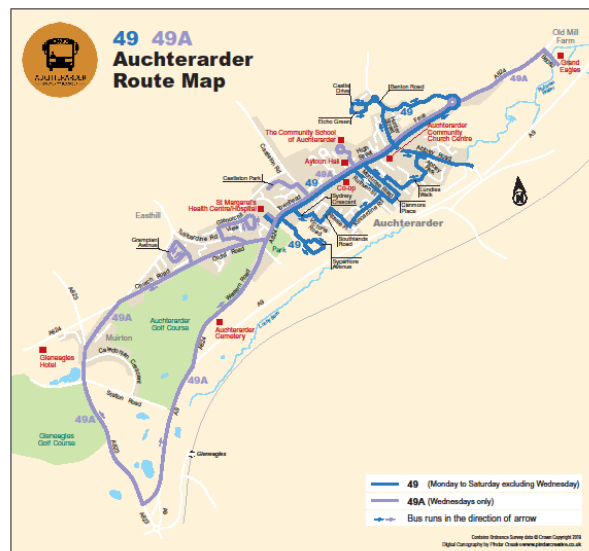




Auchterarder Community Bus Group (ACBuG) Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

01 September 2019 - 31 August 2020



SCIO, Charity No. SC048669

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Chair's Introduction

When the new Auchterarder Town Bus Service launched on 05 August 2019 no one could have foreseen what lay ahead in the following twelve months.

Over the first seven months, the Town Bus Service established itself and both Services 49 and 49A (Wednesdays) operated reliably. Feedback was generally very positive, and usage grew steadily over this period.

Unfortunately, on 28 March 2020 the Town Bus Service was suspended due to COVID-19 and did not recommence until 06 July 2020.

This second Annual Report by Auchterarder Community Bus Group (ACBuG) charts the journey over the year and highlights some of our plans for 2021 as we continue to strive to make our community more accessible and inclusive for all residents.

Establishing the Town Bus Service would not have been possible without the vision, enthusiasm, and hard work of the Trustees.

Credit is also due to Colin Docherty and the staff at Docherty's Midland Coaches, whose positive partnership approach has been very welcome.

The assistance we have received from funders and the wider Auchterarder community has also been invaluable.

My sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed.

Andrew Warrington
Chair, ACBuG

Charity contact information

Auchterarder Community Bus Group (ACBuG)

Scottish Charity Number: SC048669

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AUCHTERARDER

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Charity Trustees

Neil Anderson	Treasurer	
Ross Brodie		
Carol Duncan	Secretary	re-elected 20 November 2019
Tom Gray		
Lisa McGraw		joined 20 November 2019
Irvine Small		
Andrew Warrington	Chair	re-elected 20 November 2019

Objectives and activities

Auchterarder Community Bus Group (ACBuG) was formed in early 2017, by a number of community-based groups and individuals, specifically to address and overcome a severe lack of public transport provision in the residential areas of Auchterarder.

After seeking views about the transport problems being faced, through a community wide survey, and analysing the results, we decided to provide an innovative transport solution. We engaged with PSV-licensed Docherty's Midland Coaches to deliver a publicly available Town Bus Service.



The final operational plans including days of operation, routes and timetables were influenced by public feedback. As a result of the relationship with Docherty's, ACBuG can provide a very comprehensive and easy to access service; transport is provided six days a week, with an hourly daytime frequency for Services 49 and 49A.

Service No	Days of operation	Routing
49	Monday - Saturday (not Wednesday)	Links the three main housing areas to the south of the High Street/Townhead, Castlemains and Kirkton, to the Town Centre and St Margaret's Health Centre/Hospital
49A	Wednesday only	Links Grand Eagles, Glenorchil, Grampian Avenue, Muirton and Strathearn House to the Town Centre and St Margaret's Health Centre/Hospital

The timetables were constructed to make them easy to understand, whilst at the same time accommodating different travel requirements.

A low floor, wheelchair accessible vehicle - that can penetrate the residential areas - is used. In addition, having 'hail and ride', rather than fixed bus stops, along most of the routes is intended to facilitate passenger access.

