

## What have we been doing during lockdown

Whilst most of our drivers have been furloughed as Dial-A-Bus and Day Centre transport ceased, Dial-A-Ride remained operational, albeit limited in accordance with Government guidelines. We provided transport for people with hospital or medical appointments that the NHS had not cancelled and to funerals.

We were concerned about our passengers and whether everyone would be managing to access food deliveries.

A number of community groups and charities quickly responded to COVID-19 and we volunteered our drivers and vehicles to support the following:

In West Lothian we supported Tea J's in Armadale from 13 April to deliver lunches to elderly, disabled and those very ill and unable to go out. Tea J's is a family run cafe and began this service 3 weeks earlier to 10 people per day. In 5 weeks that increased to 80 people per day with referrals from MacMillan for Cancer patients at home and from Social Work for the very vulnerable and unable to leave home. As the numbers increased so much, HcL helped with deliveries 5 days a week delivering over 50

meals per day having secured funding to support fuel and PPE costs. Lunches were being delivered to Armadale, Whitburn, Bathgate, Blackridge, Westrigg, Westfield etc.

We also supported The Boghall Drop In Centre to deliver food packages to local people who are vulnerable, isolating and shielding one day a week delivering 20 food parcels.

In June we started deliveries for The Larder Cook School in West Lothian on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays delivering over 160 meals a day.

We reached out to many other local charities offering our help.

In Edinburgh we started working with the Food Project from 6th April and delivered food parcels to



### Inside this issue:

<i>What have we been doing during lockdown</i>	1
<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	2
<i>Dial-A-Ride's first week back</i>	3
<i>Profile Raising</i>	4
<i>COVID-19 procedures</i>	5
<i>Staff updates</i>	6
<i>Fundraising update</i>	7
<i>Short story</i>	9

### Points of interest

- Contactless payments
- Become a member
- Service awards
- Telephone survey
- Parliamentary reception

Mark (West Lothian) assisting Tom at Tea J's with lunch deliveries

HcL passengers in Edinburgh and West Lothian.

On the 15th April we began working with The SCRAN Academy, (catering social enterprise providing great value food in Edinburgh). We assisted delivering over 80,000 meals up to and including the end of August. Five drivers assisted covering 3 days a week.

In East & Midlothian, we are a member of the COVID-19 Forum, through this forum we started receiving referrals



from Midlothian Council through the Voluntary Sector. We are also receiving referrals from East Lothian Council and the Red Cross for passenger transport.

From 20th July, Dial-A-Ride resumed a phased return with restriction on passenger numbers travelling due to physical distancing

guidance. Passengers travelling will be required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical exemption. You will also be asked if you have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 before travel. See page 5 for more details.

The Dial-A-Bus service is still awaiting Government guidance on returning, we will let passengers know when the service will start back as soon as we are able through our website, facebook and twitter page.

## Become a Member

If you are a user of HcL and want to become more involved with the Charity 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 in becoming a member you can either speak to a driver, your local office or on our website.

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

# Annual General Meeting via Zoom

We will be holding our A.G.M on Monday, 12th October 2020 at 2.00pm via Zoom  
A copy of our annual report and financial statement will be available to download from our website.

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

## Dial-A-Ride

The 20<sup>th</sup> of July was Dial-A-Ride's first week back – and it was so lovely to see our passengers again.

As a wee gesture to celebrate Dial-A-Ride being fully operational again, we gave 5 passengers each from West Lothian, Edinburgh, East and Midlothian £6.00 off their journey. Some of the first passengers were:



Eva Currie  
Edinburgh



Terrane McCormack  
Edinburgh



Joe & Violet Donnelly  
West Lothian



Sadie Delaney  
West Lothian

## Dial-A-Bus 30 years Parliamentary Reception

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we had to cancel the Dial-A-Bus 30 years of service Parliamentary Reception, this was due to be held on the 13th May 2020, at The Scottish Parliament.

We want to thank everyone for their responses and support and to Miles Briggs MSP for kindly sponsoring the reception.



Miles Briggs MSP

## **PROFILE RAISING**

We have been continuing 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.

We have also been updating the website, facebook and twitter with news stories:

<https://www.HcLtransport.org.uk/>

On Monday 3rd August, Laura attended a live radio interview with Regal Radio in Bathgate, also on Thursday, 13th August, Operations Manager, Robert Hutson attended a radio interview with Black Diamond Radio in Midlothian, which was organised with the assistance of the Red Cross and will be broadcasted in September.

### **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. Our 250<sup>th</sup> follower will get a free Dial-A-Bus journey! At the time of going to print we were only [8] away from this!

