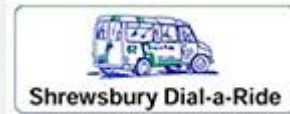


Shropshire Community Transport Forum

SHORT IMPACT REPORT



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Introduction

RHCS was commissioned by the Shropshire Community Transport Consortium (SCTC) to produce this concise report which comments on the added value provided by Consortium members. We used data provided by the 7 members of the Consortium, plus ward based population statistics and drew on a national Deloitte report - “Tackling Loneliness and Isolation through Community Transport” to arrive at the figures quoted.

Shropshire Community Transport Consortium

The 7 members of the Consortium, all of which are charitable or voluntary organisations, provide transport in distinct areas of Shropshire. Members are as follows:

Bishop’s Castle Dial a Ride, Bridgnorth Community Transport, Church Stretton Area Ring and Ride, North Salop Wheelers, QUBE (based in Oswestry), The Friendly Bus (based in Broseley) and Shrewsbury Dial a Ride which incorporates The Buzzard, covering Corvedale.

All members are fortunate to have committed volunteers who add considerably to paid staff to provide transport services across Shropshire. Collectively the consortium has 26 mini buses which range from 8 to 16 seats and provide door to door transport for people in need, including those at risk of rural isolation and people unable to attend medical appointments. Generally, services are offered during the week with limited availability at weekends. All members operate a membership scheme, for which a low annual fee is levied. Some operate a community car scheme, using volunteer drivers and others allow voluntary groups to hire their minibuses – a group membership scheme is in operation where necessary.

Members who seek customer feedback confirm comments are generally positive with many remarking on the polite and friendly service and drivers being very helpful. For some, it is very definitely a “life line” and enables people to “get out and about”.

The following table shows the level of income that supports the provision of Community Transport services across the county:

Income to support Service	B Castle	NS Wheelers	Friendly Bus	Shrews DAR	C Stretton RAR	QUBE	Bridgnorth	TOTAL
Shropshire Council Grant	13,650	23,000	10,080	60,000	42,581	45,000	17,425	211,736
Commercial Contracts	500		46,818	49,800		42,000		139,118
Other Shropshire Council income		10,000	10,851	56,000	21,677	6,000	9,619	114,147
Other income (e.g. BSOG, Fundraising)	1,500	17,500	39,821	16,000	7,214	55,000	6,473	143,508
Fares	10,846	5,200	11,430	22,500	21,474	22,000	777	94,227
TOTAL INCOME	26,496	55,700	119,000	204,300	92,946	170,000	34,294	702,736

As can be seen, over £700k is generated, through one means or another through delivering the service.

In addition to the direct income generated, there is a significant amount of gift in kind generated through volunteer time. In the table below, the estimated total can be seen: this is based on an assumed rate of £7.75 per hour, and the services being available 51 weeks of the year:

	B Castle	NS Wheelers	Friendly Bus	Shrews DAR	C Stretton RAR	QUBE	Bridgnorth	TOTAL
Volunteer Drivers	14	7	57	20	17	21	18	154
Weekly Volunteer Driver Hours	30	50	140	160	71	217	130	798
Annual Value of Vol Driver Hrs @ £7.75	11,858	19,763	55,335	63,240	27,865	85,769	51,383	315,212
Other Volunteers	3	120	8	15	7	5	14	172
Other weekly volunteer hours	10	30	30	60	27	40	10	207
Annual value of other vol hrs @ £7.75	3,953	11,858	11,858	23,715	10,474	15,810	3,953	81,619
TOTAL ANNUAL VALUE OF VOL HOURS £	15,810	31,620	67,193	86,955	38,339	101,579	55,335	396,831

As can be seen, based on actual income generated, an additional 56p per £1 value is created in volunteer time – an excellent match funding ratio.

