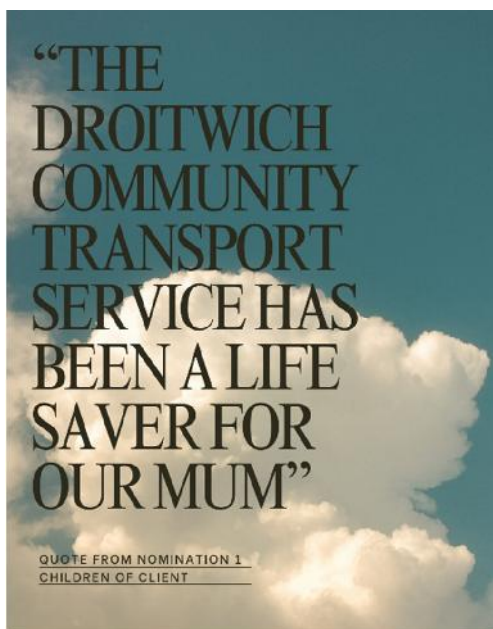
Worcestershire – Redditch MP visits Droitwich CT Scheme. MP for Redditch Chris Bloore paid a visit to Droitwich Spa CVS to meet the staff and volunteers of the community transport service which supports

residents across north Worcestershire. The MP met Tonia Enderbury BEM, CEO of the CVS and heard about the vital role voluntary organisations play in tackling isolation, improving access to essential services and supporting residents who struggle to travel to appointments or community activities, including the role played by volunteers. Mr Bloore said: "That kind of support can make a huge difference to people's day-to-day lives. It was a pleasure to meet Tonia, the staff and the volunteers and see first-hand the dedication behind their work.

Community transport in particular plays an important role for residents in the villages and surrounding areas who might otherwise find it difficult to access essential services. I wanted to visit in person to say thank you

and to look at how we can work together to sustain and grow this vital work." Among the topics discussed were the pressures facing local voluntary organisations, including rising demand and funding uncertainty, and the importance of strong collaboration between charities, councils and national government to ensure local needs were met effectively.

<https://bromsgrovestandard.co.uk/news/redditch-mp-visits-droitwich-spa-cvs-to-support-community-transport-60864/>



Worcestershire – Trustee Changes at Wyre Forest CT.

Kidderminster-based Wyre Forest Community Transport has nominated a new chair to replace Glen Collins who has stepped down from the role after seven years service (but is to remain on the board). New to the role is Trudi Elliott CBE was voted in as his successor at the AGM. Trudi Elliott commented: "Glen's support of community transport in our district has been immense and we are truly grateful for all his hard work and enthusiasm. He will be a hard act to follow." Another trustee and volunteer driver Jonathan Haley has also announced his retirement after 30 years. Mr Collins said: "As a close friend, it was Jon who got me involved to help with health and safety about 17 years ago as that was my background, and he has been a massive support to the charity." Jon said: "It's a great charity to be involved with and we've seen lots of changes over the years, of course, as it has developed."

<https://www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk/news/26003569.wyre-forest-community-transport-appoints-new-chair/>

Devon – Bob the Bus Heads East. After a year of sitting on the sidelines, the oldest of Totnes and Rural Community Transport's five buses has been acquired by Ukrainian Action Team Devon. Bob's trustees decided that it was not economic to keep an 18-year old bus in regular service, but UA Team Devon believes it can be brought up to scratch and will have a future role in Ukraine. Based in Stoke Gabriel, Team Devon drive a convoy of trucks every 6 -8 weeks to Ukraine and are the most prolific supporter of the UK



charity Ukrainian Action. The charity fundraises to purchase and deliver a variety of vehicles (4x4s, ambulances, vans and mobility vehicles), all loaded with locally-collected humanitarian aid. Since March 2023, Team Devon have delivered almost 100 vehicles and aid to Ukraine in 25 convoys. Ukraine Action is 100% volunteer-run, with no salaries or overheads. Read more about this remarkable local charity at

<https://uateamdevon.org/about-us>.

