

**HcL Newsletter**  
**Issue 26, April 2023**  
 HcLtransport.org.uk



Here at HcL we are continuing to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday year, we will be having events and activities throughout 2023 to mark the occasion. We are currently finalising Handicabs Lothian, “The First 40 Years” which will include some of our

history, what we are doing now and some lovely photos and information from passengers and staff. This will be available on our website later in the year.

Over the past few months, we have started celebrating with surprise gift bags for some lucky passengers on journeys “picked out of the hat “across Edinburgh, East, West, and Midlothian.

We have come a long way since starting with 6 vehicles in 1982 to now operating across the whole of Lothian with 29 vehicles and over 42 members of staff and 4 volunteers! Thank you for your continued support we are grateful and look forward to planning for the future.

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**Points of interest**

- Fares Increase
- Thank You for your support
- East Lothian new service
- West Lothian new service
- New vehicle



## 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](http://HcLtransport.org.uk)


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

# EDINBURGH

# WINTER OUTINGS

This winter throughout November and December 2022 and into January 2023 we ran a number of successful day trips for passengers with mobility challenges from Edinburgh. These outings were provided free of charge with funding from an Enliven Edinburgh 'Cooie in for Winter' grant from the Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership. We had heard passengers speaking about Christmas shopping and the cost of this in the current climate. We provided supported outings to the Livingston Designer Outlet which has discount options but is somewhere most of our Edinburgh passengers could not travel too independently. We also provided a local outing after Christmas to help with the January 'blues' to the National Museum of Scotland.

Our passengers told us that it was great to get a change of scenery, and to get out with friends during the cold winter months.

Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership  Working together for a caring, healthier, safer Edinburgh





# Smarter Choices, Smarter Places

## Supporting Sustainable Travel

We would like to give a huge thank you to Paths for All, who through the Smarter Choices Smarter Places programme, supported us with a staggering £46,391 for our West Lothian services. This will allow us to increase our services within the area and increase active and sustainable travel throughout Scotland, which in turn will impact on thousands of the most vulnerable and isolated people within the West Lothian area. To say a special thanks to Paths for All we will be

placing their logo on one of our West Lothian vehicles, so keep an eye out for this!

*The programme is grant-funded by Transport Scotland*

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/pathsforall](http://www.twitter.com/pathsforall)

Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/PathsforAllScotland](http://www.Facebook.com/PathsforAllScotland)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/pathsforall](http://www.instagram.com/pathsforall)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/paths4all](http://www.youtube.com/paths4all)

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/pathsforall>

### Springtime/ Easter Quiz

1. *What goes on the top of a traditional spring/easter simnel cake?*

- a. Royal Icing
- b. Chocolate
- c. Marzipan

2. *We use DST in the springtime by setting our clocks to go forward by an hour but what does DST stand for?*

3. *What is the six-week period before Easter called?*

4. *What is the common name of the spring flowering plant narcissus?*

5. *What dried fruit is traditionally in hot cross buns?*

- a. Raisins
- b. Cranberries
- c. Blackcurrant

6. *What is the main ingredient in chocolate*

- a. Sugar
- b. Cocoa
- c. Milk

7. *What meat is traditionally eaten at Easter?*

- a. Chicken
- b. Lamb
- c. Pork

8. *When was the first Easter egg created?*

- a. 1873
- b. 1868
- c. 1900

9. *Which country does Easter Island belong to?*

- a. Spain
- b. Mexico
- c. Chile

10. *What are baby rabbits called?*

- a. Bunnies
- b. Kittens
- c. Pups

*Answers can be found on page 11.....*


## 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 Elizabeth know – [elizabeth.campbell@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.campbell@handicabs.org.uk)

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

Please get in touch with Elizabeth or Gary, 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](mailto:elizabeth.campbell@handicabs.org.uk) or [gary.toner@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:gary.toner@handicabs.org.uk)

## 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 Dolina Gorman, our new Fundraising & Marketing Manager.

### How long have you worked for HcL?

2 months.

### What's the best part of the role?

Knowing that you are helping those that are socially isolated or unable to get out due to mobility challenges, supporting people to get out and enjoy time in the community or visit family and friends.



### What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy painting and various art projects and spending time with my children. My 10

year-old is football mad so we spend a lot of time outside practicing - I have just taken up kick boxing for the first time in two years and enjoying the challenges of this.

### **Where is your favourite destination to drive to?**

I do not drive but enjoy trips up to Dunkeld and around Perthshire, I also love travelling up north, Fort William and surrounding areas.

### **Favourite Food?**

Pasta and Pizza, I have a very sweet tooth and love all chocolate, sweets, and puddings too.

### **Dislikes?**

Anchovies, inequalities in life and bullying

### **Love?**

Sunshine, travelling, time with family and being out in nature.

