



## Newsletter No.67

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

**UK – Approved Mileage Allowance Payment Increase.** The Government has increased the amount of tax-free mileage allowance that can be claimed by car owners from 45p to 55p per mile, backdated to April. This is primarily to assist the workforce who use their own vehicles in the light of increased fuel costs. It does, however, meet the long-standing demands of CTA and others who have campaigned for the increase in order to make volunteering more attractive and economical. Whilst the move is welcomed by many, organisations who have budgeted used the 45p ceiling could feel under pressure to now reimburse at the higher rate, and risk putting a strain on their overall finances. We know there are some car schemes use a reimbursement rate that is less than 45p per mile but the increase does not mean, however, that car scheme operators are obliged to offer the higher rate. Where a scheme does not repay at the 55p rate, individual taxi relief may be claimable on the difference.



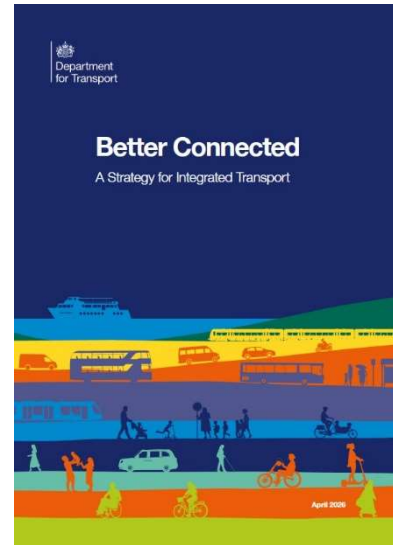
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chancellor-rachel-reeves-statement-to-parliament>

### **England - Better Connected: a Strategy for Integrated Transport.**

DfT has published a policy paper *Better Connected: a Strategy for Integrated Transport*, which outlines the government's long-term strategy for safe, reliable, affordable and accessible transport for people in England. CT services are referenced a few times. Regarding partnership working DfT recognises: "the vital role of the third sector, including providing community transport solutions." CT is recognised as part of the transport mix in two contexts: "Suburban - Demand responsive transport, community transport, taxis and private hire vehicles should play a key role in complementing and enabling access to the wider public transport network. Rural: Demand

responsive transport, community transport, taxis and private hire vehicles, shared cycle schemes, car clubs at rural rail stations and mobility hubs should offer people flexible options to increase connectivity.”

Additionally, one of the case studies is of South Yorkshire: “Community Transport has been a cornerstone of inclusive mobility in South Yorkshire for over 30 years, ensuring that people who find mainstream public transport difficult can still access essential services and opportunities. Supported by **South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority** funding, providers across the region deliver fully accessible Door 2 Door services, including ShopperBus, Dial-a-Ride, and Group Travel. These services are vital for older residents, disabled people, and those in isolated communities, reducing social exclusion and improving quality of life.”



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-connected-a-strategy-for-integrated-transport>

### **UK - CTA calls for Collaborative Position within Bus Industry.**

In the wake of the publication of *Better Connected*, CEO of CTA **Victoria Armstrong** has expressed the view that CT can play “a key role in complementing and enabling access to the wider public transport network” and that there is “a strong appetite within the sector to collaborate more widely and share practical, user-focused solutions to accessibility challenges...Community transport can be a gateway to get people using other public transport...It is about thinking of the conversations we could have.”

<https://www.route-one.net/news/community-transport-looks-for-collaborative-position-within-industry/>



**UK – CTA Autonomous Vehicles. David Kelly** considers the potential significance of autonomous vehicles, and makes an important point: “Human connection, empathy and support are essential to and indivisible from the operational delivery and social purpose of so many of our sector’s services. AVs cannot support a disabled child to have a safe, smooth and happy journey like a **PATS** passenger assistant. AVs cannot help an older person to get to a hospital appointment in peace and dignity like a Community Transport volunteer driver. AVs cannot do all this while tackling loneliness, strengthening social ties and building bridges across generations at the same time...”

<https://ctauk.org/news/autonomous-vehicles-hype-or-hope>

### Other CTA updates:

- **A Lifeline on Wheels: Portlethen and District Voluntary Community Ambulance** <https://ctauk.org/news/lifeline-wheels-portlethen-and-district-voluntary-community-ambulance>
- **Celebrating the Volunteers Driving Community Transport Forward** <https://ctauk.org/news/celebrating-volunteers-driving-community-transport-forward>
- **Miles of Impact: Throughout the Years of Community Transport** <https://ctauk.org/news/miles-impact-throughout-years-community-transport>

**East Riding of Yorkshire – Bridlington CT Profile.** Bridlington Local Community Lift (BLCL) has recently launched a new car scheme and has reported that it is already proving to be a lifeline for people in the Bridlington area. Manager **Jane Evison** said: "We now have several volunteer drivers who are already providing transport, and more applicants are currently being processed. The feedback we're receiving from passengers has been incredibly positive, which is so encouraging – but we urgently need more volunteer drivers so we can support even more people who rely on us to reach vital medical appointments." Additional volunteers are needed and interested persons should contact [jane.evison@eyct.co.uk](mailto:jane.evison@eyct.co.uk) or call 07815 489682 for further details. <https://www.thescarboroughnews.co.uk/community/bridlington-community-car-scheme-fully-operational-8550568>

### North Yorkshire – Lib Dem Opposition Councillors call for Expansion of Community Transport amid Rising Demand.

Following its recent summit, the North Yorkshire CT sector has gained support from **Liberal Democrat** opposition councillors, who have called for increased support for CT services. The Liberal Democrat members are seeking the creation of a working group involving councillors, council officers and community transport providers to identify service gaps and develop practical solutions. The group would also examine funding pressures and assess whether existing council policies are preventing local transport initiatives from growing.

