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RURAL TRANSPORT AND OLDER PEOPLE IN LINCOLNSHIRE



RESEARCH REPORT

In association with the Policy Studies Research Centre
and Lincoln Business School



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Rural Transport and Older People in Lincolnshire



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- Very few of the people interviewed used a computer, instead relying on their sons and daughters to find out information when they had no other option but to use a computer and access the internet. However, some older people did express a desire to learn more about computer technology and how to access the internet.
- There are a lack of public and community transport services that operate during the evenings and at weekends in rural communities. This creates a feeling of isolation amongst the older people interviewed and difficulties in accessing essential amenities and services.

Based on the research in this report, a series of short and longer term recommendations are suggested to increase the use of public and community transport services by older people in rural communities:

Short term

- 1 The implementation of a promotional and marketing campaign that would raise awareness of different rural transport services available to older people
- 2 Further development of the Lincolnshire Community Transport Forum
- 3 The promotion of voluntary/community transport as a way to access healthcare

Longer term

- 4 Greater opportunities for older people to access and learn about ICT for transport
- 5 The expansion of the concessionary bus pass scheme to be used on other transport services



National policy context

As different authors have pointed out (Oxley 2000; Black and Nijkamp 2002; Davey 2007), successive governments in Britain and other countries have attempted to control or reduce car use and promote the take up of public and sustainable transport (European Commission 2007; DfT 2008; UN 2009; DfT 2011). However, there are significant barriers in achieving these goals as personal expectations and negative attitudes to public transport persist (Anderson and Stradling 2004; DfT 2008; Docherty and Shaw 2008). As Anderson and Stradling (2004: 1) have argued, although the negatives 'of car use are increasingly clear, ownership and use have continued to rise. However, if sustainable development is to be considered, car use must decrease and alternative, more sustainable modes of transport made more attractive'. What is also apparent is that private transport plays a large role in the ability of older people to enjoy and sustain a high quality of life (DfT 2012). The reluctance to give up driving in older age is further coupled with the lack of awareness of alternative options available to them (Gilhooly et al. 2002). While it has been suggested that, in order to reduce car use, behavioural changes are required from individuals (Steg and Gifford 2005), as several other studies have shown this needs to be accompanied by innovative solutions which closely match the flexibility and attractiveness of cars, with public transport services operating to fit the needs of a 24 hour society (Davey 2007; Ahern and Hine 2012).

However, the *Comprehensive Spending Review* that was undertaken in October 2010 by the Coalition Government highlighted that reductions to transport expenditure had to be made. As a result of this, government funding to local authorities was cut and changes were made to the DfT's formula for concessionary fare reimbursements. The Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) was also cut by 20% from 2012-13. As these reductions have the biggest impact on those living in rural areas and those of retirement age, the provision of community transport has become increasingly significant to rural life and older people. This increased importance was highlighted by Norman

Baker from the Department for Transport, who announced in December 2011, that £10 million would be made available to 76 English local authorities to support and kick-start community transport initiatives.

The Community Transport Association (CTA) has defined community transport as 'safe, accessible, cost-effective flexible transport run by the community for the community. It mobilises and engages local communities as it is provided by charities and voluntary organisations. It meets the needs of people who do not have access to cars, taxis or buses and provides a lifeline in both rural and urban areas' (CTA 2012:2). The sector is growing and there are at least 2000 community transport organisations operating across England. These include group transport, voluntary /community car schemes, door-to door transport (e.g. Dial-A-Ride) and also community bus services, wheels to work schemes, mini-bus brokerage and driver training (CTA 2012). Nonetheless the Commission for Rural Communities (2012) found that there were inconsistencies in local authorities' policies towards public and community transport, including the degree to which scheduled bus services continue to be subsidised, the types of community transport on which concessionary passes are valid and the approach to using concessionary fares before 9.30am. The Commission for Rural Communities (2012) suggests that these inconsistencies have created a situation where older people can experience very different levels of access to public and community transport across the country.