In terms of fares, a low flat fare of £1.20 applies to all journeys and is valid for 75 minutes. The elderly, and people with a disability, who have a National Entitlement card, travel free of charge.

Timetable leaflets were distributed throughout the community, whilst there has been on-going coverage in local papers and through social media.

Structure, governance, and management

Charitable status and purpose

ACBuG became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) on 30 August 2018, charity number SC048669.



The organisation's purpose is to *'provide a public transport service for those inhabitants living in Auchterarder and surrounding area that supports the advancement of citizenship or community development'*.

The Trustees run and manage ACBuG according to a Constitution (single-tier) that was accepted by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Being a SCIO allows ACBuG to apply for grants from a variety of trusts and public/third sector funds.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

The initial Board of Trustees was appointed at the time that ACBuG gained charitable status.

Thereafter, appointment of trustees is by the ACBuG Board, by way of a resolution passed by a majority vote at a board meeting.

In the last twelve months we have appointed one new Trustee, Lisa McGraw. Lisa works in the local care sector and is a passionate advocate for community participation and brings invaluable experience and challenge to our activities.

The Constitution requires that we have a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of nine.

At the conclusion of each Annual General Meeting, one third (to the nearest round number) of the charity's trustees shall retire from office. The Constitution explains the process for re-electing or replacing such trustees.

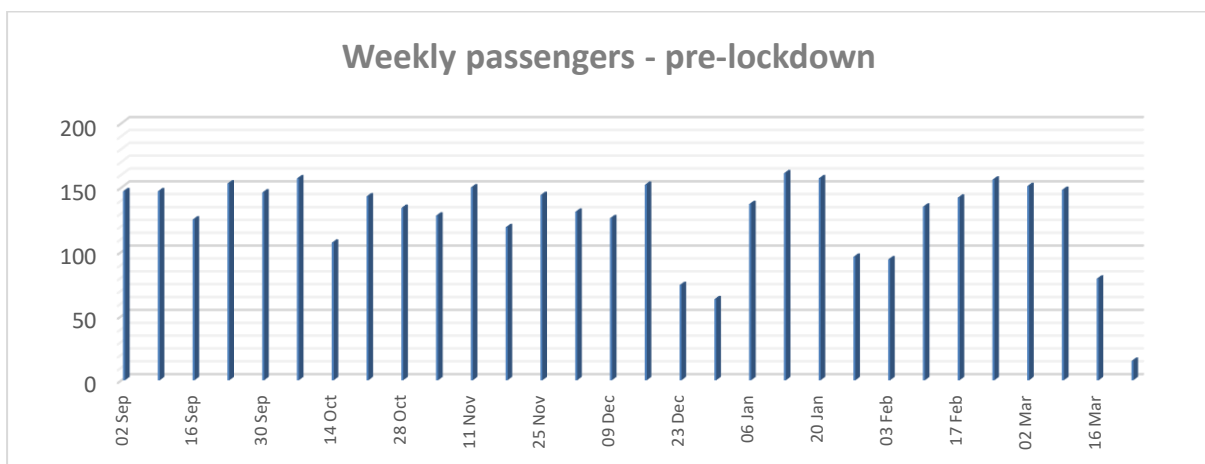
ACBuG is keen to have a diverse board to reflect our community and would welcome expressions of interest from any members of the community who feel able to help take the charity forward.

Achievements and performance

Operational experience

The aim of the Town Bus Service was to help people to participate in community life and access local services/facilities. We were particularly keen to provide a public transport option for those residents who may be experiencing social isolation, assisting them to carry out their daily activities.

Pre-lockdown, from 01 September 2019 to 27 March 2020, the average passenger journeys per week was 127, an average of 21 a day. These averages are brought down by lower usage over Christmas and New Year due to less days being operated, roadworks in Auchterarder in January 2020 and lower usage immediately prior to the lockdown, particularly in the three weeks leading up to suspension of the service on 28 March.