To get in touch with Dolina:

Please call 0131 447 9953 or email: [dolina.gorman@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:dolina.gorman@handicabs.org.uk)

I started my role with HcL in January 2023, it was a lovely start to the New Year and I am really enjoying working with the team so that we can continue to offer this amazing and essential service throughout the Lothians. My background is in care, where I started as a care worker at 16 then moved into care management and finally fundraising. I have worked in the third sector for over 15 years and find it really rewarding, I get a lot of pleasure in raising funds for so many important charities and I am looking forward to supporting the work that HcL carry out. I never knew how many thousands of people that HcL helped each year and have been humbled reading about how the service really does impact so positively in many peoples' lives, offering independence and reducing social isolation for so many. I look forward to raising as much funding possible for new and existing projects that we run and creating new partnerships with similar organisations.

As part of my role, I am looking for brave/bonkers individuals to take part in fundraising in aid of HcL to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday. I hoped to get 40 people to take part in various exciting challenges, this could be a fun run, the kilt walk perhaps an abseil from the Forth Road Bridge or anything you fancy. You could do this as part of a team or by yourself- if you would like to help please let me know.

### **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.



## Staff Update

We would like to welcome new members of staff:

### West Lothian

Thomas Crosby (Driver), Scott MacGregor (Relief Driver).

### Edinburgh

Peter Williamson (Relief Driver), Patrick Carey (Relief Driver), Gregory Crosbie (Relief Driver).

### Staff Leavers

Grant Gibson (WLcomBus), Irene McDonald (Senior Driver), Rino Sacconi (Driver), Damon Hutson-

Boyle (Driver). We wish them well.

We would like to congratulate Gary Duff, on completion of The Driver CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) Instructor training course, providing the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver Driver CPC training.

Staff training and development is an ongoing process. Our in house trainers provide:

MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme); First Aid; Driver CPC Training; Manual Handling Training. Other agencies provide: Disability Awareness Training; Epilepsy Training and Understanding Autism.



## New Vehicles

HcL has purchased 2 new 16 seater vehicles (Edinburgh and West Lothian) and we expect delivery in May 2023.

We would like to thank “Paths for All” and “West Lothian Development Trust” in receiving funding towards the West Lothian vehicle and an additional Dial-A-Ride service.

## Dial-A-Ride Fares Increase - 1st April 2023

Unfortunately we have found ourselves in the difficult position of having to increase our fares, given a number of ever-increasing costs, like many other services we have experienced unprecedented increases in our utility and wages costs alone. We have raised fares as little as possible to ensure that travel with us remains a viable option for all.

Fares will increase to £6.00 for the first mile and 75p per mile thereafter. Additional paying passengers will be charged a flat fare of £3.00. A special tariff is applied to journeys outwith the Lothian area. Prices will be quoted on request.



**“TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES”**

## **New Dial-A-Ride Service for East Lothian**

**Our Dial-A-Ride service provides personal door-through-door transport for people of all ages with mobility challenges travelling as individuals or groups. This new additional service is running 4 days a week Tuesday to Friday for people who live in East Lothian.**

**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.**

**UP TO £6 DISCOUNT APPLIED TO FIRST TRIP**



*‘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 0131 447 9949 Monday - Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm. Follow us on  @handicabs.org.uk**

## SPOTLIGHT ON A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

### WEST LoTHIAN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Community Connection was introduced by West Lothian, Health and Social Care Partnership and West Lothian Council Anti-Poverty service to address the demand from West Lothian residents to access advice on health and social care within the heart of local communities within an accessible space. Community Connections creates improved access to information, advice and signposting within local communities to support early intervention and self-management. Currently there are drop-ins at twelve local communities; Armadale, Blackburn, Boghall, Broxburn, Craigshill, East Calder, Fauldhouse, Linlithgow, Livingston North, Stoneyburn, West Calder, Whitburn and Winchburgh.

The Community Connections project creates opportunities for local residents to access the broad range of services available to assist them to live well in their own homes and communities. Community Connection is committed to working with service users, their families, the wider community and partners to find effective and sustainable solutions and to achieve the best outcomes for the local community.

Over the past twelve months Community Connections has been able to highlight available alternative community sources of support to assist those managing long term health conditions such as asthma, arthritis, coronary heart disease, chronic pain disorders, COPD, Parkinson's disease, macular degeneration, MND, MS and strokes have been supported by the service since the initial pilot stages in West Calder and Linlithgow, Blackburn and Livingston North, providing assistance with re-arranging hospital appointments, vaccinations appointments, accessing carer support, accessing benefits, obtaining prescriptions and occupational therapy.

The Community Connections project, began in March 2022 as a pilot, to assist local people as they recovered from the impact of the pandemic. It was recognised that the pandemic had brought about a huge change to people's circumstances, post pandemic ,people are struggling with the changes following Brexit, the increase to the cost of living and the difficulties encountered by organisations and companies in recruiting and retaining staff. More and more interactions are online and over the telephone, reducing the opportunity for face to face contact something that many people with hearing loss need to make themselves understood.