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In order to support local authorities specifically in the development of community transport services, the Department for Transport allocated funding to those local authorities that received the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant. In order to help local authorities utilise this funding, a partnership was then formed with the Community Transport Association's consultancy group to advise on how best to use community transport and assist rural communities. The Community Transport Grant that was awarded to LCC in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 has been used here in order to understand some of the issues older people have accessing rural transport. With transport playing a key role in helping older people to maintain their independence, quality of life, and health and wellbeing, it is essential that people learn how to access the services currently available to them. Also, at this strategically important time, when public sector resources are in decline and the numbers of older people increasing, providing an appropriate range of affordable and accessible transport options that are well used and financially sustainable is crucial for older people. As the figure below illustrates, community transport could provide the missing piece in this overall transport puzzle.

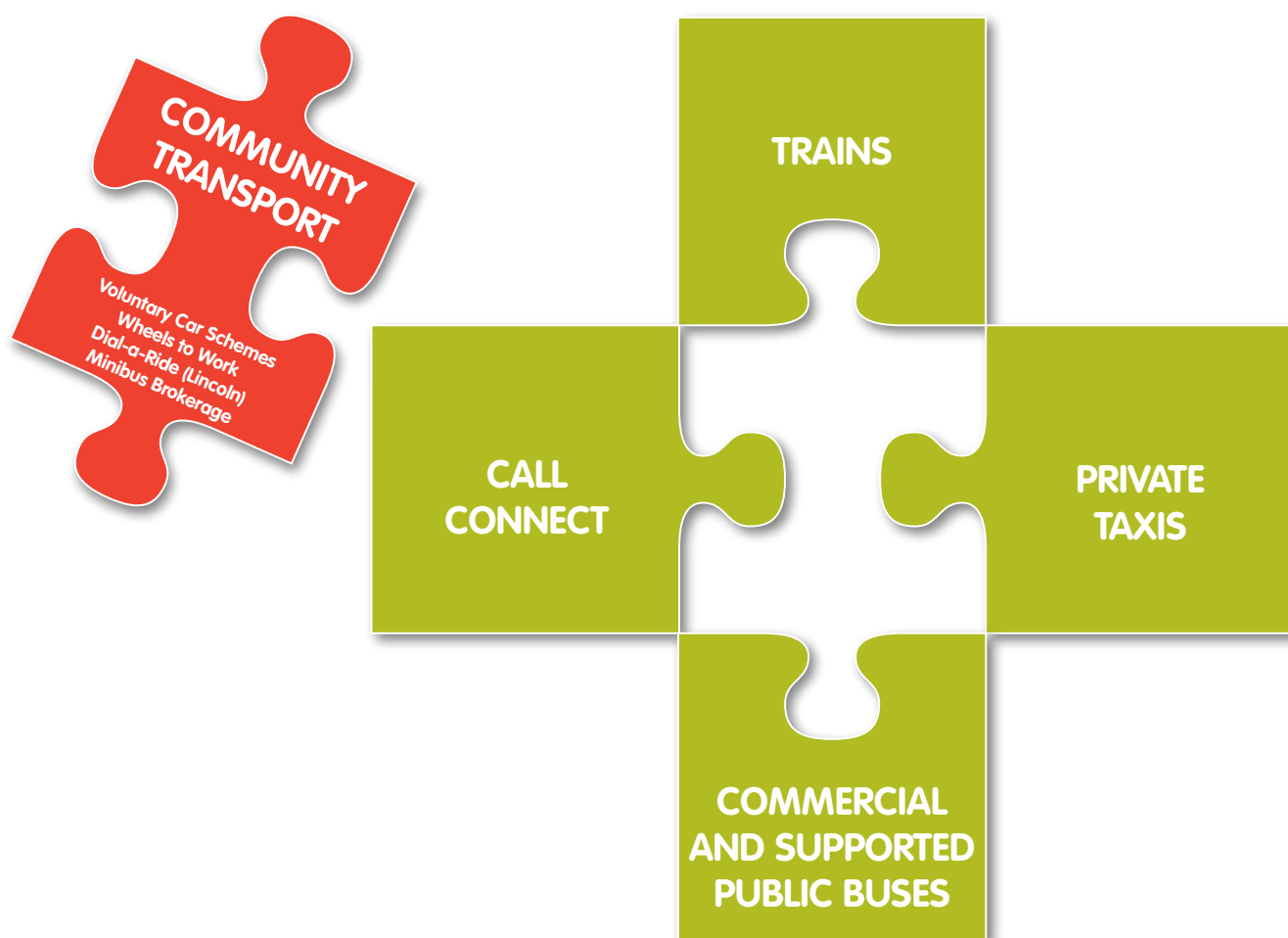


Figure 1.0 Community transport: providing the missing piece in the Lincolnshire transport puzzle

