



RURAL TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2006

WELCOME! To the Spring edition of the DRTP Newsletter! These Newsletters are produced to keep you informed about the DRTP and other Rural and Community Transport issues.

If you would like to contribute to future editions, please let us know. The deadline for the Summer edition of the Newsletter will be **Friday 28th July 2006**

In **this edition** you will find:

- Information on the DRTP
- Grants available from the DRTP
- Community Transport: New Challenges
- Community Transport News - South Hams Shopmobility
- Funding and Resources
- How to contact us

Devon Rural Transport Partnership - Review

The Spring Newsletter sees the Partnership entering its final year of committed funding. We are hoping to hear from the South West Regional Development Agency in the next few months if any further funding will be available from them. Once this decision has been made we will be able to look at the future of the Partnership and how it could be funded if it continues after March 2007. At our March Stakeholder Day we were pleased to hear that there was strong backing for the Partnership to continue. We believe there is a growing role for the Partnership and so will be searching hard for ways to keep it alive and kicking!

In the mean time, we are continuing to work hard on project development and also with strategy. Amanda is working on developing Shopmobility in the South Hams, which you can read more about in this Newsletter. We have spent a lot of time over the past few months working on the development of Devon Wheels 2 Work. This county wide scooter loan scheme will expand on the excellent work already carried out by the three existing schemes, by removing barriers to accessing work faced by many Devon residents. It is intended that Devon Wheels 2 Work will be fully operational by April 2007.

The Partnership is continuing to work with the Peninsula Health Authority, looking at transport to health facilities. This has proven to be a difficult process but we are continuing to try to get the best arrangements possible for both the Voluntary and Community Transport providers and the passengers.

I am proud to announce that bids put forward by the Partnership to Devon County Council's Local Transport Plan have resulted in capital funding support for development of Wheels 2 Work, Shopmobility and Ring and Ride. We will keep you informed of progress in future Newsletters.

All in all it is a very busy time for us and I am sure that will continue to be the case through our final year. I would like to thank you for your support so far and we look forward to working with you until March 2007.....and hopefully beyond!

Grants Available!

Up to £1,000 is available towards small transport projects:

Research

Publicity

Piloting New Services

Funding support is also available for Driver Training

Please contact Amanda Denham for further details

Community Transport - New Challenges

Tim Davies, Head of Devon County Council's (DCCs) Transport Co-ordination Service, will be retiring from full time work later this year. Tim attended the Community Transport Network meeting in April to talk about his experiences of Community Transport over the years and to look forward to the future challenges for the sector. As well as supporting Community Transport in Devon, Tim has worked with many organisations on a national basis, including the Community Transport Association, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

Community Transport has come a long way in Devon and is ahead of a lot of other counties. Most groups and services are still running after 16 years. The managers and the volunteers of the groups have achieved a great deal and have been successful with getting funding to continue their valuable work.

Tim spoke about a series of challenges, some long established and some new, facing the sector:

- New Government Initiatives and the current focus on access: DCC has produced an Accessibility Plan in which Community Transport will feature significantly as it has a strong role in reducing social exclusion and improving access. This is done through identifying local travel needs, working up solutions and operating services to meet the needs.
- Filling gaps in services: The Local Transport Plan sets targets for extending coverage of Ring & Ride schemes across the county.
- Health transport links: Changes to the provision of health transport have been given a lot of attention. The challenge is to ensure that Community Transport gets the best possible deal out of this for the services operated.
- Extended Schools: The extended schools agenda leaves a gap in services, as school buses do not cater for after schools activities.
- New types of service delivery: Community Transport has the ability to change and adapt to meet people's needs. The introduction of Wheels to Work and Fare Cars are good examples of this.
- Local Transport Partnerships and One Stop Shops: These have worked well in areas where they have happened. Where they are not in place, there is a need to get information out to people at the local level.
- Resources: Partnerships work well if they are fair on all sides. The Compact plays an important role in this. Devon County Council's commitment to 5 year funding agreements will help the process.
- Working with the RDA: There is currently no certainty regarding the future of the Devon Rural Transport Partnership. It is hoped there will be funding available for rural transport via the County Council, but it is important to

ensure that this funding is kept ring-fenced for rural transport and spent responsibly.