Other statistics from the schemes can be seen below:

	B Castle	NS Wheelers	Friendly Bus	Shrews DAR	C Stretton RAR	QUBE	Bridgnorth	TOTAL
Groups supported	25	45	55	33	13	9	36	216
Council Groups supported	1		9	2	2	3	1	18
Number of Members	120	400	755	1,491	232	462	137	3,597
Number of passenger journeys	4,500		38,000	27,100	17,720	24,790	3,318	115,428
Number of Miles	14,000		60,300	89,283	38,194	60,291	21,038	283,106
Number of car journeys	800		2,106			1,492	2,879	7,277
Number of health journeys	n/k		831	2,383	1,349	1,371	2,303	8,237
Number of wheelchair journeys	n/k		468			2,073	45	2,586

As can be seen, there are over 3,500 members undertaking over 115,000 journeys through Dial a Ride service (an average of 32 journeys per year per person). In addition, some 7,277 basic car journeys are

provided with a further 8,237 health journeys and 2,586 wheelchair journeys. If one assumes, for every basic journey a minimum of £5 is spent in the local economy by the member (i.e. shopping or coffee, etc), this in itself equates to some £577,140 put back into the local economy that otherwise may not be spent, if the member is unable to travel without community transport.

The Consortium undertook some consumer research, looking at just this issue. Responses were received from 305 individual passengers on a specific journey across the County showing an average spend of c. £33 – this extrapolated up to 102,000 passenger journeys, equates to £3.36 million. Whilst at first glance, this may seem an overstated projection, where passengers are travelling to do their weekly grocery shop, it is far from unrealistic. If all 3,597 members were to travel once per week for 51 weeks to do their weekly “shop”, then at £5 this equates to £917k economic spend and at £33 it equates to £6 million. This underlines how Community Transport services also offer great support to our market towns, supporting the neighbourhood development model.

Shropshire statistics

At the time of the 2011 Census, Shropshire was reported to have a total population of 306,100 people: according to the 2015 mid-year estimates this has increased to 311,380. In terms of an age profile, Shropshire has a higher percentage of over 65 year olds than the national average, balanced by a lower than average under 25 population. Over 30% of the population is 60 or older, significantly more than the West Midlands or national averages.

When considering future population projections, in terms of older people, the Office for National Statistics projects, in its 2006 sub based projections, that 65-84 year olds are going to increase by some 70% to 83,500 in 2031, with Oswestry projecting the largest growth (95.7%) and South Shropshire the next largest. (78%). More alarmingly, the 85 and older age group is projected to increase by 194.6% to 20,600 in 2031, and whilst South Shropshire has the highest numbers projected, Bridgnorth is showing the highest projected growth of 223.7%.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in Shropshire also notes that Shropshire has a larger cohort of older people than the national average and that this section of the population is expected to increase significantly, therefore ageing well is vitally important for the future population of Shropshire. It states that one in three over 65s and one in two over 80s fall each year: this is a key indicator of increasing frailty which comes with age. Injuries sustained from falls are one of the most common causes of death in people aged 75 years old and over. There is a high possibility for people who have fallen to have repeated falls after an initial fall. Aside from increased risk of death as a result of falling, there's also an increased risk of disability, loss of self-confidence and reduced quality of life.

It also notes that, in Shropshire, admissions to hospital from falls increase with age and there are significantly more admissions from females over the age of 75 years old. This is important due to the fact that there are large numbers of people aged 75 years and over in Shropshire: the population in this age group is expected to continue increasing.

Potential Cost Savings to the Public Purse

In the report, *Tackling Loneliness and Isolation through Community Transport* prepared by Deloitte, it is suggested that 28% of older people suffer from loneliness and isolation (based on Office of National Statistics). The report estimates that over the next 14 years, the percentage of those aged 65-74 living alone will rise by some 44%, and those over 75 living alone will rise by 38%. The widely accepted effects of such “habitation” – these living choices, are increases in loneliness and isolation;

this will no doubt put added pressure on already stretched public services. Again, according to Deloitte, the direct effects of loneliness include:

- Increased blood pressure and risk of cardiovascular problems
- Elevated cortisol and stress levels
- Disrupted sleep and its negative effects
- Depression and anxiety
- Impaired cognitive behaviour
- Cognitive decline and dementia
- Difficulties in regulating behaviour
- Increased likelihood of falls and other physical accidents

The indirect effects are noted as:

- Earlier admittance to residential or nursing care
- Greater risk of emergency admission or re-admission to hospital
- High number of people visiting GPs because they are lonely
- Non-attendance at healthcare appointments due to poor transport
- Longer hospital visits
- Increased number of domicile health visits
- Higher rates of mental health drug prescriptions.

Other indirect effects include:

- Increased demand and pressure on informal carers
- Increased demand on the voluntary sector.