Overall the research to date has shown that older people as a group have diverse needs and live in different circumstances with different experiences influencing transport attitudes, aspirations and behaviours across the country (DfT 2007). For local transport policy to successfully examine current provision and to meet future transport needs of older people, research is required to examine the perceptions old people have of transport in Lincolnshire, the services they regularly use and a greater investigation into the barriers that may hamper the use of these services now and in the future.

Section 2. Methodology

Introduction

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Denscombe 2008; Bryman 2012). The exploratory and responsive nature of this type of social science research enables participant's circumstances and experiences to be explored in depth. Qualitative research also helps explore a range of phenomena and processes amongst participants and enables an understanding of how different factors influence attitudes, behaviours and choices. The rates of use of different transport options cannot be produced from qualitative data, but such data does reveal which modes are most common and some of the reasoning behind older people's use of and evaluations of different transportation options. In this section I map out the research methods used to conduct this study, how participants were recruited and the locations that the research was conducted in across Lincolnshire.



Research methods, sampling and recruitment

This project was split into three stages consisting of a desk based study followed by observational fieldwork and a series of individual and focus group interviews conducted across rural Lincolnshire with older people. The first stage took place in April and May 2012 and a review of published government and third sector reports, academic papers and data collected by different organisations relating to travel and older people was carried out to identify issues that were relevant to this study. This established the kinds of problems that older people encounter when travelling to social activities and accessing healthcare. The review also identified that the issues faced by older people when travelling in rural communities are similar in a variety of countries and that driving cessation and lack of public transport are very important factors for older people. What this review further highlighted was the lack of coordination between community transport schemes and other modes of public transport and the lack of awareness about these schemes among older people across Europe.

Accompanying this review, a content analysis was conducted of the literature and web-based services currently being used by different public and community transport organisations in Lincolnshire to provide information to its service users. This was undertaken in order to establish how the current services that older people might use are marketed and branded, the different ways transport services are promoted and the differences in communication content.

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The table below outlines details of the participants who took part in the study and information about their transport usage.

Focus Group Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Area	Horncastle	Navenby	Scotter	Louth	Gainsborough	Stamford	
Number of Participants	7	9	10	7	5	6	44
Male	3	2	0	1	1	2	9
Female	4	7	10	6	4	4	35
Drivers	1	7	3	3	1	4	19
Public Transport Users	5	6	2	4	4	2	23
Call Connect Users	2	2	0	0	1	1	6
*Dial-A-Ride Users	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
^Voluntary/ Community Car Scheme Users	0	2	0	1	0	1	4
Free Bus Pass	7	9	9	7	4	6	42
Free Bus Pass Users	5	6	2	2	3	3	21
Mobility Scooters/ Wheelchair Users	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
Regular Taxi Users	1	0	0	4	3	1	9

A number of methods were used to recruit people to the focus groups:

1. LCC, and other agencies working with and on behalf of older people in rural areas (e.g. Age UK, Excellent Ageing and religious organisations), acted as gatekeepers and recruited older people who were not regular users of public or community transport. Focus groups in Horncastle, Navenby, Louth and Stamford were arranged in this way.
2. Direct contact was also made with people who ran social groups for older people, and the Scotter focus group interview was arranged via this means of recruitment.
3. A website was set up through the LCC website encouraging older people to get in touch to take part in the study. When a residential care home manager in Gainsborough saw the website, the final focus group was organised in this way <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/residents/transport-travel-and-roads/public-transport/lincolnshire-transport-project/>
4. An advertisement was placed in a senior citizens forum magazine about the project and invited people to take part. The individual interviews were arranged in this way via telephone, after people contacted the researcher having seen the notices.

