

New Chairman

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting, Muriel Williams said that she would like to pass on the leadership role to a new successor.

At the Executive Meeting held on the 4th December 2018, this move materialised when the Board membership was considered and Dr Kenneth Brown was elected to the Chair.

Muriel was presented with an engraved crystal plaque, bouquet of flowers and a gift card to thank her for 17 years service to HcL.

Muriel said “for once I am speechless and it is only now I can adequately thank HcL for a wonderful memory to take forward with me”.



Muriel Williams, Chairman receiving her award from Chief Executive, Kelvin Cochrane for 17 years service as Chairman of HcL

Inside this issue:

<i>From our New Chairman</i>	2
<i>HcL Visits</i>	3
<i>Fares Survey/Fares Increase</i>	4
<i>Passenger Comments</i>	5
<i>Fundraising</i>	7
<i>New Vehicles</i>	8
<i>Aging with Humor</i>	11

Volunteer

If you know anyone who would like to volunteer with HcL either to drive our vehicles or to help in the office, either answering phones or general admin work, please contact Gary Toner (01506 633953) or Robert Hutson (0131 447 9953) for more information.

Special points of interest:

- New Chairman
- A.G.M.
- HcL Visits
- Fares Survey
- Fares Increase

Cinema

Social Occasions

Visiting

Bingo

Theatre

Shopping

Hospital

Restaurants

Respite

Holidays

Education

Day Centres

Religious

Appointments

Work



New Chairman Dr Kenneth Brown

It is a privilege to have been elected as your new Chairman of HcL.

I am following in the footsteps of Muriel Williams who has been in the post since 2001. Muriel has given stalwart service to HcL over the years and her contribution to the organisation has been immense. I wish to thank her for her long service to HcL and hope that I can maintain the high standards that she has set.

Muriel is not stepping down completely but is now assuming the role of Vice-Chairman. As a comparative newcomer to HcL, I am sure that I will require her wise counsel on occasions.



By way of my background, I studied medicine at Glasgow University and following that I was commissioned into the Army as a Medical Officer. I saw service in Germany, Northern Ireland and Catterick, North Yorkshire.

After five years with the Army, I joined a General Practice in Bruntsfield, Edinburgh. I also obtained additional qualifications in Occupational and Industrial Medicine and ran the Occupational Health Service at Napier University in addition to my GP work. I was also a member of the TAVR (Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve) for many years after leaving the Regular Army with service in Riyadh during the first Gulf War. I retired from all medical work in 2007 to care for my wife. I have a daughter in Atlanta USA and a son in London.

A medical colleague, who had been on the Board of HcL, told me about the organisation and thought that it would interest me as I could utilise some of my medical skills and organisational knowledge. I joined as a member of the Board about three years ago and I am very pleased to have done so.

I want to maintain the original aims of HcL in providing a high quality transport service for disabled people. With so many financial constraints in Local Government and funding requirements, there will certainly be challenging times ahead. Any organisation is only as good as the people that work for it. I am very fortunate in having a superb team of people at HcL and very knowledgeable committee members who will rise to these challenges and we will continue to run a very efficient and important service in the future.

Become a Member

If you are a user of HcL and want to become more involved with the Company how about becoming a member?

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

If you are interested then please speak to any driver or your local office.

Visit from Colin Beattie, MSP

On 18th January 2019, Colin Beattie MSP, for Midlothian North and Musselburgh visited our Head Office at Bilston Glen to learn more about HcL's services that we provide. Kelvin showed Colin around our vehicles and introduced him to staff present.

It was our pleasure to meet with him and tell him more about the difference our services makes to our passengers.

Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive
Colin Beattie, MSP
Muriel Williams, Vice-Chairman
Dr Ken Brown, Chairman



Visit from Cllr Pauline Winchester, Midlothian

Thank you to Cllr Pauline Winchester for visiting our Head Office at Bilston Glen on 6th February 2019.

We really appreciated the time that she took to come and learn more about HcL and the services we provide to help raise the profile of our Charity.



Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive
Cllr Pauline Winchester
Dr Ken Brown, Chairman

Visit from Miles Briggs MSP, Shadow Health & Sport

It was our pleasure to have Miles Briggs MSP visit our Head Office at Bilston Glen on Monday, 11th March 2019, to learn more about our service and the needs of our passengers.

Miles spent time meeting staff and having a look round one of our vehicles. Miles said on his twitter page:

“Great to visit Handicabs (Lothian) this morning to hear more about the Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services they provide. Last year they provided over 83,000 passenger journeys helping support independent living across Lothian.”

Muriel Williams, Vice-Chairman
Miles Briggs, MSP
Dr Ken Brown, Chairman
Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive



HcL DIAL-A-RIDE & DIAL-A-BUS FARES SURVEY

In February 2019, HcL surveyed 80 passengers (combination of both Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus) from Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian. Out of the 80 passengers surveyed, 56 responded. The survey consisted of one question for Dial-A-Ride and one question for Dial-A-Bus:



Dial-A-Ride

“Due to the current financial climate and increasing operational costs, Handicabs (Lothian) are increasing the fare from £4.50 to £4.75 for the first mile and from 30p to 40p per mile thereafter. This fare increase would allow the service to be delivered at the level of quality our users have come to expect. The fares increase would take effect from April 2019.

“Would these changes have an impact on your financial ability to use Dial-A-Ride or Dial-A-Bus?”

100% responded “NO”.

Also included was the question:

“If you would like to tell us in your own words what the Dial-A-Ride/Dial-A-Bus service means to you, please do so ”.

Dial-A-Bus

“Due to the current financial climate and increasing operational costs, Handicabs (Lothian) are increasing the fare to £1.90 (single) and £3.80 (return). This fare increase would allow the service to be delivered at a level of quality our users have come to expect. The fares increase would take effect from April 2019.

100% responded “NO”.

Also included was the question:

“If you would like to tell us in your own words what the Dial-A-Ride/Dial-A-Bus service means to you, please do so in the box below”.

Fares Increase (1st April 2019)

After consultation, from the 1st April 2019 Dial-A-Ride fares will increase to £4.75 for the first mile increasing by 40p per mile thereafter. Dial-A-Bus fares will be increased to £1.90 per person (including escorts) for a single journey and £3.80 for a return journey. Special journeys outwith the Lothians have also increased—please contact your local office if you require more details.

Fares Survey Passenger Comments

"This service has been a god-send for me. I have mobility issues with my knee. The drivers could not be more patient or helpful at all times. We would be burying our heads in the sand if we didn't acknowledge the rising costs in every area of life"

"Having this service allows me to be independent and also to meet with friends on a weekly basis. I would miss the service and my independence if this was cancelled"

"This service is vital to me in many ways. I would not be able to get to places without you wonderful people"

"Am pleased with the service, you are great the way you are so helpful and good with everyone. I am so pleased I heard about your service. Keep up the good work well done"

"It means everything to me as I can't go on buses due to back problems"

"It enables me to do a weekly shop and have someone make sure I am cared for and enable me to meet other passengers like myself. Thank you"



COMMENTS

"We wouldn't get out without the use of the bus as all the family work and need their cars. I'd like to say all the drivers are a great help to both of us"

"I have used the service for a long time. If it wasn't for you and the service you provide I would be housebound. To me the service is worth every penny. Thank you I don't know where I'd be without you"

"Dial-A-Ride enabled me to become more independent and gave me a new lease of life. I was able to go to Livingston to meet friends. Travel on a day out to Edinburgh Festival and to Hospitals. If this service was not available I would be confined to my home town which has limited shop entrances for wheelchairs. Dial-A-Ride gives an excellent service I cannot travel on ordinary bus service or taxis. I no longer exist but live."

"In a word "lifeline" to someone like myself who is disabled and from a social aspect too. With so many Council cutbacks, many of which are specifically aimed at elderly and disabled, this service, along with Dial-A-Ride, cannot be praised highly enough and is well worth the fares charged"

Staff

We would like to welcome new members of staff: Laura Kearney (Fundraising Officer).
Edinburgh: Neil Young (Relief Driver), Edmund Ho (Volunteer Despatcher)

Staff leavers:

Edinburgh: Mark Thomson; Derick Melrose; Rino Sacconi; Steven Edwards - Relief Drivers.



