

42 Years of Service 1982-2024



## TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024



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

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

*Dennis Wilson*

I took over the Chair of HcL in the spring of this year, but I have been a trustee for over 15 years. My wife and I are also users of the service so I can also talk as a customer. In the past year, HcL have been moving forward to ensure that we are still able to provide both Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services throughout the Lothians.

We have had to broaden our remit by providing a community bus service in Broxburn, West Lothian which I am delighted to say that it has been very successful and liked by our clients and by the public. We have also been pleased at long last to have arranged to be able to use your travel pass on this service.

We have also taken the big step of getting our first E-Bus. Last winter we were pleased to offer a number of day trips these outings were provided free of charge with funding from a "Coorie in for Winter" Elliven Edinburgh grant from the Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership, the outings were very much appreciated by our users.

I would like to say a big thank you to all our staff for being willing to go the extra mile !!! so to speak to make our clients so looked after. Without our drivers and the booking staff, we could not provide you with a such a bespoke service.

I would also like to thank all the staff who work tirelessly behind the scenes who all help to keep the ship afloat. I would especially like to mention Kelvin, our CEO for being so encouraging and driving the Charity forward.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the volunteers who give off their time and also the Trustees who help to guide us forward and keep HcL going in the right direction.

**DENNIS WILSON**  
**Chairman**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

*Kelvin Cochrane*

This is the Charity's 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report and covers the period from the last Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to this year's AGM on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024. The Director's Report and Accounts are published separately and cover the Charity's financial year, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, however, a summary version is contained in this report.

We are still suffering from a shortage of drivers which 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 well 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 with the exception of Midlothian Council giving us small increases over the years. Overall, this is having a major effect on operations.

## **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 23,089 registered users: Dial-A-Ride (14,725) and Dial-A-Bus (8,364) as of October 2024.

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

## **Dial-A-Ride**

HcL aims to provide a quality 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 their only means of going out. This may be assisting people with putting 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 22% 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 22% use wheelchairs. Edinburgh accounted for 44% of Dial-A-Ride trips, West Lothian 32%, Midlothian 12% and East Lothian 12%.

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; visiting

shopping centres; theatres; visiting friends and family and socialising; day trips or events or to go away for a holiday which enables family members and carers to have a much-needed break!

From August 2023 until August 2024, the Dial-A-Ride service has provided 40,246 passenger trips for residents in the Lothians:

*“We are grateful to have your outstanding service. Thank you to everyone involved”.*

*“Everyone is very pleasant on calling your service, and always happy to help whenever possible. Thank you”.*

### **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 take their shopping inside on return, if needed. All areas of the Lothians have at least one or often 2 routes available during the week in either the morning or afternoon.

From August 2023 to August 2024, we have carried 29,618 passengers with 2.57% of passengers using wheelchairs...

*“All staff are very caring and kind – service provided is excellent”.*

*“A service second to none.”*

*“A very good service, let’s hope it will continue well into the future.”*

### **Community Bus West Lothian**

Following the update of purposes to include *“To provide community bus services within areas where none or little commercial services are not viable for disabled, ill, disadvantaged and the general public to improve quality of life.”*

We have been delivering a local bus service in West Lothian Broxburn area between August 2023 and August 2024 - 37,590 passengers travelled with HcL with 33,300 trips using concessionary travel passes. This service links the public and the people with mobility challenges from residential areas with key services on main streets including shops and health and personal care outlets. It also supports users to connect to existing public transport services in these areas for forward travel.

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.

### **Midlothian & East Lothian Dial-A-Bus 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. From February 2024 the Dial-A-Bus has accepted concessionary passes.

### **Edinburgh Dial-A-Bus Concessionary Travel**

HcL has been in discussions with the City of Edinburgh Council regarding changing the Dial-A-Bus service from a Section 19 to a Section 22 operation.

We are hopeful from November 2024 that we will be able to accept concessionary cards on all our Dial-A-Bus services.

We have been successful in tendering for work from Public Contract Scotland. I'm delighted to announce that we have been awarded a further one route (route 68) in Edinburgh! We are also awaiting the outcome of a tender on a second route in Edinburgh.