- The Devon Strategic Partnership, Community Strategies and the introduction of Local Area Agreements will all have an impact on Community Transport. Groups should take steps to be involved at the local level.



New developments, Fare Cars (left) and Wheels to Work (right)



Tim concluded that there is an expanding role for Community Transport in Devon. More services will need to be provided to meet access needs and the challenge will be the capacity of the Community Transport sector to do this.

Devon County Council will continue to work in Partnership with Community Transport Groups as they seek to rise to these challenges.



Ring & Ride services (above) are to be expanded across Devon

Community Transport News

South Hams Shopmobility Taster Days

A series of Shopmobility Taster Days were held in Totnes and Ivybridge. These were held to give local people the chance to try out Shopmobility and to provide more information about the scheme proposed for the South Hams. Exeter's mobile Leisuremobility unit, which carries a range of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs, was used to hire out scooters. Training was provided to ensure people were familiar with the scooters before taking them off around the town.

In each town the Taster Days were launched with a Shopmobility Challenge for local dignitaries. Following a short training session, the participants set off around the town on an accessible route to search for the answers to the Challenge.



Above: Councillor Frances Reeve takes up the Challenge in Ivybridge....

The promotional events are part of a larger project to bring Shopmobility to the South Hams. A mobile unit, similar to that used in Exeter, will be purchased to serve the market towns of Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Totnes and Kingsbridge. Scooters and wheelchairs will be available one day a week in each of the towns. The mobile unit will also be available for special events in the district.

It is hoped that the Shopmobility Service will be available in the South Hams from next year. Zoë Harris from the South Devon Transport Partnership and Amanda Denham from the Devon Rural Transport Partnership are developing the project. A Business Plan is being put together before submitting funding applications. Locations for parking the unit in each of the towns are being investigated and secure overnight storage needs to be found. It is hoped that in kind support from local councils and sponsorship from local businesses will help to make the project a success.

The project will be hosted by Ivybridge & District Community Transport Association, which currently operates a Ring & Ride service and a Voluntary Car Scheme in Ivybridge.

For further information please contact: Amanda Denham (Contact details at the end of this Newsletter) or Zoë Harris on 01626 203050.



Above: Councillor Geoff Date & Kay Dawson from South Hams District Council take up the Challenge in Totnes...

Funding & Resources

Charity Choice

Charity Choice is a website set up to support charities in the UK. The website offers several services including:

Free online donation service:

Register for free and your charity will be able to receive online donations via the website. This service is set up in conjunction with the Co-operative Bank and offers a secure encrypted service. Charities will also be able to monitor the amount of donations they are receiving online. Users of the website wishing to make a donation can search by the type of charity they want to donate to, or by local area. Several Community Transport groups are already registered with this service.

Goodwill Gallery:

The website also hosts a goodwill gallery which enables businesses and members of the public to offer goods, services or time to charities. Services available to charities range from legal advice and accounting through to graphic design and marketing. Charities can also search for volunteers and goods on offer in their area.

For more information or to register your charity for online donations, visit:

<http://www.charitychoice.co.uk>

Fundraising Skills

Fundraising Skills is a website offering online courses in fundraising for community groups and schools. The community course is accredited by the Open Network and will cover:

- Preparation of quality fundraising literature
- Researching grants
- How to approach the Lottery, statutory funders and trust funders
- How to plan and manage a fundraising strategy

The course offers a flexible approach suitable for each trainee.

For details of dates and course fees, please visit the website at:

<http://www.fundraising-skills.com/>

Jargon Buster!

If you struggle to keep up with jargon, visit the new jargon buster designed specifically for the voluntary and community sector:

<http://vcsjargonbuster.wikispaces.com/>

Contact Us

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