

### What is the Hub?

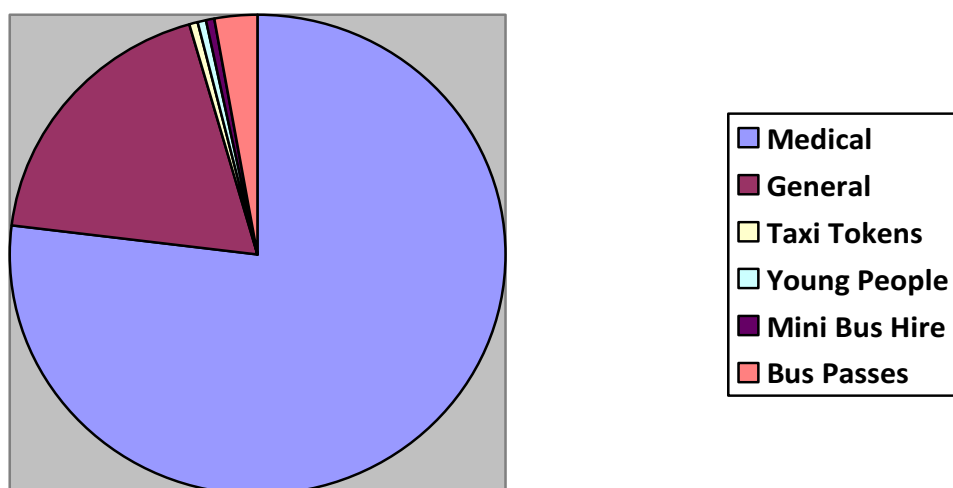
Launched in September 2012 and funded jointly by Buckinghamshire County Council and the Buckinghamshire NHS Trust, the Community Transport Hub is a one stop shop for information, advice and guidance on community transport providers in Buckinghamshire. The Transport hub has the most up to date information for all transport providers across the County from Dial-a-Rides to community car schemes, minibuses for hire and transport schemes for young people. The transport hub can also work with the community to set-up a community car scheme if there are no services in their community. Since its launch the hub has taken 1600 calls with the majority of these calls from older people looking for hospital/health related transport.

### What we do?

The Transport Hub works closely with all the community car schemes across the County and has developed a database of the schemes and what they can provide. In partnership with the Community Development team at Community Impact Bucks we also work with the schemes to support them with advice on insurance, volunteer driver recruitment, training, funding and any other needs identified. We operate and run a free phone number for members of the public to call between 9am-4pm Monday-Friday to help them with their transport needs. Once a call is taken we will signpost them to the most relevant service to suit their needs. We continue to update and grow the database and will carry out regular feedback checks on our callers to ensure they have managed to book transport and to measure feedback on the service.