Section 3 Findings

Introduction

This section outlines the key findings from the focus groups and individual interviews. A number of difficulties and issues were identified which older people in rural areas faced when trying to travel. This section explores some of these difficulties. The key findings identify how older people get out and about, the limits of technological solutions for addressing some of these issues, the severe lack of coordination between different service operators, and the confusion and misunderstandings expressed around community transport. The final part of this section provides some of the participant's suggestions for improving transport in the county and how to get more older people using public and community transport services.



How older people get out and about around Lincolnshire

Many older people that attended the group interviews used a variety of transport methods to get out and about. Some still drove and suggested that their car was a lifeline and drove because they felt there were little other options available to them. As John commented in an individual interview: *“Now without my car I don’t know what I’d do, I think there is a bus that runs twice a day, but I don’t know, I’d be a hermit I think without my car”*. Others used public service buses, or relied on friends and family for lifts. Some commented that they would use the public buses more, but that there were problems with them.

Jean *I would use the bus all the time, but there aren’t enough of them around here*

MW *Right*

Brianna *And they stop at 6:30*

Jean *And they stop in the afternoon as well, two o’ clock or something*

Brianna *And none on Saturdays or Sundays*

Jean *Yes none on Sunday*

Mavis *That’s our bugbear*

Verna *None on a Sunday!*

Brianna *No good if you are in work you see, on a shift or nights, you see*

MW *And was it always like that on a Sunday?*

Chorus *No! No!*

[Scotter FG]

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- Nancy** *Well that's the main place!*
- Tina** *Well half a dozen times I've said, look what I'll do is check and see if they will take you, and there has only been once when they said they would take us and that was to the pub*
- Doreen** *Yes that's right that is!*
- Tina** *But we were restricted if you remember, cos they do the children's school runs, so picking us up, they were supposed to come at twelve, but they didn't come till half past, and they picked us up at two and they couldn't pick us up any later*
- Doreen** *We missed our pudding because he had to pick us up at two o'clock, and we were already half an hour late!*

[Gainsborough FG]

Some older people in the focus groups indicated that they had negative experiences of using CallConnect, so did not use it again. Other complaints about CallConnect from those older people who did not use it were that they were not sure of the differences between the more well-known Dial-A-Ride scheme and CallConnect, and many others were unaware that Dial-A-Ride² no longer operated outside the city of Lincoln. Some users of CallConnect, as Glenda indicates below, were hostile to others, such as school children, using it:

- Glenda** *CallConnect is very good for the elderly people, but if you've got an appointment, you never know if you are going to be there on time, and in the afternoon it's a job to get one, as they pick children up, it's not just for the elderly any more is it, but they have difficulty using it, which I think is wrong, it was supposed to be for the elderly, who have a job to get out and about.*

[Stamford FG]

There were also further issues around wheelchair access and complaints that mobility scooters could not fit onto all buses.

However, those who used the CallConnect service found that it made a huge difference to their lives and described it as a 'life-line'. As the following case studies (which are drawn from notes made when travelling on CallConnect in different parts of the county) show for some users in particular, the service was essential for shopping and providing an opportunity to interact with others:

As we pulled up outside her house, Mrs Davies came out to the bus on two crutches and I noticed her right foot was heavily swollen and in a brace. She must have been into her 80s and seemed very frail. The driver got out and offering a cheerful hello, lowered down the ramp at the back of the bus and Mrs Davies hobbled onto it. Even though the bus was supposed to be an accessible bus, the normal step up was way too much for someone in Mrs Davies condition and, I imagine, for a lot of older people with mobility issues, so the accessibility ramp was used to help her board the bus. Mrs Davies sat on the seat at the back of the mini-bus and I moved down the bus to talk to her. I gave her one of my post cards and explained who I was. 'So how long have you been using this bus then' I asked, 'a few years' she replied, 'it's a lifeline, as no one speaks to me in my street, so since the death of my brother, it's the only place to talk to people sometimes'.

