

Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers

(Co-ordinator is usually based at) 24 Glen Fyne Park, Ardrishaig, PA30 8HQ

Report from Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers to the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Isles Community Planning Group, 4th March 2015.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1. In 1994 a few ladies from Ardrishaig became aware that some elderly and disabled members of the community, who had no car of their own, were finding it difficult to access suitable transport to visit friends and to keep appointments. They set up Mid Argyll Transport Volunteers and started fund-raising and recruiting local drivers who were willing to give of their time and use their own vehicles, receiving in return only a small mileage allowance for petrol and wear and tear to their cars.
- 1.2. Twenty-one years later MATV is still proving a much-needed and much appreciated personal service. Even with more public transport available, there are still many elderly people and people with disabilities or health conditions who are unable to access mainstream services. This may include people who don't live near a bus route or the only bus may not run at a time that allows them to keep their appointment and return on the same day.

2. MEMBERSHIP:

- 2.1. Totally run by volunteers, currently all over 60, a small committee undertaking the brunt of the organisational work. Passengers come from all areas of Mid Argyll, and we try to ensure that we have volunteer drivers in as many communities as possible – eg Tarbert, Achnamara, Minard, Furnace, Kilmartin.

3. USAGE;

- 3.1. Last year there were 650 runs, covering just under 40,000 miles last year (2013/14), which is between 3-3,500 per month: all of this driven by 15 volunteer drivers. We don't operate at weekends and usage is uneven with as many as 10 runs being delivered in one day and as few as one or none on another, although the average is 2-3.
- 3.2. Trends show increasing number of requests for runs to Glasgow, mainly for appointments for cancer treatment.
- 3.3. Passengers are charged from £3 to £50 and driver claim 45p/mile expenses.

4. FINANCE:

- 4.1. Funding sources include:
 - 4.1.1. Argyll and Bute Council

4.1.2. Local groups, including: Kilmartin Trust, Ardrishaig Craft Club, Inveraray Masonic Lodge, Mid Argyll Rotary etc.

4.2. Running costs are in the order of £1,000 per month, with £5,000 in the bank at the last AGM. We predict a deficit of £5,714 for next year unless we are able to secure regular funding.

4.3. We have in the past successfully applied to national and local trusts, but many of these are for special project or start-up costs, and not for running costs.

5. CASE STUDIES:

5.1. A lady with MS is brought up from one of the remoter villages to the MS Centre in Lochgilphead every week to use the hyperbaric chamber. Another is taken to the Southern General in Glasgow once a month for treatment. Many local cancer patients are taken to various hospitals from early diagnosis to the latter stages of life.

5.2. Visiting a spouse in a care home, shopping, appointments to opticians, chiropodists, hairdressers as well as attending local hospital appointments and those at a distance. Our drivers do not just drop our passengers off at the required destination but ensure they get in to their appointment safely, check how long they will be and reassure them they will be back to take them home. We have had excellent feedback from our customer satisfaction questionnaires.

CONCLUSIONS:

6.

6.1. Our service is invaluable, personal and meets the needs of people in the mid Argyll area, however funding remains a persistent headache. Our service is entirely volunteer led and run.

6.2. We have contacted Alan Reid MP to ask who, in NHS Highland, to contact with a view to making the same arrangements as Red Cross in regard to transporting patients to hospital. In his newsletter to constituents he said he had negotiated that patients could just pay £10 up front and the Health Board would recompense the Red Cross instead of, as we still have to do, charging the passenger £50 and have them recover £40 of it back from the Health Board through the HITS scheme.

Current charges

under 5 miles	£3	25 – 30 miles	£12
5 – 10 miles	£5	30 – 40 miles	£16
10 - 15 miles	£7	40 – 50 miles	£20
15 – 20 miles	£8	50 – 100 miles	£30
20 – 25 miles	£10	100 – 200 miles	£50