We have been successfully diversifying to bring in more funds by taking on additional work at full cost recovery, i.e. 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

As part of our commitment to improving service delivery and long-term sustainability, the boards of Handicabs (Lothian) Ltd (HcL) and South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG) are delighted to announce a merger between the two organisations. This merger aims to address financial pressures, enhance operational efficiency and ensure continued support for people with mobility challenges in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

### **Merger Overview**

The merger will result in SEAG being dissolved of its assets. Staff and resources will be transferred to HcL. The transition will be seamless with no expected disruption to services. Importantly, there will be no redundancies, ensuring long-term stability for SEAG staff. HcL will experience growth in it's staff team and services allowing both organisations to benefit from the merger. Both organisations will operate under a unified brand (to be developed post-merger) while retaining Handicabs Lothian as the registered name. The rebranding process is essential for enhancing the public image and recognisability of the organisation.

### **Synergy and Strategic Development**

The synergy between HcL's individual transport solutions and SEAG's expertise in group services will foster increased operational flexibility and efficiency. The merger is expected to drive significant growth including the potential to serve 50,000 additional trips. This synergy will offer more options for users and create opportunities to meet the growing demand for accessible transport across the Lothians.

SEAG's Trustees will join the new board to facilitate a smooth governance and strategic continuity. SEAG's Management will retain their current roles with the General Manager becoming Deputy Chief Executive.

### **Looking Ahead**

We are hugely excited about the merger and the positive impact it will have on community transport. The combined strength of HcL and SEAG will ensure greater sustainability, improve service offerings, and expand our reach within the community.

## Timeline and Milestones

Our target is to complete the merger by the beginning of the 2025-2026 financial year. This will allow for a clean financial transition and the alignment of operational goals. Key milestones include governance approvals, staff transfers and the integration of administrative and operational systems.

## Key Objectives

- **Financial Sustainability:** By merging, we aim to create a more efficient and sustainable organisation which will be better equipped to navigate financial challenges and operational demands.
- **Service Continuity:** The transition will prioritise maintaining high-quality services with no interruptions to users.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Systems, procedures and staff will be integrated to optimise resources and enhance service flexibility.
- **Governance and Compliance:** We will ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and governance standards including the protection of employees under TUPE regulations.

Thank you for your continued support during this exciting transition.

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.

Last but not least, the most important people, our members and users who continue to use and support our services.

## Summary of Achievements

1. Written HcL “Our Story” The First 40Years.

2. During the year from April 2023 to March 2024 we provided transport for over 100,000 people.
3. Extended our Service Development Manager contract to permanent.
4. HcL is proud to continue to be a member of the Scottish Living Wage.
5. Signed agreements with The City of Edinburgh Council till March 2027.
6. Rolled over yearly agreements with West Lothian, Midlothian and East Lothian Councils.
7. Reviewed and updated our Staff Conditions of Service with the assistance of Unite the Union and staff.
8. Reviewed and updated Executive Policies.
9. Maintained and improved Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus services - re-trained Despatchers on booking and scheduling software;
10. Raised profile of the Charity through the regular updating of the website, Facebook and Twitter; refreshed and updated leaflets; advertised transport through multiple routes; published newsletter.
11. Over 30 applications submitted to funders;
12. Purchased 2 community buses , one Dial-A-Bus and one Electric Dial-A-ride bus
13. Developed new services which enhance mobility – implemented a new Dial-A-Ride service in East Lothian, and West Lothian.
14. Awarded an Edinburgh community bus route (route 68) Clermiston / The Gyle.
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;

Member of ECO Stars which enables us to monitor our carbon footprint yearly.  
Drivers are trained in fuel efficient driving;

West Lothian Dial-A-Bus changed from a Section 19 to a Section 22 operation to allow users to use their Concessionary Travel Entitlement;

- 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;

- Successfully tendered for the Broxburn & Uphall town service through Public Contracts Scotland.
- Midlothian & East Lothian Dial-A-Bus services changed from a Section 19 to a Section 22 operation to allow users to use their Concessionary Travel Entitlement
- Engaged with funders to fully understanding their policy priorities and to communicate effectively the contribution that HcL makes in meeting these policies;
- Partnership working - collaborated with partner organisations in the public, voluntary or private sectors where this advances our strategic aims;
- Monitoring and evaluation of our services – both statistically and qualitatively e.g. seeking feedback from passengers, members and stakeholders;
- 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;
- Employed a trainer to deliver all staff training inhouse.
- Exploring the possibility of taking over a local Community Transport provider.