[Gainsborough, 28th May 2012]

The CallConnect service was also a vital mode of transport for those without the ability to drive. This tended to apply more to women than men:

At 11:10 we headed out to pick up our 5th passenger of the day. It was a fair way outside the town and the lady who we picked up lived in a very isolated area. In the middle of a huge flat landscape of fields, a very long distance away for any service bus routes, were situated two houses. The road leading up to these houses was in a very poor condition and the CallConnect bus bumped slowly along the single, unmarked road. We picked up an elderly lady who was waiting outside her house. She had moved up from Cambridgeshire with her husband, but he had died 5 years ago leaving her with 42 cats to look after. As she had never learned to drive, the lady told me that she relied on the CallConnect bus and taxis to get

18 ² A county-wide Dial-A-Ride service in Lincolnshire stopped at the end of March 2011, as all funders could not sustain the level of subsidy provided to the service - the estimated passenger subsidy for Dial-A-Ride services was as high as £17- £18 per passenger. CallConnect took over many of these routes, supported by community transport initiatives. LCC continues to support the Lincoln City Dial-A-Ride scheme, along with the City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council and West Lindsey District Council.

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Role of bus passes in combating social exclusion and promoting sustainable travel

The introduction of the free bus pass has been greatly beneficial to the participants in this study. Many found it helped to reduce car use:

Janet If I'm going into town I'll just use my bus pass, leave car at home.

[Scotter FG]

Charles If I go into town, I'll take the bus, saves dealing with parking.

[Navenby FG]

Judith I do have a bus pass, and if I need to go into town, I don't go in very often, but I do find it very convenient for going up to the hospital, to save on parking.

[Navenby FG]

Lois I do have a free bus pass and use it frequently, living out there it's almost essential, the bus passes are almost like gold.

[Stamford FG]

The free bus pass was also useful when visiting other areas away from Lincolnshire on holiday to reduce transport costs.

Linda I do have a bus pass, but I do have very great difficulty in using it, as the buses in my area are not convenient, but I did manage to use it on the tram in Blackpool!

Charles I also have a bus pass which I have used in Nottingham and London, and I've used it around Lincoln as well, very good they are.

[Navenby FG]

However, the times one could use a bus pass were seen by some participants as problematic and provided useful discussion about their importance:

James One thing I have noticed, though, is the county provide a nine o'clock start, whereas a lot of the rest of the country and if you go outside of the county it's nine thirty ...now what I've noticed is that because it's any time pass, quite a lot of people go out and use local services, when they don't really need to, they have no pressure on time and it squeezes pressure on people who are trying to get their kids to school... so I'm not a 100% convinced that the anytime option is a good one.

Robert I think you would have to take on board that in the days of age equality that some pensioners might actually want to work and if you took that away from them, it would be an impediment to them working. They should keep it [the passes] anytime.

Carol Because they might have hospital appointments before nine AM so we should be able to use them.

[Horncastle FG]

Other people were unsure about when the bus pass could be used and when it couldn't:

Diane Well from here we can't get on a bus at all before ten o'clock and if you got to be at Lincoln Hospital for nine o'clock or eight thirty you got to pay. I thought it was free anytime when I got it, but it's not

[Louth FG]

While free bus passes were undoubtedly valuable for the older people interviewed, there were also a number of issues that came up when discussing free bus passes. Some older people, it seems, did not bother to apply for their free bus passes because they couldn't physically access the vehicles or felt there were so few service buses available in their areas, it did not warrant the effort. In the excerpt below,

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Rather alarmingly, as Hilda illustrated below, some older people interviewed stated that while they had their free bus pass, they still preferred to drive as they got dizzy spells whilst using the bus:

Hilda Well I still drive, I love my car, but I have got a free bus pass, but I've only used it twice though, because I get frightened on the bus as I get dizzy spells. I'm ok to drive though!

[Stamford FG]

The focus groups showed that when free bus passes are used in and around the City of Lincoln, this allows for car drivers to use public transport instead of cars. This indicates that a good public transport system, combined with a free bus pass, can combat social exclusion among older people by allowing them to travel to a variety of social and leisure opportunities for free. The concessionary pass also helps to reduce car dependency and promote sustainable travel and help prepare older drivers for a time when they might not be able to drive any more. However, free passes do nothing specifically to improve access to services or activities for the most isolated or frail people (as Jan, indicates above) as they are often still unable to physically use these services. Many participants who used to drive were also unaware of how to use a public service bus or where to find information about times and routes.