### Purpose of the call

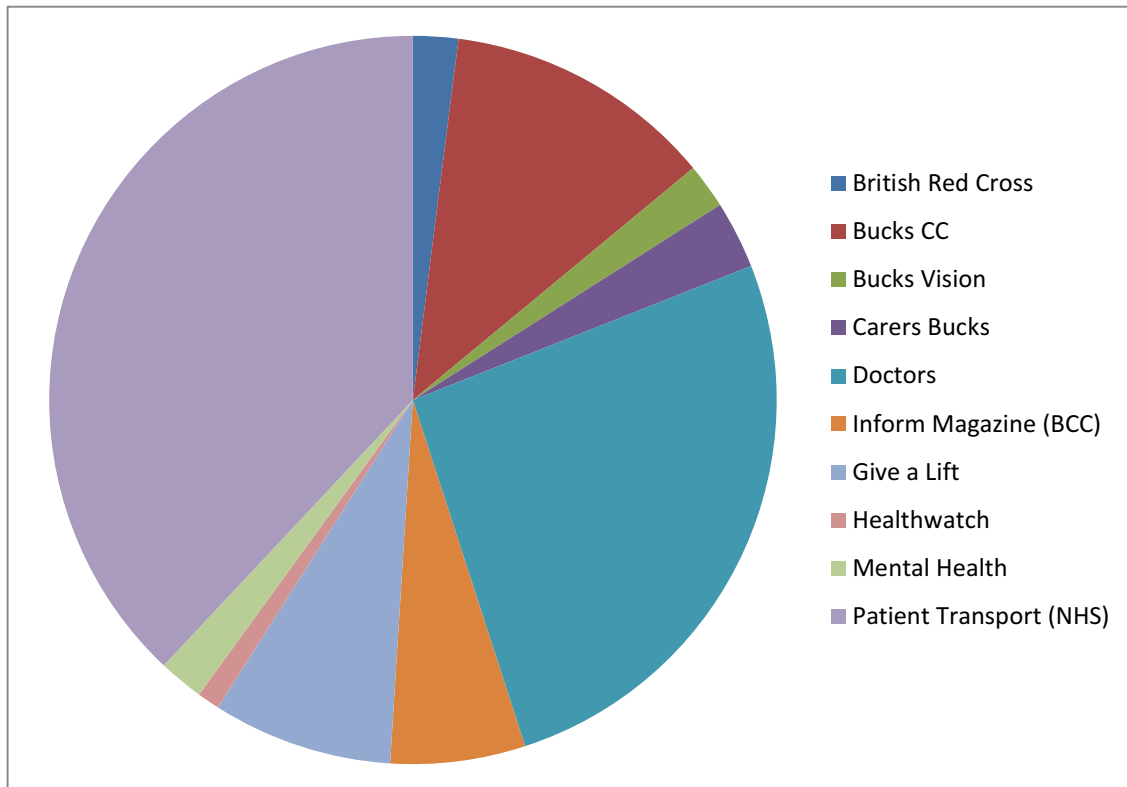
The overwhelming majority of calls are still health related with 80% of callers needing transport to get to a GP or hospital/health related appointment. General calls relate to around 10% from people needing help with shopping or social visits to a friend or relative. These types of calls received by the hub range from local voluntary groups looking to hire a minibus for an outing, advice on obtaining a bus pass and how to claim back travel expenses from the NHS. These callers are signposted to organisations that can assist them.



### Who refers a caller to the Hub?

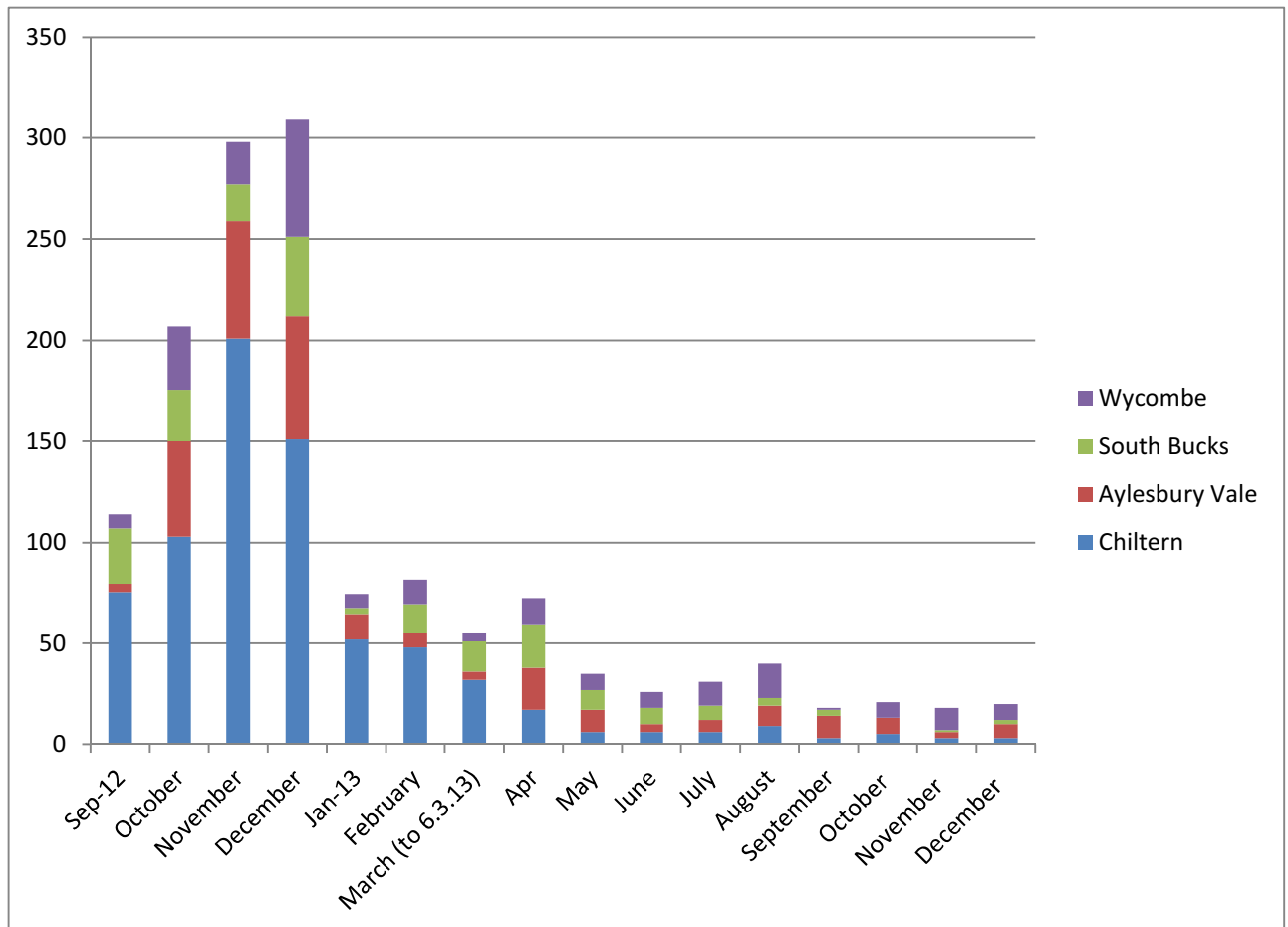
The majority of our calls to the Transport Hub since its inception in 2012 have come from GP surgeries and Patient Transport. In most case the call is made directly from the person needing transport, after that have been told about the hub from one of the services below. Occasionally one of the services listed below would call the hub on behalf of one of their clients. Additionally, more stringent enforcement by the ambulance trust of the medical criteria for eligibility of patient transport has impacted greatly on the demand for alternative transport.

