

HcL wins at CTA Awards

We were delighted to be announced as winners of the **Partnership of the Year** at the UK Community Transport Association Awards 2021 on 18 November. Together with SCRAN Academy and PEP (Pilton Equalities Project). We were recognised for our partnership in Summer 2020 for the provision and delivery of over 120,000 meals to residents in Edinburgh.



With so many deserving entries and an impressive shortlist, we were incredibly honoured to win.



We were also so proud that the recipient of the **Lifetime Achievement Award** was our Trustee, and previous Chair of HcL's Board, Murial Williams. A fantastic recognition for over 25 years voluntary service to community transport



Vaccine Travel

Since the start of the vaccination programme in January 2021, HcL has offered free vaccine appointment travel to anyone with mobility challenges across Edinburgh and the Lothians. To date, we have provided over 1,800 passenger trips. We are proud to have supported our community through the last 12 months and are committed to continuing to do this.

Inside this issue:

CTA Awards	1
Vaccine Transport	2
Dial-A-Bus East Lothian Additional Routes	2
Fare increase	3
Stairclimber	3
Broxburn Community Bus	4
Funding Update	11
Staff News	12
Music Quiz	13

Points of interest:

- ◇ Spring Day Trips for East Lothian
- ◇ Gig Buddies
- ◇ VOCAL
- ◇ Trustee Recruitment
- ◇ AGM - save the date
- ◇ Meet The Team

SERVICE NEWS

Vaccine Transport

Second booster jabs are to be offered to those aged 75 and over and those at highest risk of severe COVID-19 disease following the latest Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice. To protect those groups a spring booster dose will be offered at least 24 weeks after the last vaccine dose.

HcL will continue to offer FREE transport for people with mobility challenges to get their vaccine booster. This is of course subject to availability so call as soon as you have your appointment and we will do our very best to help get you to your appointment and home safely.

Any person who has challenges with getting out and about due to age, disability, health issues, additional support needs or geographic remoteness is eligible to use the service.

**To book free transport for your vaccine booster call:
Edinburgh, East Lothian or Midlothian 0131 447 9949 /
West Lothian 01506 633953.**

New Dial-A-Bus services for East Lothian

We have two new East Lothian services starting from 1 February 2022 covering some of the more outlying areas of the county.

Tuesdays 11.30 to 1.30pm: Service for Longniddry- Aberlady - Gullane & Haddington to Tesco Haddington.

Thursdays 11.30 to 1.30pm: Service for - Aberlady - Gullane - North Berwick & Dunbar to ASDA Dunbar.

For more information or to book a journey please telephone 0131 447 1718 between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday – Friday.

The bus will pick you up at your home and will set you down at the supermarket. You will have between 1 and 2 hours to do your shopping, meet friends or have a coffee and then the service returns you to your home.

The driver will provide assistance with your shopping on and off the vehicle and into your home if required.

And remember, that your first trip is free—single or return!

SERVICE UPDATES

Fares Increase

From the 1 April, the Dial-A-Ride fares will increase to £5.00 for the first mile and then 60p per mile.

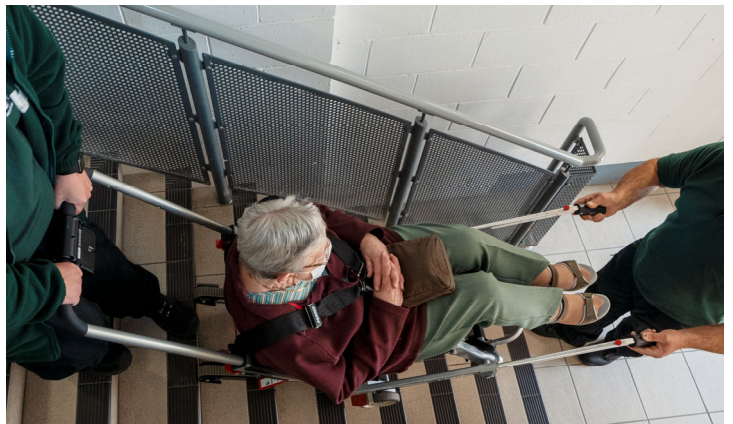
Additional paying passengers will continue to be charged a flat fare of £2.00.

