

Community Transport in Carrick Newsletter

Welcome to the first of what we hope will be a bi-monthly production, giving you the community transport news and details about the community transport operators (CTOs) in Carrick. Below, you will find information about the various community transport groups in Carrick (and the new service just opened in Kyle), what they offer and their contact details. We hope you'll find this helpful and maybe find a way to get around that you didn't know about before. Maybe we can even inspire you to get involved in a practical way through volunteering!

CARRICK COMMUNITY TRANSPORT



The big, dark blue buses are a very familiar sight in Carrick and beyond and they have now been joined by a white one! If you are a community group, sports team or some other form of constituted group looking for transport to get you somewhere, you can hire out one of Carrick Community Transport's buses. You could have a fabulous day out – to the coast, the hills, the theatre, a theme park or a stately home. Or the bus could take your club to a sports fixture – without the expense of hiring one of the commercial operators' buses.

The group, which is entirely run by volunteers, has three minibuses, two of which are based in Girvan and one in Maybole. All are 17-seater but currently none are wheelchair accessible. You will need to provide your own

driver, but Minibus Driver Awareness (MiDAS) training is currently not necessary. (See later on in the bulletin for more information on MiDAS training). If the driver has never driven a minibus of this size before, the group will ask her/him to drive over a short course first to get a feel for the size and the handling of the bus. The driver will, however, need to have a D1 on his/her license).

Your organisation will have to pay an affiliation fee of £25 (which lasts for a year). Once you've paid that, the hire of the bus will cost you £15 per day and 70p per mile for the first 50 miles; 65p per mile thereafter. This includes all fuel. If this sounds like something that would fit your needs, ring 01655 882105 for the Maybole bus or 01465 716621 for the Girvan buses and someone will give you all the information you need.

GIRVAN AND SOUTH CARRICK COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK (CAN)

CAN is a voluntary car scheme, based in Girvan, which helps the people of South Carrick to access hospital appointments as far afield as Glasgow and Edinburgh. CAN has a number of volunteer drivers who use their

own cars in return for a mileage allowance. CAN is totally grant funded and runs on volunteer labour. There is no fee for using the service, but a donation is requested – the amount is at your discretion.



CAN could always use more volunteers.

Everyone who does volunteer in this way will tell you how much fun it is and just how much they themselves get out of it. If you need the services of CAN or feel that you could volunteer a little of your time on an occasional basis to do this, you can contact them on 01465 714060 or by email at: communityaction@btopenworld.com (and yes, it is meant to be spelt like that!

BALLANTRAE RURAL INITIATIVE CARE IN THE COMMUNITY (BRICC)

The BRICC Care Agency is part of the larger Ballantrae Rural Initiative Care in the Community Ltd and is based at 12 Main Street, Ballantrae. The aim of the organisation is to support local vulnerable, frail and elderly people. One of the ways in which they do this is through their Volunteer Driver Scheme which supports people to get to medical appointments or to BRICC's Tuesday Club. The costs of this are heavily subsidised by the income from the fantastic BRICC Thrift Shop (pictured below).



Drivers use their own cars and are paid a mileage allowance. **More volunteers would be very welcome.**

If anyone is interested in volunteering, application forms are available from the agency. BRICC can be contacted on 01465 831380 or by email at: bricc@btconnect.com or lynne.mcilwraith@btconnect.com. For more information on the wonderful work which BRICC does, you can take a look at its website <http://bricc.btck.co.uk/>

THE STRANRAER TO AYR LINE SUPPORT ASSOCIATION (SAYLSA)



SAYLSA, the Community Rail Partnership for Carrick & Wigtownshire, was founded in 2007 as a community-based rail partnership with the aim of developing services and facilities for the historic Stranraer to Ayr railway line, as well as helping to secure its long-term future. The 16-seater Barrhill Community Rail Bus, funded by contributions from the Ayrshire LEADER programme, Barrhill Community Interest Company, Carrick Futures, South Ayrshire Council and SAYLSA, is part of this plan. The minibus is also available for hire by community groups or organisations in South Ayrshire.

If you would like to hire the bus, there is a small annual fee (£12) for community minibus membership of SAYLSA. Thereafter, the cost of the bus is currently £25 per day and 61 pence per mile. Groups may provide their own driver, but all drivers must be MiDAS trained. If this is not possible for you, a volunteer driver from SAYLSA is frequently available. You can contact SAYLSA via the

website www.saylsa.org.uk or by telephone on 01563 533442 or by email at saylsa@tiscali.co.uk

SAYLSA, like the other community transport operators featured, is always **on the lookout for more volunteers, particularly drivers.** Training can be provided for anyone interested.

