

# Community Transport in Carrick Newsletter

**Welcome** to issue number 2 of the newsletter. In this issue we focus on news from the community transport sector, looking at CTO provision in another part of Scotland as well as giving you the contact details for your local CTOs. We hope you enjoy it and find something of interest and of use.

## CTO NEWS

### Partners for Change

The community transport sector is fast becoming a significant player in the provision of services to Scotland. It

- Owns or leases more than 900 vehicles
- Employs more than 400 people
- Has 2,500 volunteers (minimum)
- Serves more than 4,000 groups
- Has 30,000+ registered members
- Is used by at least 100,000 people for more than 35m journeys

Meanwhile, public services in South Ayrshire are under increasing pressure from the combined effect of changing demographics including an ageing population, a rising demand for services and serious financial constraints on already stretched budgets. In order to sustain services and deliver better local outcomes, the Council is keen to involve the third sector, and in particular community transport providers, in planning for services which meet the transport needs of communities within South Ayrshire. Therefore, South Ayrshire Council (SAC) and representatives from the Community Transport Sector have been taking part in the Scottish Government funded **Partners for Change** programme which is being delivered by the Social Value Lab as part of the national

Developing Markets for the Third Sector Providers programme.



The three intensive half-day workshops should result in the development of an action-oriented plan focused on ways to maximise the benefits of commissioning community transport. The process will:

- Support and enhance the groundwork which is already underway among third sector providers, supported by SPT and others
- Help to deliver on a strong Council commitment to improved working with the third sector
- Result in a win-win situation:
  - For the Council: Financial savings, more efficient services, better outcomes
  - For the third sector: New opportunities, a platform for CT provision

There will be more about the outcome of the Partners for Change process in the next newsletter.

## Healthcare Transport

The recommendations of the Short Life Working Group on healthcare transport were published in May of this year. This group was created to review existing health and social care transport services and develop practical strategies supporting closer collaboration between NHS Scotland and its partner organisations. Close collaboration between all the partners, including community transport operators, was identified as crucial to the successful delivery of person-centred services and in reducing transport barriers to health and social care.

Although the availability of care in primary and community settings is increasing, more efficient responses are still required to support those who continue to need secondary and tertiary care. An ageing population makes this even more critical. There is a need to ensure strong and consistent NHS engagement with Regional Transport Partnerships and to involve all relevant agencies, patients and carers in the design of the service. There is also scope to consolidate and integrate the planning of non-emergency transport and demand responsive transport to improve the service to patients and result in better utilisation of resources.

Given the difficulty in delivering comprehensive bus services, (*particularly in an area like Carrick with a widely scattered rural population*), there is a pressing need to develop a safety net of alternative community transport options particularly in the light of the increasing demand for health and social care related journeys.

## MiDAS Training

Following on from the article in our last newsletter which focused on the need for all drivers of community buses to have MiDAS certification as a minimum qualification, **Ailsa Horizons** was delighted, in conjunction with Community Transport Glasgow, to be able to offer free MiDAS training to a number of community volunteer drivers. The first training session took place on September 16<sup>th</sup>

and 17<sup>th</sup>. Twelve volunteer drivers from community groups all over South Ayrshire were put through their paces by Charlie McKean, MiDAS trainer with Community Transport Glasgow. A morning theory session on best practice, driving training, hazard observation training, minibus driving regulations and the enhanced responsibilities required by minibus drivers was followed by a written assessment which all candidates fortunately passed. Then over a period of two or three days, Charlie took each candidate out individually for a rigorous observed driving assessment which 11 out of the 12 passed. The 12<sup>th</sup> will re-sit very soon!



Above are Lorraine McFarlane (L) and Helen Hair (R) of Coylton Community Association holding their well-earned certificates. The feedback from the candidates was extremely positive and everyone learned a lot. We hope to be able to offer MiDAS training to at least one further batch of candidates, so if you, or anyone in your organisation would like to be included, please contact Catriona at the address at the end of the newsletter.

## Community Transport Association appoints new Chief Executive



The CTA's new Chief Executive Bill Freeman took up his post in August. Bill's previous posts include director of services and business development at NAVCA (the National

Association for Voluntary and Community Action) and chief executive at the British Youth Council and the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance.