Stairclimber

We purchased a new Stairclimber, thanks to The Schuh Trust, who funded the cost of this equipment. A Stairclimber carries a passenger up or down stairs with the support of 2 of our trained team.

This helps someone housebound who lives in a flat / upper floor to get out of their home and onto a destination of their choice.

We have secured further funding to cover the staffing cost for this service, so currently this service has no additional cost to your fare. Now is a great time to try using the Stairclimber if you are housebound.



This makes getting out possible for someone who otherwise could not. Get in touch to find out more.

Call Robert on 0131 447 9953

Contactless Payments

HcL have card readers in all vehicles offering passengers contactless payment options. The card readers can use chip and pin, and other contactless options.



New Vehicles

HcL purchased 2 second-hand Fiat Ducato Low Floor vehicles, one as a relief vehicle for Broxburn & Uphall Town Service. And the other to replace a WLcomBus.



Additional Route on WLcomBus

From the 18 March 2022, passengers in Armadale will be able to access a second route to Morrisons and Lidl in Bathgate on Fridays 10am - 12pm. This will be route WB18.

This has been added due to the popularity of this route on a Friday morning.

Community Bus Service in Broxburn and Uphall (West Lothian)

In April 2021 we launched a new community bus service in Broxburn and Uphall, in partnership with West Lothian Council.

The service has proved to be very popular with numbers of passengers higher than anticipated.

Feedback from passengers and residents of Broxburn and Uphall is being incorporated into future service plans.

Vehicles used on the 2A and 2B routes are fully accessible and are specially adapted to carry combinations of wheelchair users and other passengers safely and comfortably.



Concessionary travel passes are valid on the Community Bus Service.

The service operates on a hail and ride basis in residential areas where there are no formal bus stops. Passengers can signal to the driver to stop at any point in these areas, and the driver will stop as soon as it is safe to do so.

Further information and timetables can be found:

<https://www.hcltransport.org.uk/community-bus>

Have you thought of becoming a member of HcL?

If you are a user of HcL and would like to become more involved with the Charity and support our future, have you thought about becoming a member?

You can attend the Annual General Meeting and have your say about how HcL should be run.

If you are interested in becoming a member you can either speak to a driver, your local office or find out more information on our website.

[HcLtransport.org.uk](https://www.hcltransport.org.uk)

Membership is £5 a year, and these funds help sustain our services.

PROFILE RAISING

We continue to increase our presence on social media so that more people can learn of HcL and the Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services. We want to ensure more people know of our services and can benefit from them.

How you can help raise awareness

Word of mouth is still the best way to raise awareness so it would be great if our lovely passengers could help us. Here are a few suggestions:



If you do not yet follow us on Facebook, please do at [@handicabs.org.uk](https://www.facebook.com/handicabs.org.uk) and ask your family and friends to as well.



We are also on Twitter – so you can follow our tweets at [@TransportHc](https://twitter.com/TransportHc)

Next time you are on one of our buses, take a leaflet for someone you know who could benefit from using HcL.

If you have any suggestions of local newsletters, magazines, radio stations that would help us raise further profile, please let Laura know –

laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk

Are you a member of a group or organisation that HcL could help

Please get in touch with Elizabeth or Laura, if you know of an organisation that would like us to pop along and chat about HcL, Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus.

Please call 0131 447 9953 or email:

elizabeth.campbell@handicabs.org.uk or laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk



SPOTLIGHT ON A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

Gig Buddies West Lothian is a project by Thera Trust, funded by West Lothian Council.



They work with adults with a learning disability, local venues and organisations to create more inclusive social events. Their social events can be a drink or a meal in a local café or pub, or a gig in a local venue or even a gig at a not so local venue, such as OVO Hydro. We don't host exclusive Gig Buddies events, we get out to whatever is happening in the local community.