**Hannah Gostlow**, Liberal Democrat councillor for Knaresborough East said: "Community Transport is a lifeline for many people across North Yorkshire, and for some young people it is the difference between getting to college or missing out altogether. It is about fairness, access and backing the local schemes that already do so much for our communities. The work our motion will initiate will provide a framework for a service across the county and of which we can be proud."



**Felicity Cunliffe-Lister**, Lib Dem councillor for Masham and Fountains, added: "Given the lack of public transport, particularly in many rural parts of the county, community transport, led by local people who understand the needs of their community, can provide a lifeline particularly for the young and

old alike. Investing in and supporting community transport is money well spent. "I want the council to recognise the benefits and the savings that this will generate in the long run." **Helen Flynn**, Chief Executive of **Nidderdale Plus Community Hub**, commented that "Community Transport is becoming increasingly vital across North Yorkshire. Operators like us have seen a growth of between 20 and 30 per cent over the past 18 months. So, strengthening the partnerships between voluntary organisations, the council, and the Integrated Care Board, and working together to find innovative ways of sustaining this vital network is important."

<https://www.harrogateadvertiser.co.uk/news/politics/north-yorkshire-opposition-councillors-call-for-expansion-of-community-transport-amid-rising-demand-8551105>. Also <https://news.moovitapp.com/en/news/yorkshire-councillors-push-community-transport-growth-2109-2026-05-16-1778914802620>

## North Yorkshire – Scarborough Dial a Ride Seeks New Trustees.

New trustees are being sought by **Scarborough Dial a Ride**. Two volunteers are required, as the service follows a record year of operation in which over 23,000 trips were delivered. Manager **Steve Marsh** said: "Over the past few years, three Trustees have had to leave us due to ill-health or a change of circumstances, and we are now looking for two people who believe in the importance of the service we offer, to become new Trustees." **Colin Woodhead**, Chair of Scarborough Dial a Ride, added: "Previous experience of being a Trustee is not important – we are more interested in people who have enthusiasm for what we do, an ability to exercise good, independent judgement, and a willingness to embrace the existing relaxed, supportive and collaborative culture. We need people who have business, charity, local government, health service or community transport experience, and we are particularly keen to have someone with finance experience." Potential volunteers can call Steve Marsh on (01723) 354434 between 8.30am and 5pm, from Monday to Friday, for an informal chat. <https://www.thisisthecoast.co.uk/news/local-news/scarborough-dial-a-ride-seeks-new-volunteer-trustees-to-steer-charitys-future/>



## **Cumbria – Concerns over Cumbria CT Operational Standards.**

Following concerns over **Cumbria Community Transport's** safety standards, **Cumberland Council** has now withdrawn use of Council-owned vehicles from the operator. Councillor **Denise Rollo** said: "These concerns relate to driver safety checks, permit use and the adherence to national regulatory expectations, including those of the DVSA and the Department for Transport.

Given the seriousness of these matters and, in line with our duty as a vehicle owner and public authority, the council has taken the decision to temporarily suspend Cumbria Community Transport from using any council-owned minibuses with immediate effect...



The suspension will remain in place until the identified issues have been fully resolved with appropriate evidence provided to the council and officers are satisfied that the required standards are being consistently met. We fully recognise that this decision may affect some service users. Officers are therefore actively working to put interim arrangements in place where this is possible, prioritise essential journeys and vulnerable users, while ensuring all alternative provision is fully compliant."

<https://cumbriacrack.com/2026/05/16/community-transport-firm-concerns-lead-to-suspension/>

## **Cumbria – Border Rambler Marks 10 Years of Operations.**

Carlisle-based **The Border Rambler** is marking its tenth anniversary with a special event at Lanercost Priory. The wholly volunteer-operated community bus has become a lifeline in the border region since its launch in 2015, carrying around 1,500 passengers each year. Chair **Keith Meller** said: "Our volunteer drivers are the heart and soul of the Border Rambler. Their hard work, patience, and generosity have ensured that this service continues to make a real difference to people's lives. Without them, there simply wouldn't be a Border Rambler... This anniversary is a testament to the dedication of the volunteer drivers, whose tireless commitment keeps the service running day in

and day out. Their friendly faces and community spirit have made the Border Rambler far more than just a bus — it's become a symbol of local pride and mutual support." Long-standing volunteer **Ian** commented: "I've been driving the Rambler since the start, and it's one of the best things I've ever done. You get to meet so many people, hear their stories, and know that you're doing something that genuinely matters. It's not just a bus — it's part of the community... Volunteering as a driver is incredibly rewarding. You don't just help people get from A to B — you become part of a friendly team that makes a genuine difference every day. We'd love to welcome more local people on



board." <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/community-bus-service-marks-10-years-of-connecting-residents/ar-AA1QDuXn?apiversion=v2&domshim=1&noservercache=1&noservertelemetry=1&batchservertelemetry=1&renderwebcomponents=1&wcseo=1>