Lack of coordination between service providers

The focus groups indicate that there seems to be a perception amongst some older people that there is a lack of cooperation between services providers in rural areas, both across a range of transport operators and between different local authorities. As indicate below, whilst some found they could use some local transport schemes to get to the main transport hubs, they would still have long waits for other services.

MW So is there anything that you would like changed?

Margaret Well I used to get the ten o'clock Nipper

into town so I could get the bus to Grimsby, but it goes at ten till the hour now, so I can't use the Nipper bus to do that anymore

MW Ah right

Margaret Two different companies operating

Betty That's right, it happens all the time, why don't these companies talk to each other? Half the time I don't bother, I think one of the worst things about using public transport is the waiting, waiting on a pavement in the rain and so on and so forth, I think that is the very worst thing and the bus station. Lincoln bus station is beyond belief really!

[Louth FG]

Furthermore the lack of fit between health policy and transport policy is very serious. While it may be beneficial to health care providers to centralise certain treatments and procedures, this will not fully achieve their aims if those who are most likely to need to access these treatments and procedures (older people) cannot get to these hospitals and clinics. Much greater consideration needs to be given to the location of treatment centres and the needs of those who will be treated at these centres and how patients travel to and from their appointments. Some respondents reported having to travel very early to appointments, and then had to sit around waiting for a long time for transport back home.

Participants' suggestions for improving and encouraging more usage of public and community transport

This section has shown that some older people experience great difficulties in making journeys due to a lack of access to transport. This supports other research that has found that an inability to participate fully in an active social life can have drastic effects on mental health, independence and physical well-being (Cloke et al 1997; Glasgow and Blakely 2000; Gilhooly et al. 2002; SEU 2003; Commission for Rural Communities 2006; Manthorpe et al 2008; DfT 2012; Shergold and Parkhurst 2012). The focus groups further demonstrated that public transport services are often too infrequent during the day (and non-existent during the evenings and at weekends in some areas) to generate sufficient usage amongst older people, despite the availability of free bus-passes. What was also evident was that there was general confusion about what community transport schemes and CallConnect actually were. As Tina, the manager of the residential care home quoted above pointed out in relation to CallConnect:

Tina There needs to be more information about the routes, the times, about where they can and can't go, like Call Connect, it can't go to the hospital, well why not? There is not a public service bus which goes [from Gainsborough] at that time in the morning. What's the point of it, if you want to take me to a village in the middle of nowhere, so I can go to a garden centre? That's not what I need, what I need is to go to the hospital!

[Gainsborough FG].

To help understand this confusion further, during the course of the focus group interviews, participants were asked for their constructive comments and opinions for the improvement of current modes of transport. They were also asked what could be done to get more people to use the voluntary/community car schemes. A variety of advertising and publicity opportunities were mentioned by older people in the focus groups. These included:

- Putting more traditional bus timetables in places where old people went, such as post offices, in churches, information points in towns and villages, arts centres, village shops, community centres and pubs
- Placing notices in parish magazines and local free newspapers
- General letter box drops in isolated areas
- Using senior forums to spread the word about these services
- Putting posters and notices in health centres, doctors surgery's, opticians, dentists

Other suggestions that were made were around service improvement. These included smaller accessible buses instead of double decker's, more helpful drivers, better bus shelters, fewer restrictions on where buses may set down passengers in rural locations and the improvement of the central bus station in the City of Lincoln. One participant James, who was registered blind, described some of the challenges he faced when arriving at the end of his journey at the central bus station:

James Well Lincoln bus station is very challenging for me and it's so dangerous, hard to walk around even with my [guide] dog, they don't really know where the buses are coming and they change the bus stops and don't really tell you they are coming, some of the staff don't know when they are coming. I have heard they are trying to move the bus station, near the train station, which would tie in with the rail services, so that would be better, but who knows it that is ever going to happen.