### Call Referrals September 2012 – December 2013



## Calls received by District

September 2012 – December 2013



### Marketing

The transport hub is marketed through our partners, on our website and through leaflet drops to health related providers throughout the county. We also undertake targeted campaigns including BCC Inform magazine and promotion through dedicated publicity events like the 'Give a Lift Week' campaign detailed below. These campaigns generate a marked increase in calls to the hub.

#### "Give a Lift week"-

The Community Impact Bucks Transport Team arranged a week of publicity around Buckinghamshire to promote Community Transport and encourage communities to look at setting up a scheme in their area. At each location we were joined by a member of Dial-A-Ride or a community car scheme coordinator. We specifically targeted areas where we receive the highest level of calls. We spoke to transport users to identify their needs and gave out information and advice on what schemes are available to them and work of the Transport Hub.

The schedule was:

Monday 14th Oct	Location
AM	Stoke Mandeville Hospital
PM	Stoke Mandeville Hospital
Tuesday 15th Oct	
AM	High Wycombe Hospital
PM	High Wycombe Hospital
Wednesday 16th Oct	
AM	Amersham Hospital
Thursday 17th Oct	
AM	Winslow Centre Café 10 - 2pm
Friday 18th Oct	
AM	Chalfont St Peter Community Hospital 9am - 1pm
Saturday 19th Oct	
AM	Princes Risborough Tesco
Monday 21st Oct	
AM/PM	Wexham Park Hospital