Devon – CVS urges Volunteering with Okehampton CT.

Tavistock Today reports that the West Devon Community and Voluntary Services (CVS) is encouraging more people to volunteer for Okehampton District Community Transport Group (ODCTG). Two encourage others, two volunteer drivers – Debbie and Graham – have been profiled. Debbie said: "I said I wanted to volunteer somewhere worthwhile, but my diary is busy, and I didn't want to let anyone down...It's completely flexible. I can take or turn down lifts depending on what I've got on. It's such a sociable role. People are interesting, and you get to know them. You really do feel you've made someone's day easier." Graham commented: "I didn't want to sit at home. I wanted to give something back, but I didn't want anything too formal or demanding. I like driving, I like meeting people, and I like feeling useful. You can do as much or as little as you want. Some weeks I take several people, other weeks I take none. It fits around my life perfectly. You realise how many rely on this service. Some live miles from anywhere. Some haven't got family nearby. When you turn up, you can see the relief on their faces. You meet all sorts of people. You hear their stories. It keeps you connected."



<https://www.tavistock-today.co.uk/news/cvs-urges-volunteering-with-okehampton-transport-group-ahead-of-coffee-morning-890899>

Devon – Profile of Exmouth CT. As part of a profile in the local press, the service provided by Exmouth and District Community Transport Association has been outlined. The operation serves Exmouth, Lympstone, Exton, Woodbury, Woodbury Salterton, Colaton Raleigh, Newton Poppleford, East Budleigh, Budleigh Salterton, Yettington and Otterton with two minibuses, and completes around 80 passenger trips per week. Chair Paul Hudson said: “There are individuals who will go on three trips a week because that’s the only safe way that they can leave their house because a known driver in a



marked bus comes and picks them up. The buses are especially adapted for people in wheelchair or have mobility difficulties, and then they will help them onto the bus. So many people now, the older people who are saying, with everything that’s going on in the world at the moment that they’re really frightened when a stranger suddenly appears at their door. We are determined that that will not happen to anybody who gets involved in any of our services.” Further information is available by calling 01395 26 66 62, emailing edctg@btconnect.com or visiting www.exmouthringandride.org.uk. <https://www.exmouthjournal.co.uk/news/25947967.exmouth-district-community-transport-service-thriving/>

Devon – Tesco in Honiton Assists Local CT. The Tesco store in Honiton has installed dedicated drop-off points at the front of the shop to assist TRIP Community Transport Association in dropping off and picking up passengers. This initiative makes the shopping experience easier and safer for customers who use the TRIP minibus. A Tesco spokesperson said: “It has always been a matter of pride for us, at Tesco Honiton, to be able to support Trip. The community reach that a partnership like ours can have becomes almost unmeasured. Supporting customers to be able to shop with us is one thing, but being able to support with complementary parking spaces, advertising and other support means Trip can spend their money and resources on more vital things. We are massively excited to be able to work



with Trip to secure a safe drop off point at the front of the store, helping with specialist signage to raise awareness with our customers and ensure we promote car park safety 100%. We are looking forward to 2026 to see how we can build on a very special relationship and, through our actions, encourage other retailers and local

businesses to really get behind Trip and the essential work they do in the community.” TRIP has expressed its gratitude to Duncan Sheridan-Shaw and Tesco for the support it had received in accommodating TRIP transport and for providing provisions for its Friendship Hub.

