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18 November | Online

Winners and Finalists

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Congratulations from the Community Transport Association!



It won't have escaped anyone's attention that a lot has happened since the last time we held the Community Transport Awards back in 2019! The world was turned upside down during the coronavirus pandemic and what's transpired since March 2020 is going to inform a lot of what you read in the following pages.

Over the last year and a half, community transport providers all across the UK have done what they do best – stepping up, in whatever way they're needed, to meet the needs of their communities, whatever those might be. The determination, dedication and commitment of our sector has been on full display since the start of the pandemic. Whether our members have been delivering food parcels, prescriptions, running essential journeys, keeping in touch with isolating passengers or volunteers and, in more recent times, getting back out there to reconnect their communities, their impact has been extraordinary. And that's why this year's Community Transport Awards are so important: to recognise the dedication of our sector and to look at how our members have gone above and beyond for the people that needed them the most.

We received more nominations than ever for this year's awards, and in these pages you can find the incredible stories of our award winners and our runners up. Every nomination though, whether a finalist or not, was of an incredibly high standard and all of our members deserve enormous praise for what they've done during the pandemic.

On behalf of everyone at the CTA team, thank you for everything you do.

Best wishes,

Bill Freeman, Chief Executive, Community Transport Association

Our Judges

A huge thank you to our judging panel for their support!



Martin Taylor
Endleigh
Insurance



Jessica Davies
Social Finance



Naomi Mason
Development Trusts
Association Scotland



Lee Robinson
Transport for Wales



Ross Behrouzi
Department for Transport

“Reading the entries left me with the really clear impression that these organisations and individuals are the heart and soul of their community.” Martin Taylor, Endleigh Insurance

Community Transport Provider of the Year

Sponsored by:



Winner

Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport



Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport are the winners of the 2021 Community Transport Provider of the Year award!

Based in Aviemore, Scotland, the coronavirus pandemic immediately changed how they operated, with the organisation becoming one of three major partners in the Aviemore Community Response Project, enrolling 300 volunteers when lockdown was announced and making sure their local community had the support it needed during the pandemic.

As part of the project, BSCTC led a range of community responses including essential transport services, telephone befriending, online exercise sessions, partnering with their local foodbank, and more recently, running their mystery tours, helping people take the first steps out of their home and get back out into their communities. The pandemic has also seen Badenoch and Strathspey create new outdoor activities such as walking groups and a new allotment and gardening project which has become one of their most popular services.

With so many older people in their community isolating during the pandemic, BSCTC also set up an inter-generational project, connecting local primary school children with their older passengers. The children produced artwork for the passengers, in one instance

delivering spring posters to every house in the village of Aviemore with the help of local volunteers!

The posters were displayed in windows, brightening up the village and strengthening a sense of community and cohesion. The children also had the chance to chat online (supervised by parents) with older passengers.

During the pandemic, BSCTC have made new friends and partners, including their local foodbanks which they plan to continue working with. The new services they've developed for vulnerable members of their community who came to them during lockdown are here to stay. Now more than ever, they are at the heart of their community, led by their community, and fulfilling the needs of their community.

"Where would we be without you?" said one of their passengers. "You have been our guardian angels! You have done an amazing job for me, always so helpful, I couldn't have managed without you."

With a focus for the future on further improving transport provision, the continued need for digital communication and the creation of new partnerships across their local area, our judges were incredibly impressed with this organisation.

Readibus

Readibus is a dial-a-ride service based in Reading, England and spent lockdown meeting the needs of local people through delivering essential journeys. They put in place intensive cleaning regimes and COVID procedures to provide over 2,000 journeys in the first lockdown – all provided for one person at one time with social distancing and deep cleaning in place after every journey.

Our judges were impressed with their work taking people to medical appoints, supporting cancer patients and those discharged from hospital, initiating a partnership with the South Central Ambulance Service to support them in meeting non-emergency patient transport needs, as well as making hundreds of welfare calls through their loneliness buster initiative.

"I feel very safe traveling with Readibus," said one passenger, "because the drivers are not only driving the bus but they do more than just driving – they are very caring and make sure that we are safe in each and every way."

Out and About Community Transport

Out and About Community Transport are based in Magherafelt, Northern Ireland and during the pandemic moved quickly to address the needs of their community by offering alternative services. They developed their Meals Within Wheels project, delivering over 6,700 meals, as well as care packages from the council and supporting local grocery stores with deliveries.

Our judges were impressed with the proactive way they switched from taking calls to making calls, developing a system to identify those most in need and then making thousands of calls to ensure each person got the level of personal contact and support they needed.