I met up with Bill at a meeting of the West of Scotland Community Transport Network where he kindly agreed to pen a few words (below) for the newsletter about his new post and future of community transport in Scotland.

“I joined the Community Transport Association as its new chief executive in August this year. I work with our team in Scotland to help them lead and support our Scottish members. I was keen to come to Scotland straight away so attended two meetings in September to meet Scottish members and the public bodies they work with. The first was the meeting of the West of Scotland Community Transport Network. This gave me a great insight into issues affecting our members in Scotland. A few weeks later in Parliament, the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee gathered together people who deliver, fund and support community transport to discuss their recent inquiry on community transport and the Government's response. It was clear that community transport is understood and valued at the highest level and we're now looking forward to new investment that should enable operators to become more successful and sustainable.

“It was also great to hear how our staff in Scotland, John MacDonald and Sheila Fletcher, are really valued by Scottish members. Although we cover the whole UK, we know our work in Scotland is stronger because we have staff dedicated to leading and supporting our members there. I'll be back in Edinburgh on 5 November for our national conference and am looking forward to meeting some more members than”.

Thank you Bill and we wish you well in your new post at this crucial juncture for the community transport sector.

## Community Transport Focus

### Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company

BSCTC operates one of the most successful community transport schemes in the country!



Among its activities is a car scheme, with volunteer drivers using their own cars to take people to a destination of their choice within the Badenoch and Strathspey area in return for a mileage allowance which covers fuel and vehicle wear and tear.



The company also runs a community vehicle which can be hired by community groups or individuals and is fully wheelchair accessible. It can be hired for any purpose such as social outings, sports events, visits to the theatre and a volunteer driver can be requested if necessary. The picture above features the Walking Group. Other trips take place to garden centres, shopping centres, lunch on the steam train, Eden Court Theatre, Fish & Chip lunches in Aviemore and a monthly trip for a discounted lunch at the Silverfjord Hotel in Kingussie.



This vehicle is also used for the group's door-to-door shopping service for those people who require a little assistance i.e. the visually impaired, those with a mobility problem or just in need a little support. Once registered, the person will be picked up from their own home and taken to a main shopping area where volunteers are on hand to help. The company has won a prestigious Scotland Go Shop Award from the Royal National Institute for the Blind for this service.



In addition, the group offers free short-term hire of mobility scooters and wheelchairs to locals and visitors to the area who have mobility problems and who wish to get about independently.

The company deservedly won Best Rural Enterprise Award at the 2011 Scottish Countryside Alliance Awards for "its outstanding role in country life and community". Maggie Lawson, Community Transport Projects Development Manager, was shortlisted for the Charity Champion Award at the 2012 Charity Awards in Glasgow and this year was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday List.

For more information go to: [www.ct4u.co.uk](http://www.ct4u.co.uk)

## Local CTO Contact Details

- **Carrick Community Transport Group**  
Maybole: 01655 883444  
Girvan: 01465 716621
- **Stranraer to Ayr Line Support Association (SAYLSA)** 01563 533442  
[saylsa@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:saylsa@tiscali.co.uk)
- **Ballantrae Rural Initiative Care in the Community (BRICC)** 01465 831380  
[bricc@btconnect.com](mailto:bricc@btconnect.com)
- **Friends of Hillcrest** 01465 712628
- **Kyle Community Transport**  
01292 283935  
[k.transport@acctoemp.org.uk](mailto:k.transport@acctoemp.org.uk)
- **British Red Cross** 01292 266712
- **Ayrshire Hospice** 01292 269200  
[Pauline.Greenshields@ayrshirehospice.org](mailto:Pauline.Greenshields@ayrshirehospice.org)
- **Ayrshire Cancer Support** 01563 538008

If you have something you would like to see covered in the next issue, contact me, Catriona Haston, at: [cct@ailsahorizons.co.uk](mailto:cct@ailsahorizons.co.uk) or ring me on 01465 710628 or 07786 272938. I look forward to hearing from you!



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