**Highlights for the last 12 months**  
**113,182 passengers transport from September 2023 to**  
**August 2024**  
**23.06 million miles covered since 1982**



A huge thanks to the following funders, businesses and the public who have impacted so positively on the work that we can carry out throughout the Lothians. This year's aim was to work within partnerships more effectively which in turn supports our mission to reduce social

isolation and loneliness and encourage community connecting.

We also have strived to continue to provide the best community transport we can within the Lothians with Dial-A-Bus supporting 28496 Passengers on 6308 journeys , Dial-A-Ride supporting 39,971 passengers on 23176 journeys and our community transport service supporting over 35,000 people to stay connected.

## Partnerships

Our focus has been on securing funding for our partnership work- we are delighted to be working alongside:

- OPAL – Opportunities for Active Lives run by the Cyrenius
- Play Works
- Wallyford Daycare Centre

**Paths for all- Smarter choices, smarter places funding supported us this year with nearly £80,000. This supported us to provide shared journeys for OPAL and Playworks.**



Happy passengers with Playworks staff

## Play Works Midlothian

Transport is provided Monday to Thursday, during school term-times: offering 4 shared journeys per week, reducing costs for parents, reducing air pollution, CO2 and traffic on the roads.

## OPAL – Cyrenians

We currently provide adapted transport for OPAL groups 3x weekly return journeys to and from day care groups. These groups have a real impact on older people lives in West Lothian and support both charities aim to reduce isolation and loneliness while promoting community connecting.

Aim of our community connecting work 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.”*

This funding also means the public get the opportunity to choose sustainable transport options for longer journeys through our Dial-A-Bus, Dial-A-Ride and community bus service in West Lothian

### **Craigengar Group Leader for OPAL**

“Since the pilot scheme with HCL we have had a significant increase in group members. These individuals would not otherwise consider attending due to their mobility restrictions and confidence in travelling with public transport. With the door-through-door service, it has allowed these attendees to increase their contact with others and seen them establish new friendships with other attendees from the group reducing previous feeling of isolation and loneliness. Having an understanding and caring driver who provides assistance in getting on and off the bus, takes time with them and understands their lack of confidence in getting out and about and issues they may experience with their mobility. These attendees are very grateful for this additional service and find it a great help to attend our groups and meet others.”



Passengers joining us for the OPAL groups

### **Case Studies and Quotes**

#### **Lydia**

Lydia is 70 and is living with Dementia. She lives alone and is in close contact with her sister who is her principal carer and lives in East Lothian, over one hour's drive away.

We were able to offer Lydia a place on the HCL bus which takes clients to our Craigengar group, and she has attended weekly since then. The driver picks her up and checks she has her handbag (which she can forget if not reminded) and has locked her door and sees her back into the house (with her handbag) on her return.

Lydia's dementia has progressed to a point where she now needs full-time care but her last year living in her own home has been much happier because she has been able to attend our weekly group. Having previously been anxious about going out and mixing with others she has gained confidence and is feeling positive about her new start in a care home where she will enjoy socialising with the other residents.

Lydia's sister Brenda recently phoned to let us know how much she appreciated our support for Lydia:

*"I was speaking to the group leader on the phone, and I could hear Lydia laughing heartily in the background – it really lifted my heart. It's lovely to know she is so happy and content. OPAL and HcL are really valued by myself and Lydia"*



### **Plugged in Funding - £75,000 towards an electric bus.**

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 £75,000 grant to purchase our first electric-Zero emissions vehicle which is currently supporting our Dial-A-Ride service. This is the first step to growing our green zero emission fleet.

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

"The aspiration is "for HcL to play an inspirational and leading role in delivering Scotland's Net Zero transition by 2045 in a fair and just way in line with the work we carry out as a community transport provider"

### **Visit to Stanford Coachworks 2024 to see the new EV being built**

We were delighted to be invited to Stanford depot in February 2024 to see how the build was getting on. The whole build process is carried out by a team of just 2 highly skilled coachbuilders. From order to arrival was just over a year, our passengers are delighted with the new quiet, sustainable green travel. A special thanks to all the team for the great service.