We are now 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](mailto:laura.kearney@handicabs.org.uk)

### **Information Stands**

We have had one information stand at Almond Housing Association in Livingston. This was put up just before lockdown and is still there.

We will be looking for new places to have a stand – either an unmanned one for a week or two or we can man a stand for a few hours.

Get in touch with either office if you know of an organisation or group that would like a HcL Information Stand.

### **Spreading the word about HcL**

Please get in touch with Gary 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. Alternatively, in the current situation we can join meetings by Zoom and spread the word about HcL. Please contact Gary or Laura on 01506 633953 or find us @



## COVID-19 procedures

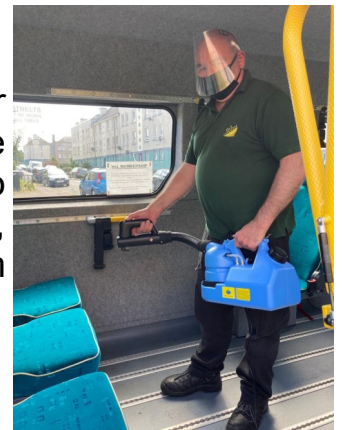
We have updated our procedures and introduced additional cleaning measures in light of COVID-19 and to ensure the safety of our passengers and drivers. Drivers will follow Government guidelines re attending work and are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Up to 4 passengers may travel from the same household. Physical distancing does not apply to members of the same household and any carer or escort. Rear screens have been fitted to all Dial-A-Ride vehicles.

We commissioned a short film demonstrating cleaning procedures introduced as a result of COVID-19 to ensure a safe Dial-A-Ride service for our passengers, many of whom feel at risk. The video can be viewed on our website, facebook and twitter page showing what we are doing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 when travelling with HcL. Throughout their shift, drivers will sanitise/clean:

- ◇ door handles, doors, grasp rails;
- ◇ seatbelts, seatbelt clips and wheelchair tie down;
- ◇ floors and passenger lifts;
- ◇ steering wheels and dashboards;
- ◇ Clean all areas of the vehicles that drivers, passengers or escorts have come into contact with;
- ◇ hand sanitiser stations in vehicles for all passengers.

In addition all vehicles will be disinfected monthly by using a ULV Fogger disinfectant mist sprayer. What is a ULV Fogger you say? ULV Fogger disperses a fine mist or fog of high grade disinfectant that kills 99.999% of bacteria. It is far reaching so eliminates bacteria in hard to reach places like, ceilings, walls, crevices as well as furniture, floors and equipment, leaving them safe to use.



At the time of booking you will be asked:

- ◇ do you have any symptoms associated with COVID-19?
- ◇ do you have a high temperature?
- ◇ do you have a new continuous cough?
- ◇ have noticed any difference in your taste and smell?
- ◇ are you self-isolating?

If you answer yes to any of the above questions, transport will be refused. Passengers and escorts are required to wear face coverings on vehicles unless they have a medical exemption. When arriving at your home, drivers will be wearing a face covering. They will ask you the same questions again to see if there has been any changes since booking. The driver will still provide any assistance you require from your home, to the vehicle and entering/exiting the vehicle - either by the side door or passenger lift.

## Contactless Payment

HcL are trialling card readers in some of our Dial-A-Ride vehicles offering passengers contactless payment options. The card readers can use chip and pin, and other contactless options. Please

look out for the contactless payment signs in available vehicles.



## Staff Update

On Friday 17th April, Assistant Operations Manager Robert Hutson, assumed the role of Acting Operations Manager. Robert took over the role Operations Manager officially on Monday 24th August 2020. We wish him well in his new role.

new capacity as an Operations Support Officer on a part time basis.

Staff Leavers:

West Lothian:  
Donna Millar (Volunteer Despatcher)

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

After 37 years service, Operations Manager Ian Greig has taken a step back from senior management but will continue to support HcL in a

Staff training and development is an ongoing process. Managers provide;

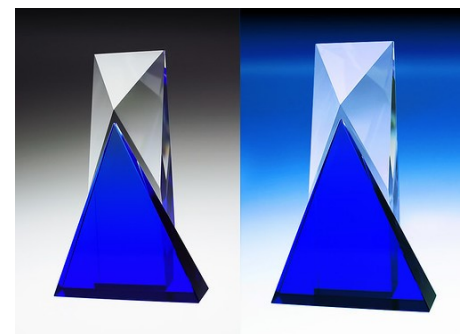


## Service Awards

We would like to congratulate the following members of staff for their long-term service but due to COVID-19, we have been unable to present them with their awards.

Kevin Gibson, Senior Driver (30 years service).