"As the weeks turned into months," they told our judges, "there were many lengthy calls as loneliness and isolation were starting to get a strong grip. When our drivers deliver the meals, members have an opportunity to see a lovely pair of 'smiling eyes'! Even with face masks and social distancing, it was another bit of communication and human interaction that they wouldn't otherwise have had."

Finalists



Volunteer of the Year

Sponsored by:



Winner

Ann Rodger

The winner of the 2021 Volunteer of the Year Award is Ann Rodger, who has volunteered for the Larkhall and District Volunteer Group since 2017 and was nominated by Sandra McCrory.

"When the pandemic hit," said Sandra "despite having numerous family members she takes care of, and her own village pensioner group, Ann didn't hesitate in continuing to offer her services."

Since she began volunteering in 2017, Ann has become an invaluable member of the LDVG team. She's worked as a volunteer driver, volunteered calling passengers, taking part in lunch clubs and has been a member of the organisation's Board of Trustees.

During the pandemic, Ann volunteered most days to ensure hot lunches were delivered to the most vulnerable members of her community, with approximately 100 meals being delivered every day from April to July and then three days a week from September.

As part of LDVG's involvement with the Larkhall Community Network's COVID-19 response, Ann drove the LDVG buses to collect food from public sector hubs and would collect surplus donations from local businesses.

She was a key volunteer when the network ran a community event, to brighten up people's day and encourage them to leave their homes and mix in a COVID-safe setting. And when the Network wanted to hold pop-up food stalls within local communities, Ann was there with the bus to transport them and help



hand out the food parcels.

"Ann takes time to speak to the people she is delivering items to," said Sandra. "This gives her the opportunity to find out what other support may be needed. She then makes sure this information is passed on to the right person to ensure support is put in place as soon as possible."

"Ann has a particular eye and ear for the older members of our community," Sandra continued, "and often referred community members for 'pick me up' packs, wellbeing calls, activity packs, or for a Christmas hamper and a Christmas Eve hot meal. Many of these people would be reduced to tears when their items were being delivered! Anytime we need a driver, Ann is there – she will often change her own arrangements to make sure we are not left unable to carry out a service."

Ann genuinely enjoys helping people, and never expects anything in return. She is always upbeat and enthusiastic in her role, and this rubs off on the people she helps and colleagues she works with. We are so lucky to have her and appreciate and value her dedication and support."

Hazel Johnston

Hazel Johnston volunteers with Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport, who operate in Aviemore, and was nominated by Gordon Gilfillan. Hazel has been a befriender with the organisation for the last six years and was a regular shopping assistant on their one-to-one shopping trips for four years before that. Gordon told our judges that Hazel's support has meant so much to so many people and that it's also had a hugely beneficial effect for Hazel herself.

"As soon as she joined the organisation," said Gordon, "she was passionate about helping people. Even though she also had a part-time job, Hazel still managed to find time to help our most vulnerable of clients. She thrived on it and was also keen to attend any training sessions we had. Her enthusiasm was infectious – it made all our clients feel good, they loved her laugh and wanted to be part of her conversation!"

"Hazel doesn't expect any praise for what she does," continued Gordon, "she just likes to know she can help people and make life a bit easier for them."

Nigel Hinch

Nigel Hinch set up Ability Community Transport, based in Northamptonshire, with his wife Lynn in 2018 and was nominated by Dan Green. "Nigel has put his heart and soul into the organisation without ever expecting anything," said Dan.

"Throughout the past year, Nigel has been the calm and confident voice the organisation has needed to survive multiple lockdowns and come out feeling stronger."

"From day one of lockdown," continued Dan, "Nigel has done his utmost to ensure Ability was able to weather the storm brought on by the pandemic. A real spirit of cooperation led to countless hours spent in conversation with other community transport providers and local representatives to spread ideas and work towards finding solutions to the problems caused by the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, Nigel has sought to ensure that Ability remains an organisation that thinks of its members first and puts their wellbeing at the centre of everything we do."

Finalists



Partnership of the Year

Sponsored by:



Winner

HcL Transport, Pilton Equalities Project and Scran Academy

The winner of our Partnership of the Year category is the Scran Meals Coalition, made up of HcL Transport, Pilton Equalities Project and Scran Academy, who worked together to tackle food insecurity in Edinburgh during lockdown.

The aim of the Scran Meals Coalition was simple: to produce and deliver nutritious and delicious meals to vulnerable people across Edinburgh with dignity. The partnership was set up in response to the emerging issue of food insecurity during the first lockdown and operated at a scale that impressed our judges. Scran Academy coordinated the preparation of the meals, partnering with HcL Transport and Pilton Equalities Project who enabled the delivery to those in need.