**energy  
saving  
trust**

**STANFORD**  
Coachworks  
BUILDERS OF LUXURY & ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

## Landfill Fund

A huge thanks to the Landfill fund that supported the installation of the dual charging points for our new electric bus, these are located at the Bathgate depot and will allow us to grow our electric fleet, a special thanks to Boyd Brothers for the service they provided when installing

the infrastructure

## **Clothworkers Foundation**

A huge thank you to Clothworkers foundation who have supported us to purchase new office furniture and IT equipment.

## **Aviva Community Fund**

The generosity of Aviva staff saw us raise £1800 towards community outings. Thank you to all the staff that voted for us.

## **Edinburgh Community Bookshop**

A huge thanks to Edinburgh Community Bookshop for choosing HcL as their chosen charity in May. The book shop does a wonderful job of choosing a charity each month to support. Alasdair and the team donated a staggering £650 to us which will summer and winter outings for our HcL passengers in 2024/25.



## **Events**

# Hd 2024

## BUNGEE JUMP AND HIGHLAND SWING



2024 main event was our fundraising bungee. We were delighted to have 7 brave volunteers taking part in the 2024 Bungee jump, this included 5 members of staff, MP for Midlothian Owen Thompson and our highest fundraiser and youngest participant Ryan Brown. Our very own CEO Kelvin Cochrane also took the leap. The team raised an incredible £3027 in their brave 40-metre jump over the Garry bridge in gorgeous Perthshire. A massive thank you to team Bungee 2024 who's fundraising will allow us to offer more free trips in the Lothians for those that are socially isolated.





## **JOIN US IN 2025- IN AID OF EVENTS**

- **Challenge yourself**
- **Do something different**
- **Need a team builder?**

If you would like to take part in any in aid of event, please let us know. It's a great opportunity to try something new, challenge yourself and raise funds for the essential work we do at HcL. It could be a 5K run, a wild swim, an abseil from the Forth rail bridge, a kilt walk across the city or perhaps the Loony Dook??? Corporate teams also welcomed as part of their volunteer time or for a team building experience. We can arrange it all on your behalf and set you up with a fundraising page all you need to do is get some sponsorship and be part of something special.

## **Summary**

It has been a hugely eclectic year of fundraising for HcL, from our aid to Ukraine campaign which saw a huge amount of support from small businesses, large corporations, community interest groups, like minded charities and of course our staff team, passengers and the public.

A great big thank you must also go to all our bungee jump volunteers, leaping 40 metres to raise over £3000

We have been overwhelmed and humbled in the kindness of so many, thank you for sharing your knowledge, skills and for offering financial support to all our projects this year.

# TOGETHER WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS



## Funders

**SCSP Paths for all**  
**Awards for all Lottery**  
**Plugged in Energy saving**  
**Coorie in for winter**  
**Landfill funding**  
**Hugh Fraser(Turcan Connall)**  
**Disability Trust WL**  
**Aviva fund**



## Outreach

Throughout the year we have provided pop-up stalls, information talks and group visits to a variety of organisations in Edinburgh, West, East and Midlothian from Tranent to Fountainbridge and Dalkeith to Bathgate.

In an outreach/development capacity we attend and contribute to ten different forums/commissions both across the four Health and Social Care Partnership areas and also nationally. These include older people's provider's forums, Volunteer networks, the Edinburgh Wellbeing Pact, Voluntary Health Scotland, and the Edinburgh Accessibility Commission. We also regularly complete consultations and questionnaires on various subjects which affect us as an organisation and our passengers.

In order to further develop our accessibility this year we also set up and registered HcL on ALISS: Scotland's online information system.

Since our last annual report, we have contributed to many other organisations sending written information, posters, flyers, and articles.

Elizabeth Campbell our Service  
Development Manager at the West  
Lothian Volunteer Network volunteer fair  
in Bathgate





## Aid to Ukraine Campaign

This year saw HcL and SEAG (South Edinburgh Amenities Group) came together to support the donation of one of our 9-seater adapted vehicles to Khmelnytskyi City Children's Centre in the Khmelnytskyi region of Ukraine. The Centre supports hundreds of children every year from birth to 18.

February 2024 saw the second anniversary of the war on Ukraine, and we knew it was still having a major impact on day-to-day activities especially in certain regions and on equipment such as adapted transport and mobility equipment getting to these essential services.