### Community Transport Promotional Video

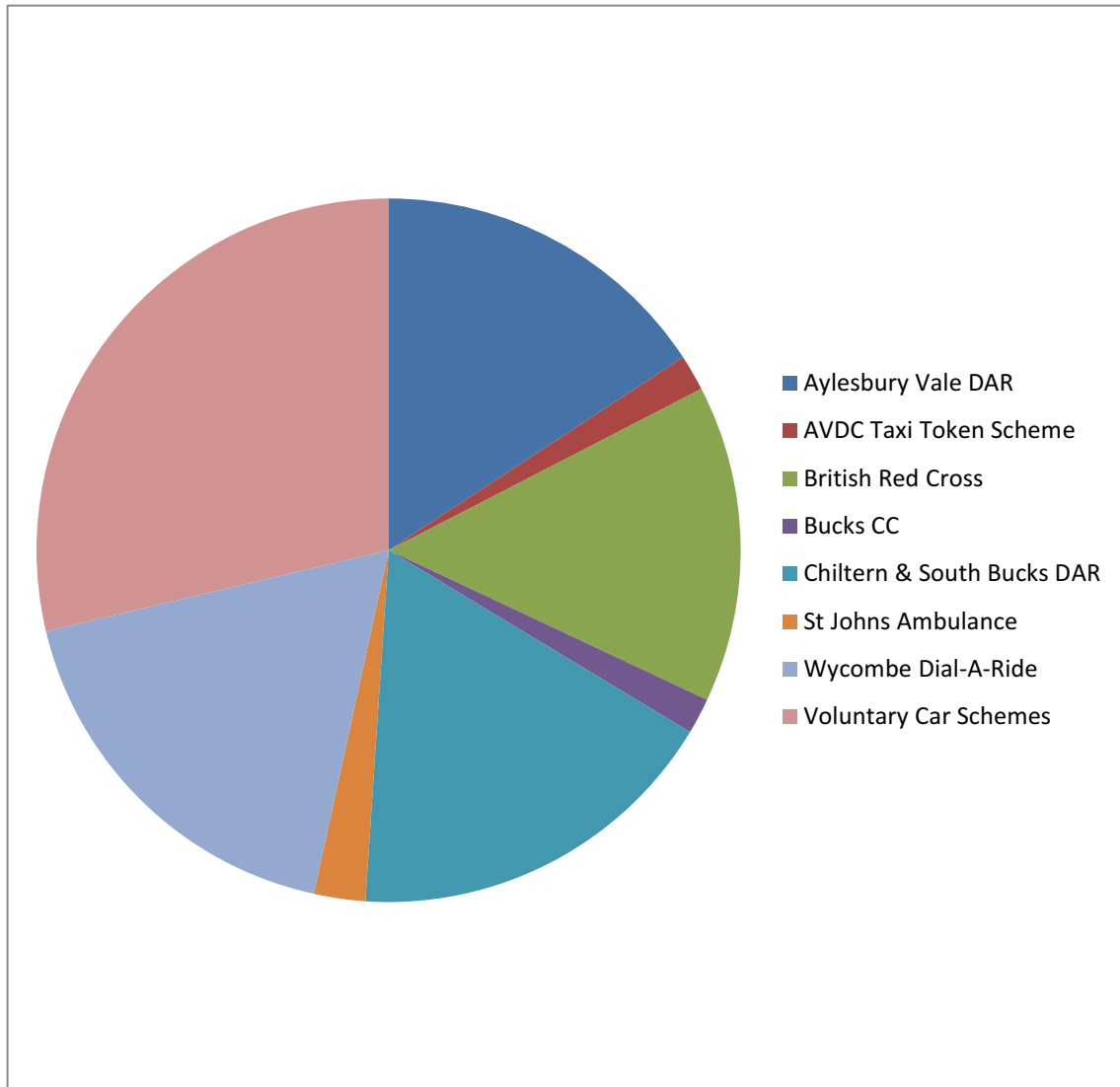
In partnership with Bucks County Council Community Impact Bucks produced a promotional video on community transport. The short film highlights the benefits of running a community transport scheme and the huge difference it makes to those people who use the services and those who volunteer their time.

<http://www.communityimpactbucks.org.uk/pages/community-transport.html>

### Services Signposted by the Hub

It is clear from the graphs below the reliance on community car schemes and alternative transport providers are huge, the demand for these services is growing as the gap in public and ambulance transport becomes less available to those people who struggle with using these services. As this demand grows, there is the need for potential users of community transport schemes to be able to access these from one central point; the Community Transport Hub is the way to provide this one central reference point for users.

The hub signposted to the following services in the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2013.