<https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/25962158.tesco-honiton-designates-drop-off-point-front-store/>

Isle of Man – CT Service to Cease after 38 Years. A community transport service which has been running since 1988 has decided to cease operations after nearly four decades of supporting young people with additional needs. Rushen Round Table have been providing weekly transport for members attending Phab Youth Club in Douglas using the Red Bus. Both the vehicle and the volunteers who operated it are stepping down: the bus itself was nearing the end of its service life and it has been difficult lately to recruit volunteers. <https://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/entertainment/end-of-an-era-as-community-transport-service-stops-after-nearly-40-years-890553>

Leicestershire – Melton CT Stalwart Retires. After 27 years managing the Melton Community Transport car scheme, Angie Bennett has now stepped down from the role. A leaving event for Angie was hosted by Melton Learning Hub (which now operates the scheme) with both drivers and scheme users in attendance. Sarah Cox, Hub manager, said: “Starting when the scheme was operated by Voluntary Action Melton, she has seen many changes over the years. Users of the service, which operates around 8,000 journeys a year, will miss the conversations and extra commitment Angie always brought to the role. We wish her all the best for the future.” Naomi Blindloss has now taken on Angie’s role. The scheme is always interested in volunteers who should call 01664 482903 for further details.



<https://www.meltontimes.co.uk/community/angie-steps-down-after-27-years-running-melton-community-transport-6562137>

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Graham Lightfoot: a pioneer in sustainable transport for all, co-ops and community-led housing – assembled by Richard Armitage

Graham Lightfoot died in Limerick Hospital on 11 November 2025 at the age of 75. His family were present and their announcement was heartfelt indeed: “He is deeply mourned by his loving wife Mary [nee McGuinness], his loving

daughter Caitie, Mary's son Adrian, Caitie's mother Patricia, brother Michael and his wife Sally, nephews Jordon and Tom. Sadly missed by the McGuinness family, brothers-in-law TJ, Pat, John, their wives, children and extended family, his cousins Peter and Ian, their wives, children and extended Lightfoot family, neighbours, and many many friends."

Given the life Graham lived and his life's work, it is no surprise that his wake and the funeral were attended by people from all walks of life, all ages, indeed from all parts of society. To some considerable amazement, a heartfelt and personal letter was read out during the funeral service from the newly elected President of Ireland, Catherine Connolly. Graham had campaigned for her during the election. She took office the day Graham died, so how she found time to even dictate the letter we shall never know.

Richard Armitage recalls: I first met Graham in 1978 in Manchester, where he was working on the seminal pamphlet *Can I get there?* It turned out to be just the beginning of many years of collaboration – and much debate – in our working lives.

Straightaway, he was introducing me to new concepts, about transport and mobility equity. We worked together throughout the 1980s when I was General Secretary at the Community Transport Association UK. Graham lead workshops and training courses at many CTA events and contributed regularly to *Community Transport* magazine. More significantly, he was an unstinting source of support. He was always available to thrash out what was to be done about the most challenging issues of the moment, how we should respond to social and environmental developments. He was very clear what principles we should adopt to guide us during a period of considerable innovation and rapid development.



May 1984: Graham Lightfoot & Richard Armitage at a Connemara farmhouse

Graham was a natural global citizen. This led to many international collaborative ventures and projects. In the 1990s he became involved in the introduction of car sharing in Ireland, helped greatly by Michael Glotz-Richter in Bremen. They worked together on an EU funded pay-as-you-go car sharing project. In Ireland, Graham went on to start up GoCar and Graham asked Cork City Council to hire my consultancy to help with its development there.

Graham convinced me I should organise the first UK national conference on car sharing in Leeds in 1997. Here was Graham gently but firmly getting me involved in yet another innovation, 20 years after we first met! By 1999, car sharing was properly underway in the UK. The Community Car Sharing Network became Carplus, and is now CoMoUK – promoting all things shared mobility. In the 2000s we set up City Car Club, Edinburgh being its most successful location. In 2015 we sold it on and today it is Enterprise Car Club.

Graham is fondly remembered by the many people he stood alongside down the years. For many of us, Graham started as a social or work acquaintance but then his knack of making friends for life kicked in and there we were decades later, still doing things together. For Graham life was not all work, so there was plenty of socialising: country walks, a cycle tour together round the west of Ireland, a visit to the Spanish holiday pad at Torrox, the 68 Club in Manchester and more. Thanks for everything, Graham.