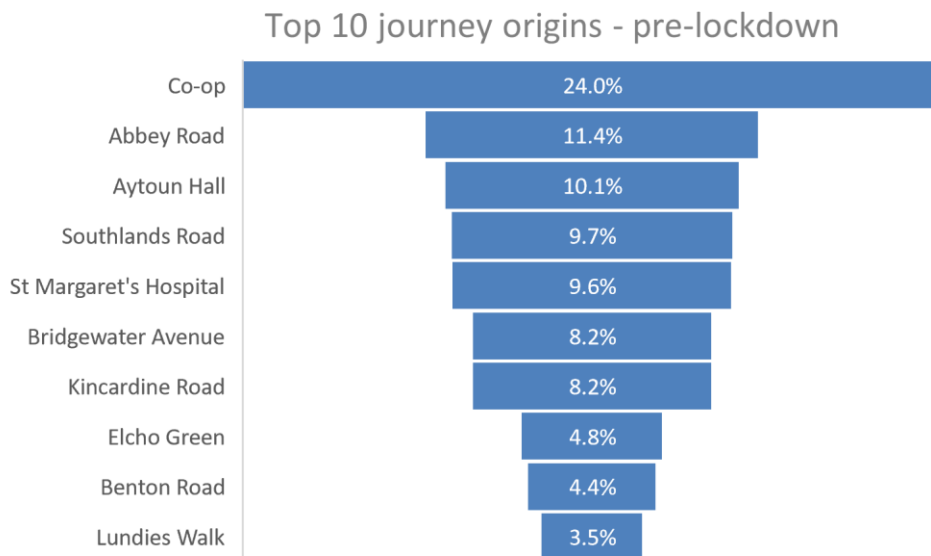
There was encouraging evidence of an increasing usage trend from October through to March. The busiest day was 26 October 2019 when 42 passengers travelled, whilst the busiest week to date was w/e 18 January 2020 when 161 passenger journeys were made.

The overall daily average is reduced somewhat by Service 49A, where the daily average from 01 September 2019 to lockdown was 15.

Post-lockdown, after a very slow start, numbers are recovering. Whilst outwith the timeframe of this Annual Report, by October 2020 the average usage had returned to 67% of pre-lockdown level.

In terms of the origin of the journeys on the Town Bus Service, the pre-lockdown pattern for the 10 most popular boarding points is shown below:

Where Passengers Board the Town Bus Service*



*percentage of boarders by farestage

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Co-op was the main boarding point, whilst usage from St Margaret's Health Centre was possibly a little lower than initially expected.

Data is also available for journeys by day of week and time of day, which shows a clear peak in usage between 09.30 and 12.30, with Saturday afternoon journeys more lightly used.

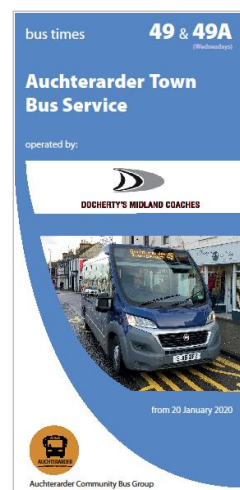
Route and timetable changes

Operational experience and user feedback led to a small number of route and timetable changes being made in January 2020. These included:

- Service **49**: The Feus was added to the route and timetable after Benton Road; with Hunter Street served one way only. In addition, there is an extra weekday journey from the Co-op to St Margaret's and Kincardine Road at 0910.
- Service **49A**: Castleton Park and New School Lane, Parkdale are added to the route and timetable.

The earlier arrival at St Margaret's on Service 49 was to accommodate patients attending specific clinics, whilst the other changes were in response to requests for the bus to serve new locations.

Crucially the improvements could be accommodated without changing the regular hourly pattern for either service.



A new timetable leaflet was prepared and circulated widely, with a dedicated flyer distributed door to door in the Castleton Park area.