### Case Studies

1. A call was received from an elderly lady living in High Wycombe. She was extremely isolated and had not been out of her home for over 8 months. She was desperate for someone to pick her up and take her round the shops for a few hours. The hub investigated various options with Age UK, ENRYCH and BCC in touch team but unfortunately they did not provide a service in the High Wycombe area. Wycombe Youth Action arranged for one of their volunteers to pick the lady up and take her into Wycombe with Wycombe Dial-A-Ride. High Wycombe Shop Mobility provided use of a wheelchair. The lady was over the moon to have spent a few hours in the shops.
2. A Community Practice Worker at Bucks Mind contacted the hub looking for transport solutions for one of their clients. The lady was vulnerable and had a fear of male drivers so required a female driver. The hub referred the client to Community Care North Bucks who have female volunteer drivers and also provided some local taxi company numbers whom accept the AVDC Taxi token scheme.

3. A retired gentleman called from Hyde Heath. He was looking for help with transport to High Wycombe Hospital as he required an operation on his hand. He was referred to the Chesham Voluntary Car Scheme who was able to help him. He was very thankful for the advice and has offered to help volunteering when his hand is better.
4. We took a call from a visually impaired lady living alone in Beaconsfield who needed transport to Wexham Park Hospital. She was nervous of using the larger minibus vehicles as she had a fall from one once and hurt her leg. We put her in contact with the Beaconsfield Advisory Centre Transport Scheme who found her a volunteer driver to take her to her appointment. She was move confident going in a smaller vehicle and having the support of the driver to get her into the hospital safely.
5. Nita contacted the Transport hub very distressed as she no longer qualified for hospital transport. She was desperately looking for transport from Chalfont St Peter to Stoke Mandeville hospital to have treatment for cataracts she was very worried on how she would make this journey. Her details were taken by a member of the transport team and contact was made with the Chalfont St Giles Voluntary car scheme. They were happy to assist and sourced a volunteer driver who lived just round the corner from her. He was happy to take her to the hospital and wait the 2 hours she needed for treatment. She was then taken home to recover. The volunteer driver takes Nita to her hospital appointments on a regular basis and they have built up a friendship.
6. We were contacted by an elderly gentlemen living in Marlow who needed to attend the Churchill Hospital in Oxford every day for a 2 week period. He had been quoted a return daily fee of £80 by a local taxi firm. We put him in touch with the Wycombe Dial-A-Ride service and also the Marlow- British Red Cross voluntary Car Pool. He was able to arrange transport between the two services which saved him a considerable amount of money and gave him peace of mind he could attend his appointments.
7. A retired gentleman called from Hyde Heath. He was looking for help with transport to High Wycombe as he required an operation on his hand. He was referred to the Chesham Voluntary Car Scheme who was able to help him. He was very thankful for the advice and has offered to help volunteering when his hand is better.

### **Conclusion**

From the calls to the Transport Hub it is clear that the more stringent enforcement of the ambulance transport criteria has had a huge impact on those people accessing these services. This has put a strain on those community transport providers who are now picking up the majority of the calls signposted from the Hub.

As demand for the service continues to be from those people most in need who are accessing transport to health related appointments it is clear that work needs to continue in establishing more community car schemes across the County. Moreover, it is also clear that with the stringent enforcement of ambulance transport criteria, there is a demand for one central hub which is able to provide information on all of the available transport options to those people seeking assistance in getting to health related appointments. We therefore feel that the Community Transport Hub provides a valuable service and has the potential to grow in the future as a real one stop shop for all transport information.

However, to enable this to happen there is the requirement for ongoing resources to support its development. Without the community transport hub many people will simply not know where to turn when faced with finding transport options to get to their hospital or doctors' appointments; as for many traditional public transport is simply not an option (either they are physically unable to use public transport or there is no public transport options within their community). It is also the case that, due to shared services, many people have to travel to a hospital which is not their closest. This increases the anxiety around having to get to the appointment. The Community Transport Hub is able to reduce this anxiety by providing information on the different transport options available; and thus reducing transport issues as a reason for people missing or cancelling their hospital and doctor appointments.

As can be seen from the information presented above, Community Impact Bucks feel that the Community Transport Hub provides a valuable service to the people of Buckinghamshire and would like it to continue. The Hub is currently funded through to the end of May 2014. Further resource is required to ensure that it can continue beyond this point; and hopefully develop and diversify the service that it offers.

**January 2014**  
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