"We knew those already struggling before the pandemic were disproportionately impacted by the lockdown as financial insecurities worsened and support services were reduced or paused," Laura Kearney at HcL Transport told our judges. "Evidence shows a causal relationship between poor nutrition and negative mental and physical health outcomes and, for many kids, their only decent meal is at school."

This programme was developed rapidly with a simple idea, to not only serve portions of food, but portions of love and community. The network rapidly activated



six production kitchens, enrolled or trained over 500 keyworkers and took referrals from over 100 agencies including GPs, the council, homelessness agencies, sheltered housing, schools and national charities.

All 3,500 recipients were facing financial struggles or isolation due to being highly vulnerable to coronavirus, with over 40% saying they were alone, self-isolating or told to shield. Many reported that the interaction with the drivers and volunteers was their only regular social contact.

At the height of the programme, the network sent out 7,500 meals per week. Volunteers, staff and partners distributed these meals from two distribution hubs to residents across Edinburgh. The coalition provided around 120,000 freshly-made meals to over 3,500 people in just six months in 2020.

The model used for this initiative focussed on providing positive social contact between volunteers and vulnerable people alongside food support. Wherever possible, the same driver consistently delivered to the same households on an ongoing basis, encouraging a positive relationship to develop over time.

"Thank you to everyone involved, from the chefs, kitchen staff, admin staff, drivers and deliverers," said one recipient. "As a vulnerable person who's been shielding, I don't know how I would have survived without you!"

Larkhall and District Volunteer Group and Larkhall Community Network

Finalists

Larkhall and District Volunteer Group and Larkhall Community Network became partners in March 2020. The main goal of the partnership was to facilitate the COVID-19 support effort in the Larkhall area and to make sure that everyone within the community was supported as much as possible.

The team worked together to coordinate their resources and activities: through having access to community transport, the Network were able to collect food parcels from the local authority hub and deliver them to a central location to be distributed within the community.

Our judges were impressed with how the partnership brought together transport services and community knowledge in South Lanarkshire to provide a range of support services during the pandemic including meal delivery, prescription delivery, supplied activity packs and setting up local food stalls for the community.



Bristol Community Transport, Social Access and FareShare

Bristol Community Transport, Social Access and FareShare South West worked together during the pandemic to identify the need for emergency food parcels and deliver them throughout lockdown, providing over 27,000 meals.

During lockdown, Bristol Community Transport identified that many customers were cancelling their regular shopping trips due to fear of going out, but did not have regular access to food. Contact was made with their local foodbank FareShare South West and the conversation resulted in a partnership which hugely impressed our judges, joining forces to develop a referral list, pack the food parcels and get them out into the community.

"Most importantly," they told our judges, "we achieved our goal of maintaining connection with our most isolated and vulnerable customers during lockdown and provided regular access to good quality food."



Keeping in Touch

Winner

Bridges Community Car Scheme

The Keeping in Touch award is a new category for 2021 and is for an organisation who has gone above and beyond to keep in touch with vulnerable and isolating passengers during the coronavirus pandemic. Our winners, Bridges Community Car Scheme, are based in Monmouthshire, and are part of a community centre whose mission it is to reduce social isolation for a range of people in their community.

At the start of the pandemic, and up until August 2020, the car scheme had to stop completely, but reopened its service as soon as was feasible, with PPE provided to drivers and social distancing measures put in place.

When the car scheme was temporarily suspended, the team at Bridges ensured that contact was maintained with passengers and beneficiaries. During this period, their telephone befriending service grew from supporting 13 people pre-pandemic, to calling more than 160 passengers every week.

"The service ensured that, although people were unable to leave their homes, they were at least able to have an uplifting conversation with a volunteer every week. Those friendly voices made all the difference," Vicki Pitt, Team Lead at the Bridges Centre, told our judges.



"We also spread Christmas cheer in December 2020 when we delivered 140 Christmas afternoon tea hampers to befriender and car scheme beneficiaries, offering them a much needed treat and to feel that wider connection to their community."

"We had to adapt very quickly," continued Vicki, "as our services were needed even more during this challenging time. The pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have hit those already vulnerable the hardest - with many of our beneficiaries having to shield for the duration."

Our team worked hard to adapt our existing activities and this has been greatly appreciated by the community when so many other services they relied on had to stop."

"I would like to put on record my appreciation of the tremendous help I've received throughout the pandemic," said one beneficiary. "Regular calls and visits from Deb, Karen, Vicki and Jill have helped me immensely to cope with life - I like to think of them as friends. As someone who has suffered from anxiety and depression, their friendship has been invaluable."

