



# British Red Cross

Rural Community Transport Service

6 monthly EDRT report to Argyll and Bute Council  
for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 September 2013

Anke-Rita Brown – Transport Service Coordinator  
Mid Scotland and Argyll

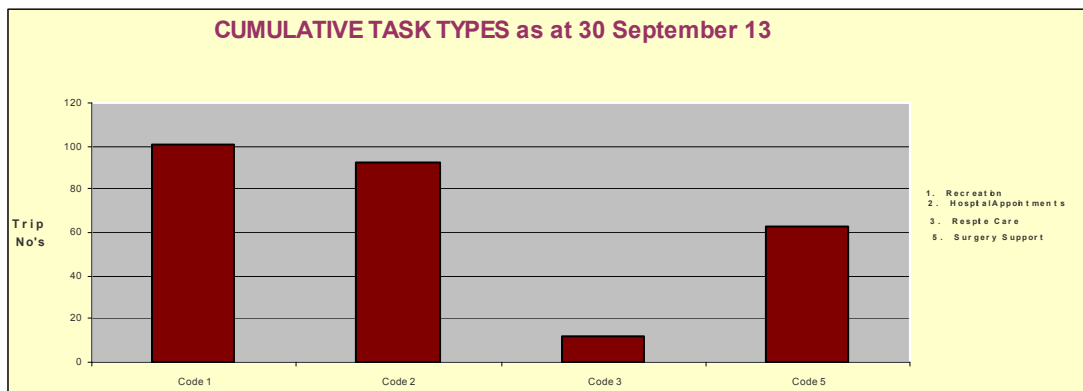
**EDRT GRANT SCHEME 6 MONTHLY REPORT**  
**FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL 2013 TO 1 OCTOBER 2013**

**General**

1. Since its inception at the end of 2004, the project vehicles which include 2 Mini buses and volunteer cars have covered 421,791 miles, completed 5,435 tasks and carried 20,265 service users.

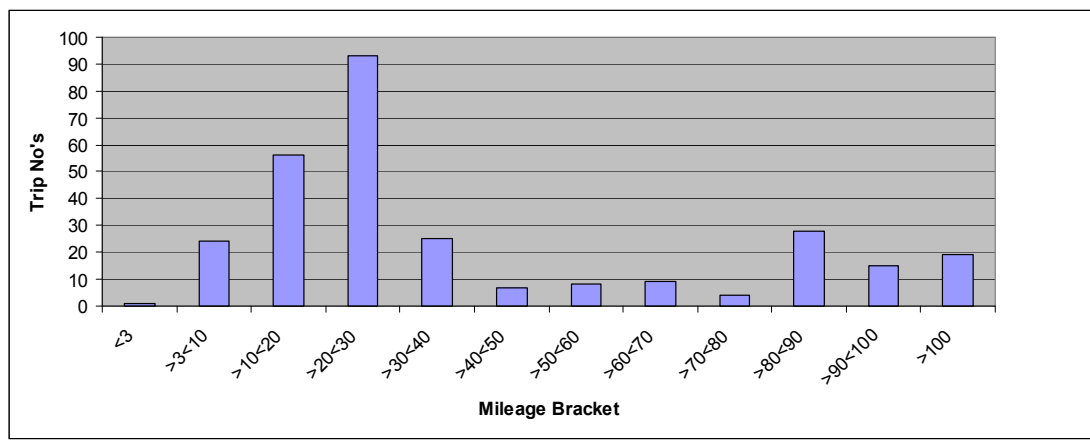
**Achievements to Date**

2. The project undertook 268 taskings and moved 913 service users in this reporting period. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of tasks by category. This illustrates that most of our taskings are still recreational, hospital visits and surgery support. In April to September the breakdown of task categories are as followed: Recreational: 101, Hospital: 92, Respite: 12 and Surgery Support: 63.



**Figure 1 – Cumulative task type**

3. The worth of the community transport service is demonstrated by the trend in trip lengths contained in Figure 2 below. The chart shows 19.38% (56) of trips are in the 10 – 20 miles bracket and 32.18% (93) in the 20-30 miles bracket per task. This is indicative of the catchment areas for the major centres of Oban, Lochgilphead and Campbeltown and the service therefore alleviates the access issues for those who may be living from rural isolation in the surrounding areas and are not served by other means of transport provision. Trips in the over 100 miles bracket sit at 6.57% (19) which mostly occur due to hospital appointments in Glasgow or Oban. It also demonstrates the complementary role to public transport which community transport can play when multi trip journeys are involved. It is estimated that in Kintyre 90% of passenger numbers consist of repeat users. The Mid Argyll figure equates to approximately 70%. This is similar for the islands.