[Horncastle FG]

Section 4 Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

The older people interviewed in this report did not fully understand the transport options available to them in Lincolnshire, and it was perceived that there is a lack of coordination between transport providers and key services used by this age group. Community transport schemes offer solutions to these problems; nonetheless, as the findings in section 3 of this report show, the lack of awareness about these services, and the confusion that surrounds them amongst older people means that they are not fully achieving their potential. In order to make a real difference to rural communities these services need to increase their customer patronage and recruit more volunteer drivers to help the service grow. However, this can only be done if people are aware of what these services can do and if different services work together to promote and use them. The authors of this report would therefore like to make a number of short and longer term recommendations based on the findings of this research study and following research into potential local solutions.

Short term recommendations

1. A promotional and marketing campaign that would raise awareness of different rural transport services available to older people

As this study has found, transport plays a key role in tackling social exclusion and reducing health related costs. There are also significant differences between the travel experiences of older women and older men, as older women are less likely to own cars and be able to drive than older men. As men are highly likely to die earlier than their female partners, consideration must be given to how older women will make important trips without a car when they are left alone. Furthermore, older men, and an increasing number of older women, have experienced lifestyles where they have always driven, so losing the ability to drive will have a drastic impact on their lives, for which they need to be prepared. Using community transport

schemes should be emphasised as a means to help with this preparation.

However, rural public and community transport must be seen as more than just providing a vital social service that reduces social exclusion. It must also be seen as something that could be a vital alternative to using a car, which will become increasingly important as the population continues to age over the coming decades. The focus group interviews demonstrated that some older people perceived that public transport services were often too infrequent during the day (and non-existent during the evenings and at weekends in some areas) to generate sufficient usage amongst older people, despite the availability of free bus-passes. As the previous section illustrated what was also evident was that there was general confusion amongst those interviewed about the concept of the public bus service CallConnect, especially around booking and accessing the service. This confusion also extended to community transport. Furthermore, as the content analysis of the different information resources for transport in the methods section highlighted, the confusing array of literature on voluntary/community car schemes in particular could be a key part of this confusion. Drawing on the suggestions made by older people themselves that were outlined in the previous section, if transport services were advertised in key locations and publications used by older people, there might be a greater take up of them, which could also reduce car dependency. These could include:

It would also highlight the services on offer and could lead to an increase in the passenger usage of the individual schemes. An easily recognisable logo could be designed to be included on a variety of publicity to aid and promote public recognition of the forum. Some of the schemes have begun to use the CTA logo on their promotional material, so there are links already being made to wider organisations. LCC also provides each organisation with an annual grant, which with the agreement of the different schemes, could be extended. While each individual scheme could still be responsible for publicising their own services, this good work could be supported and developed by LCC to ensure a more strategic approach to promotion of community transport is developed. These could include car stickers to illustrate membership and build confidence in the branding with service users and the wider population, advert panels to be inserted into publications, simple and clear information posters for display in key information locations and a county wide community transport user guide available online.

Although many older people in this study reported that they were not regular users of information technology, the current website information that is available for the different community transport options could also be developed to be more interactive and user friendly to aid those who do. Furthermore it is arguable that as the internet is likely to become a key information resource for transport services for older people over the next twenty years, the importance of web based resources for future generations of older people is vital.

3. The promotion of voluntary/community transport as a way to access healthcare

As this research has highlighted through participants discussions about health and transport services (see the importance of accessing health services on page 20 in section 3 of this report), hospital appointments were a major source of worry for the older people interviewed. As a result of transport difficulties, hospital appointments were often made more stressful for some of the people interviewed. Therefore health and transport policy and provision

do not seem to be joined up. Furthermore, most of those interviewed relied greatly on family and friends to take them to appointments, while the most vulnerable and those without families able to take them, suffered huge amounts of anxiety when dealing with the ambulance booking system. Many were unaware of the voluntary/community car schemes that might have been available to them as an alternative to alleviate some of this stress and worry. It would seem that the voluntary/community transport schemes could be better promoted through health services to tackle some of these issues.