Thera Trust have Gig Buddies projects running in West Lothian, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Gig Buddies West Lothian has been improving the social lives of adults learning disability for nearly 5 years. They have 45 members and a small team of local volunteers who have gig buddies. Members and volunteers share a wide range of interests, They have buddies who go for walks, coffees, football, galleries, theatre, and those who's shared love lies in music, or dancing, from jiving to the mosh pit, whatever their 'gig' is!

"I had a good night at that concert. I'd not seen that kind of music live before, I don't really listen to RnB, but it was good! Good being back a gigs!" – Jay, Gig Buddies member

Gig Buddies:

We have been loving getting back out to gigs, our most recent gig was at Purple Orange in Bathgate. They held a sing-along gig, some great local artists performed and a few of our gig buddies got up on stage and performed their favourite song, it was a big hit and everyone had a great time.



Sandra and Joseph at Purple Orange

Purple Orange are a fantastic local partner who put on fundraisers and raise awareness of our project. We are very lucky as we have lots of partner venues and organisations across central Scotland. Our partnership with DF Concerts means we can offer free tickets to gigs like Coldplay and Kings of Leon, tickets that otherwise might be out of reach for some of our members.

GIG BUDDIES



“I really enjoyed this event, I’d go back again!”

- Colin, a member after coming to the Purple Orange singalong gig.

Colin performing with Sam and Scott

We also offer a befriending service, we pair adults with a learning disability with local volunteers who share the same interests, to get out to events that they both enjoy. We have very limited volunteers in West Lothian, so new volunteers are always welcome.

“My gig buddy has introduced me to so many different events, that I’d never have attended if it wasn’t for her. We’ve seen some amazing dance, theatre, and world music together. We love discovering new things together, it’s fantastic!” - Gig Buddies volunteer

If you want to find out more:

For West Lothian - please contact Debbie, the West Lothian Gig Buddies Project Coordinator via email:- Debbie.Forsyth@thera.co.uk or call her on 07921 289626

For Edinburgh: contact Sam by emailing him at Samuel.Maggs@thera.co.uk or calling him on 0773 848 6001



“If I didn’t have Gig Buddies, I’d be lost” - Gig Buddies member

Annual General Meeting — Save the Date

We will be holding our AGM on Monday, 10th October 2022

If you require any information, please contact your local office.

Edinburgh, Midlothian + East Lothian - 0131 447 9953

West Lothian - 01506 633336

SPOTLIGHT ON A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

VOCAL – Voices of Carers Across Lothian.

Who is an unpaid carer?

A carer provides unpaid care to a family member, partner, relative or friend with a:

- Physical health condition
- Mental health condition
- Disability or additional support needs
- Long-term condition
- Drug or alcohol addiction

You do not have to be providing a certain number of hours of caring or have specific responsibilities to be considered a carer.

About VOCAL

VOCAL, Voice of Carers Across Lothian, is a local charity which supports unpaid carers in all caring situations and relationships. We help carers identify the issues affecting them and achieve the best possible outcome. With two carer hubs and locality bases across Edinburgh and Midlothian, we offer in-person and digital support, and our services and support measures include:

- Individual support with an experienced practitioner
- Carer support groups
- Individual mentoring with a trained carer
- Welfare rights advice and support
- Counselling
- Free training, activities and events
- Help to shape care packages and support
- Short breaks funding



Grants and Funding

VOCAL holds funds from the Scottish Government and other sources to enable small grants for carers in greatest need. Applications can now be submitted by any carer seeking support, who would benefit from opportunities to improve their personal health, enable them to obtain a break from caring or improve financial wellbeing.

To help your personal health, we can support you in accessing mindfulness, Tai Chi or yoga classes, or even fitness equipment to help you keep fit at home.

To improve your financial wellbeing, you may need support to pay for additional costs associated with caring, purchase essential furniture or white goods, or to cover costs associated with obtaining employment.

Costs towards breaks can include day or residential trips in the UK. For some carers, a break is time outside to do some gardening. For others, it is the funds to buy an iPad to help them access Netflix or another hobby. We can also support you

VOCAL - VOICES OF CARERS ACROSS LOTHIAN

Applications are invited from carers of all ages and caring situations, including young carers and young adult carers, parent carers of children with additional support needs and carers of minority communities.

