

Recent developments in Community Transport provision: Experience from Britain and Ireland

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Overview of Presentation



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- Background to Community Transport
- Benefits of CT (DfT, 2010)
- Partnership working and Social Enterprise
- The role of ICT
- Conclusions

Background



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- In England alone there are approximately 1,700 community (CT) transport organisations, with over 60,000 volunteers and 10,000 employees. Over 15-million trips were provided by (CT) groups in 2010 and many of these services were tailored to the needs of groups and individuals.
- CT organisations are usually independent charitable companies limited by guarantee.
- CT ranges from school and patient transport; community buses for social groups or clubs and dedicated transport schemes for rural and isolated communities.
- British CT operators may apply for a permit to operate a vehicle for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward.
- CT operators have been closely associated with the development of (telematics-based) flexible and demand responsive transport services.

Benefits of CT (DfT, 2011)



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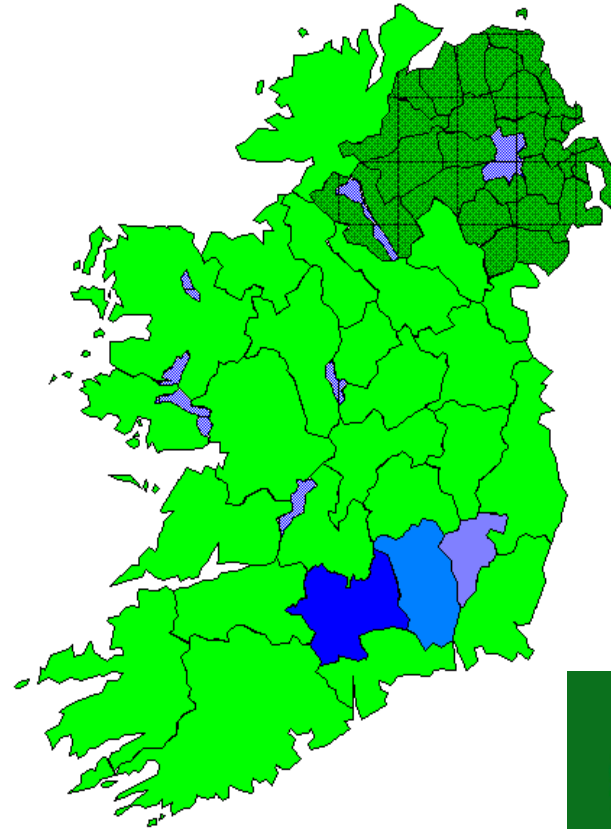
- CT provides much valued essential services, often for the most vulnerable in society.
- CT contributes to promoting equality of opportunity through transport.
- CT can provide efficient and effective tailored transport solutions of both a general and specialised nature.
- “We strongly encourage local authorities to form partnerships with the voluntary and community sector when developing local transport solutions”

Case study: Ring a Link



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- Area 5,500 Km²
- 100 miles east to west approx
- Population 205,474
- Average 37 / Km²
- Rural areas 8 – 9 / Km²
- Covering Counties Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary



Ring a Link Mission



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“To address the issue of rural isolation and to ensure a real transport option for rural residents across County Kilkenny, Carlow and South Tipperary”.



- There are 10 vehicles in the fleet.
- Vehicles are assigned to particular areas.
- Usually shared by 2 or more full-time or part-time drivers.
- Flexibility to move / swap vehicles to other areas for servicing requirements etc.
- Distinctive logos & contact number

Funding for R-a-L



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- Rural Transport Programme
(Dept of Transport)
- Community Services Programme
(Dept Rural Comm & Gael Affairs)
- Free Travel Scheme (Dept of Social and
Family Affairs)
- Kilkenny County Council
- Carlow County Council
- Tipperary South County Council
- Fares