At the local level there needs to be more cooperation between doctors, consultants, public health, transport providers and those working at local authority level. An awareness of the transport problems faced by older people in rural areas of Lincolnshire needs to be created in hospitals and amongst consultants when making appointments for older people. This should form part of the Smarter Choices and Accessibility team and community champions. The amount of stress and frustration that even routine appointments can cause for older people, their families and carers needs to be addressed. What would also be beneficial is if other health care providers such as optometrists, who often have to advise older patients that they have to cease driving, had access to literature from the voluntary/community car schemes which could point older people to other transport options in order to ease the transition to being a non-driver. This literature also needs to be available in doctors' surgeries, hospital waiting areas and on hospital websites. This will be undertaken as part of a long term communication strategy within the Smarter Choices and Accessibility Team at LCC. The development of the Lincolnshire Community Transport Forum in recommendation 2, and a single brand identity with supporting publicity material, could further help with this promotion.

Conclusion

This study sought to address the following questions:

- What are older people's perceptions of public (commercial bus and train companies, including InterConnect and CallConnect) and community transport services (voluntary car schemes, mini-bus brokerage) in rural areas of Lincolnshire?
- What are the current transport services used by older people?
- Are there any obstacles or barriers to the use of community transport services?
- To what extent are older people aware of the services available to them?
- What issues can be identified that may influence recommendations for the future provision of transport services?

This report has identified that older people used a variety of transport options including driving, lifts with family and friends, buses and trains, with some using the voluntary/community car schemes and the CallConnect service. Others walked around their local villages, but this was not a dominant mode of transport. Those interviewed had both positive and negative perceptions of public transport, but there was a serious lack of knowledge amongst participants about what community transport schemes exist, how they operate and what services they offer. There also appeared to be a negative relationship between the number of community transport providers and levels of socio-economic deprivation. For example, in Gainsborough there were no voluntary/community car schemes, whilst in Louth there was a large scheme, well operated and well used. However, despite these findings, there were still people who attended the focus group in Louth who had little or no idea about what a voluntary/community car scheme was or what CallConnect could do for them.

A serious lack of coordination between transport services was also reported by older people. These included connection times between different bus operators and also to railway stations. Furthermore,

there was also a variety of health care providers who older people felt gave little or no consideration to how they were to get to appointments and how to deal with potential life changing events, e.g. the cessation of driving. ICT usage was identified as being low in all groups interviewed, which would seem to indicate that there are limits to relying on ICT to solve transportation issues for older people. Based on the research in this report, a series of recommendations have been suggested, which aim to increase the use of transport services by older people in rural communities and to shape future transportation planning.

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Appendix 2 Recruitment Poster

Lincolnshire Transport Project

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M: 07890 874188



**Tell us your opinions on
transport services**

Over 60's Focus Group Wednesday 13th June
10.30-11.30am
Horncastle Community Centre

Would you like to be involved in a focus group?
Have your say about transport - or the lack of it - in your community.
Your opinions will help make recommendations for the future provision of
transport services for older people in Lincolnshire.
You will receive a membership pack and a free return pass on the
CallConnect service as a token of appreciation for taking part.
The focus group will run for about an hour. All information will be strictly
confidential and anonymous.



To participate please contact Mike Ward
Phone 01522 552555 or 07890 874188
Email miward@lincoln.ac.uk



Appendix 4 Project Information Newsletter



Lincolnshire Research Project

My name's Mike Ward and I'm a researcher conducting a twelve month study that will principally examine the current and future transportation needs of older people in rural parts of Lincolnshire. In particular the study will focus on older peoples use and perceptions of public (commercial bus and train companies, including InterConnect and CallConnect) and community transport services (car schemes, mini-bus brokerage, wheels to work).



The research, consultation and data analysis, will produce a report that makes clear recommendations for the future provision of transport services in the county. This research study is a knowledge exchange partnership project between Lincolnshire County Council and the University of Lincoln. The recommendations from the final report will help form a Community Transport Strategy, used to inform Local Transport Plan 4. This work is being undertaken with support by the Community Transport Association, and will be funded with the DfT Community Transport Grant awarded to Lincolnshire County Council in 2011-2012. Data will be gathered from surveys with Call Connect users, participant observation of transport services, one-on-one interviews and focus groups consisting of older people (8-10) who do not currently access any public or community transport on a regular basis.



Lincolnshire County Council

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Alternatively visit our websites:

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/busrailtravel

www.lincsbus.info

www.lincstravel.info

www.lincspartnerconnect.com