## **Greater London - Funding Extension for Vital Services**

### **Achieved at Westway CT. Westway Community Transport** writes:

"We are delighted to share that funding for some of our key community transport services has been extended, allowing us to continue supporting local people across Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster. Our bi-borough Older People's Services, including the Shopper Service, Excursions Programme and Volunteer Car Scheme, have been extended until September 2026. **NHS Whole Systems** funding has also been extended until April 2028, helping us continue to support people attending essential medical appointments. This funding helps protect services that make a real difference to people's lives. Over the last year alone, we delivered:

- 25,789 passenger trips across the borough
- 4,651 Shopper Bus journeys
- 2,499 Volunteer Car journeys
- 471 passenger places on excursions"

Behind every number is a person maintaining their independence, attending an appointment, staying connected to friends and activities, or accessing support they might otherwise struggle to reach. Community transport is often the link that enables everything else to happen. We're grateful for the continued support of these services and look forward to continuing our work helping older people, vulnerable residents, people with mobility challenges, and local community groups stay connected to the people and places that matter. Because when transport works, people can continue to live full, active and connected lives.

<https://westwayct.org.uk/>



**Wales – CTA Spearheads New CT Funding Proposal. Gemma Lelliott** writes: “**CTA Cymru** have worked with colleagues from the **Welsh Government, ATCO, Transport for Wales**, and the CTA member network, to identify and propose a pathway for the Welsh Government to more efficiently and effectively invest in the sustainable development of the Community Transport movement. *By streamlining and refocussing on investing positively and proactively in Community Transport*, the Welsh Government has the opportunity to directly influence the development of community-led infrastructure which is particularly important for people living in rural Wales, as well as those of us with additional support needs. This protects the value already created by the Welsh CT movement, and creates a stronger foundation for growth, improved mobility, equity, and the transition to net zero, while simultaneously bringing the sector into closer alignment and integration with the mainstream transport network.” <https://ctauk.org/sites/default/files/2026-05/CT%20funding%20mechanism%20report%20and%20proposal%20March%202026%20final.pdf>

**Wales – CTA: Wales' Volunteers Are Carrying Cross-Border Healthcare. Gemma Lelliott:** “Cross-border health transport is a significant and growing area of need for patients, leading to increased demand on the Community Transport sector. Most of this demand is currently being met by volunteers, an almost invisible workforce that is directly enabling health and wellbeing for patients in Wales and England, that is under increasing pressure”. **CTA Cymru** was invited to give evidence to the **Welsh Affairs Committee** as part of its inquiry into cross-border health arrangements between Wales and England...” <https://ctauk.org/news/wales-volunteers-are-carrying-cross-border-healthcare>

**Other CTA Wales updates:**

- **South Wales Regional Forum: May 2026** <https://ctauk.org/news/south-wales-regional-forum-may-2026>
- **Launch of the Wales Region of Women in Bus and Coach** <https://ctauk.org/news/launch-wales-region-women-bus-and-coach>

**Wales – PACTO is Developing a Community Transport Strategy for Pembrokeshire.** Work has been ongoing recently at **Pembrokeshire Association of Community Transport Organisations** in preparing a long-term CT strategy for the county. Project manager **Wyndham Williams** has posted: "Last week, as part of the **Motability Foundation** funded **Transformation Project**, we brought together Community Transport operators and stakeholders at Black Pool Mill for a highly positive and productive discussion on the future of Community Transport in Pembrokeshire. A sincere thank you to **Marten Lewis** and the **Bluestone National Park Resorts Ltd Black Pool Mill** team for their hospitality and for providing such an excellent venue for our event. It was particularly encouraging to see the strong engagement and valuable contributions from Community Transport operators across the county.



The experience, insight and honest conversations shared throughout the day will play an important role in helping shape and finalise the Pembrokeshire Community Transport Strategy. For those representatives who were unable to attend, the Transformation Project team will be making contact over the coming weeks to gather

additional feedback and input. Events like this demonstrate the value of partnership working and the shared commitment across the sector to build a more connected, sustainable and accessible transport system for Pembrokeshire."

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7463857051023368192/>

**Wales – Carmarthenshire CT Volunteers are Praised.** News release: **Carmarthenshire County Council** is marking Volunteers' Week by recognising the vital contribution volunteers make to communities across the county. This includes community transport volunteers, including **Country Cars** drivers and those supporting other local schemes, who play a crucial role in supporting residents across Carmarthenshire. They help reduce loneliness, enable independence and provide access to healthcare by transporting people to GP, physiotherapy and wellbeing appointments. **Roy Davies**,



recently named **Volunteer of the Year** at the **West Wales Regional Partnership Awards**, is one example of a volunteer supporting this wider community transport network. Roy helps people access transport and essential services, supporting independence and wellbeing. Councillor **Linda Evans**, leader of Carmarthenshire County Council, said: "Volunteers are at the heart of our communities here in Carmarthenshire. Whether it's providing transport,

improving local environments, supporting cultural experiences or encouraging activity through Actif programmes, their contribution is invaluable. I would like to thank all volunteers for their commitment and encourage anyone considering volunteering to get involved." To find out more or apply to become a Country Cars volunteer, visit:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/highways-travel-parking/country-cars/volunteering-for-country-cars/>

