

41 Years of Service 1982-2023



TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023



Scottish Registered Charity No. SC013906 Registered Private Limited Company No. SC079712
Admin & Registered Office: 24/3A Dryden Road, Bilston Glen Industrial Estate, Loanhead EH20 9H

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Kenneth Brown

This year we celebrate 41 years of HcL.

The organisation has developed considerably since its inception. It started with only 6 buses, and we now have 31. While this is a very admiral achievement there will always be a need for further expansion of our services due to the increase in the number of older people in the future.

In order to do this, we are following our Strategic Plan, developed in 2022, which gives the organisation a template with various strategies to achieve this aim. I am pleased to say that HcL is progressing well in this regard, although we can never be complacent.

Being a Charity always means that there will be financial challenges but hopefully we will always have the ability to mitigate these.

HcL cannot stand still and must respond to external challenges such as reducing vehicle emissions. We have converted some of our diesel vehicles in order to assist with this and we are looking forward to our first electric bus being delivered within the next few weeks.

Any organisation is only as good as the staff working within it and I am very pleased to let you know that our CEO Kelvin and his dedicated staff work tirelessly in order to give you, our passengers "The Best Experience".

Fundraising is extremely important in any Charity, and I am pleased to welcome Dolina Gorman who joined HcL as our fundraiser this year and thank her for the excellent work she is doing for HcL.

I also wish to welcome two new members to our Executive Committee: Lee MacInnes and Stephen Somerfield.

With their combined expertise they will be a valuable addition to the Board and look forward to working with them.

At this point, I would like to thank our sponsors and the local councils, for their continued support. This is very much appreciated as without you we would not exist.

Thank you also to our other donors for your generosity and to you our passengers for your continued use of HcL. Please keep using the service and inform others who may wish to use the service.

Best wishes to you all and we look forward to meeting you at our AGM.

Dr Kenneth Brown TD MBChB MRCGP AFOM CIH
Chairman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Kelvin Cochrane

This is the Charity's 41st Annual Report and covers the period from the last Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 10th October 2022 to this year's AGM on 9th October 2023. The Director's Report and Accounts are published separately and cover the Charity's financial year, 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, however a summary version is contained in this report.

This has also been a difficult year, not only for HcL, but for all Charities, businesses, and members of the public.

Like all business, we have endured the cost-of-living crisis, this has had a major effect on our operating costs, not only did we see fuel peaking at £2.00 a litre, which increased our fuel by approximately £1,000 per week. The fuel rise had a knock-on effect for our suppliers who also raised their costs ie vehicle servicing, insurance, utility bills and stationery.

There is also an ongoing labour shortage, this has had effect on all transport companies and is pushing up wages. Last October, we increased salaries by 7.8% to all staff below management and management received 5% - the cost to the company was c£75,000 per year.

The shortage of drivers has had an effect on the number of vehicles we are able to put out daily. We have not had a full quota of staff for over a year. On speaking to other Community Transport Operators and private bus companies, we are not alone.

We have not received an increase in funding from the local councils for more than 15 years, albeit Midlothian Council have been giving us small increases over the years, this is having a major effect on operations.

We have also started to tender for work from Public Contract Scotland and I am happy to say we have won our first contract.

We are starting to diversify to bring in more funds by taking on additional work at full cost recovery, ie Local Community Bus Services, day centre transport, school transport for children with complex needs and group bookings, any surplus made helps us to maintain our core services, Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus.

All additional work we undertake complies with our Memorandum & Articles.

Charitable Objectives and Activities

The objectives of HcL are to provide transport for older people, people with disabilities, additional support needs or with health conditions that affect mobility and those who are rurally isolated with little or no accessible transport.

Handicabs Lothian (HcL) operates 2 core services across Edinburgh and the Lothians: Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus. We also provide longer distance journeys on demand subject to availability. We have 24,261 registered users: Dial-A-Ride (14,015) and Dial-A-Bus (10,246) - August 2023.

We believe transport will play a massive part in improving wellbeing and reducing loneliness and isolation for people with mobility challenges post-pandemic. Combined with the growth in population in the Lothians, more and more people will have the need for quality accessible transport.

With this in mind, we created a new position of a Service Development Manager (two-year contract) in August 2021. In April 2023, the position became permanent. Our aim is to build on and develop new relationships with other organisations and groups to provide access to our service to more people.

Dial-A-Ride

HcL aims to provide a quality of service which goes above and beyond providing door-to-door transport by providing a door-through-door service. This ensures our passengers receive the assistance they need at the start and end of their journey, which is often what makes going out possible for them. This may be assisting people with getting their coat on, tying a shoelace, locking a front door or ensuring that they are settled safely in their home after the journey. The profile of our passengers indicates a high level of mobility difficulty, with 23% of our passengers using a wheelchair. Many of our passengers rely on our service and cannot use buses or taxis. Our service is a particular lifeline for passengers across the Lothians attending medical and health related appointments, in particular across the different NHS Lothian hospitals.