Our Carer Support Team can advise on what you can seek funding for and how to apply. Visit the Wee Breaks website for more information: www.weebreaks.com/funding-your-break/

Counselling and emotional support

If you are experiencing isolation, stress and anxiety, VOCAL has range of therapeutic and emotional supports that can help you to improve your wellbeing, including a COSCA recognised counselling service.

Counselling appointments can be by phone or video calling in the first instance, but we can offer face-to-face counselling for those who might not be able to access the service otherwise.

Events, activities and training

Increase your confidence, become better informed and improve your stress levels by attending a course or session with our Training Team. Our January – March events and activities programme has over 70 **free** opportunities.

We have a mix of online sessions on Zoom and face-to-face sessions at our Edinburgh Carers' Hub and Midlothian Carer Centre, meaning you can find a session or format that suits your needs. We have short courses (running between 2-6 weeks), one-off information sessions, and social groups. Whether you are looking to learn, socialise or unwind, there is something for everyone.

Get in touch:

General information and refer to our services: www.vocal.org.uk

Accessing a break: www.weebreaks.com

Sign up to an event or activity with VOCAL: www.carerstraining.co.uk

Contact details: VOCAL Edinburgh

Email: centre@vocal.org.uk

Call: 0808 196 6666

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VOCALEdinburgh>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/vocaledinburgh>

Contact details: VOCAL Midlothian

Email: midlothian@vocal.org.uk

Call: 0131 663 6869

Facebook:



NEWS

HcL gains Living Wage Accreditation

At HcL we know that our staff are what make the service - from our despatch team speaking with our customers, to our drivers supporting our passengers door-through-door, to our operational management ensuring our resources are where they need to be and our small core team behind the scenes.



We are proud to now be a Living Wage Accredited Employer.

Spring Day Trips

Thanks to funding from Volunteer Centre East Lothian - Social Isolation Fund we will be coordinating 3 day trips for people with mobility challenges from across East Lothian.

Destinations and dates are being finalised which we will announce shortly.



Watch this space!

Outside the Lothians

We love taking passengers to different locations — some to enjoy a day out, others to have a wee staycation in another part of the country.

Recently we have been to:

- Glasgow Hydro
- Five Sisters Zoo
- Edinburgh Playhouse
- Mackinnon Mills
- Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
- Kilmarnock
- Peebles
- Revitalise Respite, Southport
- Renfrew
- Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew
- Cromlix Hotel
- Whitley Bay Holiday Park
- Seton Sands
- Hawes Inn South Queensferry
- Cardy Lodge, Homeland Trust, Leven
- Dunfermline
- Rouken Glen Garden Centre, Linlithgow
- Cameron House Hotel, Loch Lomond
- The Oaks, St Andrews
- Ranaich House, Dunblane
- Calvert Trust at Kielder Water
- Coldingham Bay



FUNDING UPDATE

As HcL is a charity, it is really important we raise funds from other sources. Laura, HcL's Funding and Marketing Manager, continues to apply for funds from many Trusts and Funders to help cover equipment costs; fuel costs for free vaccine transport; towards vehicles and salaries. In the last 6 months, we secured funding from:

- M&G Prudential Community Fund
- M A Black Charitable Trust
- WL Councillor Disbursements 2022
- East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership
- The Carmela and Ronnie Pignatelli Foundation
- Asda Straiton Green Token vote
- Volunteer Centre East Lothian - Social Isolation Fund

We would also like to thank the following West Lothian Councillors for their donations from their disbursement fund:

- Councillor Pauline Clarke
- Councillor Harry Cartmill
- Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan

THANK YOU to all the Funders and Trusts and Businesses who have supported HcL this year.

Feedback

Any feedback you can provide HcL can be used in our reports to funders where we have to detail the difference their financial support has made.