Centre 81

Centre 81 run an activity centre and a community transport service in Great Yarmouth and stepped up to support their community during the coronavirus pandemic.

"When lockdown was announced in March 2020," they told our judges, "we were determined that our members and passengers would not feel abandoned by us. We phoned each and every one of our passengers and spoke to them or, when needed, a family member. From the 20th March to the 24th August we had made 4,867 phone calls."

During the pandemic, their drivers also became personal shoppers, collecting and delivering shopping to the community. "Importantly, throughout the delivery of the shopping, our drivers make the time to listen and to talk," they told our judges. "For some of our passengers this is the only time, day after day and week after week, isolation is broken by a visitor. Our members and passengers tell us that pre-COVID our buses were their social club on wheels and Centre 81 and our drivers have been continuing that lifeline."



CT4N Charitable Trust

CT4N Charitable Trust provide community transport services in Nottingham and impressed our judges with their work supporting their community during the pandemic when 90% of their service users had to isolate.

"Our team played a vital role during the pandemic", they told our judges, "to ensure that our service users were always supported, especially when they weren't able to leave their homes. We developed new services so that we could ensure that they weren't left feeling isolated."

The CT4N team made welfare phone calls, collected shopping and prescriptions, delivered meals and sent out Christmas hampers to those who were facing a difficult Christmas, bringing that bit of much needed holiday cheer.



Finalists

Volunteer Car Scheme of the Year

Winner

HMR Circle Volunteer Drivers Service

The winners of the 2021 Volunteer Car Scheme of the Year award are HMR Circle Volunteer Drivers Service based in Rochdale. The service supports older people and vulnerable adults who can't or struggle to use public transport.

Pre-pandemic the scheme organised around twenty thousand journeys a year, taking people to health appointments, to get their shopping as well as out into their community for social activities and other trips. They also regularly organised social events and practical support to keep older people connected and to help reduce social isolation.

When the pandemic hit, HMR Circle Volunteer Drivers Service had to modify their work to adhere to the changing restrictions whilst continuing to support the people in their community.

They quickly adapted their services to provide as much support as possible, collecting and delivering PPE, particularly at the beginning of the pandemic, and working with their local authority to design a safe working practice for volunteers and passengers.

"It was important that we engaged with our members and the wider community," Director Mark Wyn told our judges.



"We spoke with passengers and created surveys for member feedback and they told us how they wanted us to adapt to the 'new world' of coronavirus."

Following this feedback, the team implemented new collection and delivery services, they also undertook telephone calls with all members, created a weekly newsletter, a 'boredom buster magazine', supplied craft kits, created online quizzes, held zoom meetings, supported older people to get online, and provided a meals on wheels service to help people access a healthy, freshly prepared meal.

Our judges were also impressed with the support that HMR Circle Volunteer Drivers Service gave to their volunteers, working with local agencies to get them added to the list of key workers so that they could access testing and vaccination services.

"We've also organised a thank you event for our volunteers," said Mark, "to celebrate their huge effort in helping provide the most amazing service for older people in our community."

Finalists

Stockport Car Scheme

During the first coronavirus lockdown, Stockport Car Scheme continued to provide a community lifeline, taking people to essential medical appointments and supporting passengers in other ways. "As our clients were not going out socially at that time, we adapted our service to help the community by using our volunteer drivers to collect and deliver prescriptions and PPE," Manager Sue Peck told our judges.

"Clients were struggling to get to essential appointments in a safe way and were frightened due to the virus. We got numerous compliments saying we were a lifeline and that they couldn't have managed without us. They said that we took the stress out of getting out and about!"

"We've also kept in touch with our volunteers throughout the pandemic and supported them to come back in a safe way if they wished to continue to volunteer. Many of our volunteers live alone and we kept in regular touch with them and were always happy to get calls from them if they needed someone to speak to."

Tunbridge Wells Community Car Service

At the start of the coronavirus pandemic, Tunbridge Wells Community Car Service based in Kent made the decision to stay operational – the organisation felt like their community needed them now more than ever.

The service continued to run essential journeys as well as other services such as shopping delivery and wellbeing phone calls. They also played a big roll in getting their community vaccinated with their 'cabs for jabs' programme – running more than 800 journeys to vaccination centres.

"We've supported the community in many ways during lockdown", the team told our judges "reducing loneliness and isolation which has had a real impact on the wellbeing of our community and for the extremely vulnerable that were advised to stay at home and shield."



Photo Competition

Voted on by the public, the 2021 photo competition was for a photograph that captured the spirit of community transport during lockdown.

Winner

Out and About Community Transport

"This picture shows our driver Owen McBride delivering meals to long standing members Peggy and Francis McLaughlin as part of our Meals WITHIN Wheels service.