Replacement bus and dedicated livery

From the outset, Docherty's provided a fully DDA compliant bus on the Town Bus Service, but this did face occasional problems with parked cars in certain residential areas. As a result, Docherty's agreed to provide the partnership with a replacement vehicle that was both narrower and shorter.

The new vehicle's passenger capacity whilst lower (16 including a wheelchair space), was adequate for the demand at the time - and given the looped nature of the Service 49 timetable still provided circa 45 passenger seats per hour.

The replacement bus, purchased specifically for the Town Bus service, entered service in November 2019 and has proven popular with users, having no internal steps and increased manoeuvrability.

ACBuG were also keen that the bus had its own livery thus increasing awareness of the Town Bus Service in Auchterarder. The agreed livery, which was provided by Docherty's at no additional cost to ACBuG, includes a strapline on the rear of the bus:

*Up and doon the Lang Toon
....use your town bus*



Financial Review

Funding

Operating a local bus service is clearly expensive and needs significant levels of subsidy. As a result, trustees continued to look at opportunities to raise funds, albeit this was curtailed for part of the year due to lockdown.

So far, ACBuG has raised £190,000 out of a four-year funding target of circa £330,000.

Financial Statements

The financial statements on Pages 13 - 15 provide details of income and expenditure for the second year of ACBuG's existence, during which we were very pleased to receive £50,000 of funding from Auchterarder Community Facilities Fund.

The period covered by this report includes 38 weeks when the Town Service was operational and 14 weeks when the service was suspended due to COVID-19. It is worth noting that Docherty's Midland Coaches levied no charges during the lockdown.

Looking ahead, we have a further £100,000 of funding which has been committed. With operating costs of around £5,200-£5,900 per month, we already have sufficient funding to take us up until Spring 2022. In addition to the costs due to the bus operator, we will have additional expenses for publicity materials, a further community survey and potentially for some bus infrastructure.

We expect monthly charges paid to the bus operator to make up around 83% of our total expenses in the future.

Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Funding income will come in unevenly being linked to successful grant applications; compared to outgoings which are largely regular and predictable. Therefore, we don't have a specific policy on reserves, but we would always aim to have secured funding to cover up to six months of operational costs.

Future Plans

Phase 2

In mid-2018 ACBuG established an initial four-year Business Plan, with the first eighteen months concentrating on planning, arranging, implementing, and managing the Town Bus Service; embedding it as a resource in the local community.



Phase 2 of the ACBuG project was intended to build upon the positive results of the initial operational period. It is clear to the Trustees that there is a good deal more development work that still needs to be undertaken because the Town Bus Service is not reaching all its intended users.

Prior to lockdown ACBuG Trustees had been considering a number of actions we could take to increase the patronage and ensure more residents had greater independent mobility throughout Auchterarder.

Trustees now hope that by Spring 2021, we will begin to implement Phase 2 proactively. The following Outcomes will focus attention on three key strands of work for the Trustees.

Outcome 1

Local people are better connected within their community:

- Undertake another community survey with the aim of ensuring the Town Bus Service is responding to the previously highlighted community needs
- Use the community survey to help facilitate 20% year on year passenger growth
- Where practicable to do so, respond to new or changed travel needs/demands twice per year
- Provide updated Town Bus Service publicity throughout the community twice a year
- Attend meetings of community-based groups to promote the Town Bus service
- Engage with The Community School of Auchterarder to seek support from pupils

Outcome 2

Isolated older people have more opportunities to be involved in core community activities:

- Work with key social care, health and voluntary sector agencies to identify isolated older people - and their transport needs
- Provide direct travel training/support for up to 25 people per annum
- Support elderly and people with disabilities (irrespective of age) to obtain National Entitlement Cards - and gain free bus travel

Outcome 3

More local residents find it easier to reach appointments at the St Margaret's health facilities:

- Work with staff at both St Margaret's Health Centre and the Community Hospital Outpatients to try and co-ordinate appointments with the Town Bus Service timetable and help reduce missed appointments where this is due to transport unavailability
- Directly support and promote two health sector initiatives a year, such as the annual flu jag sessions

Trustees also recognise a need to focus on the sustainability of the Town Bus Service and ensure its financial stability, primarily through fundraising.