If you are happy to provide a short quote and share how HcL has helped you, please send this to laura. Kearney@handicabs.org.uk



THANK YOU to our Key Funders



STAFF NEWS

Welcome back to

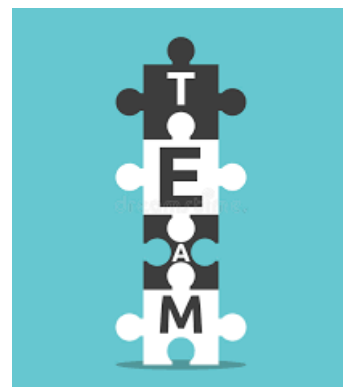
West Lothian:

- Reginald Watson (Driver)

Staff Leavers:

West Lothian:

- David Kilgour (Driver)



Additional staff training:

All drivers are currently going through an additional training course on Understanding Epilepsy and Administration of Midazolam.

TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT

HcL are looking for 3 new Trustees to join our Board.

There is no doubt that being a trustee is one of the powerful ways in which you can contribute to your local community or to a cause you really care about. As a trustee at HcL, you will play an integral part in shaping our sector and in ensuring that HcL adheres closely to our 5-year Strategy in the interests of its beneficiaries, supporting members to provide accessible and inclusive transport to the community. This is an opportunity to bring your experience insight on the unique issues facing community transport organisations in the Lothians area to the fore.

Experience Required: commitment to the values of HcL, we are interested in volunteers with relevant experience in transport across the UK, human resources and the legal framework in which we operate, but equally we are keen to talk to people who can bring their lived experience to the charity. Trustees should also have time available to support with scrutinising and approving papers, support risk management and be able to use their expertise to support the new 5-year strategy for HcL.

For a chat about the role and nomination process, please contact:

Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive, on 0131 447 9953 or at kelvin.cochrane@handicabs.org.uk

Service Awards

We would like to congratulate the following member of staff for their long-term service:

Edinburgh:

- Chris Howard (Operations Supervisor) 15 years' service award



Music Quiz



Try our music quiz with a difference every question is related to a colour!

1. What colour of ribbon did Tony Orlando and Dawn tie in 1973?
2. What colour was the lady wearing that Chris de Burgh sang about in 1986?
3. What colour of eyes does Van Morrison's girl have?
4. Who had the 1972 hit 'Song Sung Blue'?
5. What colour are the fields in the 1993 song by Sting?
6. In a 1964 single by The Rolling Stones which type of bird was little and red?
7. In 1981 what colour door was Shakin Stevens singing about?
8. What colour were Elvis Presley's suede shoes?
9. In 1983 who sang 'I guess that's why they call it the blues'?
10. What colour was The Beatles submarine in 1966?
11. Who sang the James Bond theme Goldfinger in 1965?
12. Which country music star was known as 'The man in Black'?



Answers can be found further on in the newsletter.....

Interesting Music fact

Plants grow faster when they are exposed to music

This is an interesting fact about music. According to a study conducted by South Korean scientists, plants develop more quickly when classical music is played. The scientists used 14 separate music pieces to play music to a rice field and then analyzed the effects. The results showed that music aided crop growth and also indicated that plants could "hear."

Let us know if you play your instrument in your vegetable garden!

FUNDRAISING

Amazon Smile

If you shop on Amazon, please register with Amazon Smile – we get 0.5% of what you spend at no cost to you.

Just go to www.smile.amazon.co.uk and select Handicabs as your charity. HcL will get 0.5% of everything you spend.

Amazon Smile is exactly the same as shopping on Amazon, it recognises your spend and donates to your chosen charity.

You can also use a browser extension called Smilematic.

It will redirect you to smile.amazon.co.uk automatically so if you go to shop on Amazon. Just use this link <https://couponfollow.com/smilematic>



Gift Aid

For every £1 donated to us we can claim 25 pence in gift aid.

If you have not completed a Gift Aid form for HcL and your donations are eligible, we would really appreciate you completing a form.

Anyone who has paid the same amount (as their donation to a Charity) or more in Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax in the same tax year can complete a Gift Aid form. This includes money you earn from employment; profits you make if you're self-employed; some state benefits; most pensions, including state pensions, company and personal pensions and retirement annuities; rental income; income from a trust; or interest on savings over your savings allowance.

Just ask the office who can arrange for a form to be sent to you.



