



## Slide 2

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## Community Transport and who can use it?

- ▶ Those who are frail, elderly or disabled
- ▶ Not having regular access to a vehicle
- ▶ Unable to use public transport
- ▶ Rurally isolated
- ▶ It is a door to door (or even armchair to armchair!) service
- ▶ Many groups require you to be a member
- ▶ It is pre bookable
- ▶ Larger groups have wheelchair accessible vehicles
- ▶ Volunteer cars are used very often for the those with medical appointments, depending upon group and location.
- ▶ A fee is payable to the driver

## How often is Community Transport used by Gloucestershire Patients?

- ▶ On a daily basis
- ▶ To access medical appointment at their GP
- ▶ Local/ Cottage hospitals
- ▶ Dental/ Chiropody
- ▶ Major Hospitals for example Gloucester Royal/ Cheltenham
- ▶ Further afield to hospitals in Bristol, Birmingham, Oxford, Swindon etc.
- ▶ Whilst access is good, it is reliant on volunteers being available and willing to take the patient. The service is very dependant on the good will of their volunteers but there will be occasions when the trip request is unable to be fulfilled.



## Where is Community Transport Available in Gloucestershire

- ▶ Gloucestershire is served well by Community Transport, although pockets of the County for example Sedbury, Redbrook and the edges of the County can have difficulty.
  - ▶ The three major Charities Community Connexions, Newent and Lydney Dial A Ride have a range of wheelchair accessible minibuses and volunteer car service.
  - ▶ Many other groups run successful volunteer car services from Cotswold Friends in the North and Bream Voluntary Car Service in the South
- ▶ Cheltenham
  - ▶ Cotswold
  - ▶ Forest of Dean
  - ▶ Gloucester
  - ▶ Stroud
  - ▶ Tewkesbury
- And surrounding villages and Hamlets.

## Do you see Community Transport changing in the future?

- ▶ There has been a lack of investment within Community Transport for the past ten years.
  - ▶ A rising population has seen many people driving their own vehicles for longer. The effect of that is Community Transport is seeing those with greater needs, when their transport options are limited.
  - ▶ Demand responsive transport must be seen as integral to the transport network
- ▶ Recruiting volunteers is becoming more difficult
  - ▶ Many community groups struggle with recruiting new Trustees
  - ▶ Increasing costs adds to the pressure of running the groups
  - ▶ Community Transport requires long term investment and a recognition of the social value that it adds to the community it serves

## What are the alternatives for patients who do not have their own car?

- ▶ Most will ask friends and family first
  - ▶ The public bus network
  - ▶ Local taxi companies
  - ▶ Dial A Ride minibus service
  - ▶ Voluntary Car service
  - ▶ NHS Patient transport
- ▶ **Is NHS non-emergency transport co-ordinated with Community Transport?**
  - ▶ The simple answer is no!
  - ▶ People have very often tried the patient transport before coming to us but they have been refused on grounds of eligibility, the timings are not suitable or they would like a more personalised door to door service.
  - ▶ Inevitably all journey requests will not be fulfilled, due to availability, lack of volunteers in a specific area etc. Data has not been collated on this as often we ask if their appointment time can be changed.

## Statistics

- ▶ Following a quick survey to prepare for this presentation I asked Community Transport Groups how many Hospital journeys have been taken in the past twelve months.
- ▶ The response was from just seven of the CT groups, one was a nil return, in the County so the final figure would be much higher than this.

▶ **The total is a staggering 6531 !!!!**

## That figure was taken from

- ▶ Community Connexions covering Cheltenham, Gloucester, Tewkesbury and surrounding area
- ▶ Cotswold Friends - North Cotswolds
- ▶ Lydney Dial A Ride - South Forest of Dean
- ▶ Newent Dial A Ride - North Forest of Dean
- ▶ Wotton Volunteers - Wotton-under-Edge and District
- ▶ Bledington Care Committee - Bledington Village

## Summary

- ▶ Community Transport is run on a Charitable basis, many groups are volunteer led. Offering access to hospitals across the county and beyond for those with limited transport options.
- ▶ Whilst generally there is good coverage from Community Transport in Gloucestershire, there will be areas which are not serviced and additionally in areas where there is, it will be dependant on volunteer driver availability.
- ▶ The demand for Community Transport is changing with growth in some areas, especially the volunteer car services.
- ▶ We are seeing those with limited transport options and in turn an increase in need
- ▶ Community Transport is faced with a range of challenges from funding, lack of volunteers and increased legislation.
- ▶ Most importantly for those we help we are a lifeline and all our volunteers report a sense of satisfaction that they have been able to help someone through a critical stage in their lives.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions.