Dial-A-Ride operates 7 days a week, 365 days per year, including evenings to provide door-through-door transport for people with various mobility challenges, of whom 23% use wheelchairs. Edinburgh accounted for 47% of Dial-A-Ride trips, West Lothian 28%, Midlothian 14%, and East Lothian 11%. By providing quality transport, our customers are able to be involved in the community by attending medical appointments, day centres, colleges, school and support groups or to go to shopping centres, theatres, visiting friends and family, socialising, day trips or events and to go away for a holiday. In doing so, it enables family members and carers to have a much needed break.

From August 2022 until August 2023, the Dial-A-Ride service has provided 39,392 passenger trips for residents in the Lothians:

“An excellent service – takes pressure and worry away on expensive transport. So helpful drivers and bookings for transport this can be a lifeline in a lot of ways. A big thank you for this service.”

“I have very poor mobility and using DAR is vital for my physical and mental health. Truly a wonderful service”.

Dial-A-Bus

Provides a Monday to Friday shopping service to local major shopping centres for people who have difficulty shopping using public transport. Passengers are helped in and out of their homes, to and from the bus, and helped to get their shopping inside on return, if needed. All areas of the Lothians have at least one and often 2 routes available during the week, either morning or afternoon.

From August 2022 to August 2023, we have carried 26,452 passengers with 2.43% of passengers using wheelchairs.

Following a Transport Review, West Lothian Council committed to support HcL (as a third sector organisation) in obtaining the necessary licence to accept concessionary card holders on Dial-A-Bus (DAB) services. The DAB service was renamed West Lothian Community Bus (WLcomBus).

The registration of this service allows National Entitlement Card holders to travel on WLcomBus for free. With the added enhancement of the door-through-door support that is the core of HcL's services - users can rebuild their confidence and sense of freedom to return to shopping centres and supermarkets as they did prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The WLcomBus offers another public transport option for people who are unable to use normal bus services, providing links to The Centre in Livingston and large supermarkets.

Other than this development, the WLcomBus service is operating in the same way as DAB:

“Thank you for an excellent bus service. I enjoy the company of other passengers and just travelling round the houses as we pick them up.”

“With no public service bus to Bathgate, Dial-A-Bus is a lifeline for me and allows me to do my shopping personally. Do not like to order online as I like to see the goods before I buy”.

“It's an excellent service. I couldn't cope without it thank you so much”.

Community Bus West Lothian

After updating our Statement of Charitable Purposes to include: “To provide community bus services within areas where none, little or commercial services are not viable for disabled, ill, disadvantaged and the general public to improve quality of life.”

We have been delivering a Community Bus Partnership Pilot with West Lothian Council following members of the public requests for a local town service. Between August 2022 and August 2023 - 34,385 passengers travelled with HcL with 29,727 trips using concessionary travel passes in the Broxburn and Uphall area. This service started on 5th April 2021 and links the public and people with mobility challenges from residential areas with key services on main streets including shops, health and personal care outlets. It also supports users to connect to existing public transport services in these areas for forward travel.

As the pilot was a great success, the service was increased from a 2 hour service to an hourly service in June 2022 with an additional bus. This service now operates Monday to Saturday with 2 buses and employs 4 local staff members, 2 full-time and 2 part-time drivers.

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. Fares are £2.00 for adults and £1.00 for children, with concessionary bus pass holders able to travel for free.

All the 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.

The service went out to tender through Public Contracts Scotland in June 2023, which I'm happy to report we will continue to operate the service for a further 2 years.

Midlothian & East Lothian Concessionary Travel

HcL has been in discussions with Midlothian and East Lothian Councils to change the Dial-A-Bus services from a Section 19 operation to a Section 22 operation. This will allow users to use their concessionary passes. Midlothian & East Lothian Council have given their support. The date set for this changeover will be 3rd January 2024.

I would like to thank our professional and committed 43 members of staff who operate our 32 vehicles and 2 despatch centres throughout the year, including evenings and weekends.

I would also like to thank our volunteer drivers and office staff for their commitment over the last year. Also a big thanks to the Chairman and Executive members past and present for all their efforts over the years and the support they have given me.

Our Committee, members and friends continue to help us with generous donations and voluntary assistance.

Support to HcL

We also wish to thank our many suppliers and service centres who have assisted in keeping our services and vehicles going every day of the year.

HcL could not operate without the financial support from:

- **Local Authorities** - The City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council for their continued financial support which underpins our services and subsidises the trips for passengers.
- **Passengers and Members** – thank you for your support, using the services and donations.