Easy Fundraising

Do you shop online?



Did you know if you register with easy fundraising and choose Handicabs Lothian, we will get a percentage of what you spend on numerous online retailers. There are thousands of retailers registered including M&S, Argos, John Lewis, Tesco, Expedia, Direct Line, Boots and many more.

Just register at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

Then click on the reminder and every time you go on a website that is registered with Easyfundraising, the company will donate a percentage of your sale to HcL.

Get to know the Team

Each newsletter we will ask a member of the team some questions and share the answers so you get to know our team. This month it is **Laura Kearney, Funding and Marketing Manager.**

How long have you worked for HcL?

4 years

What's the best part of the role?

Securing funding to support the delivery and growth of HcLs' services, so that we can support more people

Who is the best driver at HcL?

Well its not me, but thankfully I am not a driver for HcL

Where is your favourite destination to drive to?

Pitlochry, the scenery is so beautiful

Favourite movie?

Harry Potter series,.

Favourite Food?

My dads mince and tatties

Hate?

Mushrooms

Love?

Disney, Harry Potter, travelling and spending time with friends and family

Thanks Laura!

Let us know who you would like to know more about next time!

NEWSLETTER IS GOING QUARTERLY

We will be sharing quarterly newsletters going forward, so the next one will be out in June.

Let us know anything you would like to see included!

Quiz Answers:

1. A yellow ribbon round the Ole Oak Tree
2. Lady in Red
3. Brown eyed girl
4. Neil Diamond
5. Fields of Gold
6. Little Red Rooster
7. The Green Door
8. Blue Suede Shoes
9. Elton John
10. Yellow Submarine
11. Shirley Bassey
12. Jonny Cash

Easter Limerick:

Easter Bunny

By Kaitlyn Guenther

There once was a nice Easter bunny
He hopped around looking very funny
He injured his leg
While hiding an egg
Then he didn't feel very sunny



What's the best way to make Easter easier?

Put an "i" where the "t" is.

How does Easter end?

With an "R"!

Edinburgh, East Lothian & Midlothian

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West Lothian

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bathgate@handicabs.org.uk

www.hcltransport.org.uk



@handicabs.org.uk



@TransportHc

Kelvin Cochrane
Chief Executive
0131 447 9953

If you would like this document in another format (such as large print) or in another language please contact Gary on 01506 633953

STANDARDS

We Will:

- Operate most services in the Council's area every day of the year. A reduced service may operate on public holidays, subject to passenger demands and availability of driving staff.
- Process registrations within 7 working days, and will acknowledge receipt either by telephone or letter. We will attempt to meet urgent travel needs on the same day as registration, subject to availability.
- Aim to have telephone lines available when passengers telephone the office.
- Aim to answer calls within 5 rings.
- Ensure that all our drivers are fully trained to give reasonable assistance passengers may require to and from their homes, and on entering and leaving the vehicle.
- Ensure that wheelchairs are securely restrained using approved equipment on all journeys.
- Test passenger satisfaction with our vehicles and their cleanliness on a regular basis and report the results to customers.
- Acknowledge any complaint/comment in writing within 7 working days with a copy of the formal procedures.
- Aim to complete 1.33 passenger trips per scheduled working hour on Dial-A-Ride and 5 passenger trips per scheduled working hour on Dial-A-Bus.
- Pick up 97% of customers within 15 minutes of the scheduled trip time.
- Complete 99% of all trips booked.
- Ensure that all customers are treated with courtesy and respect. We will measure our success with customer satisfaction surveys and report the results to our customers.

**If you have any comments, suggestions or stories for the next newsletter, please contact Laura at:
laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk or telephone 01506 633953**



West Lothian
Council

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



The Scottish
Government



Midlothian



East Lothian
Council

HcL is a Scottish registered Charity No. SC013906 and Registered Company No. SC79712

Administration & Registered Office: 24/3A Dryden Road, Bilston Glen Industrial Estate, Loanhead, EH20 9HX
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We promise to collect, process and store your data safely and securely. Our full Privacy Policy is available on our website www.hcltransport.org.uk or contact your local office for more information.