<https://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/2026/6/volunteers-at-the-heart-of-carmarthenshire-celebrated-during-volunteers-week/>

## **Wales – Brecon CT Volunteer Retires & Substantial Donation is Received.**

As part of its Volunteers' Week activities, **Brecon and District Dial-a-Ride** has highlighted its star driver **Peter** who is now stepping down after 40 years behind the wheel. Along the way Peter launched a Sunday service for the operation. Peter commented that: "Some preferred to maintain their independence and not rely on a friend or neighbour week after week... I often felt I had gained more from assisting these inspiring people than they



had from me." Over the years, Peter's volunteering became a family affair when his wife joined him as a passenger assistant, turning journeys into lifelong friendships. Peter's retirement marks the end of an era, but the Sunday service will continue. New volunteers are being sought. For more information, including opportunities to get involved as a volunteer, please email Brecon & District Dial-a-Ride at: [office@brecondialaride.org](mailto:office@brecondialaride.org).

<https://www.brecon-radnor.co.uk/news/thank-you-peter-driver-hangs-up-keys-after-more-than-40-years-at-dial-a-ride-911792>

Meanwhile, Brecon CT has upgraded its fleet after securing funding for two replacement wheelchair-accessible minibuses. The CT has posted: In a heart-warming boost for community transport, Brecon Dial-A-Ride has announced the purchase of two replacement wheelchair-accessible minibuses. This significant upgrade to the fleet has been made possible by a substantial donation from a charitable anonymous donor with links to Brecon, demonstrating a profound commitment to supporting mobility for everyone in the community. As well as the \$50,000 donation (approx. £36,500) the purchase was also supported by the **Percy Davies Trust**, towards a replacement bus to cover the Crickhowell DAR area. A volunteer of the Club made up the shortfall to complete the purchase of these 2 replacement minibuses. The Club has also been able to purchase a further secondhand minibus from the sale of the two old vehicles, donations from members and welcome support from Brecon Motors. This means the Club will now have a back-up vehicle. The new minibuses have replaced older models in Brecon DAR's fleet, ensuring that the Community Transport Service is not only more reliable but also more comfortable for passengers... "This donation couldn't have come at a better time as we were facing ever increasing repair costs for the oldest two vehicles," said a spokesperson from the Dial-A-Ride. "We are

extremely thankful to both our anonymous donor and the Percy Davies Trust for their incredible generosity. It will allow us to continue providing vital transport services to those in need within our community."

<https://www.brecondialaride.org/news/>

**Lincolnshire – Grantham CT Seeks Volunteers.** A volunteer car service, **Grantham Area Community Transport** (known as G-ACT) largely provides low-cost journeys to enable people to get to vital medical and hospital appointments. However, around 10% of journey requests cannot be fulfilled due to driver capacity. Chairperson of trustees **David Leigh** said: "If we could have another 10 or 15 drivers, that would be fantastic... If it wasn't available, people would either miss their appointments because they couldn't get there, or they'd have to pay for a taxi. For people who are old, frail or have restricted mobility, jumping on the train to an appointment at the Queen's Medical Centre [in Nottingham] is just out of the question. We wait at the hospital or the doctors and bring the people home." G-ACT currently delivers around 4,000 trips per year with 15-20 drivers. The scheme can also help with trips to visit relatives in care homes. G-ACT currently has between 15 and 20 volunteers and completes about 4,000 journeys a year, covering nearly 60,000 miles, each driver giving around 100 hours per year. The majority of journeys are local but some trips reach Nottingham, Peterborough or Sheffield. Would-be volunteers should contact: 01476 978916 or email



[gact@talktalk.net](mailto:gact@talktalk.net).

<https://www.lincsonline.co.uk/grantham/news/appeal-for-volunteer-drivers-who-offer-more-than-just-a-lif-9465862/>

**Shropshire – Upton Magna Residents in Talks for New Community Bus.** Villagers from Upton Magna east of Shrewsbury have been struggling with inadequate bus services and MP **Julia Buckley** has now approached **Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride** about potential community-led solutions. The CT operator has responded positively and further talks are to take place. Julia Buckley said: "The villagers of Upton Magna aired their views at a community coffee afternoon I hosted. Many said they're desperate to have more buses, and so I suggested Dial-a-Ride, a Shrewsbury-based organisation funded by the council and run by volunteers, and who run an excellent mini-bus service. I thought they might be able to help. And it sounds like they can. Of course, if we can make this work for Upton Magna then perhaps there's scope to make it work in other rural areas as well."

Speaking on behalf of the Dial-a-Ride is Chief Officer **Neil Langford**, who said: "I really do think there's a genuine and exciting opportunity here, not just to help in the short term but also to give us the chance to rethink how we do things at Dial-a-Ride so we better meet the needs of more rural communities like Upton Magna. I'm fully committed to extending what we offer at SDAR, including looking at weekend services to align with the wider Shrewsbury Transport Plan. There are many different options we can explore with this. I'm very enthusiastic about discussing these ideas with the people of Upton Magna. I'm also absolutely delighted, by the way, that Julia Buckley, in her wisdom, sees us as an organisation that can help in these situations..."