- **Funders** - We are grateful to all supporters – from members and customers who have made donations; and from the Funders, Trusts, Charitable Organisations and Local Groups who have supported us this year. Our thanks to:
 - The Robertson Trust;
 - Arnold Clark Community Fund
 - West Lothian Council Disbursements;
 - Howdens;
 - Penpont Charitable Trust;
 - EVOC Enliven;
 - East Lothian Council - East Lothian Project;
 - Edinburgh Airport;
 - Nancy Massey Trust;
 - JTH Charitable Trust;
 - WG Edwards Charitable Trust;
 - Marian Gibson Trust;
 - NHS Lothian – Coorie in for Winter;
 - East Lothian Health & Social Care Partnership;
 - East Lothian Community Intervention Fund.

We would also like to thank the following West Lothian Councillor for her disbursement donation: Maria MacAulay.

Anniversary Jaslin Bhagrath CA (Treasurer)

Jaslin Bhagrath first joined the HcL Executive Committee back in 2013 and we are delighted that 10 years later she is still with us as a member of the Executive and our Treasurer. To celebrate Jaslin's 10th anniversary, we found out a bit more about her and her time with us.

In her professional life Jaslin is a Chartered Accountant and partner in her firm with an extensive history and expertise working with charities.

Jaslin explained that she had just had her daughter in 2012 and was on maternity leave but after a few months she was getting restless and looking for a new challenge.

Often the way people become involved in charities is not straight forward and Jaslin was no different. Her father-in-law is a keen golfer and was out playing and chatting to another golfer, Ronnie Sinclair when he mentioned that he volunteered as a member of the Executive Committee at a charity called Handicabs (Lothian) and they were looking for a new Treasurer. Straight away Jaslin's father-in-law said he knew the perfect person, Jaslin phoned and then popped into see the CEO at the time and in early 2013 she attended her first Executive meeting, the rest is history.

Jaslin agrees that a good member of an Executive Committee or Board needs a variety of skills particularly in an office bearers' position. You need to be able to strike a balance between sharing your ideas, listening, offering support but also challenging the senior management team. A trustee needs to have a strong knowledge in their area of expertise. Here at HcL we know that Jaslin has all of these qualities, but she also explained that she enjoys being part of the Executive listening to new ideas, learning from other people and encouraging new developments.

Jaslin acknowledges that like all charities there have been financial challenges for HcL over the past few years while we are grateful to still receive local authority grant funding this has not risen in line with our expenditure. Jaslin explained that one of the highlights of her time with us has been how as an organisation we have risen to these challenges exploring new areas of income, fundraising and community development while adapting our services and how we work to meet these.

“It’s been good to see that whilst continuing to provide our core Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services we have evolved and diversified into group and community transport and have developed our staff team in order to grow, develop and make new connections”.

Probably the most challenging time for us all in recent years was the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly the lockdown and further restrictions. Although hugely challenging, Jaslin said that these months also gave her some of her proudest moments at HcL with us providing hot food deliveries, free journeys to vaccine appointments and for nurses to provide vaccinations for vulnerable people in their own homes and residential nursing and care homes. This was the perfect example of how HcL was able and prepared to diversify and always put our passengers first.

Jaslin is always busy with her work, her family and volunteering but what does she do to relax and have some time to herself. She explained that she always enjoys having time with her children and she likes running, *“to get out in the fresh air on a Saturday morning and get stuck into the park run down at Cramond”!*

And since we provide transport and are always driving people around, where’s her favourite drive?

“Anywhere down the coast in East Lothian, Dunbar or North Berwick is perfect.”

Jaslin explained that she volunteers as an Executive member because she thinks it is important for people to share their skills, to give back and help Charities to grow and develop. She says even after 10 years she continues to enjoy it and looks forward to new developments. We are certainly delighted to continue to have Jaslin as our Treasurer and very much look forward to continuing to work together into the future.