In the longer term, Deloitte proposes that these lead to greater health costs, greater pressure on carers and greater social care costs. The resultant costs on a national basis have been estimated to amount to between £1.3billion and £2.9billion per year. (These are based on the costs of earlier admittance into residential/nursing care, increased use of home care and day care services, higher rate of non-elective hospital admission, increased proportion of domicile GP visits and increased number of A&E visits.) Therefore the “value” of services such as Community Transport, as a preventative measure to keep people engaged, must be emphasised. It is also worth noting that as part of this potential value, is the use of community transport in taking people to hospital and medical appointments: these have increased significantly in recent months.

It has therefore been estimated, on a national scale, that use of Community Transport can make savings against these costs of between £0.4billion and £1.1billion per year. This equates to a cost per person over 65 of between £110-£245 and savings of £34-93 per person.

When considering the potential costs and savings in Shropshire on the same pro rata basis based on population statistics of the areas covered by the Community Transport partners, the table below shows that costs to the state would be between £7.1 and £15.9 million, with potential savings, arising from Community Transport, being between £2.2 and £6 million per annum:

Potential CT Savings	National	Shropshire
Total Costs to the state	£1.1 billion - £2.9 billion	£7.1 million-£15.9 million
Equivalent cost per person	£110-£245	£110-£245
Total savings to the state	£0.4 billion - £1.1 billion	£2.2 million - £6 million
Equivalent savings per person	£34 - £93	£34 - £93

We can also analyse these figures between the different Community Transport organisations, the table below showing the cost and savings estimates:

Note: in the table below, lower and higher relates to the range of potential costs and savings as based on the Deloitte report.

Potential Costs	Lower £	Higher £
Bishops Castle DAR	634,272	1,414,915
North Shropshire Wheelers	1,194,196	2,663,976
Friendly Bus (M Wen & Bros)	253,071	564,543
Shrewsbury DAR	2,496,946	5,570,110
Church Stretton Area RAR	334,459	746,100
Qube	1,016,464	2,267,496
Bridgnorth	1,195,296	2,666,430
TOTAL	7,124,704	15,893,570
Potential Savings	Lower £	Higher £
Bishops Castle DAR	196,137	536,692
North Shropshire Wheelers	369,282	1,010,474
Friendly Bus (M Wen & Bros)	78,257	214,137
Shrewsbury DAR	772,132	2,112,800
Church Stretton Area RAR	103,425	283,003
Qube	314,322	860,085
Bridgnorth	369,622	1,011,404
TOTAL	2,203,178	6,028,596

These are not insignificant potential savings, but it should be noted that they are potential. If one uses these figures to look at actual savings by utilising current membership figures, then the actual current potential savings are significantly less, but still very notable. With the quoted 3,597 current members, there is an estimated saving of up to £1.2m based on the higher level of costings – and bearing in mind, some of these “members” are groups, the figure could be much higher.

The current membership, by its very nature, is clearly isolated, hence their interest in community transport. However, such people do not reflect the estimated 28% of older people suffering loneliness and isolation, quoted by Deloitte; only some 6% of older people in Shropshire. Age UK has proposed, on a national scale, between 7% and 33% people consider themselves to be lonely/isolated; as ever, there are many caveats applied to such projections. Therefore, bearing in mind this, the population projections and the age profile of these projections, then in years to come, the health and social care savings highlighted in the table may well be realised.

Conclusions

1. Shropshire's population profile shows a higher than average number of older people with projections forecasting this to continue to increase dramatically to 2031.
2. The provision of Community Transport services across Shropshire enables almost 3,600 members (some of which are groups, therefore the figure in actual people numbers is higher but currently difficult to measure) to access transport for over 115,000 journeys per annum.
3. The service is funded to the tune of £702k by a mix of Shropshire Council, commercial contracts, passenger fees and fundraising but is also supported by over 51,000 volunteer hours valued at £397k.
4. Potential savings to the Health and Social Care budgets, based on projections contained in the Deloitte report could amount to between £2.2 million - £6 million. Based on the current usage, this could already equate to some £1.2m.
5. In terms of economic benefit, expenditure within Shropshire's towns as a result of community transport services has been calculated to be a minimum of £577k per annum, rising to anything up to £6 million.