FRIENDS OF HILLCREST



Friends of Hillcrest have one 16-seater minibus capable of taking up to three wheelchairs at one time. The bus was largely funded by money raised by the Friends of Hillcrest with help from the Davidson Trust and the Lottery. The bus is used on a regular basis to take residents of Hillcrest Care Home on trips out and to medical appointments. Unfortunately, due to insurance restrictions, the bus is currently unavailable for use by the general public. Nevertheless, it performs a valuable function by catering for the practical transport needs of the residents of the Care Home and by providing them with much needed leisure outlets.

The group would very much like to attract a few more volunteer drivers. MiDAS training is required to drive the bus, but this could be provided. Friends of Hillcrest can be contacted by telephone on 01465 712628 or denis@reid800.freerve.co.uk

KYLE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT



Now, we know that Kyle isn't in Carrick, but read on! Kyle Community Transport officially launched in March this year and its fleet of minibuses can be rented out by community groups within the Kyle area. The buses can take up to 14 passengers, or alternatively, two wheelchairs and ten passengers. To date groups such as the Chest Heart and Stroke, VASA, the Domain Youth Centre and Opportunities in Retirement have rented the buses to help them facilitate the activities that they provide. Any group wanting to rent the buses should be based in the Kyle area of South Ayrshire – this includes Annbank, Coylton, Monkton, Tarbolton, Prestwick, Minishant, Ayr, Dundonald and any other towns and villages in between. However, this service is also open to groups in Carrick which particularly require a wheelchair accessible bus but cannot hire one locally.

The scheme is currently looking for volunteer drivers and would be pleased to hear from you if this is something you would be interested in. To join the scheme, volunteer or find out more information please contact Nicola McTurk on 01292 283935 or by emailing Kyle Community Transport on ktransport@acctoemp.org.uk

CALLING ALL COMMUNITY GROUPS!

Please remember, it is absolutely critical to do your research and factor in adequate transport budgets when filling in your project funding applications. It could easily mean the difference between the project's success or failure!

BRITISH RED CROSS

The Red Cross operates a minibus system to take patients to and from hospital appointments, charging 70 pence per mile. Operating largely in North Ayrshire and Arran, it also makes a number of trips to South Ayrshire and would be keen to expand its service down here if it could attract enough volunteer drivers and patient escorts. The training is obviously a bit more specialised and involved but immensely worthwhile and would be a great addition to anyone's CV if you are interested in working in this field. Contact jrankine@redcross.org.uk or rnoble@redcross.org.uk or ring the office on 01292 266712

AYRSHIRE HOSPICE

The hospice caters for people all over Ayrshire and runs its own community transport system to take its clients (and families) to and from the Day Hospice. At the moment, they do not need any more volunteers for the car scheme, but would be really pleased to hear from people who would be willing to drive either their patient transport car or minibus, and particularly from anyone who would like to become a passenger escort. Full training will be given. Contact Pauline at Pauline.Greenshields@ayrshirehospice.org

AYRSHIRE CANCER SUPPORT

This organisation also operates its own community transport service, taking hundreds of patients to and from hospital for treatment. It makes 800 – 1,000 patient journeys per week and relies on volunteer drivers. If you feel that you could volunteer for this organisation, please contact their Support centre on 01563 538008 Mon – Fri from 9am – 4am.

CTO NEWS

WEST OF SCOTLAND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT NETWORK QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The new Quality Framework which has been developed by the West of Scotland Community Transport Network (WoSCTN) Steering Group has defined a number of quality standards for Community Transport Operators which cover the following Quality Areas:

- Vehicle Management
- Governance
- Finance/Planning
- Operations

There are four different categories of compliance depending on what kind of service a CTO supplies and support and training are available from SPT and WoSCTN). CTOs can apply for either a basic (working towards full compliance with the Quality Network) or full membership (have attained compliance). The latter will be awarded accredited status. 'Basic' members will be offered support to enable them to reach full membership within one year. However, a two year lead-in time will be extended to those CTOs working towards the Management Certificate of Professional Competence in Road Passenger Transport.

Part of the Operations Quality Area involves ensuring the appropriate training of drivers, with MiDAS training (see below) being the minimum requirement for all minibuses with 12 seats or more.

It is worth noting by all CTOs that MiDAS is likely to become the mandatory legal standard for ALL drivers of community minibuses in the near future.