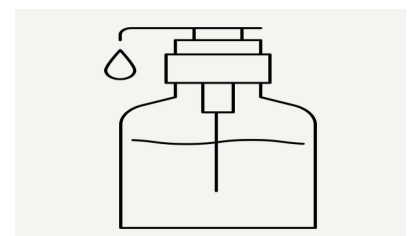
Billy Armstrong, Senior Driver (20 years service).



## Vehicles

HcL purchased 2 good quality second hand vehicles for Edinburgh (one Dial-A-Ride and one Dial-A-Bus) which were purchased in March 2020 and delivered in July 2020.

The delivery was delayed due to COVID-19. All Dial-A-Ride vehicles have been fitted with passenger screens and rear hand sanitiser stations.



## Fundraising Update

As HcL is a charity, it is really important we raise funds from other sources. Laura has been working hard applying for funds from various Trusts and Funders to help cover some costs during recent months and to help support the food projects we helped with. We secured funding from:

Scottish Government Wellbeing Fund

Tesco Bags for Life COVID-19 Fund - Bathgate

Tesco Bags for Life COVID-19 Fund – Penicuik

Corra Wellbeing Coronavirus Fund

Other funding secured in the last 6 months includes:

Persimmon Homes - £1,500

Tormywheel Windfarm Community Fund

### Money Collection Boxes



If you have any suggestions of a business that would be happy to take one of our money collection boxes to help raise funds for HcL, please let us know!

### Co-op Gullane

We are one of Co-op Gullane's 3 charities until October. Members of Co-op can choose HcL as their charity and then 1% of everything they spend will be donated to HcL over 12 months. Funds will go to an additional vehicle in East Lothian. We have raised over £380 so far, so thank you to everyone who has selected HcL. If you have not yet chosen your charity for 2020, please go online and choose HcL.



Easy Fundraising

Do you shop online?

If you register with easy fundraising and choose Handicabs Lothian, we will get a percentage of what you spend on numerous websites donated to us, at no cost to you.

It is easy to register, then click on the reminder and every time you go on a website that will donate a percentage of your sale to your chosen charity, it reminds you so that we do not miss out. It is really simple to do!

## Amazon Smile

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

Go to the website [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk) and select Handicabs as your charity, we will get 0.5% of everything you spend. It is exactly the same as shopping on Amazon, it recognises your spend and donates to your chosen charity.



This will mount up over the year and be a great help to us.

## 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.

## TELEPHONE SURVEY

In February 2020, a telephone survey was conducted in West Lothian. The following questions were asked of 50 passengers.



Question 1: Do you have a bus pass?

Answer: Yes - 100%

Question 2: If you could use your bus pass on Dial-A-Bus, would you use the service more frequently?

Answer: Yes - 74% No - 26%

We would like to thank everyone for taking part.



**'FACTS' is an acronym for:**

- **Face coverings in enclosed spaces**
- **Avoid crowded places**
- **Clean your hands and surfaces regularly**
- **Two-metre social distancing**
- **Self-isolate and book a test if you develop coronavirus symptoms**

Bertie was a very good boy. He was kind, obedient, truthful, and unselfish. He had, however, one great fault,—he always forgot.

No matter how important the errand, his answer always was, "I forgot." When he was sent with a note to the dress-maker his mother would find the note in his pocket at night. If he was sent to the store in a great hurry, to get something for tea, he would return late, without the article, but with his usual answer.

His father and mother talked the matter over, and decided that something must be done to make the little boy remember.

Christmas was near, and Bertie was busy making out a list of things which Santa Claus was to bring him.

"Santa Claus may forget some of those things," said his mother. "He cannot," replied Bertie; "for I shall write sled, and skates, and drum, and violin, and all the things on this paper. Then when Santa Claus goes to my stocking he will find the list. He can see it and put the things in as fast as he reads."

Christmas morning came, and Bertie was up at dawn to see what was in his stocking. His mother kept away from him as long as she could, for she knew what Santa Claus had done.

Finally she heard him coming with slow steps to her room. Slowly he opened the door and came towards her. He held in his hand a list very much longer than the one he had made out. He put it in his mother's hand, while tears of disappointment fell from his eyes.

"See what Santa Claus left for me; but I think he might have given me one thing besides."

His mother opened the roll. It was a list of all the errands Bertie had been asked to do for six months. At the end of all was written, in staring capitals, "I FORGOT."

Bertie wept for an hour. Then his mother told him they were all going to grandpa's. For the first time he would see a Christmas tree. Perhaps something might be growing there for him.

It was very strange to Bertie, but on grandpa's tree he found everything he had written on his list. Was he cured of his bad habit? Not all at once; but when his mother saw that he was particularly heedless she would say, "Remember, Santa Claus does not forget."

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[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:  
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**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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