Summary of Achievements

1. HcL celebrated its 40th birthday on November 9th, 2022, events and activities held during the year;
2. Written “Our Story” The First 40 years for HcL;
3. During the year from April 2022 to March 2023 we provided transport for over 100,000 people;
4. Extended our Service Development Manager contract to permanent;
5. HcL is proud to continue to be a member of the Scottish Living Wage;
6. Continued working under the 3+1 agreement with The City of Edinburgh Council (signed 2019)
7. Rolled over yearly agreements with West Lothian, Midlothian and East Lothian Councils;
8. Reviewed and updated our Staff Conditions of Service with the assistance of Unite the Union and staff;
9. Reviewed and updated Executive Policies;
10. Maintained and improved Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services - re-trained Despatchers on booking and scheduling software;
11. Raised profile of the Charity through the regular updating of the website, Facebook and Twitter; refreshed and updated leaflets; advertised COVID related support with local charities and organisations; advertised free vaccine transport through multiple routes; sought PR opportunities with several magazines and newspapers etc; published bi-yearly newsletter;
12. Over 30 applications submitted to funders;
13. Purchased 2 community buses and paid a deposit on another one – delivery June/ December 2023;
14. Developed new services which enhance mobility – implemented a new Dial-A-Ride service in East Lothian, with funding from East Lothian Council One Council Partnership Fund, East Lothian Council Community Intervention Fund and East Lothian Council Health and Social Care funding;
15. Active members of forums: Edinburgh Community Transport Operators Group (ECTO) Lothian Community Transport Services, Pilton Equality Project, South Edinburgh Amenities Group and The DOVE Centre, Community Transport Association, West Lothian Volunteer Network, West Lothian Senior Peoples Forum, Edinburgh Older Peoples Forum, Edinburgh Well Being Pact, Midlothian Older Peoples Forum, Volunteer Centre East Lothian Third Sector Forum, Community Scotland Electric Vehicles Forum & West Lothian Bus Alliance.
16. Ongoing development of stakeholder relationships and ways we can work with The City of Edinburgh Council; West Lothian Council; Midlothian Council; and East Lothian Council. New services include school transport for children with complex health needs, Adult Day Centres and Community bus services;
17. Member of ECO Stars which enables us to monitor our carbon footprint yearly. Drivers are trained in fuel efficient driving;
18. West Lothian Dial-A-Bus changed from a Section 19 to a Section 22 operation to allow users to use their Concessionary Travel Entitlement;
19. After a successful pilot in partnership with West Lothian Council, our local bus service (Broxburn & Uphall Town Service) has increased to an hourly service to 2 buses;
20. Working towards implementing a Section 22 operation in Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian in 2023;

21. Continued to develop the organisation: we reviewed and implemented a 5-year strategy; one of the recommendations of the Board was to authorise the Chief Executive to carry out an organisational review with the support of the Cranfield Trust which included:
 - that HcL diversifies its services as outlined in HcL's Strategy Report;
 - develops key performance indicators based on strategy outcomes;
 - provides ongoing governance training for Executive Members;
 - refreshed the Opening Doors Strategy document;
 - encourages more people to become members;
 - reviews and updates our image including corporate branding;
 - increases efficiency, through minimising vehicle and administrative overheads to exploit new technology;
22. Engaged with funders to fully understanding their policy priorities and to communicate effectively the contribution that HcL makes in meeting these policies;
23. Partnership working - collaborated with partner organisations in the public, voluntary or private sectors where this advances our strategic aims;
24. Monitoring and evaluation of our services – both statistically and qualitatively eg seeking feedback from passengers, members and stakeholders;
25. HcL staff became Dementia Friends – Dementia Friends Scotland is part of a social action movement to increase awareness of dementia and to address the stigma experienced by many people living with the illness.
26. Employed a trainer to deliver all staff training in-house.

Highlights for the last 12 months

109,264 passengers transport from September 2022 to August 2023

22.56 million miles covered since 1982

Becoming more Environmentally Friendly

HcL Green Committee

A new committee was established at the beginning of 2022 to consider how HcL could become greener and more environmentally friendly taking into account different aspects of our business, their environmental impact and how we can improve our practice.

The group membership consists of a mixture of different staff as well as a member of the Executive Committee.

Over the past year the Green Committee have focused on how we can make improvements in 5 key areas:

- **Waste and Recycling;**
- **Paper Use;**
- **Plastic use & other products;**
- **Utilities and resource efficiency;**
- **Vehicles /Travel;**

Considering information and advice from Business Energy Scotland and the Community Transport Association (Climate Action in Scotland) we have produced a new concise Environmental Policy underpinned by a more extensive Action Plan.

Environmental Policy: What do we aim to achieve?

Action Plan: How will we do this?

Over the past year as well as enabling the Green Committee to become an established part of HcL and fostering environmental awareness with our staff the Green Committee has also reviewed or introduced 30 new initiatives in order to improve our practice and make us a greener organisation. These changes have included everything from simple changes such as:

- Minimizing photocopying and printing;
- Ensuring the packaging from the current products that we use for cleaning etc are recyclable;
- Ensuring heating/lighting and taps are turned off and displaying 'Remember to Switch Off' signs;
- Ensuring new office and other equipment have the highest energy efficiency rating;

Along with bigger pieces of work such as:

- Securing funding based on increased multi -occupancy /shared journeys;
- Actively investigating funding sources for electric vehicles, charging points and training;

Members of the Green Committee also attend the quarterly CTA Electric Vehicle Forum and we contributed a case study for the CTA Climate Action programme and their Act Local Climate Action report



Becoming more Environmentally Friendly

A huge thanks to the following funders that have impacted greatly on the work that we can carry out throughout the Lothians. With particular focus on the aims within our 5-year strategy to:

“Modernise our fleet, especially seeking to acquire electric, low or zero emission vehicles, continued close liaison with each of the four Councils to ensure we are supporting their key priorities and support our service users to have the choice to use greener travel”.