<https://www.shropshirelive.com/news/2026/05/26/villagers-reaching-out-to-volunteer-run-bus-service/>

## **Scotland – Highland Public Transport Strategy 2026-2036 Announced.**

The Highland Council is preparing to adopt a new transport strategy and a briefing report to members has indicated how the strategy might impact on the CT sector: "The strategy includes the Council's ongoing support for community transport, and actions being developed by the inter-



agency **Community Transport Working Group** which was set up in August 2025 to expand the role of community transport, including inter-agency collaboration... Actions to promote access and inclusion include... further development of community transport provision, extension of free travel for people aged under 22 to ferry routes within Highland, and fuller utilisation of vehicles required for additional needs school transport or patient transport to provide off-peak demand-responsive transport for people with mobility difficulties, involving co-ordination with NHS Highland where opportunities are identified..."

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/86961/Item%25207.%2520Public%2520Transport%2520Strategy>

## Scotland – New CT service is launched in Aberfeldy. Tay Valley Connections

has announced that a “new Community Car service [has] launched in the Aberfeldy area with an 8-seater car. We are currently covering the area of the 91 bus route from Aberfeldy to Kenmore on Monday, Thursday and Friday from 8am - 9am and afternoons from 4.30pm - 6pm, and want to hear from the community about what other routes people would like. Join as a free member to find out more about our community car and other services. Visit us in the Aberfeldy Information Centre or get in touch with the contact details below. 07507479555

[jean@tayvalleyconnections.org](mailto:jean@tayvalleyconnections.org).”

**CTA** has reported on **Linked In**:

“**Lara Henderson**, Development Officer for Scotland at CTA visited sunny Aberfeldy to attend the launch. The car is already being used to enhance transport connectivity between Aberfeldy and Kenmore with plans to expand the service to support their community in accessing health appointments, visiting friends or shopping trips. Congratulations to Tay Valley Connections on the launch of what will be a brilliant community asset!”

<https://tayvalleyconnections.org/getting-around> and

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/community-transport-association-uk/posts/?feedView=all> and [https://news.moovitapp.com/en/news/scotland-expands-rural-access-with-community-transport\\_402\\_2026-05-29\\_1780038001992](https://news.moovitapp.com/en/news/scotland-expands-rural-access-with-community-transport_402_2026-05-29_1780038001992)



**Scotland – Walking the Loch with Coalfield CT.** East Ayrshire operator **Coalfield Community Transport** has been one of the stakeholders which has facilitated the recent **Walk the Loch - Loch Doon** event. This was



facilitated by **Shire Housing**, and was created through a partnership between **Alan Thomas** of Shire Housing and **Nicola Higgins**, who leads the **Zone Recovery Support Group**. The objective was to host “an inclusive, welcoming day that encouraged people to get outdoors, connect with others, and focus on health and wellbeing. Participants of all ages and backgrounds came together to enjoy the scenic walk, using the opportunity to talk, share experiences, and build

new connections. The day successfully highlighted the importance of community engagement, demonstrating how simple activities can have a powerful positive impact on both physical and mental wellbeing.”

<https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/community-comes-together-for-walk-the-loch-event>

**Scotland – Aberdeenshire Dial-a-Bus Expansion.** Three new electric minibuses have been added to the fleet of **Buchan Community Dial-a-Bus**, based in Maud. The new vehicles will reduce the charity’s running costs and overheads, as well as providing a reliable transport service across Buchan and Aberdeen. They were funded through the **Rural Communities Challenge Fund** and the **Energy Saving Trust’s Plugged in Communities Fund**.

Buchan Dial-a-Community Bus completes over 20,000 journeys every year, safely transporting hundreds of users. The arrival of the energy-efficient vehicles brings the charity’s fleet up to 10 and they come as the charity celebrates its 26th year. **Sue Foster**, speaking for the CT commented on the service saying “People rely on it, for some it’s the only time they get out during the week and it’s their social life as well. It takes pressure off their families too because they don’t have to worry that their parents aren’t getting their



shopping or making it to hospital appointments.” Passenger **Kate Anderson** added: “I live in a rural area with very few bus services and as I am disabled due to eyesight problems, do not drive. Dial-a-Bus always try to accommodate me and try and help me out to get to where I need to go. Without the service, I would miss out on my social groups and clubs and miss seeing my friends.”

<https://www.aberdeenlive.news/news/aberdeen-news/aberdeenshire-dial-bus-expands-fleet-10995416>

## Scotland - Volunteers’ Week Celebrations at Lothian CT.

**Lothian CT** posted: At LCTS we are lucky enough to have some of the very best volunteers, so this Volunteers’ week the spotlight will be on them! First up is a new volunteer member of the team, **David** - here's a bit about David, who is a great addition to the team! We regularly gather feedback from our member groups.