Alexis Brown, Finance Officer receiving her 10 years Service Award.

We wish them well.

We would like to congratulate the following members of staff for their long term service presented by Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive:

Ian Greig, Operations Manager (35 years service).

Gary Toner, Assistant Operations Manager (25 years service).



Ian Greig, Operations Manager receiving his 35 years Service Award.

Alexis Brown, Finance Officer (10 years service).

Staff training and development is an ongoing process. Senior members of staff provide; MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme); Manual Handling Training. Other agencies provide: First Aid Training; Disability Awareness Training and Understanding Autism.



Gary Toner, Assistant Operations Manager receiving his 25 years Service Award.

Laura Kearney – Fundraising Officer

Laura joined the team in November and is working hard at raising the profile of the charity through social media and also writing to numerous local businesses, schools and all MSPs, MPs and Councillors.

She is also working on funding applications to Trusts and Funders to secure funding for additional vehicles.

Laura has enjoyed her first 3 months, in particular going out on the Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services in West Lothian, meeting the drivers and the lovely passengers too.

One of the initiatives just launched is to name our buses so Laura would love to hear from passengers and members with vehicle name suggestions. Drop her an email at laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk.

Also if you are on Facebook, or any of your family and friends are, please 'like' HCL Transport and follow us. Our 250th follower will either get a free Dial-A-Bus Journey or £5.00 discount towards Dial-A-Ride journey.

Fundraising

Do you shop online? If you register with easy fundraising and choose Handicabs Lothian, we will get a % of what you spend donated to us, at no cost to you, from numerous websites. It is easy to register, then click on the reminder and every time you go on a website that will donate a % of your sale to your chosen charity, it reminds you so that we do not miss out. It is really simple to do!



And if you shop on Amazon and register with Smile – we get 0.5% of what you spend. Again at no cost to you. Go to the website smile.amazon.co.uk and select Handicabs Lothian as your charity, we will get 0.5% of everything you spend. This will mount up over the year and be a great help to us.



Gift Aid – if you have made a donation to us, we could claim gift aid on this. For donations under £20 we do not need any paperwork but if a donation was over £20, we would need a completed form. Please let Laura know at laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk or mention

next time you book your journey if you would like a form. Thanks!

Donations

Donations were received from Members and service users from April 2018 to December 2018 was £3661.40. We would like to thank our members and users for their support throughout the year.

Annual General Meeting 2019

The A.G.M. this year will be held at Davidson Mains Parish Church, North Hall, Edinburgh on Monday, 14th October 2019. Lunch Buffet will open at 1.00pm and meeting will start at 2.00pm. Please contact your

local office for transport as early as possible as spaces fill up fast.

If you are not a member but would like to attend HcL's A.G.M., please contact your local office. If you would like to become a member please see above. If you have

any questions/queries you would like to ask but cannot attend, you can either telephone, post in your question or alternatively you can use our Facebook page.



New Vehicles

Two second hand Dial-A-Ride low mileage vehicles were ordered and delivered from HW Pickrell in December 2018. These vehicles were to replace Bathgate and Edin-

burgh vehicles. They came into service in January 2019.

A new Dial-A-Bus vehicle was purchased by Midlothian Council it came into service in December 2018. HcL purchased a

new Volkswagen Crafter vehicle in conjunction with The City of Edinburgh Council through the Public Social Partnership.