This funding allows us to offer a more environmentally friendly service, reducing carbon emissions and traffic, encouraging shared journeys, working in partnerships to share charging point infrastructure and partnership work that supports our target service user groups.

Paths for All - Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding supported us with £46,391 funding for one driver’s salary, driver training and marketing the project.

What this funding supports:

- In recent years we have provided over 12,863 passenger journeys in West Lothian with DAR. We have around a 15% refusal rate across our service. An additional vehicle and trained driver have the potential to offer services to another 3,500 passengers;
- This funding allows us to pilot an additional service, thus increasing the number of people using our service and reducing the need for private car or taxi journeys;
- This funding has enabled us to put a driver in place, offer driver training and support the promotion of the new service;

- We are currently working to the outcome, "more people choose sustainable transport choices for longer journeys", and we would expect to encourage 16,363 journeys for the DAR service;



People get the opportunity to choose sustainable transport options for longer journeys.

Through this service people’s knowledge about sustainable transport will increase - we noted that no other services for those with mobility challenges or other support needs currently promote the green impact of shared travel. People cannot choose unless they are informed of what green/eco options are available. One of the main areas we noticed was a barrier of choice to use shared sustainable transport on weekly journeys, this service covers that gap. The journeys we offer with this service are much more direct, reducing the carbon footprint, mileage, traffic and offering a much more sustainable short journey.

The lack of choice often means people who need to use supported transport do not get the opportunity to decide what environmental impact their journey has, the Dial-A-Ride service, can plan the journey so it takes the most direct route, avoiding congestion, reducing milage and enabling several passengers to travel long journeys on shared transport. At capacity, our larger buses can hold 3 wheelchairs and 10 other passengers:

“Dial-A-Ride gives me the freedom to travel further afield with my wheelchair. The service is reliable, and the staff are not only helpful but very cheery.” Service User 2022.

Lottery Awards for ALL - £5,000 towards Partnership work between HcL and Cyrenians OPAL (Older People Active Lives)



Both projects in the partnerships’ main mission/aim is to:

“Offer preventative services to improve older people’s mental health and wellbeing, physical health and support an active lifestyle with a connection to the local community.”

We are delighted to be working in partnership with Cyrenians OPAL, this project will take place all over West Lothian using one of our adapted vehicles to support OPAL service users to get to and from the groups each week. Older People Active Lives (OPAL) service supports older people to increase their independence and well-being across West Lothian. This all contributes positively to the wellbeing of many West Lothian residents; including older people; people with disabilities; people with additional support needs ; health issues

affecting mobility; and geographic remoteness. The lottery funding has enabled us to support 3 groups per week offering return journeys with supported transport for up to 24 service users, we also support outings to places of interest around the Lothians for the groups. This funding will support up to 190 older people each year to get to and from groups/outings and engage with their peers and the community, reducing social isolation and loneliness and engagement with friendship groups.

Plugged-In Funding - £75,000 towards an electric bus.



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The Plugged-In communities grant fund supports community transport operators in Scotland to purchase or lease zero emission community transport vehicles. We are delighted to have been offered a grant to purchase our first electric-Zero emissions vehicle in July 2023, this will allow us to have a new zero emissions bus providing our community bus services on the road by 2024.

As a city, Edinburgh is aiming to be net zero by 2030. The primary objective of this funding is to help us transition our services in Edinburgh and the Lothians towards zero emission electric vehicles.

The comparison vehicle report carried out by Plugged-In Funders highlights the reduction in running costs and maintenance of the electric vehicle and the complete elimination of any CO² emissions.



	Existing vehicle	ZEV alternative A
Based on 20,000 miles per year	Renault Master LM35dCi (SN64 DHE)	Maxus eDeliver 9 L3H2 FWD 89kWh
Official CO ₂ emissions (g/km)	209 ¹	0
Annual CO ₂ e (tonnes) ²	9,61	2,24 ³
Annual fuel cost	£5,965 ⁴	£2,717 ⁵
Fuel over 6 years	£35,788	£16,303
First year VED	£395	£0
VED over 6 years	£2,370	£1,160 ⁶
First year costs (fuel + VED)	£6,360	£2,717
6-year costs (fuel + VED)	£38,158	£17,463
First year cost saving		£3,642
6-year cost saving		£20,694
Annual CO₂e saving (tonnes)		7,37t CO₂e

ScotZEB 2 Funding and Consortium bid Funding - £256,039 towards HcL vehicles and infrastructure.

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Overview

There is a global climate emergency, and we all have a part to play in tackling it. Buses and coaches are currently one of the most climate-friendly transport choices people can make and as we work to encourage more people to leave the car at home, it is important that buses and coaches maintain that position.

The Scottish Government wants to help by supporting the bus and coach operators, manufacturers, financiers, and the energy sector work together to make the market for zero emission vehicles and infrastructure self-sustaining, such that the sector can continue to decarbonise at pace without the need for further taxpayer support after this round of funding.