We believe this picture represents the spirit of community transport because, not only are we here to provide transport to essential services, there are also so many indirect benefits our members have experienced since the start of the pandemic. We've introduced alternative services such as grocery, prescription and meal delivery, transport to vaccination centres and our check-in calls.

Being associated with Out and About offers a lift in many forms! Here's Peggy and Francis' story behind the photo:

Peggy had a fall at home in February 2021 but was so frightened to go and get checked out for fear of catching COVID that she was in total agony for days.

When Owen showed up to deliver their dinners, he noticed that Peggy wasn't herself. He made a call to Gillian in the office, who had been checking in with Francis and Peggy since lockdown to see



how they were and to get their meal orders. Gillian managed to coax Peggy to see her doctor and arranged the transport.

She was sent directly to the hospital where she was admitted with a broken hip and underwent major surgery. Owen waited and transported Francis back home from the hospital that evening.

Francis found it difficult while Peggy was rehabilitating in hospital, so our calls kept him upbeat. There was a running joke that he'd need to keep the house well cleaned for when Peggy got home!

Peggy has now returned home and is recovering well. She and Francis are still enjoying having their dinners delivered, as well as having a bit of crack with Owen on the doorstep!"

Finalists

Ability Community Transport

"Pete is one of our valued minibus drivers who has worked at Ability for 2 years now. He is loved by all our passengers for always being his cheerful and chatty self no matter what day it is.

It's never a dull moment with Pete, and the passengers always look forward to their journeys with him for his great sense of humour and his readiness to have a laugh!" Most importantly, Pete is always willing to go the extra mile for his passengers. This photo



shows Pete helping one of our members with her shopping, which he always offers to carry to the front door should any of the passengers need a helping hand. Outside of hours, he is always happy help to out, be that tending to the buses to ensure they are well maintained, delivering vital food parcels to vulnerable people during lockdown, or returning forgotten items and shopping left on the buses."

Brent Community Transport

"We have chosen this picture that represents BCT simply because it shows a togetherness, notwithstanding social distancing of course! For us, what is behind the picture is the support we gave to each other. Keeping physically active and mentally alert at the depot whilst waiting for a job to come up, was a test of our team's character, mental awareness and strength as they overcame fatigue.

Not even the searing heat of the sun, and the proper adherence of the COVID-19 guidelines can deter these dedicated worker from delivering a vital service. We would not be deflected from the task in hand: to keep Dial a Ride operating and tackle social isolation for some of the most vulnerable people in our community."



Photo Competition

Finalists



Community Transport Waltham Forest

"By creating the Waltham Forest vaccination bus, we've been able to take vaccines directly to our residents. Whether that be our homeless communities, our housing estates or local schools – it's helped us get more people vaccinated. By branding it in our #Ihadmyjab campaign and deploying our engagement teams alongside the bus, we've been able to engage with residents and sustain a high profile across our borough.

We allocated a regular driver to the service Arshad Ali so that the engagement team could establish

a relationship with the driver. Arshad forms an important part of the team and is very good at encouraging residents to take up the vaccine. He also speaks two community languages which has proved very helpful to the team."

CT4N Charitable Trust

"During the pandemic, new ways of working we're quickly introduced, which transformed the way services were delivered. For the team at CT4N Charitable Trust, this meant quickly adapting to help people in genuine need – the elderly, the disabled and those having to isolate. It was a difficult time for lots of people and for different reasons. Even in our darkest hour, there were small glimpses of light and new relationships started to develop.

This photo shows Elaine delivering one of our hampers to Easylink customers Arthur and Elma, who had been isolating during the pandemic. This small gesture can make all the difference to people who we know can sometimes feel forgotten at Christmas, something which can be extremely difficult at the best of times, but none of us have ever experienced anything like Christmas 2020. Community transport is more than just a bus service to help get people from A to B, it's about people and the little extras can make a huge difference."



Finalists

Dial-a-Ride Denbighshire



"This is John, a 93-year-old man who up until about 6 years ago, would still ride his push bike for miles around town every day. In the summer of 2016, John came to the conclusion that he could no longer continue to ride his bike due to his deteriorating health. This is when he became a member with us here at Dial A Ride.

In this picture, we see John being accompanied by Dave, one of our excellent drivers, to attend his first vaccination appointment at his local clinic back in January of this year. John was the first of many members that we took to get their COVID-19 jabs.

We don't just provide our members with transport, we provide them with somebody to talk, laugh or even cry with. Our drivers become a very big part of our members' lives by supporting, assisting and comforting them and any needs they may have. This picture is just one example of the astonishing work we do day in, day out to ensure that the needs of our members are always met."