The graphic has a light blue background with black starburst shapes. At the top, it asks "What attracted you to becoming a volunteer driver with LCTS?" and includes the hashtag "#VolunteersWeek". Below this is a photo of David, an older man with glasses, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with the LCTS logo. To the left of the photo, there are two paragraphs of text: "After over 46 years in full time employment, almost all in the public sector, I was looking for a volunteer role that would utilise my skills; driving and working with the public." and "I also knew a few who were already driving for LCTS who recommended the role. My life has often involved voluntary roles and I needed to make the transition from full time employment to full time retirement. This could take quite a few years." A purple banner at the bottom of the photo says "Meet David!" and there are yellow and green starburst graphics.

As part of Volunteers Week, we wanted to share this recent feedback about one of our regular volunteer drivers, **Roger**. We are always striving to give the best experience possible to our passengers, many of whom would not be able



to access other forms of transport easily, and it is volunteers like Roger who enable us to do that! CEO **Kimberley Ward** said: "This is the kind of feedback that you dream of receiving about a team member. We could have done a cut and paste post to acknowledge we have a small number of volunteers and 'keep us on the socials', but this

week we really wanted to reflect and share why our volunteers are so wonderful. We asked some of our members if they had any thoughts that they would be happy to share about our volunteer drivers and this is just one example of a number of similar responses we got back. The dedication and level of service that the team at LCTS provide really is special and I am so very proud to lead them..." <https://www.linkedin.com/company/lothian-community-transport-services/posts/?feedView=all>

### Scotland – Beeline CT Stretches Further.

Three new vehicles have been added to the fleet at Moray-based **Beeline Community Transport and Wellbeing Hub**. Beeline provides community transport and wellbeing services across Hopeman, Burghead, Cummington, Duffus, Roseisle and nearby villages. The new vehicles are the result of support from the **Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation**, the **Robertson Group**, **Moray Local Action Group**, **CAe UK**, the **Just Transition Scheme**, **Money for Moray** and the **Plugged In Communities** programme with support from **Energy Saving Trust** on behalf of



**Transport Scotland**. Chair of Beeline CT **Lindsay Nelson** said: "We began with a simple idea and a lot of community spirit. Over the years our service became a lifeline for people who were isolated. The support we have received means we can keep people moving, keep people together and make sure no one is left behind." For more information, to book transport or to find out about volunteering contact Beeline Community Transport at [beelinecommunitytransport@gmail.com](mailto:beelinecommunitytransport@gmail.com) <https://www.northern-scot.co.uk/news/lifeline-transport-service-expands-fleet-to-support-commun-436700/>

**Scotland – North Ayrshire CT Consultation. North Ayrshire Council:** Residents and community groups across North Ayrshire are being encouraged to share their views on potential proposals to expand local

community transport services by completing a short online survey. Community transport can provide vital support for people who may find it difficult to use conventional public transport, including older people, individuals with disabilities, those living in rural areas, and anyone facing barriers to accessing buses or taxis. **Coalfield Community Transport** currently delivers a range of successful services in neighbouring East Ayrshire and is now exploring opportunities to bring similar benefits to mainland North Ayrshire, with the support of North Ayrshire Council.



To help inform future provision, a consultation has been launched with a series of questions. Councillor **Alan Hill**, Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing and Islands, said: "Community transport can make a real difference to people's independence and wellbeing. We want to hear directly from residents and organisations to ensure any future service meets local

needs and delivers maximum benefit." The consultation is open to individuals and organisations, and support is available through local libraries for anyone needing help to take part. You can find participate in the Community Transport consultation online:

<https://northayrshire.communitychoices.scot/legislation/processes/42/debate>

The survey closes at midnight on Sunday 12 July. <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/news/call-for-views-on-community-transport-in-north-ayrshire>

**Cheshire – New CT Provider Comes Under Fire.** The contract award for CT services in the **Cheshire West and Chester Council** areas saw a change of provider from **Ealing CT** to local charity **Changing Lives Together** in April. However, since the change, the Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston **Your Bus** CT services have been criticised by **Annette Lawrence**, an electric wheelchair user from Waverton. Annette feels that the new Your Bus is "not a like for like service" with the previous **Plus Bus**, and she can no longer travel for appointments to the Neuro Therapy Centre in Saltney. It is also claimed that bookings now need to fall between 1000 and 1500. Annette said: "They want people to be 'on the route', and it doesn't work like that. I'm fortunate that my husband is able to drive me at times, but it's also nice to be able to go into the likes of Chester independently. There are so many people that rely on this...If you had to get to Blacon for an appointment at 9.30am then [the former PlusBus] would prioritise that. It just stinks, how can they leave vulnerable people in this situation?"



A spokesperson for Cheshire West and Chester Council said: "Initially, to enable the service to start operation effectively the service has focussed on ensuring that as many existing user groups and commonly requested pick-up points and destinations are served as well as possible. Once the service fully gets underway, door to door requests for transport will be accommodated where service availability and scheduling allows. The intention is also for the service's times of operation to extend further, depending on demand. At present, the service is very busy with lots of requests for travel and we are aware that some members of the public are at present unable to secure transport for the trips they would wish to make. Cheshire West and Chester Council is working with Changing Lives Together to ensure that the service meets the needs of as many members of the public as possible, as fast as is practicable. Your Bus is a discretionary service. There is no legal requirement to provide this service, but the council has chosen to support this service for eligible residents 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."