Funding applications will be submitted to a number of local and national trust funds in the year ahead, highlighting the partnership we have with Docherty's Midland Coaches.

Risk Management

Auchterarder Town Bus Service was a completely new transport solution, so there were various operational and organisational risks that needed to be addressed.



The key risks that are likely to be faced by ACBuG in the next twelve months are:

- Significantly reduced passenger usage due to restrictions on community activities because of COVID-19
- A lack of success in identifying isolated residents and providing them with increased travel opportunities
- Failure to gain additional funding to support the Town Bus Service

Each of these will be monitored carefully and mitigation measures put in place whenever practicable.

Acknowledgements

ACBuG is exceedingly grateful for the financial support, both received to date and committed, from funding partners without whom we would not be able to operate the Town Bus Service. These include:

- Auchterarder Community Facilities Fund (managed by the Council)
 - Robertson Homes
 - Muir Homes
 - Stewart Milne
- Friends of St Margaret's
- Community Investment Fund
- New Transport Initiatives in the Community Fund

Additionally, ACBuG would like to acknowledge the on-going support from the following:

- Auchterarder & District Community Council
- Public Transport Unit, Perth & Kinross Council
- St Margaret's Health Centre
- APC Connect
- Pindar Creative
- OSCR
- PKAVS



... and the shops and community facilities that stock and hand out the Town Bus Service timetable leaflets.

Declaration

The Board of Trustees declare that they have approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Signature(s)	<i>A J Warrington</i>	<i>N A Anderson</i>
Full Name(s)	Andrew Warrington	Neil Anderson
Position	Chair	Treasurer
Date	29 December 2020	29 December 2020

Statement of Receipts and Payments

	Note	Year to 31 August 2020 £	Year to 31 August 2019 £
Receipts			
Grants	4	50,000	40,000
Fundraising		0	745
Total Receipts		50,000	40,745
Payments			
Costs of Charitable Activities	5	47,282	1,994
Fundraising costs		56	0
Governance costs - other		180	0
Total payments		47,518	1,994
Surplus (Deficit) for the period		2,482	38,751

Statement of Balances

	As at 31 August 2020 £	As at 31 August 2019 £
Opening cash at bank and in hand	38,751	0
Surplus for the period	2,482	38,751
At end of year	41,233	38,751

Bank and Cash Balances

	As at 31 August 2020 £	As at 31 August 2019 £
Current Account	41,233	38,751
At end of year	41,233	38,751

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

2 Nature and Purpose of funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objectives of the charity. The trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day-to-day running of the charity.

Restricted funds may only be used for the specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

3 Related party transactions

No remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the period.

4 Grants received (year up to 31 August 2020)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total £
Auchterarder Community Facilities Fund	50,000	50,000
	<u>50,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>

5 Cost of charitable activities (year up to 31 August 2020)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total £
Payments to Docherty's Midland Coaches	46,531	46,531
Design and printing of timetable leaflets	751	751
	<u>47,282</u>	<u>47,282</u>

Independent Examiner's Report

APPENDIX 3



Independent examiner's report on the accounts v2							
Report to the trustees/members of	Charity name AUCHTERARDER COMMUNITY BUS GROUP (ACBuG)						
Registered charity number	SC048669						
On the accounts of the charity for the period	Period start date			to	Period end date		
	Day	Month	Year		Day	Month	Year
	01	09	2019		31	08	2020
Set out on pages	13-14						(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.						
Basis of independent examiner's statement	My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.						
Independent examiner's statement	In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention [other than that disclosed on the attached page*]						
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations <p>have not been met, or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. 						
Signed:	<i>A Macpherson</i>			Date:	29 December 2020		
Name:	ANDREW DAVID MACPHERSON						
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	FCCA						
Address:	xx xxxxxxxxxx xxxx						
	EDINBURGH EHxx xxx						

*Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply. If the words do apply, set out those matters which have come to your attention on the following page.