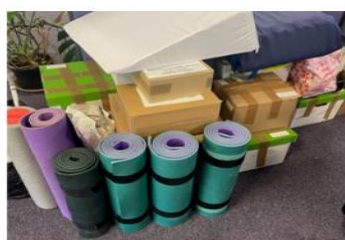
Lesia Herasymchuk the Manager of SEAG lived in this region of Ukraine and explained there was a desperate need for adapted transport for the Centre. Both boards of directors voted that this was something they could support through the donation of one of HcL buses.

We needed support in many areas to make this happen and are incredibly grateful to all of those that were involved. From those that supported logistics and travel, shared safe travel advice, donated to the wish list, valeted the vehicle, and sponsored the journey we could not have done this without you.

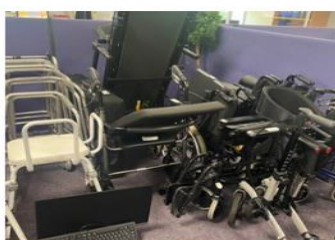
On Friday May 24<sup>th</sup> HcL CEO Kelvin and Lesia started the journey in the 9-seater adapted bus filled with equipment. Leaving from our Loanhead depot in Edinburgh to the hospital in the Khmelnytsky region of the Ukraine, covering a staggering 3134km they arrived 4 days later at 9pm on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

## We did a call out to the public for donations-wow did you respond!

**Mats and sensory toys**



**Mobility aids**



**Filled Bus!!!!**



## News coverage May 2025

HCL were grateful for the positive involvement within the community, and were supported by the following businesses, organisations and charities: EVOC, TASH, AUGB, Sunflower Scotland, CPG Ukraine, Reusing IT who all work tirelessly to support Ukraine.

As well as received sponsorship from South Queensferry Rotary, BEAR Scotland, HW Pickrell, Loanhead church Tea and Chat group. With Fast Aid Edinburgh office donating equipment and K & I Ltd servicing the bus.

Furthermore, they are grateful for the help and service provided by the drivers and passengers.

## Community

## Handicabs Lothian donates bus filled

Edinburgh Minute Community Noticeboard

♦ "On Friday May 24th, Handicabs Lothian CEO Kelvin and SEAG CEO Lesia started the journey to donate the 9-seater adapted bus filled with equipment. **Leaving from our depot in Edinburgh to the hospital in the Khmelnytsky region of the Ukraine, covering a staggering 3134km, they arrived on Tuesday the 28th of May and handed all donations over. Thank you to all of the community that supported us to make this happen.**" Thanks to Dolina Gorman Fundraiser and HCL [for sharing this news.](#)

## What's On **Edinburgh**

What's On ▾ Festivals News Activities Attracti

**LIST YOUR EVENT FOR FREE**

## HcL Handicabs Lothian and SEAG aid to Ukraine Campaign

On Tuesday the 28th of May, following a 4 day journey by Kelvin Cochrane, CEO of HCL Handicabs Lothian and Lesia Herasymchuk, CEO of SEAG, arrived at the children's centre in Ukraine.

## Kelvin and Lesia meet Centre staff

## NEWS

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## HcL arrive in Ukraine with resources for children with disabilities

Friday May 31st 2024



Thank you to:

SEAG

EVOG

AUGB

TASH

## Sunflower Scotland

CPG Ukraine

## Prestonfield Project

## Reusing IT

BEAR Scotland

Rotary South Queensferry

HW Pickrell

## Prestonfied Neighbourhood Project

Loanhead Tea and Chat group

K&I Ltd

## Fast Aid

All of the community of Edinburgh and beyond

## New Service - No 68 service Gyle-Clermiston Circular

We are delighted to have won the tender to deliver a new service, On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the 68 service began the much-needed route. The route offers our unique hail and ride service which allows passengers to wave the driver down in areas there are no bus stops. The service has been a great success with passengers sharing the following feedback.