Community Connections recognise the benefit of speaking to someone directly to access support and ask questions within a relaxed atmosphere at the heart of the local community. The drop-in provides face to face advice and support without the need to travel to a social work centre for appointments, access the internet or discuss their concerns on the telephone which can be overwhelming for some people making them reluctant to ask for assistance.

Community Connections ensures that the local community has a greater opportunity to voice their opinions and help shape the planning and delivery of health and social care services, addressing the challenges faced when trying to reach the right sources of support when seeking advice on changes of personal circumstances. The sessions are supported on a rotational basis by a range of professionals.

Community Connections is open to all West Lothian residents over the age of sixteen, you are invited to come along to any of the Community Connections drop ins to have a cuppa and chat. The sessions provide quick and easy access to the



right information at the right time by delivering direct in person support.

A warm welcome is provided by Community Connections volunteers and staff are on hand to respond to any enquiries that require access to specialist support West Lothian Council staff from services including the Advice shop, Access-2-Employment, Housing, Social Work, and third sector partner are also available at specific sessions to assist. Currently the Social Security Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is being replaced by Adult Disability Payment, to reflect this change, advisors from Social Security Scotland will be available on a regular basis to assist with benefit applications or answer any concerns about the changes in payments.

If you, or anyone you know, is in need support, information or guidance on topics such as benefits, employability, finances, housing, living well at home, social care, social isolation, support for carers or anything else that matters to you, why don't you come along ? The Community Connections drop-in services takes place in locations across West Lothian in the mornings between 10am and 12pm and the afternoons 2pm and 4pm, to address the recognised need from West Lothian residents to access advice on health and social care within the heart of local communities at an accessible space. For those who are unable to access the drop ins, video calls are available using the safe and secure Near Me platform, used by the NHS and Social Security Scotland, no need to download software or apps.

### Monday

Strathbrock Partnership Centre 2pm -4pm

### Tuesday

Fauldhouse and Breich Valley Hub 10am-12pm

Blackburn Partnership Centre Library 10am -12pm

Winchburgh Community Centre 10am-12pm

Livingston North Partnership Centre 2pm-4pm

### Wednesday

Ian Tennant Library Whitburn 10am -12pm

Boghall Drop in Centre 10am – 12pm

East Calder Dave King Partnership Centre 2pm-4pm

### Thursday

Craigsfarm Café, Craigshill 10am-12pm

West Calder Community Hub, Dickson Street 10am -12pm

Linlithgow Partnership Centre, Library 2pm-4pm

Dale Hub, Armadale 2pm – 3pm

Website details [HSCP Community Connections](#)

## 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](http://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](http://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 25p 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.

# Midlothian Funding

## Thank you for your Support

Earlier this year in February as part of their savings plan for 2023/24 onwards Midlothian Council proposed cuts that would have impacted greatly on HcL services. If the cuts went ahead 100 percent of our funding would be withdrawn, this would have had a devastating impact on the services we could provide, affecting the most vulnerable and isolated people in Midlothian.

We immediately implemented a campaign to emphasise the importance of community transport and how we are an essential part in enabling people to get out and about to be engaged, active and participate in their local communities.

We wrote to the local Councillors, MPs, MSPs and Midlothian Council's 'Have your Say' consultation. We put together petitions and made them available to other organisations, on social media and on our Midlothian journeys.

The Councillors met on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2023 when we found out that HcL would not receive a cut to our funding . We have no doubt that the support that we received from other organisations, our passengers and the wider community had a huge influence on this decision, and we want to thank each and every one of you for your support, we truly appreciate your time and effort.

# THANK YOU



'Spring/Easter Quiz An-

swers:

1. Marzipan
2. Daylight Saving Time
3. Lent
4. Daffodil
5. Raisins
6. Cocoa
7. Lamb
8. 1873 made by Joseph Fry
9. ny .  
from Fry's Chocolate compa-
10. Kittens

**Edinburgh, East Lothian & Midlothian**  
0131 447 9949  
E-mail:  
edinburgh@handicabs.org.uk

**Bathgate**  
01506 633953  
E-mail:  
bathgate@handicabs.org.uk



[HcLtransport.org.uk](http://HcLtransport.org.uk)



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

**Please contact:  
01506 633953**

**If you have any comments, suggestions or stories for the next newsletter, please contact Gary at: [bathgate@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:bathgate@handicabs.org.uk) or telephone : 01506 633953**



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**Administration & Registered Office, 24/3A Dryden Road, Bilston Glen Industrial Estate, Loanhead, EH20 9HX  
tel: 0131 447 9953 email: [admin@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:admin@handicabs.org.uk)**

**We promise to collect, process and store your data safely and securely.**

**Our full Privacy Policy is available on our website [HcLtransport.org.uk](http://HcLtransport.org.uk) or contact your local office for more information**

## 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.