Richard Armitage, 15th March 2026

Nina Smith recalls: I first met Graham in 1977. I was the North West Regional Manager for The Spastics Society in England. I had negotiated funding for a research project looking at the barriers disabled people faced in using or not being able to use public transport.

Graham was one of three researchers we hired, and he was the one with the transport knowledge. Graham was a pleasure to work with, being intelligent, knowledgeable, inquiring and committed. An influential report, *Can I Get There?*, was followed up in 1981 with *Getting There* highlighting transport projects and services recently set up to tackle the problem. For a time I was Graham's boss, but I soon came to regard him as a friend, a like-minded campaigner for social and environmental justice.



Libby Graham recalls: Graham was involved in setting up a housing co-operative. It was successful and they purchased a house on Clarendon Road in Whalley Range, Manchester. I can't remember who else was involved in it, but I think his German friend, Doris, was there. He never actually lived in the co-op house!

John Sutton recalls: I have been looking through some documents referencing Graham's contributions to Community Transport (CT) and the broader accessible transport sector. Here are my reflections.

In the early 1970s, Graham studied Transport Management and Planning at Loughborough University, which equipped him with the foundational knowledge and technical skills essential for his career in the specialist passenger transport sector. His tutor, Dr. David Gillingwater, remembered him as an inquisitive student who constantly questioned and pushed boundaries.

After graduation, Graham moved to Manchester, where he engaged with Manchester CT and accessible transport through the Spastics Society (NW region). His contributions to the influential 1979 report, *Can I Get There?*, underscored the need for a more integrated approach to transport and mobility for individuals with mobility impairments. He also played a key role in organizing the first national CT conference in Edinburgh in 1980 and the creation of the *Community Transport* magazine.



1986: Board of Community Transport Services Ltd.

Standing, L-R: Paul Beecham, Valerie, Jenny Berry (Meadows), John Taylor, Phil Naylor, Steve Sears, Nick Buxton, Ed Passant, John Moore, Eric Chardin, Graham Lightfoot and Cliff Fulford.

Seated at front: Pat Duncan and Richard Armitage.

In 1982, Graham became a research assistant at the Community Transport Services Research Unit at Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham. This role allowed him to explore his research interests in special transport and organize one of the first national conferences focused on Community Initiatives and Transport Issues. His research complemented his practical involvement in CT on a national level.

Graham's dedication to mobility justice and his experiences in accessible transport were pivotal in his support for the creation of the Community Transport Association and the establishment of the National Advisory Unit for Community Transport. As the national Research and Development Officer from 1983 to 1986, he significantly contributed to the development of dial-a-ride services in cities across the UK.

Our professional paths intersected numerous times during the 1970s and 1980s, and we both eventually became transport consultants in passenger transport. Graham always embraced new innovations and ideas to enhance passenger transport, expanding his interests to rural transport and other community initiatives. His substantial contributions to the development of special transport services and the promotion of mobility justice for all will be long remembered.

John Taylor recalls: Graham and I worked closely together from the late 1970s onwards. He was a volunteer when I ran the Manchester project of the national charity called Community Transport. We worked together at the National Advisory Unit for Community Transport. In 1987, I resigned from the NAUCT after a fundamental policy disagreement about the development of the community transport sector. I set up my own community transport consultancy. Then Graham joined me and it became Taylor Lightfoot Transport Consultancy. Later, Graham established TLTC in Ireland. We helped establish and support a lot of community transport operations around the UK, and did early work on transport co-ordination and brokerage. Graham was proud of the direct support we provided for a transport co-operative in Ileje, a remote province in Tanzania.

Andrew Bibby recalls: Graham was involved in establishing East Clare Telecottage, November 1993. Telecottages Ireland was set up in November 1993 by a number of pioneering projects, including the East Clare Telecottage in Scariff, TeleTeach (a telecottage in the gaeltacht area of County Donegal) and the commercially run Cork Teleworking Centre. The organisation linked projects throughout the island of Ireland, and its first major event was a conference organised by Kite and held in Enniskillen in October 1994 (by luck, in the strange and hopeful time immediately after the announcement of the paramilitary ceasefire in the north). By December 1994, the association had 150 members, including 15 telecottages.