SOME INFORMATION ON DRIVER TRAINING

MiDAS TRAINING

MiDAS (or the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) is organised by the Community Transport Association U.K. (CTA) which promotes a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers. It is a membership based scheme which has been designed to enhance minibus driving standards and promote the safer operation of minibuses. The training covers both classroom-based theory training and an on-road driving assessment for all minibus drivers, plus additional training on passenger assistance and the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles for drivers who will be transporting passengers with disabilities.

Drivers who successfully complete the MiDAS assessment and training programme will receive a nationally recognised certificate valid for four years, as well as the option of obtaining the comprehensive "MiDAS Driver's Handbook".

PATS (Passenger Assistant Training Scheme)

PATS provides a nationally recognised standard of training to people whose role it is to provide care and assistance to passengers travelling by road. These may be paid staff, or volunteers or they may be performing the dual role of driver/carer. PATS has five modules, an induction module undertaken by all, then modules looking at assisting passengers with disabilities (but not wheelchair users), assisting wheelchair users, assisting children and young people and assisting older people. The other modules to be completed will depend on the needs of the people being transported.

In addition, drivers may need to be registered under the **PVG Scheme** (Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme) which is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland.

VOLUNTEERING – WHY SHOULD YOU?

Because volunteering is fun! You get to feel great about yourself, do something incredibly useful which is really appreciated by the people you are helping and you get to meet and interact with a whole new group of people you might never have met under other circumstances. It is also an opportunity to increase your skills through undertaking training opportunities, extend your experience and enhance your CV if that is what you need. For the slightly older, it is a wonderful opportunity to give back in a small way and to prevent your retirement from becoming boring! Here are the experiences of a couple of Carrick volunteer drivers:



CAN Hospital Driver – Mike Ross

"I started driving for CAN in August 2011, when I was out of work and was fed up being in the house a lot of the time. It was suggested as a way of meeting people who might know of jobs going - who you know, not what you know. From then on I would be doing one or two runs a week, the furthest destination being the Beatson, in Glasgow. Crosshouse and Ayr hospitals were other regular runs. Having found paid employment since April 2012, the amount of runs I do has lessened, but I still get called and do them when I can because I enjoy doing them.

Why? Because the clients have varied ages, reasons for travelling, with different stories to tell and a need for the service. The horror stories of the time it can take via standard patient transport makes the CAN service so valuable. It also helps that I like driving. A

typical CAN run will only take up 3-4 hours of time, even to Glasgow.

Personally I get a fair bit out of it. My own father died of cancer and so I'm "doing my bit" for him. The clients are all nice people and I enjoy listening to them talk about their lives. I have recommended CAN volunteering to others and will continue doing so as CAN can never have enough drivers".



Friends of Hillcrest Volunteer - Denis Reid

"I have been involved from the beginning of Friends of Hillcrest. I felt it was important for Girvan to support our old folk to ensure that their latter years were enjoyable and that they were able to get out and about and have experiences which the local council, which operates the care home, could not provide.

Our minibus is at Hillcrest's disposal 24/7 and is used to take the residents to hospital, shopping, outings etc. Several of the staff are MiDAS trained, but we also have a group of qualified volunteer drivers if staff are unavailable. We have taken our residents on holiday as far as Blackpool and Dunoon over the years as well as on trips to Ayr, Kilmarnock, theatres, gardens etc.

It is a wonderful experience to be among our residents whose camaraderie and sense of fun is marvellous. There is also the satisfaction of knowing that you are providing a support that they may otherwise not have. On a personal level, I get such a lot of knowledge from the old folk whose experiences of life they are happy to share. And I get a deep sense of satisfaction that I am doing something

worthwhile for other folk and for my town. It is unbelievably satisfying.

I would undoubtedly recommend volunteering to other people. I think it is something that younger folk in the town should consider, as the amount of information and knowledge of life, history etc. the residents have is unbelievable. As a volunteer I also think it serves as a reminder that, no matter how well and active we are, the day comes when we too will be old and need support and understanding. It's a way of saying thanks to people who made your town and community what it is."

That's it for this issue. If you have something you would like to see covered in the next issue, contact me, Catriona Haston, at: cct@ailsahorizons.co.uk or ring me on 01465 710628 or 07786 272938. I look forward to hearing from you!



This project is part-financed by:
The Scottish Government and the European
Community Ayrshire LEADER 2007-2013 Programme
Wind farm benefit funds of ScottishPower Renewables
Carrick Futures Community Benefit Fund
South Ayrshire Council – CPP Community Development
Funds