### **Feedback from customers July 2024**

#### **No 68 service Gyle-Clermiston Circular - information taken from our FB page and Clermiston chat community page**

“Good service, staff pleasant and helpful”

“Very friendly and helpful drivers on the 68 bus, great service”

“Brilliant Service” 🇬🇧

“Can’t fault the service they provide; staff are so helpful and friendly”

“Drivers are very polite and helpful”

“It’s a great bus no 68, I take my mum to the shops with the new service”

“Brilliant service, the driver had passengers saying dingdong when we wanted off- we had a right laugh”

“They are wonderful, my lifeline, drivers are all great the new 68 is fantastic “

“I went on the 68 bus for the first time last week with the new bus company, calling it the happy bus, I fair enjoyed the journey”

“Thanks to HcL at last we have a service that suits Clermiston and a professionally provided service”





# New Bus Route 68 The Gyle - Clermiston Circular July 1st 2024 - Provider HcL

On July 1st 2024 HcL are delighted to be introducing the new 68 service which will cover Gyle -Clermiston Circular

Fares are Adult £2 child £1

Bus passes can be used for free travel

The service will be run with our a 16-seat low floor vehicle. The bus is fully accessible and specially adapted to carry combinations of wheelchair users and other passengers safely and comfortably

Please have the exact money as no change can be given. Payment by card through contactless payment is accepted.

## Timetable

Operates:

Monday-Saturday

Public Holidays:

The service will not operate on 25,26 December,1,2 January, If Christmas and New Year fall on a weekend the following two consecutive week days each week would be taken as public holidays.

Monday to Saturday	Service68	Service68	Service68	Service68	Service68	Service68	Service68
Gyle Centre		09:40	10:50	12:00	13:10	14:20	15:30
Turnhouse Cargo Terminal		09:51	11:01	12:11	13:21	14:31	15:41
East Craigs, Craigmount High School		09:57	11:07	12:17	13:27	14:37	15:47
Meadowplace Road		10:02	11:12	12:22	13:32	14:42	15:52
St Johns Road, St Ninians Road		10:06	11:16	12:26	13:36	14:46	15:56
Drum Brae North, Craigmount Ave Nth	09:01	10:11	11:21	12:31	13:41	14:51	16:01
Drum Brae Drive, Clermiston Crescent	09:11	10:21	11:31	12:41	13:51	15:01	16:11
Drum Brae South, Duart Crescent	09:17	10:27	11:37	12:47	13:57	15:07	16:17
Meadowplace Road	09:22	10:32	11:42	12:52	14:02	15:12	16:22
St Johns Road, St Ninians Road	09:26	10:36	11:46	12:56	14:06	15:16	16:26
East Craigs, Craigmount High School	09:30	10:40	11:50	13:00	14:10	15:20	16:30
Gyle Centre	09:35	10:45	11:55	13:05	14:15	15:25	16:35

For more information about the service please contact our main office on 0131 447 9949



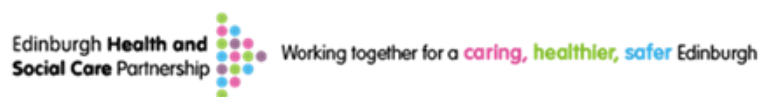
**HcL** TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES

## Edinburgh Winter Day Trips

This winter we ran two 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. Speaking to our passengers, we know that people tend to have things to do in December with Christmas lunches and other events and often have family/friends with them over the Christmas /New Year period into January as a result in February we provided a couple of free accessible outings to Dunbar Garden Centre East Lothian to help people get out and about at a time when they can feel quite isolated.



26 passengers took part over the two days, and they told us that it was great to get a change of scenery, and to get out with friends during the cold winter months.



## Concessionary Bus Passes on our Dial-A-Bus service

Our Dial-A-Bus service provides a personal door-through-door shopping service which connects people throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians with different shopping centres and supermarkets.

This year in East and Midlothian we have continued to provide the same great service but with one big change from 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2024 passengers have been able to use their concessionary bus passes.

Our passengers in West Lothian have been able to use their passes for some time and now East and Midlothian have this advantage too.

We are working hard and hope to have the same concessionary pass benefits on our Edinburgh Dial-A-Bus service by the end of 2024!



Audrey our 1st concession fare passenger for Midlothian receiving a lovely box of chocolates from our driver Russell

## Becoming more Environmentally Friendly

The Green committee which was established at the beginning of 2022 has continued to consider how HcL can 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;**

This year using these key areas, we put together a Net Zero policy to sit alongside our Environmental policy and action plan.

We were also to be asked by the Community Transport Association to provide an environmental case study about the work we have been doing and were delighted that this was included in the CTA Act Local Climate Action Report.

In 2024 we are delighted to have received funding to support our first 9-seater EV, we have also installed 2 EV charging points at our Bathgate depot. These are the first steps to growing our fleet of EV.