HcL Transport

"This photo shows passengers Dennis and Pat Wilson, with their guide dog Beryl (just out of view), and HcL driver Neil Young. Neil had taken Dennis and Pat, both long-term service users of HcL, to North Berwick (in East Lothian, Scotland) for a wee trip out in June.

They were very lucky with the weather, particularly for Scotland, and Beryl enjoyed a dip in the sea and Neil, Dennis and Pat enjoyed a 99 cone from the ice cream van found at the sea front.



So much of community transport is about practical day-to-day trips such as taking people to medical appointments, treatment at hospital, or to the supermarket, so it's lovely to support passengers on a trips like a day out at the seaside. Community transport is about community: meeting others; accessing facilities and amenities; experiencing nature and all it offers; locally."

Photo Competition

Commitment to Sustainability

Finalists

Readibus



"This is a photograph taken in May 2020 showing the deep cleaning that took place after every journey during the height of the first wave of the pandemic.

Those who volunteered to work throughout the pandemic set about the task willingly, with great spirit and determination. People needed to get out and they needed us in order to do so safely. We knew that we had to take all precautions possible to keep everyone safe and we cleaned and we cleaned and we cleaned... all hard surfaces, the floor, the windows...everything, every time!

It seemed that the sun was always shining. Every day seemed to be as in the photo – beautiful clear blue skies. It felt like the weather was doing its best to help us! We forgot what people's faces looked like behind all that PPE! Even eyes were covered as we understood that eyes were a potential entry point for the virus. Nothing was shared – other than a close bond. And it worked! We provided thousands of safe essential journeys for extremely vulnerable passengers ... and we all came through ... smiling ... happy ... exhausted!"

Wandsworth Community Transport

"This photo is of Marcus, one of several WCT drivers who stepped up to volunteer, taking a very grateful Mr Khonboker to get his COVID vaccination.

Our Shopmobility unit at Sainsburys Southside also went into action - taking telephone orders, doing the shopping and delivering goods to housebound residents unable to get delivery slots or use the internet.

All in all we were pleased to be part of a very well organised group of volunteers and organisations that joined seamlessly together to care for those who needed help in the Borough."



Winner

Community Transport Glasgow

Community Transport Glasgow are the winners of our first Commitment to Sustainability Award! The award, which is new for 2021, recognises an organisation who is taking proactive steps to put sustainability at the heart of their organisation, with a clear plan for the future.

In their entry, Community Transport Glasgow laid out their ambitious strategy over the next five years with a focus on climate change at the centre of their vision; a vision to develop a community-centric transport system which is multi-modal, more accessible, less polluting, better co-ordinated, flexible and above all shared.

The initial phase of the strategy, Manager Graham Dunn told our judges, was to develop a sustainable fleet replacement strategy, securing investment to purchase 15 fully electric vehicles to replace 11 of their diesel counterparts.

"We have also developed a transport coordination centre," said Graham "that is looking to better schedule, plan, and book transport. We currently provide a transport hub facility for NHS Lanarkshire's non emergency patient and nonpatient journeys. One of the main aims of the hub is to reduce duplicate journeys which will have an impact on the overall reduction in emissions."

"During COVID-19," Graham continued, "CTG remained open and we repurposed our resources, expertise, and knowledge to assist with food delivery. This included



working in partnership with two key stakeholders - the Scottish Food Pantry Network and Glasgow Community Food Network - enabling us to run wholesale food pickups totalling over 300 tonnes of food that would otherwise have been wasted and be in landfill."

Through the parts of their strategy that they've implemented so far, Community Transport Glasgow estimates that they have achieved overall CO2 emissions savings of 90,000 tons from operating an electric fleet and through better coordinating local transport to reduce duplicate journeys - that's a figure they hope will rise.

They also estimate that their strategy has saved them around £80,000 in running costs with an estimated 50% reduction in fuel, maintenance and repair costs to date, resource that can be reinvested in delivering and developing sustainable transport solutions for the community.

"As we move forward with the other elements of our strategy," said Graham, "we will be focusing on climate change at the heart of our vision to reduce CO2 emissions as our main environmental ethos and building on our social purpose."

Community Transport Champion

Winner

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

The Community Transport Champion award is for an organisation or an individual who has championed and supported community transport either in their community or at a national level. This year, our judges presented the award to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for their investment in, and support for, community transport providers in their local area, through setting up and expanding transport to health services.

ABUHB is the second largest health board in Wales, supporting a population of 600,000 people in six county boroughs across south-east Wales, from Monmouthshire to Caerphilly. The development of a new major emergency department and critical care unit for the region highlighted the issue of access and transport.