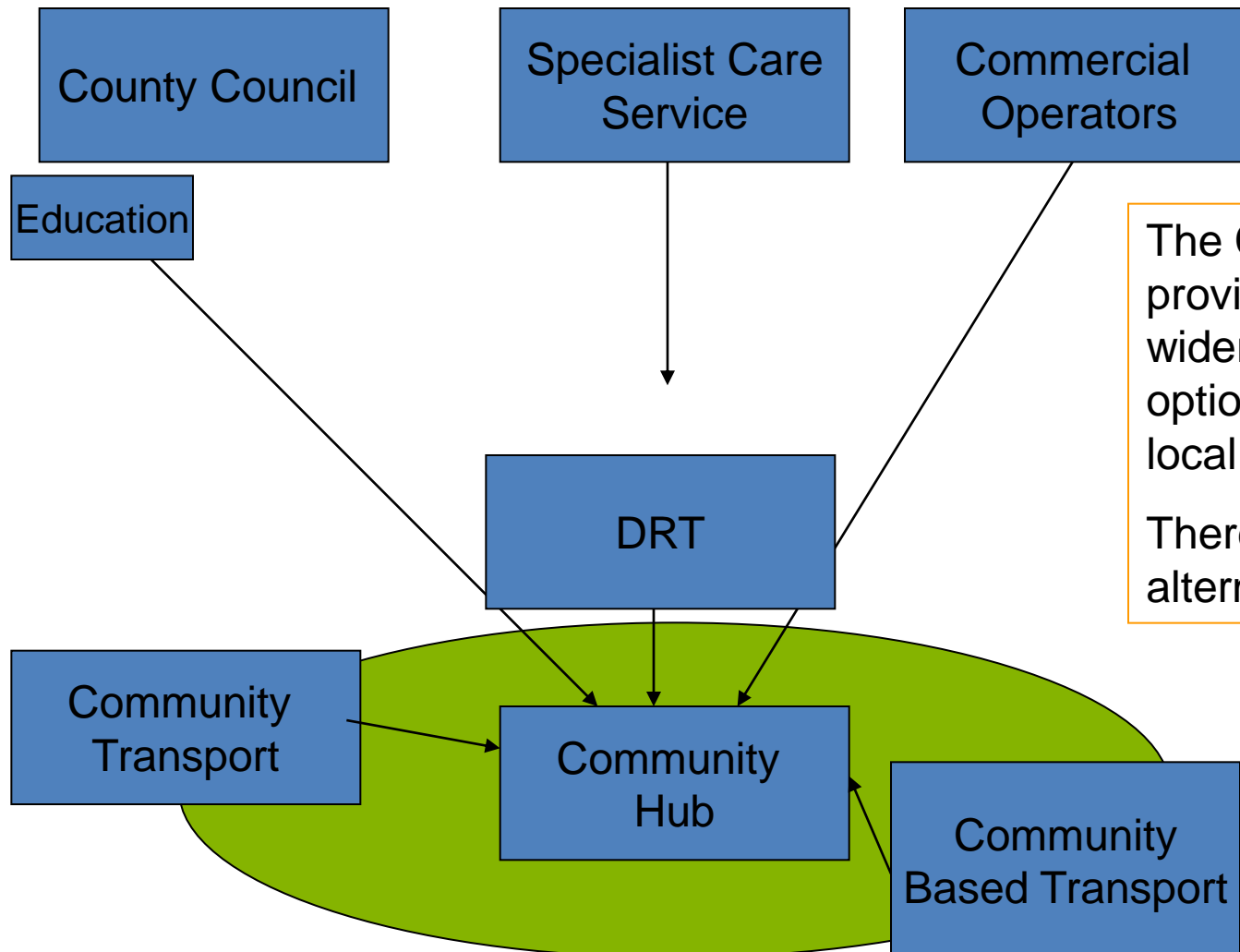
Partnership

- The move towards *partnership-working* with local authority is the hallmark of current Government policy.
- Examples include:
 - Joint commissioning of transport services (Surrey County Council)
 - Development of a Transport Co-ordination Centre (Tyne and Wear)
 - Vehicle brokerage (East Riding)

The Community Hub approach (after Du Services CIC)



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The Community Hub provides access to a wider range of options – with one local phone call.

There is now a viable alternative to the car



Partnership with Social Enterprise



- Government encourages local authorities and other CT support organisations towards the greater use of social enterprise approaches within the sector.
- Most of the sector already use social enterprise approaches, at least in part, whether or not they describe them as such.
- The use of social enterprise approaches can be a way of increasing income streams for the benefit of both operators and customers, but it is not normally a way of eliminating the on-going need for external support, be that from funders or volunteers.



OVERVIEW



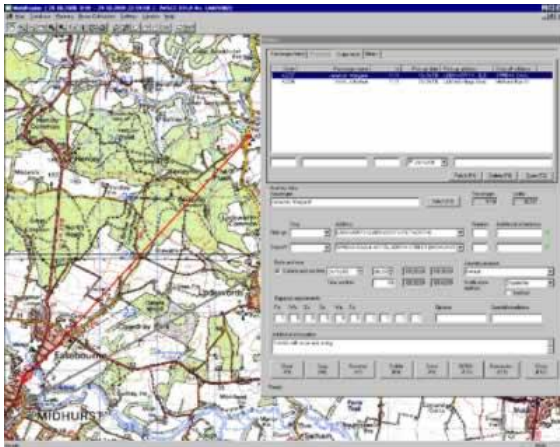
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Role of Booking and Dispatching Technologies

- Technological advance is not a critical success factor to adopting an enterprise approach...
- Benefits of BDT (the CT operator perspective)
 - Speed of information transfer
 - Route information can be sent in ‘real-time’; constantly updating / informing the driver of passenger details, addresses, cancellations, extra passengers booking after service has received the schedule.
 - Communication
 - Less time spent making calls to drivers.
 - Flexible and Efficient
 - Information sent as ‘data’ at a very low cost.
 - Co-ordinate a large area without detailed local knowledge.
 - Ability to manage complex bookings.
 - Ability to take live bookings (once journey has commenced and after driver has received schedule).
 - Dispatcher error minimised as all information is available through the system and does not need to be communicated by another source.

Transport and the Rural Digital Economy



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AIM: provide more customer-focused solutions which maximise the available transport resource and are optimised to meet diverse and customised passenger demands



**integrated
flexible
transport
challenge**



virtual
transport
marketplace
(passenger &
freight)

trust
management,
data sharing
& privacy

agent-based
computation
(logistics,
decision
making)



accessibility & mobilities

Conclusions



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- The move towards *partnership-working* with local authority is the hallmark of current British Government policy.
- Local authorities and other CT support organisations are encouraged to support greater use of social enterprise.
- Wide scale adoption of ICT is also enabling CT operators to diversify their activities.

Contact details



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