Therefore, the challenge for applicants is to make the biggest possible impact in creating a self-sustaining zero-emission bus and coach market.

HcL Consortium Bid - Partnership

We are delighted to have submitted a joint application with:

- Lothian Buses;
- SEAG;
- Midlothian Council;

This ground-breaking £68.6 million collaboration, which will see Lothian Buses, HcL, South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG) and Midlothian Council join together to form a consortium with key suppliers and other stakeholders to deliver this step change.

The aim of this project is to bring to market a transformational way of delivering decarbonisation as laid out in the Scottish Government's Pathway to Zero Emission Buses. ScotZEB 2 funding will be used to help fund this ambitious project at pace to capture renewable energy, install charging infrastructure and introduce a significant number of electric vehicles to the consortium operators' fleets.

If successful, the funding will see HcL supported to purchase 4 new electric buses and a 4-charging point infrastructure at our Bathgate depot. The members of the collaboration will share infrastructure allowing each service to run in a more efficient and effective manner. We will also share our infrastructure (charging points) with:

- Public bodies such as NHS Scotland and its delivery partners;
- Universities and Colleges;
- Van fleet operators;
- Distribution centres;
- Emergency Services;
- Air and seaports;
- Network Rail and other railway bodies.

We are proud to be seeking support with installing the infrastructure from a local company - Boyd Brothers (Fauldhouse) Ltd, supporting local businesses/jobs in the Lothians.

The funding will see our CO² reduced by almost 30 tonnes each year, as well as reducing noise and air pollution and offering our service users a more sustainable, environmentally friendly way to travel.

The project presents a comprehensive multi-year plan to deliver electric public transport in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

All of the funding supporting us in 2023-24 enables us to not only see growth in our fleet and services but do all of this with an emphasis on partnership work and positive environmental impact all in line with our 2020 5-year strategy:

- Maintain and expand our core Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services, increasing the number of trips we can offer;
- Modernize our fleet, especially seeking to acquire electric, low or zero emission vehicles;
- Extend contracted support to third sector community groups and clubs and create new partnerships;
- Continued close liaison with each of the 4 Councils to ensure we are supporting their key priorities;

Stakeholder Feedback

Membership numbers are 134 at present - we recently asked for feedback from our members groups from March to May 2023:

“Your staff always give a first-class service, whether on the phone or drivers of your buses. Well done and best wishes to all;”

“Service provided is excellent and all staff are kind and patient, as I can be very slow due to my back pain and Arthritis;”

“I hope to use your bus again soon! Service is brilliant;”

“Compliments to drivers -excellent care service and attention;”

“Wonderful reliable help with such nice drivers and booking staff;”

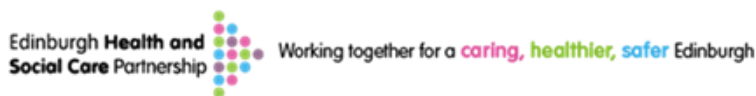
“Thank you for all your help and kindness to me. I am able to book my journey and know you will always be there for me;”

“Congratulations on the excellent service provided.”

Edinburgh Winter Day Trips

Last winter throughout November, December and into January 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 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.



Midlothian Funding

This year local authorities have increasingly found that they must manage substantial reductions in their budgets which is resulting in proposed savings and cuts to services. As a result, 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 this went ahead, 100% 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 to 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 21st of February, and we were very relieved to find out that HcL would not receive a cut to our funding. As well as quickly organising our funding campaign we also received fantastic support from other organisations, our passengers, and the wider community for which we are hugely grateful.

Driver CPC Training

This year HcL has become an approved CPC Driver Training Centre with Gary Duff (driver) being qualified to provide the training which includes:

- Driver CPC training 5 year certification LGV & PCV;
- MiDAS Minibus qualification induction or refresher;
- Passenger Assistant Training (helping you help others)
- Passenger Tail Lift training;
- D1 Driver Training Roadcraft getting you test ready;
- D1 Driver Familiarisation;
- D1 Driving assessments and refresher courses;
- Accessible Training Minibus;
- First Aid Training 3-year certification.

Gary has been providing the required training to our drivers for a number of months and is now advertising to external organisations and businesses. For more information, please contact Gary Duff at gary.duff@handicabs.org.uk

Outreach

As well as attending a variety of meetings, forums and seminars over Edinburgh, East, West & Midlothian we have also provided almost 30 pop-up information stalls and group visits to various organisations throughout the year from Dunbar to Linlithgow and Penicuik to Leith.

Over the summer months, in line with the criteria for our Paths for All SCSP Open Fund Award we have had a particular focus on West Lothian working in partnership with Cyrenians OPAL and Alzheimer Scotland visiting local groups and Dementia cafes.

As well as our own newsletter we have also contributed to a number of other organisations sending written information, posters, flyers and articles.



