

Moving between A and B in Dorset is not always easy. For most people living in rural areas having a car is not a lifestyle choice, it is a necessity. But what about those who cannot drive or afford to run a car or those who would use public transport but can't as there is no service where they live or work?

Traditionally, we look at how we can travel to services but an alternative approach is to look at how to bring services to local communities. Solutions are likely to differ from one community to another and from one year to the next so it is important to remain flexible and ready to adapt to the changing needs of people in the local area.



**Shaping our communities** - a toolkit to help community groups turn ideas into action

# Transport and accessibility

## A few facts

Dorset is a rural county with a population of 401,000. The population is widely dispersed with an average of 158 persons per square kilometre compared with 379 for England as a whole.

20% of rural settlements in Dorset have no bus service and a further 17% have services on certain days only.

75% of villages do not have a general store and 92% do not have a Doctor's surgery.

Dorset County Council is developing a programme of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services across Dorset. Passengers book a place and the vehicle is able to travel outside of a set route introducing far more flexibility to an otherwise constrained service.

## Ideas for action

- Ensure the local community is involved in consultation events by service providers such as the introduction of new DRT services.
- Encourage your community to use the services that are provided. Consider a campaign using the slogan "Use it or Lose it".
- Get involved with local transport groups such as Transport Action Groups and Local Area Partnerships.
- Set up your own Community Transport scheme. It takes time but there's lots of advice available.
- Set up a befriending scheme or collective shopping deliveries.
- Join a car share scheme or set up a voluntary car scheme or car club.
- Tell young people about Dorset Scooter Schemes.
- Encourage mobile services to visit your community eg shops or health services.
- Share facilities in multi-use community buildings to reduce the need to travel.



## The 73 Bus Service User Group

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) is a service which combines the flexibility of community transport schemes such as Dial-a-Ride with a public transport service. User groups have been set up to assist in the development of these DRT schemes.

The 73 User Group was formed to help with the development of service 73 between Maiden Newton and Bridport and the Wednesday service in the Bride Valley. Additional links to services in Bridport and additional services in the mid-afternoon have been introduced on the recommendations of the 73 User Group. In addition, local involvement has now ensured Cattistock is included within the 'roam zone'. Community involvement is seen as integral to the roll out programme of DRT schemes across the county.



## Scooter Schemes

These have been operating in various areas across the county for a number of years. The merger of the Bridport and North Dorset schemes enabled them to be extended across the whole of West and North Dorset. There are separate schemes in East Dorset and Purbeck.

The success of the scooter schemes and the recognition that they can provide what is sometimes the only solution to transport difficulties persuaded Colleges of Further Education in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole to become involved with the scheme. A marketing campaign was funded through the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Transport to Learning Partnership and a single telephone contact point set up.



### **The Wareham Home Hopper**

This is a traditional community transport Dial-a-Ride scheme. A Dial-a-Ride service responds to a call and picks up a client from home taking them to a pre-determined destination. At a specified time the driver picks up the client and returns them home helping to carry any shopping bags. The service has expanded with more buses and operates on Tuesday and Thursdays from as far afield as Church Knowle and Holton Heath into Wareham. Local fund-raising events and grants have funded the scheme.



### **The Mid-Dorset Voluntary Car Scheme**

This scheme covers Milton Abbas, Cerne Abbas and Puddletown surgeries with approximately 62 volunteer drivers. Ian Walker, a voluntary driver at Cerne Abbas is seen here bringing four patients from Piddletrenthide to a clinic at the surgery in Cerne Abbas. A part-time co-ordinator matches patients to drivers, sometimes grouping appointments to ensure best use of a valuable resource and ensuring that as many people as possible are able to access the service. Users of the service are charged a small fee and volunteers reimbursed in accordance with Inland Revenue recommendations.

During 2005/06, 1379 requests for journeys were made to the Voluntary Car Co-ordinator and trips included appointments with a doctor, nurse, physiotherapist, counsellor, chiropractor, chiropodist, dentist, optician and other health-related professionals.



## The Friends of Milton Abbas Practice

This group offers a variety of support services to patients from medical practices in Dorchester, Crossways and the rural villages of Milton Abbas, Cerne Abbas and Puddletown.

These include:

- Shopping for or with patients who are unable to do this on their own
- Carrying out general errands
- Befriending by visiting people in their own homes
- Supporting families
- Transporting patients to clinical appointments or on other essential journeys
- Delivering medicines to homes.

By giving their time and friendship, these Dorset Primary Care Trust volunteers have enriched the lives of many and particularly the older people in these communities.



## The Bopper Bus

The Bopper Bus is a community transport service which picks up children between 8-16 years from various points around West Dorset on Friday evenings and takes them to Bridport Leisure Centre. There they can take part in a wide range of activities including swimming, circuit training, trampolining, gymnastics, 5-a-side football amongst others. The service was established in September 2003 following a need identified by children and young people in Chideock and developed by a group of volunteers supported by Dorset Community Action and the Parish Council. The service was expanded later to additional parishes. The children are accompanied by escorts (many parents and grandparents) who are all Criminal Records Bureau checked and have undergone child protection and First Aid training. The success of the service is demonstrated by its continuation over four years and the numbers of children who regularly attend.

# Who can help

**Further ideas, information and advice can be obtained from:**

## **Jane Colvin**

DART Partnership Manager  
Dorset Community Action  
The Barracks, Bridport Road  
Dorchester DT1 1YG  
01305 216414  
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## **Andy Matthews**

Dorset County Council  
Passenger Transport Team  
County Hall, Colliton Park  
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## **Catherine Phillips**

Heart of Wessex Community  
Rail Partnership Officer  
South Somerset District Council  
Council Offices  
Brympton Way, Yeovil  
Somerset BA20 2HT  
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## **Community Transport Association**

Highbank  
Halton Street, Hyde  
Cheshire SK14 2NY  
0870 774 3586  
CTAUK@ctauk.org  
www.ctauk.org

## **Local Transport Action Group**

(for more information on your particular area please contact Jane Colvin, DART Partnership Manager as above or Nici Hill, DART Partnership Officer on 01305 216413)

## **Helen Reed**

General Manager  
NORDCAT  
Unit 4A  
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## **Alan Legg**

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Unit 4A  
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## **Funding Advice**

### **Modernising Rural Delivery**

Contact: Rural Renaissance Partnership Officer  
Dorset County Council  
County Hall, Colliton Park  
Dorchester DT1 1XJ

### **Local Transport Plan (capital funding)**

Contact: Steve Williams  
LTP Manager  
Dorset County Council  
County Hall, Colliton Park  
Dorchester DT1 1XJ

### **Grant funding**

Contact: Liz Hole  
External Funding Adviser  
Dorset Community Action  
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