<https://www.chesterstandard.co.uk/news/26140930.chester-resident-criticises-new-community-transport-scheme/>

**Cheshire – CEO Steps Down at Halton CT.** After more than a decade in post as CEO, **Mark Arnold's** departure from **Halton Community Transport** has been announced. Halton CT's board has issued the following statement: "Following discussions with the Board of Trustees, Mark Arnold has made the decision to step down from his role as Chief Executive Officer of Halton Community Transport in order to focus on his health and home life. Mark has been at the heart of HCT from more than 12 years and has played a huge role in shaping the organisation into what it is today. Under his leadership, the charity has grown significantly, secured and maintained key contracts across the Liverpool City Region, strengthened relationships with local authorities and partners, and continued to deliver vital transport services to thousands of people in the community."



His dedication, vision, and commitment to accessible Community Transport have left a lasting impact on both the organisation and the people it supports. Mark has worked tirelessly over the years to help drive HCT forward through periods of growth, challenge, and change, always with a passion for supporting the local community. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and everyone connected with HCT, we would like to place on record our sincere thanks to Mark for his outstanding contribution, leadership, and years of service. We wish him nothing but success, happiness, and good health for the future."

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7466064738683142144/>

## Cheshire – Future of a 'much-needed' Local Service is

**Secured.** The operation of the **Rainow Village Bus** has transferred to the **Bridgend Centre** from June, to ensure its ongoing sustainability. Former chair of community bus **Tony Wilkinson** said "the trustees and volunteers of Rainow Village Bus are very proud of what they have built over the last 12 years, but circumstances have meant that it is impossible for us to continue. It is time to hand over the keys, and we know the bus service is in safe hands with the Bridgend Centre."

The bus has been operating since 2014. Chief officer of the Bridgend Centre, **Becky Lea** said "Our two charities have a similar ethos and have worked together closely for many years. Rainow Bus has provided transport services for Bridgend trips and Bridgend has provided volunteer



drivers for the service." To book the bus or find out more, visit

[www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/bridgend-community-bus](http://www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/bridgend-community-bus).

<https://macclesfield.nub.news/news/local-news/rainow-village-bus-future-secured-by-move-to-bollingtons-bridgend-centre-297761>

## Somerset – Exmoor Community Bus Receives King’s Award.

The **Exmoor Community Bus Association** has been presented with the prestigious **King’s Award for Voluntary Service** at an event in Dulverton in May. The Lord Lieutenant presented the award to the CT organisation, which has been operating since 1981 with support from Somerset County Council. A weekly service from Dulverton to Minehead is operated, providing a vital link for residents of Brompton Regis, Upton, and Skilgate. The CT currently has 13 volunteer drivers, each driving an average of at least two trips per month. For more information about becoming a volunteer driver or to book the minibus, contact Jan Ross on 01398 323818 or email



[janaross2003@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janaross2003@yahoo.co.uk).

<https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/26138376.exmoor-community-bus-association-presented-kings-award/> and

<https://www.wsfp.co.uk/news/lord-lieutenant-presents-kings-award-for-voluntary-service-to-exmoor-bus-volunteers-909711>

**Somerset – Nailsea CT Tribute to Volunteers.** With over 5,000 hours of volunteer time in the past year, **Nailsea and District Community Transport** (NDCT) has paid tribute to its drivers. The volunteers provided transport across Nailsea, Clevedon, Portishead, Long Ashton, Gordano, Felton, Yatton, Wrington, and surrounding rural areas. NDCT operates 10 minibuses and two cars and volunteers have enabled 100 day trips, 777 Dial-a-Ride journeys, and 606 group transport journeys. **Gerald**, a trustee at NDCT, said: "Our volunteers are the heartbeat of this service. Their dedication ensures people who might otherwise be isolated can stay connected and live independently. They are all amazing people who we really can't thank enough." Using the



**ECT Toolkit**, NDCT calculates that it has generated £750,409 in social value during 2025. <https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/26155984.nailsea-district-community-transport-thanks-volunteers/>

## Northern Ireland – Fermanagh CT Celebrates its Volunteers.

A **National Volunteers’ Week** tribute has been paid to the volunteers of **Fermanagh Community Transport’s** social car service. The volunteer drivers have completed more than 6,400 journeys over the past year. One passenger praised the service saying: "It’s not just about getting from A to B. We can’t do

without this service." Another commented that it offered a "safe service". One volunteer driver described the role as deeply rewarding: "It's never just a lift.



It's the chat, the connection - you know you've made someone's day a little easier. And that stays with you." Fermanagh CT manager **Jason Donaghy** said: "More people than ever across our rural community are finding it difficult — and sometimes impossible - to get out and about. If you have a full driving licence, a caring nature, and even just a little time to spare, you can make a real difference..." Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Fermanagh CT on

028 66324260, email [lara@fermanaghcommunitytransport.com](mailto:lara@fermanaghcommunitytransport.com), or visit [www.fermanaghcommunitytransport.com](http://www.fermanaghcommunitytransport.com).

