

TOGETHER *IN TRANSPORT*

NEWS & INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SECTOR

JULY 2026 | ISSUE 4



BOOST FOR DIAL-A-RIDE

Brecon Dial-A-Ride has strengthened its transport service with two new wheelchair-accessible minibuses, thanks to a generous £36,000 anonymous donation and support from the Percy Davies Trust. The vehicles replace older models, improving reliability, comfort and accessibility for those travelling to medical appointments, shopping and social activities.

The charity has also added an additional second-hand minibus following the sale of older vehicles and further support from members and local businesses. These upgrades will help the organisation continue expanding accessible transport services across the local area and ensure the service remains reliable for those who depend on it.

RETHINKING RURAL TRANSPORT

East Ayrshire Council could purchase its own fleet of minibuses as part of a review of local transport services. A report being considered by councillors sets out plans for a new long-term approach to cover school transport, rural connections, community travel and provision for those with additional support needs. The proposed fleet would cost around £700,000 and would be funded by the councils existing service balances.

The move comes as rising transport costs and growing pressure on local operators have prompted the council to rethink how services are delivered.

Funding preview

My Funding Central

The National Lottery Community Fund

Network Support Grant (Scotland only)

Forte Charitable Foundations: Small Grants

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES INSIDE

Inside this issue

Welcome to the July edition of Together in Transport, bringing you the latest stories from across the community transport sector and celebrating the organisations making a difference across the UK.

Enjoy the issue!

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TRANSPORT FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport (PVT) has launched a new fundraising campaign, Community Wheels: Access for All, to improve transport for vulnerable and isolated residents. The campaign aims to expand PVT's fleet of wheelchair-accessible vehicles and recruit volunteer drivers.

PVT provides essential transport for people facing barriers due to age, disability or illness, helping them attend medical appointments, shop and take part in community activities. With demand continuing to grow, the campaign will help more residents stay connected, independent and engaged in their communities.

GET A FUNDING BOOST

Grants are available for running costs, staff training and transport across the UK.

My Funding Central

Database of funding and grants – free service for organisations under £30,000

The National Lottery Community Fund

Multiple funding pots open for different regions of the UK to fund projects and organisations of all sizes.

Network Support Grant (Scotland only)

Discretionary grant to enable service providers to keep fares affordable.

Forté Charitable Foundations: Small Grants

One off grant of £2,000 to £10,000 to operators in areas of need to cover core costs, running and project costs.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Grants of £30,000+ over 3–5 years are available to organisations with a turnover above £100,000 to support core costs and staffing.



50 YEARS SERVING COMMUNITIES

West Sussex Minibus Association recently celebrated half a century of providing vital door-to-door transport across rural West Sussex. The volunteer-run charity operates 11 minibuses, helping vulnerable residents access shopping, appointments and social activities, regardless of age or ability. A special anniversary event drew

over 100 attendees, with local dignitaries joining chair Gerry Toner to honour the dedicated volunteers who keep the service running. Long Service Awards were presented to those volunteering for over 20 years, with standout recognition for Ian Carrott, whose remarkable 40-year commitment began back in 1986.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY BUS RENEWED

Ravenscraig Ltd has renewed funding for the circular bus service linking Ravenscraig and Motherwell town centre. Operated by ARG Travel, the route connects Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility and nearby residential areas.

The company invests around £200,000 each year to maintain the service, supporting access to employment, education and local amenities as the community grows.

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KING'S AWARD FOR SOMERSET CTA

Exmoor Community Bus Association has received the King's Award for Voluntary Service, the UK's highest honour for voluntary groups. The award was presented by Somerset's Lord Lieutenant, Mohammed Saddiq, in May at a ceremony attended by local dignitaries, passengers and volunteer drivers.

Founded in 1981 by Exmoor Rotary Club members David Hunt and Frank Pooley, the association provides a lifeline for villages without public transport. Its weekly Dulverton to Minehead route remains vital for residents accessing appointments, shops and social activities. Today, 13 volunteer drivers keep the service running, averaging two trips each per month.



ABERDEENSHIRE FLEET EXPANDS

Buchan Community Dial-a-Bus has expanded its fleet to ten electric vehicles after funding from the Scottish Government's Rural Communities Challenge Fund and Plugged-in Communities Fund enabled the purchase of three new minibuses.

The expansion coincides with the charity's 26th anniversary. It provides over 20,000 door-to-door journeys each year, helping people access shops, education and hospital appointments while reducing social isolation and supporting independence. Demand remains high, with the shopping service oversubscribed and a waiting list in place.

NEW MPV TACKLES LACK OF RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Perth and Kinross Council has provided an eight-seater vehicle to Aberfeldy charity Tay Valley Connections, helping improve transport access for residents in remote Highland Perthshire communities with

limited or no public transport. The charity has trained volunteer drivers and will operate a pre-booked community transport service for people of all ages, connecting them to essential services, employment and social

activities. The initiative is the result of collaboration between the council and Tay Valley Connections to address rural transport challenges and has been supported by several local and national funding partners.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE SERVICE RETURNS

FACT Community Transport has restored the Route 68 bus service in Wisbech after winning back the contract to operate the route from Stagecoach. The return of the service has been welcomed by local residents, particularly those who rely on accessible and dependable transport to reach shops, services and community facilities.

Operating with its previous driver, the minibus serves many local destinations including the local supermarket and college. Designed to meet local needs of everyone in the community, the service plays an important role in reducing isolation and helping older and less mobile residents stay connected.



BRIDGING THE TRANSPORT GAP

Community transport and commercial bus and coach operators are increasingly working together, with growing opportunities for collaboration. Community Transport Association (CTA) Chief Executive Victoria Armstrong says policy is shifting towards more integrated, user-focused transport, with strong support for partnerships that improve accessibility.

Despite challenges including D1 driver shortages and funding pressures, the sector continues to grow. The CTA sees community transport as a vital gateway to wider public transport, helping keep communities connected.



community transport association
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TACKLING LONELINESS TOGETHER

Berwickshire Housing Association's BeFriend scheme supports people over 65 through friendship and companionship.

Funding from the Scottish Procurement Alliance's Community Benefit Fund will help continue the scheme's community minibus, enabling participants to attend outings, social events and group activities, particularly in rural areas.