**Figure 2 – Trip Mileage Bracket**

### Trends

4. After 9 years of the project operating trends have stabilised. With the main categories of recreation, which includes access to amenities, hospital and surgery support and this has been fairly consistent throughout. The reduced number of clients, as demonstrated in our monthly reports, in this period is largely due to the uncertain funding situation with certain community groups, which has led to a suspension of some of their activities.

5. In geographical terms, demand trends differ throughout the area of operations. In the main the majority of Kintyre tasks are scheduled and the remainder is demand responsive. The reverse is true for Mid Argyll and the Islands. Timetabling difficulties with national public transport providers also means that in the case of Mull and Lismore, the Red Cross service would appear to be a favourite option for trips to Greater Glasgow hospitals, especially as a degree of additional care is provided. There has also been a noticeable increase in hospital movement between Campbeltown, Oban and Glasgow. These are usually arranged on short notice. Islay and Jura patients are picked up at the ferry terminal at Kennacraig, usually after collection from home by the Red Cross at the start of the journey. Patients from Mull are mainly picked up by Red Cross volunteers and taken to the ferry in Craignure and then picked up by another volunteer in Oban. The transport service is particularly useful for Gigha patients with regular appointments at the Lochgilphead hospitals as it enables them to pre book but also for patients needing to attend clinics at Glasgow Hospitals. That requires them to be picked up at the ferry terminal and taken to Machrihanish Airport. On return the trip will be reversed.

### Performance against Objectives

6. The following table relates to the objectives contained within the EDRT grant application.

Serial	Objective	Comment
1	Improve access to amenities by 10% for individuals living in	A campaign of re-advertising the service is under way as the new driver

	isolated localities within 12 months	in Lochgilphead has taken up his position. This has included targeted visits and attendance at community group meetings like RCOP and transport forum meeting on Islay and also advertising in local facilities such as the library and AVA office.
2	Improve respite care movement by at least 100% within 12 months	This is a work in progress. Numbers have slightly gone up and we are working more often with the Social Care Department
3	Increase annual trips by 5% per annum relative to current utilization statistics	After being without a driver in Lochgilphead for over 6 month we are still aiming to achieve this figure as we now have a new driver in situ.
4	Improve cover to Gigha residents	Current activities include ferry pick ups at Tayinloan for onward movement to Campbeltown Airport and access to medical and dental facilities at Lochgilphead and Oban. Most of our tasks are via the surgery at Muasdale which is in contact with the community nurse on Gigha.

### **Other Funding Opportunities**

7. The search for other funding opportunities is a constant feature of the business. Assistance is provided by our Area management accountant in Hillington and the project management staff at UK Head Office.

### **Staffing Situation**

8. The staffing situation has changed to 3 full time staff. In addition to the regular staff there are approximately 20 volunteers in Kintyre, Mid Argyll, Appin and the Inner Hebridean Islands. However, only about 8 of those are volunteers on a regular basis. Amongst the volunteers there are also 2 individuals nominated as relief drivers for those periods when the regular drivers are unavailable due to sickness or leave.

### **Fares and Charges**

9. In accordance with the grant application, the project is committed to raising £7500 during the financial year April to March. Income projections show that there should not be a problem with this figure.

10. There are 3 categories of charges raised by the project:

a. For trips requested by individuals, the fares and charging regime implemented in November 2004 is still in force. As opposed to straight line charges, which would be exorbitant in a rural setting and defeat the object of community transport, costs are based on variable rates over the distance travelled, whilst still ensuring no losses are involved. Staff subsistence costs are included as are any parking fees, ferry costs or any other incidental costs.

There has never been a problem with this approach. This type of fare structure also requires constant monitoring of fuel prices and vehicle fuel consumption figures.

b. Tasks, which are scheduled to take place on a regular basis such as Surgery support or support to specific community groups, are subject to a retainer. Charges are based on the frequency of occurrence and estimated fuel consumption. These retainers are normally paid on a 6 monthly basis.

c. Tasks, which are in support of a national organisation such as the Ambulance Service or the NHS, are subject to charging conditions as contained in the relevant MOU. The MOU is in the format of a call off contract, aligned to straight line charges and dependent on the availability of resources after community demand has been taken into account.

### **Current Challenges**

11. The major challenge is to draw up and consider various options for structural change with the decrease in external funding. The aim would be to achieve a seamless transition with no diminution in service to the community if at all possible. The current volume of activity and flexibility of application is only possible with a regular complement of full time drivers. Any reversion to a pure voluntary model would lead to a significant decrease the number of journeys that could be done. Recruiting volunteers is also a huge challenge in itself.

The rurality of the area that we cover also means that we have a challenge of winter weather and continuing to support service users in adverse weather conditions. This was demonstrated earlier this year with the huge amount of snow that fell in the Campbeltown area. We managed to help with the evacuation of some of the very rural living people and also to return them to their homes once the power had been restored and the roads were cleared. We continue to prepare for a similar conditions and a repeat of the severe weather in the future.