<https://www.impartialreporter.com/news/26145777.fermanagh-community-transport-offers-lifeline-service-users/>

**Oxfordshire – Community Bus Founder Dies.** The founding director of **Going Forward Buses** CIC **Mike Ward** has died following a short illness. Based in Goring, the company was established in 2017 to provide a service between Goring and Wallingford when other bus operators pulled out from the Route 134. The service has since expanded to provide six routes. Going Forward Buses said in a statement: "Mike's vision, dedication, and commitment to serving the community were at the heart of Going Forward Buses CIC from the very beginning. He will be greatly missed by staff, volunteers, passengers, and all who knew him. Mike would be delighted to know that the bus services he helped establish are continuing as business as usual, with new director roles being undertaken by existing members of staff and volunteers who are committed to carrying his vision forward. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mike's family and friends at this difficult time."

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/news/bus-company-boss-dies-aged-65-after-sudden-illness/ar-AA24wmEr?ocid=BingNewsVerp>



**Surrey – New Buddy Bus Service is Launched in Woking.** The **Buddy Bus** is operated by **Silver Friends** charity in partnership with **Woking CT**. It has also now gained sponsorship from the **Bernard Sunley** dementia care home. Manager of the care home **Andy Cumper** said: "We have an ongoing commitment to ensuring our residents remain active members of the local community. Through our relationship with Silver Friends, we learned about the Buddy Bus and immediately



recognised the positive difference it could make. Not only will it enable our residents to enjoy more outings, but it also creates opportunities to welcome older people from across Woking to our events and activities, helping them make new friendships and connections." <https://www.charitytoday.co.uk/care-home-becomes-first-sponsor-of-new-community-buddy-bus/>

## Sussex – Volunteers’ Week Celebrations at CT Sussex. CT



**Sussex** has posted: Happy Volunteers’ Week from all of us at CT Sussex! Take a look at the post to meet three of our fantastic Mid Sussex Volunteer Drivers: **Jerry, Sharon, and Terry**. Together, they’ve powered over 7,952 trips to help 725 local people reach medical appointments, shopping, and social activities. From partial retirees to community champions, our drivers find immense reward in the "car chats" and the vital lifeline they provide to those who need it most. Thank you for your incredible dedication!

[https://www.linkedin.com/feed/?highlightedUpdateUrn=urn%3Ali%3Ashare%3A7467934228069056512&highlightedUpdateType=SHARED\\_BY\\_YOUR\\_PAGE&origin=email](https://www.linkedin.com/feed/?highlightedUpdateUrn=urn%3Ali%3Ashare%3A7467934228069056512&highlightedUpdateType=SHARED_BY_YOUR_PAGE&origin=email) CT Sussex has recently enlisted the help of Worthing’s town crier to spread the word: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ct-sussex/posts/?feedView=all>

## Cambridgeshire – Return of Valued Wisbech Bus Service.

The 68 Wisbech bus service has now been contracted to the **Fenland Association for Community Transport** (FACT), incorporating a stop at an out-of-town retail park that the previous commercial operator did not serve. Passenger **Michelle Rham** said: "It enables me to do my shopping independently. I don't drive as I have epilepsy and other health issues. It really gives me my freedom back... I have a disabled person's bus pass, so it is free for me. We all had big grins on our faces when we boarded." FACT driver **Joe Duffy** commented that "The people who need this have been lost without transport, and it is so great to have it back. The bus does take a lot of people with concessions, but we are available for everyone." Janet Wallis says she is "over the moon...I couldn't wait for it to return. It's going to give me my life back. The atmosphere was great on our first trip. Everyone was so happy...The bus driver is so helpful and friendly. He helps us put our shopping trolleys on and off. He makes sure we're safe." FACT co-ordinator **Nicola Christy** said "We took on the contract to run the bus as a not-for-profit service by the **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority**. All our minibuses are leased and include a wheelchair lift at the back to make access easy for everyone." <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx213wed22wo>



**Nottinghamshire - Bassetlaw Action Centre says Thank You for Volunteers' Week.** News release: **Bassetlaw Action Centre** (BAC) celebrated **Volunteers' Week** on Thursday 4th June by hosting an information stall at Retford Market, thanking volunteers past and present whilst also highlighting their vital volunteering opportunities. The team spoke with residents throughout the day, encouraging people of all ages to consider giving their time to support the local charity. Visitors were able to learn about a wide range of roles, from befriending and administration to becoming a volunteer driver using their own vehicles or one of BAC's fleet. Alongside volunteering, the stall also raised awareness of the support open to unpaid carers as part of **Carers Week** which ran 8th -14th June, and gave people a chance to see one of their accessible minibuses, complete with shallow steps and a wheelchair lift.

BAC CEO **Lynn Tupling** said "Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisation. Without them we would not be able to provide services like Befriending, The Bassetlaw Community Car Scheme and Car Scheme Plus, or



our popular minibus trips. We know the difference they make to the Bassetlaw community and there aren't words enough to thank them for all they do." A number of people expressed interest in becoming a volunteer on the day and were reassured to find that full training is given and expenses are paid, meaning they will not be out of pocket for being good citizens. Anyone interested in learning more about volunteering or BAC services can go to [www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk](http://www.bassetlawactioncentre.org.uk) email [enquiries@actioncentre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@actioncentre.org.uk) or call on 01777 709650.