ABUHB investigated and became aware of gaps and inconsistencies in public transport provision across their footprint. These contributed to significant transport barriers for some residents, particularly those with additional support needs, with low incomes or who live in isolated locations.

Following extensive engagement work to explore the nature of the challenge and the potential to improve outcomes for local residents, ABUHB's Executive Board agreed to fund a targeted pilot to support transport to health across the region. Funding of £114,000 was agreed for a one-year pilot, which includes funding for a new Regional Community Transport



Coordinator post and a revenue grant fund to enable community-based organisations, including existing community transport providers, to develop new transport services, enhance existing ones, and engage in new partnerships to improve travel connections and quality standards across the region.

"Getting a Gwent-wide overview of where and how community transport schemes are already operating has been invaluable," said Faye Mear, the Regional CT Coordinator now employed through the pilot. "One of the first projects we are supporting is helping an established volunteer car scheme extend its services into a neighbouring borough. They already operate a proven and successful model and have bags of experience and expertise in doing so, but needed local knowledge and contacts to set up in the neighbouring area. The partners have been able to supply that knowledge and offer on-the-ground support to get a replica scheme going in an area that previously had no community transport options whatsoever."

Our judges were impressed by the Health Board's determination to support community transport in their local area, clearly invested in the enormous benefits the sector can bring, and their hard work to make sure local CT providers are given the resources they need to meet an important challenge.

Brian Hughes, Welsh Border CT

Brian Hughes from Welsh Border Community Transport was nominated for the Community Transport Champion award by Ian McDermott, who spoke about how "everybody knows Brian." Brian started working as a volunteer driver for the organisation in 2005 and came on board in a fulltime role a year later and is now the organisation's Assistant Manager.

"Due to the pandemic we have been operating at weekends taking people to vaccine clinics and to general hospital appointments," said Ian. "All of the drivers have taken a turn, however Brian has put himself forward the most ensuring that colleagues can be at home most weekends as he carries out the work."

"Due to his length of service, positivity and great popularity, he is generally the point of contact for the many clubs, societies and groups that we work with. His warm, friendly personality and his can do attitude endears him to everyone he comes into contact with and, unsurprisingly, he is a very popular person as a result!"

Elaine Allitt, CT4N Charitable Trust

Elaine Allitt is the Charity Coordinator at CT4N Charitable Trust and was nominated by Ian Combella who told us about her incredible contribution to their organisation, both before and during the pandemic, developing new services, building relationships to promote the organisation and being a hidden hero in their community.

"As the country witnessed an unprecedented medical challenge," said Ian, "Elaine played an integral role in providing a heroic logistical response to support it. Elaine knows from her experience that we had a number of people who would be lonely and vulnerable, living on their own, who would find the fact they were forced to stay at home and isolate very difficult. This started with telephone welfare checks on all our customers and identifying who needed some extra help and offering a listening ear. We know that for some people, Elaine is the only person that they have had contact with, but it gave people the comfort that she was just on the end of a phone if needed."

Finalists



Lifetime Achievement Award

Sponsored by:



Winner

Muriel Williams HCL Transport

Muriel Williams was born in Edinburgh in 1933. In 1952, she joined the Women's Royal Army Corps until 1955 when she married her husband Peter, with whom she lives in Edinburgh and has two children. In 1995, Muriel fell ill with polio which resulted in her using a wheelchair from then onwards.

After raising her young children, she went back to full-time work in 1971 through to 1993, when she ended her career as a manager with the Forestry Commission. Although Muriel retired from paid employment, she continued as an active volunteer in a number of roles.

"Muriel is incredibly committed with a focus and passion to support others," said Laura Kearny at HCL Transport with whom Muriel has volunteered over the years in several different capacities. "Ensuring people with disabilities are able to access their community through accessible and inclusive transport has been a clear goal for her for over 50 years."



Muriel has been involved in many charities, networks and organisations linked to community transport and to polio. Muriel was involved as a trustee for a number of charities over the years, including time spent as Chair for organisations including HCL Transport, the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance, and the City of Edinburgh's Disability Equality Group. Muriel has been a Trustee of HCL Transport since 1996, the Vice Chair from 1997 to 2001, Chair from 2001 to 2019 and is currently a Trustee!

She's also been involved as a volunteer in numerous other organisations. A member of our judging panel described it as exhausting reading the list of the organisations Muriel has supported!

"She has donated 1000s of voluntary hours to charities and groups that work around accessible transport and polio and delivered training on disability awareness to organisations across Scotland and further afield," said Laura. "She's also been involved in setting up new

charities and organisations including the community transport provider Dial-a-Journey in Stirling and Glasgow."