	Existing vehicle	ZEV alternative A
<b>Based on 20,000 miles per year</b>	Renault Master LM35dCi (SN64 DHE)	Maxus eDeliver 9 L3H2 FWD 89kWh
Official CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km)	209 <sup>3</sup>	0
Annual CO <sub>2</sub> e (tonnes) <sup>2</sup>	9.61	2.24 <sup>3</sup>
Annual fuel cost	£5,965 <sup>4</sup>	£2,717 <sup>5</sup>
Fuel over 6 years	£35,788	£16,303
First year VED	£395	£0
VED over 6 years	£2,370	£1,160 <sup>6</sup>
First year costs (fuel + VED)	£6,360	£2,717
6-year costs (fuel + VED)	£38,158	£17,463
<b>First year cost saving</b>		<b>£3,642</b>
<b>6-year cost saving</b>		<b>£20,694</b>
<b>Annual CO<sub>2</sub>e saving (tonnes)</b>		<b>7.37t CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>

Handicabs Lothian in Midlothian has upgraded to an environmentally sustainable fleet funded by Plugged-In Communities

We are delighted to be able to offer more shared, zero emission journeys throughout the Lothians. A huge thank you to Energy Saving Trust for their support

Dolina Gorman  
Fundraiser and Marketing Manager  
Handicabs Lothian










## TREASURER'S REPORT

The year to 31 March 2024 saw the charity generate income of £1.96m, an increase of 20%

on the previous year. Of this 61% was received from grants from local authorities and Grant Giving Trusts, this compares to 71% in the previous year. The increase in income is largely due to the increase in fares, particularly those in Edinburgh, together with the continued development of our community bus services across the Lothians

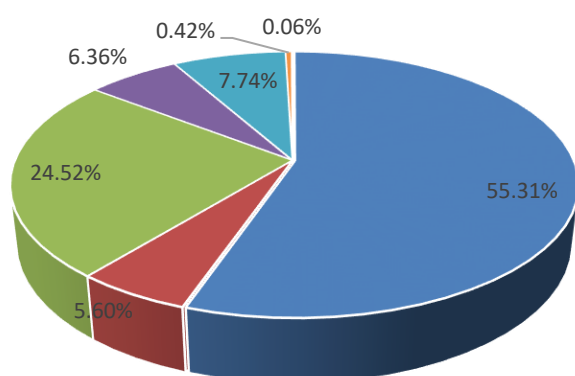
Expenditure for the year was £1.73m, a decrease of 3.5% on the previous year. Like many charities, finding the right resource has been challenging, this lack of recruitment has impacted expenditure in the year.

As a result of the above, the charity has net income (before other recognised losses) at the year-end of £253k.

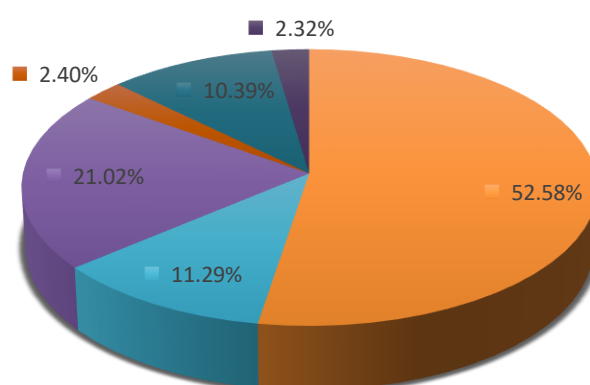
Total funds as at 31 March 2024 were c£1.4m made up of:

- Restricted funds £197k
- Unrestricted designated funds (towards new vehicles, equipment and office refurbishment) £437k
- Unrestricted funds (including pension fund) £775k

### Incoming Operating Grants 2023/2024 Total: £1,957,472



### Expenditure on Charitable Activities 2023/2024 Total: £1,733,586



## 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 10th September 2024 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's ended 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2023 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 auditor's 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.