HIGHLIGHTS: the year in brief [Extract from Annual Report 2017/2018]

- 83,199 passengers and their escorts transported during the year.
- Completion of 36 years' service covering over 20.89 million miles.
- 2 replacement vehicles.
- The user led Executive Committee, Finance and Fundraising Sub Committees met regularly during the year.
- Service level partnership agreements continued with all local Councils and the review of Accessible and Community Transport in Edinburgh ongoing.
- Development of the 3 vehicles Rural Project (RCTI) during its 17th year covering rural areas in West Lothian, Midlothian and East Lothian and continuation of the Urban DRT project in Edinburgh.
- "Special Trips" outwith the Lothians for people travelling on holiday or for respite care.
- Joint working with other members of ECTOG (Edinburgh Community Transport Operators Group) to develop local community transport initiatives.
- Joint working with City of Edinburgh Council, Lothian Community Transport Services, Pilton Equalities Project, Dove and South Edinburgh Amenities Group developing a Public Social Partnership.
- Ongoing staff training including: manual handling, first aid, health & safety, MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) and Disability Awareness.
- Membership of Disability Forums, Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA), Community Transport Association (CTA), Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOG), Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), West Lothian Social Enterprise Network (WLSN), Edinburgh's Older People's Service Providers Forum and West Lothian Senior Peoples Forum.
- Members and friends of HcL continue to offer tremendous support for the organisation with generous donations being put towards replacement vehicles and equipment. The "Gift Aid" scheme continues to provide a boost for charitable donations.
- Working with Unite the Union to progress staff conditions and training and health and safety matters.
- Updating and development of accessible vehicle specifications to improve access and comfort for passengers.
- Newsletters, surveys, leaflets and publicity material produced.



“TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES”

Dial-A-Bus

The Dial-A-Bus service provides a personal door-through-door shopping service which connects people in all areas of Edinburgh and the Lothians with their major local shopping centres like Asda, Morrisons and Tesco.

The service is designed for older people and people with limited mobility.

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

FIRST TRIP FREE - SINGLE OR RETURN



the centre



MORRISONS



'This service means I can get out and about. It lets me continue to do things I couldn't do otherwise'

"Gives me independence which keeps me sane. Allows me to interact with others and experience outside world"

For more information please telephone your local office between 9.00am and 4.30pm or follow us on @handicabs.org.uk



“TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES”

Dial-A-Ride

The Dial-A-Ride service provides a personal door-through-door transport for people with various mobility challenges travelling as individuals or groups. The service runs 7 days a week including evenings 365 days a year across Edinburgh and the Lothians. Destinations are unrestricted and can include visits to social and recreational facilities, friends, family and health appointments. All HcL vehicles are specially adapted to carry combinations of wheelchair users and other passengers safely and comfortably.

£5 DISCOUNT APPLIED TO FIRST TRIP



'Without DAR sometimes I would be house-bound. The chaps are always welcoming and I feel safe and secure at all times. I look forward to them coming to get me, no matter where I am going.'

'This service means I can get out and about. It lets me continue to do things I couldn't do otherwise'



For more information please telephone your local office between 9.00am and 4.30pm or follow us on  @handicabs.org.uk

Aging with Humor

An elderly woman decided to prepare her will and told her preacher she had two final requests. First, she wanted to be cremated, and second, she wanted her ashes scattered over Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart?" the preacher exclaimed. "Why Wal-Mart?" Then I'll be sure my daughters visit me twice a week."

My memory's not as sharp as it used to be. Also, my memory's not as sharp as it used to be.

Know how to prevent sagging? Just eat till the wrinkles fill out.

I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia. Have poor circulation; hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. Have lost all my friends. But, thank God, I still have my driver's license.

I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over.

It's scary when you start making the same noises as your coffee maker.

These days about half the stuff in my shopping cart says, "For fast relief."

Remember: You don't stop laughing because you grow old, You grow old because you stop laughing.

Two Old Guys at Dinner

An elderly couple has dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives leave the table and go into the kitchen. The two gentlemen were talking, and one says, 'Last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly.'

The other man asks, 'What is the name of the restaurant?'

The first man thinks and thinks and finally asks, 'What is the name of that flower you give to someone you love? You know... The one that's red and has thorns.'

'Do you mean a rose?'

'Yes, that's the one,' replied the man. He then turns towards the kitchen and yells, 'Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?'

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Kelvin Cochrane
Chief Executive
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**If you would like
this document in
another format
(such as large print)
or in another
language:**

**Please contact:
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**If you have any comments or suggestions for the next newsletter,
please contact Gary at: bathgate@handicabs.org.uk or telephone :
01506 633953**



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