"She has been an integral part of HCL Transport," continued Laura. "Before Muriel was Chair, HCL was operating from day to day with no strategy, no business plan and no direction. Muriel had the foresight to see change was required in the organisation if it was to have a sustainable future providing transport for disabled, ill and disadvantaged people living in the Lothians. Muriel always says you've got to move forward to stay still, and so she wanted the charity to constantly develop, grow and increase its services."

In her 18 years as Chair of the HCL Board, she has guided the charity through many changes, developments and challenges, including overseeing a significant increase in passenger numbers; we delivered over 85,000 journeys in 2019."

Due to Muriel's strong advocacy for the principle that people with disabilities should be involved in the management and strategic development of the organisation, HCL is now more service user focussed as a result of Muriel's work. "HCL has grown into a well-respected long-standing organisation under her leadership," said Laura, "where our service users are at the forefront in all our decision making."

Muriel has also attended conferences around the world, seeking to learn how other countries were developing accessible community transport so that she could bring knowledge and ideas back to HCL, and to the other organisations and networks she was involved in.

"I have never known Muriel to miss a meeting," said CEO Kelvin Cochrane. "She has selflessly devoted a great deal of her life to helping vulnerable and disabled people to be able to be part of their communities and, in doing so, has improved many people's lives."



From speaking to those who know Muriel, it is clear that she has selflessly devoted a great deal of her life to helping people with disabilities to be able to be part of their communities, and to be able to get out and about through the continued championing of the need for more and improved accessible transport. The impact from her lifetime of service has been transformative.

Special Commendation

As part of this category, our judges were also pleased to give a special commendation to:



Barbara Perks,
Green Community
Travel



Eric Smallridge, East
Teingbridge Community
Transport Association

Congratulations to Barbara and Eric – our judges were inspired by their length of service to their organisations and how both have clearly put a huge amount of time, love and service into community transport, having an enormous impact on the people they support.



Messages from our sponsors

Thank you to our fantastic sponsors for their support of this year's Community Transport Awards!

Headline Sponsors: Endsleigh Insurance



"We are delighted to be the headline sponsor at the 2021 Community Transport Awards. This is a fantastic opportunity to come together and celebrate the amazing efforts of CTA members across the country during a challenging year. Since the first day of the first lockdown, CTA members have gone above and beyond in supporting their local communities and have done everything they can to keep their services running.

We're also particularly excited to sponsor the prestigious 'Community Transport Provider of the Year' award. With so many excellent providers who have done everything they can to support their communities during the pandemic, I'm sure picking just one winner will have been a tough choice for the judges.

All of us at Endsleigh would like to say thank you to the CTA members who have supported the national vaccine delivery programme. It's been inspiring to see communities come together to support this national effort. We know there will be challenges and adjustments as we exit lockdown and return to a 'new normal'. Here at Endsleigh, we are doing everything we can to support our charity customers through this time of change." **Ben Harris, Endsleigh Insurance**

Enterprise Flex-e-Rent



"Enterprise is a committed supporter and supplier of accessible vehicles to community transport organisations across the UK. We work in partnership with our customers to ensure the vehicles we supply are not only the right specification but also supplied on rental terms to meet your needs.

Community transport is about providing flexible and accessible community-led solutions in response to un-met local transport needs. Enterprise understands the importance of business partnerships and is a proud sponsor of the 'Partnership of the Year' category at the Community Transport Awards 2021." **Ashley Breeze, Enterprise Flex-e-Rent**

Minibus Options



"It is a privilege to be given the opportunity to sponsor the Volunteer of the Year Award. Volunteers in the community transport sector help to provide a vital function in delivering a service which benefits all our communities.

Over the years we have worked with so many organisations where volunteers play a key role, be that as part of the management team, support staff or in customer facing service delivery. It is always a joy to work with such groups of people who are so enthusiastic, happy and hard working in providing such a valuable contribution to society" - **Fred James, Minibus Options**

UK Global Road Safety



"UKGRS are delighted to sponsor this Lifetime Achievement Award, to recognise an exceptional individual and their contribution towards Community Transport. Here at UKGRS, our passion is, and has always been Road Safety. The winner of this award will be someone who's actions have had a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of many passengers, both inside and outside of the vehicle. We are proud to recognise such a commitment with this prestigious award." - **Simon Calvert, UKGRS**



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Community Transport Association UK



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find our offices across the UK at ctauk.org/contact-us

We'd like to thank our fantastic sponsors for this year's Community Transport Awards. Their support has been instrumental in running the event.

Headline Sponsors



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