Elizabeth Campbell our Service Development Manager visiting the Cyrenians OPAL group in Fauldhouse

West Lothian driver Mark Toner, receiving his 15-year service award from Kelvin Cochrane, Chief Executive. Congratulations



Day trips throughout the year



TREASURER'S REPORT

The year to 31st March 2023 saw the Charity generate income of £1.6m, an increase of 7% on the previous year. Of this 65% was received from grants from local authorities and Grant Giving Trusts. A return to a full year of our Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services has seen fare income returning to closer to pre-pandemic levels, together with our new community bus service in Broxburn helped to boost our income in the year.

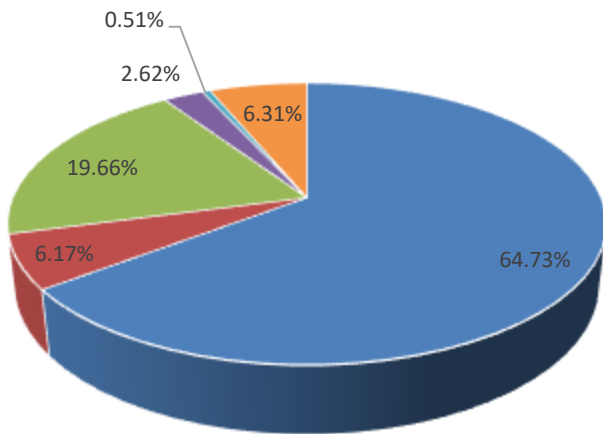
Expenditure for the year was £1.8m, an increase of 13% on the previous year. Rising inflation, which is driving up prices across the board, had a significant impact on the charity's key expenditure; staff and vehicle costs.

As a result of the increased expenditure, the charity made a net deficit for the year of £197k.

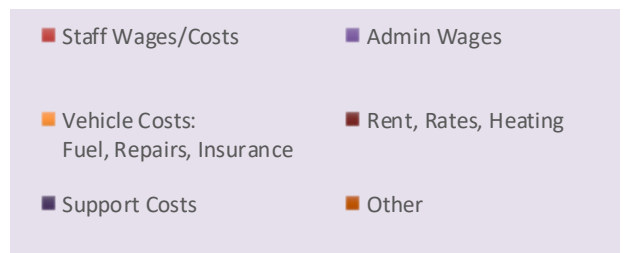
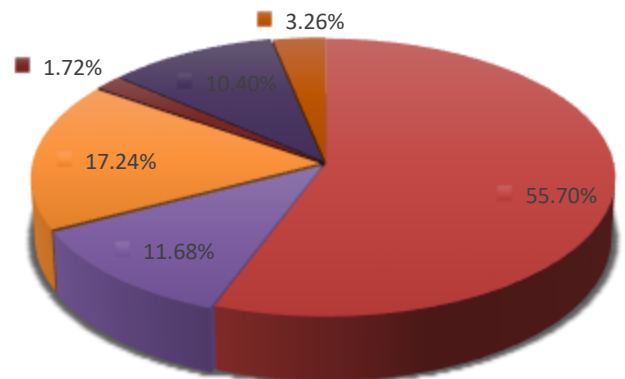
Total funds as at 31st March 2023 were c£1.3m made up of:

- Restricted funds £147k;
- Unrestricted designated funds (towards new vehicles and staff restructure) £463k;
- Unrestricted funds (including pension fund) £679k.

Incoming Operating Grants
2022/2023 Total: £1,622,617



Expenditure on Charitable Activities
2022/2023 Total: £1,797,213



DIRECTORS' STATEMENT ON SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The summarised financial statements set out below have been extracted from the full financial statements which were approved on 12th September 2023 and do not constitute the charity's statutory financial statements. The full financial statements have been audited and the auditor's opinion was unqualified. The full financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023 and 31st March 2022 can be found at Companies House.

These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Charity. For further information the full financial statements, the auditors report on these financial statements and the Directors' Report should be consulted. Copies of the full financial statements can be obtained from the Registered Office at 24/3A Dryden Road, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9HX

SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 ST MARCH 2023				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Income and endowment from:				
Donations and legacies	7,515	-	7,515	78,348
Membership	710	-	710	671
<i>Charitable activities:</i>				
Operating grants	1,000,860	49,460	1,050,320	1,075,657
Capital grants	-	100,174	100,174	39,250
Bus Service Operators Grant	102,348	-	102,348	123,780
Fares	319,083	-	319,083	181,612
Investments	10,467	-	10,467	7,284
Other	32,000	-	32,000	8,000
Total income	1,472,983	149,634	1,622,617	1,514,602
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	(1,684,986)	(112,227)	(1,797,213)	(1,587,312)
Total expenditure	(1,684,986)	(112,227)	(1,797,213)	(1,587,312)
Net (losses)/gains on investments	(22,037)	-	(22,037)	8,197
Net (expenditure)/income	(234,040)	37,407	(196,633)	(64,513)
Transfers between funds				
Other recognised gains/(losses):				
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	77,000	-	77,000	120,000
Net movement in funds	(157,040)	37,407	(119,633)	55,487
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds at 1 April 2022	1,298,980	109,386	1,408,366	1,352,879
Total funds at 31 March 2023	1,141,940	146,793	1,288,733	1,408,366
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2023				
			2023	2022
			£	£
Fixed assets			906,701	865,880
Current assets			471,356	635,065
Current liabilities			(89,324)	(92,579)
Net current assets			382,032	542,486
Net assets			1,288,733	1,408,366
Total funds of the charity:				
Restricted funds			146,793	109,386
Unrestricted funds				
Designated			462,985	474,481
General			678,955	824,499
			1,288,733	1,408,366
Approved by the Board on 12th September 2023				

HcL Staff (40 staff and 5 volunteers as at October 2023)

^ denotes 20 or more years' service * denotes 10 or more years' service

Headquarters

Kelvin Cochrane^ Chief Executive

Core Team (5)

Robert Hutson^ Operations Manager
Ian Greig^ Operations Support Officer
Alexis Brown* Finance Officer
Elizabeth Campbell Service Development Manager
Dolina Gorman Fundraising and Marketing Manager

Edinburgh (18)

Amy Hutson	Despatcher	Kirsty Kinnaird	Despatcher/Finance Assistant
Tony Brice^	Senior Driver	Julian Ogilvie^	Senior Driver
David McGill*	Senior Driver	Conor Barclay	Driver
Angela Stein	Driver	James Blain	Driver
Gary Duff	Driver/Trainer	Darren Wallace	Driver
Neil Young	Driver	Fredrick Aspinall	Driver
Gregory Crosbie	Driver	Patrick Carey	Driver
James Marr	Driver	James Foy	Driver
John Dryden	Volunteer Driver	Andrew Jeffrey	Volunteer Driver

Midlothian & East Lothian (4)

Russell Scott*	Senior Driver	Mark McCrindle*	Senior Driver
Andrea Battini	Driver	Scott Pennycook	Driver

West Lothian (17)

Gary Toner^	Assistant Operations Manager	Kevin Gibson^	Senior Driver
Frances McCallum^	Despatch Co-Ordinator	Mark Toner*	Senior Driver
John Watson*	Senior Driver	Reginald Watson	Driver
Robert Kelly	Driver	Eric Davidson	Driver
Steven Pennycook	Driver	Thomas Crosby	Driver
Maria Jamieson	Driver	James Wilson	Driver
George Edmondson	Driver	Douglas Campbell	Volunteer Driver
Jackie Stewart	Driver	Falconer Crichton	Volunteer Driver
Margaret Comfort	Volunteer Despatcher		

HcL Staff leavers throughout the year

Chris Howard	Operations Supervisor	David Hogarth	Driver
Irene McDonald	Senior Driver	Ged McDonald	Senior Driver
James Hunter	Senior Driver	Grant Gibson	Senior Driver
John Gallagher	Driver	Cameron McLean	Driver
Damon Hutson	Driver	Scott MacGregor	Driver
Stephen Galloway	Driver	Andrew Hood	Driver
Rino Sacconi	Driver	Julie Miller	Driver
Ian Bell	Driver	Allan Bridges	Volunteer Driver
Stuart Glen	Driver	Peter Williamson	Driver

HcL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr Kenneth Brown TD MBChB MRCGP AFOM CIH	Chairman
Dennis Wilson	Vice Chairman
Jaslin Bhagrath CA	Treasurer
Mike Harrison MSc BA	
Joan Cameron	
Marie McDonald	
Patricia Lawson	
Margaret Purdie	
Kirstie Kerr	
Lee MacInnes	
Stephen Somerfield	

Assessors and Observers:

Councillor (To be arranged)	The City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Tom Conn	West Lothian Council
Councillor Russell Imrie	Midlothian Council
Councillor (To be arranged)	East Lothian Council
Frank Henderson (Observer)	The City of Edinburgh Council
Nicola Gill (Observer)	West Lothian Council
Derek Oliver (Observer)	Midlothian Council
Bruce Moffat (Observer)	East Lothian Council

Contact Information

Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian:
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Loanhead, EH20 9HX

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Dial-A-Bus Bookings 0131 447 1718
edinburgh@handicabs.org.uk

West Lothian:
17A Inchmuir Road, Whitehill Industrial Estate,
Bathgate EH48 2EP

Dial-A-Ride Bookings 01506 633953
Dial-A-Bus Bookings 01505 633336
bathgate@handicabs.org.uk

HcL Administration & Registered Office 0131 447 9953
admin@handicabs.org.uk

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Scottish Charity No. SC013906

www.HcLTransport.org.uk

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