Davie Philip recalls: I first met Graham in the early 2000s at a co-operatives event in Dublin. He immediately impressed me with his interest in mutual aid and passion for collaborative approaches to meeting our needs, evident in the many initiatives he set up or helped shape.

In the 1990s, Graham was involved in establishing Ireland's first Telecottage project in County Clare, a community-based IT centre that empowered rural residents. For 30 years he was active in East Clare Community Co-op, where he was instrumental in developing many of its projects and improvements.

In the 2000s he and his wife Mary joined the Ecovillage project and moved to Cloughjordan for a number of years. In 2016 we founded Cloughjordan CoHousing together, where he served as a Director and Company Secretary. His experience in co-operative housing began with his involvement with a Manchester housing co-op back in the 1970s. Graham helped organise the annual Housing Ourselves conference, and right up to his death, worked tirelessly to advance the concept of a co-housing neighbourhood within Cloughjordan Ecovillage.

His interests went beyond housing. Graham was an early champion of sustainable mobility, playing a pivotal role in the establishment of GoCar, the company that revolutionised car sharing in Ireland.

His skills in community governance and sustainability were generously shared with numerous local projects. On returning to County Clare Graham got involved in the Killaloe Community Garden, helped set up the Killaloe Community Council and continued to support the East Clare Coop in Scariff.

I will remember him for his encyclopaedic knowledge on so many topics, his enthusiasm for co-operatives and his unwavering commitment to community. He was a mentor, a colleague and friend. Thoughts with wife Mary, his daughter Caitie and all who knew him. Rest in peace Graham.



1985: Graham Lightfoot asleep on a sofa during a house party (and wearing a fascinator)

Extracts from the online Condolence Book for Graham Lightfoot

A selfless gentleman, his contribution to the East Clare Community Co-op from founder member to recently leading the fundraising drive has been invaluable. His wisdom and knowledge will be dearly missed by everyone he has worked with in the many voluntary organisations he was part of. Graham did so much pioneering work on Rural Transport in the early days that impacted on its rapid development. — David O'Brien, Local Link Cork

I had the honour and privilege of working alongside Graham in Clare Bus for a number of years until his retirement. Graham was passionate for all the community to have access to a reliable public transport service. He was instrumental in setting up Clare Bus (Ecat) a community led, not for profit bus service which was a lifeline for many in the community, and allowed many people who had no access to transport to live independently and access

essential services. Graham was so kind hearted and was always striving to improve the community we all live in. — Donagh and Carmel Cronin

Graham was very helpful to many in Ireland in the formation and development of rural transport services. He was a shining light regarding mobility and accessibility. A very kind and honourable man who had great knowledge and vision. — Damien Tobin, Local Link Waterford

Graham Lightfoot: a work and projects timeline

Early 1970s

-) Transport Management and Planning, Loughborough University
-) Management Trainee, BOAC
-) 1977 Spastics Society North West England
-) Volunteer, Community Transport (Manchester branch)

1982 Community Transport Services Research Unit, Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham

1983 Research and Development Officer, National Advisory Unit for Community Transport

1986 Transport Officer, Lancashire County Council

1987 Taylor Lightfoot Transport Consultancy – in UK and then in Ireland

1988 Founding Trustee, Preston Community Transport

<https://www.prestonct.org.uk/>

Ireland

-) Clare Bus
-) Cloughjordan Ecovillage <https://www.thevillage.ie/>
-) East Clare Telecottage
-) East Clare Community Co-op
-) GoCar – via Cork Car Club, Dublin Car Club
-) Judge, Irish Logistics & Transport Awards <https://www.iltawards.ie/past-judges>
-) Killaloe Community Council
-) Killaloe Community Garden