Signed on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 on behalf of the directors: Director Mr D Wilson

### SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income and endowment from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	7,579	-	7,579	7,515
Membership	655	-	655	710
<i>Charitable activities:</i>				
Operating grants	989,793	92,791	1,082,584	1,050,320
Capital grants	-	109,625	109,625	100,174
Bus Service Operators Grant	124,450	-	124,450	102,348
Fares	479,998	-	479,998	319,083
Other trading activities - training	1,115	-	1,115	-
Investments	13,666	-	13,666	10,467
Other	137,800	-	137,800	32,000
<b>Total income</b>	1,755,056	202,416	1,957,472	1,622,617
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Fundraising	(22,413)	-	(22,413)	-
Charitable activities	(1,559,033)	(152,140)	(1,711,173)	(1,797,213)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	(1,581,446)	(152,140)	(1,733,586)	(1,797,213)
<b>Net gains/(losses) on investments</b>	28,783	-	28,783	(22,037)
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	202,393	50,276	252,669	(196,633)
<b>Other recognised (losses)/gains:</b>				
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	(132,000)	-	(132,000)	77,000
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	70,393	50,276	120,669	(119,633)
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>				
<b>Total funds at 1 April 2023</b>	1,141,940	146,793	1,288,733	1,408,366
<b>Total funds at 31 March 2024</b>	1,212,333	197,069	1,409,402	1,288,733
	=====	=====	=====	=====

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>	1,037,082	906,701
Current assets	469,145	471,356
Current liabilities	(96,825)	(89,324)
<b>Net current assets</b>	372,320	382,032
<b>Net assets</b>	1,409,402	1,288,733
	=====	=====
<b>Total funds of the charity:</b>		
Restricted funds	197,069	146,793
Unrestricted funds		
Designated	436,934	462,985
General	775,399	678,955
	1,409,402	1,288,733
	=====	=====
<b>Approved by the Board on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>		

## HcL Staff (46 staff and 3 volunteers at October 2024)

^ 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 (21)

Amy Hutson	Operations Supervisor	Kirsty Kinnaird	Despatcher/Finance Assistant
Chris Howard	Despatcher	David McGill*	Senior Driver
Connor Barclay	Driver	Angela Stein*	Driver
Robert Cummings	Driver	David McGeachie	Driver
Darren Wallace	Driver	Neil Young	Driver
Fredrick Aspinall	Driver	Gregory Crosbie	Driver
Patrick Carey	Driver	James Marr	Driver
Jim Foy	Driver	William Ross	Driver
Rossalyn Stein	Driver	Andrew Dickson	Driver
Steven Woodburn	Driver	Brian Cornwall	Driver
Amanda Waines	Passenger Assistant		

### Midlothian & East Lothian (4)

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

### West Lothian (18)

Gary Toner^	Assistant Operations Manager		
Frances McCallum^	Despatch Co-Ordinator		
John Watson*	Senior Driver	Mark Toner*	Senior Driver
Robert Kelly	Driver	Reginald Watson	Driver
Ronald Thompson	Driver	Eric Davidson	Driver
Janet Russell	Driver	Thomas Crosby	Driver
George Edmondson	Driver	Richard Sharp	Driver
Iain Wherrett	Driver	Jackie Stewart	Driver
Douglas Campbell	Volunteer Driver	Margaret Comfort	Volunteer Despatcher
Falconer Crichton	Volunteer Driver	Colin Dundas	Passenger Assistant

## HcL Staff leavers throughout the year.

Julie Miller	Driver	Derek Stevens	Driver
Kevin Madden	Driver	Steven Pennycook	Driver
Maria Jameson	Driver	Tony Brice	Driver
Kevin Gibson	Driver	David Hogarth	Driver
James Blain	Driver	Julian Ogilvie	^Senior Driver
John Dryden	Volunteer Driver	Andrew Jeffrey	Volunteer Driver
Richard Finch	Volunteer Driver		

## HcL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dennis Wilson Dr	Chairman
Kenneth Brown TD MBChB MRCGP AFOM CIH	Vice Chairman
Jaslin Bhagrath CA Mike	Treasurer
Harrison MSc BA	
Joan Cameron	
Patricia Lawson	
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:**  
24/3A Dryden Road, Bilston Glen Industrial Estate  
Loanhead, EH20 9HX

**Dial-A-Ride Bookings    0131 447 9949**

**Dial-A-Bus Bookings    0131 447 1718**

**[edinburgh@handicabs.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto:bathgate@handicabs.org.uk)**

**HcL Administration & Registered Office 0131 447 9953**  
**[admin@handicabs.org.uk](mailto:admin@handicabs.org.uk)**

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**[www.HcLTransport.org.uk](http://www.HcLTransport.org.uk)**

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