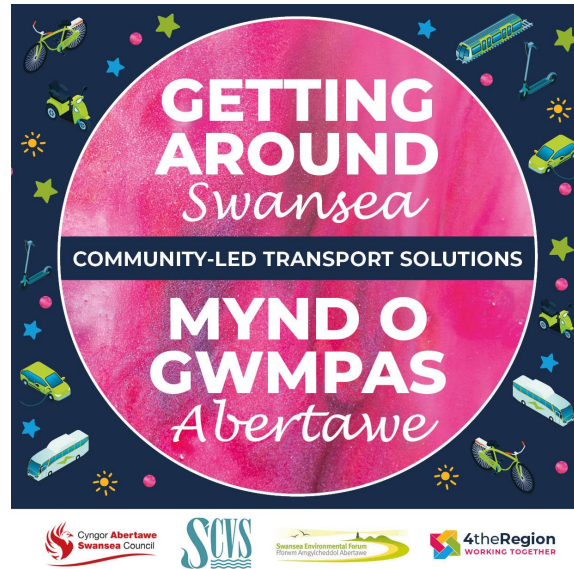


Getting Around Swansea - Community Transport Business Event



25/05/2022 | 1:00 - 2:00 | Online via Zoom

Event Overview:

Lots of people in Swansea struggle to get around, and we want to explore community-led ideas and solutions to help! We are inviting businesses and organisations to come and discuss how transport challenges affect you and your staff, and/or how you might want to get involved in supporting people to get where they need to go.

It's easy to say "There needs to be more investment in public transport!", and this is definitely true. But there must be more we can do between ourselves, as businesses and communities across Swansea, to solve some of the challenges people are facing in innovative, collaborative ways.

In collaboration with SCVS and Swansea Environmental Forum, this is a shared project bid to look at community-led transport solutions.

This project is supported by Swansea Council and the UK Community Renewal Fund. There is a small funding pot to provide grants to support good ideas that emerge from these discussions.

Event Aims

- What can we learn from other successful community transport schemes?
- What transport solutions do people in the community need?
- How can we link up volunteers with people in the community?

Why are you here?

We asked attendees to share their insight, ideas and experiences and the importance of this project to them.

Andy Satshop: I don't drive, so I rely on public transport. I find it difficult to navigate Swansea later in the evening as there's a lack of available services.

John Davies: My role is to promote public transport to visitors to the Swansea Bay area. I have heard for so long the issues surrounding securing micro-level transport and making it financially viable. You need a willing person to coordinate things. The Welsh Government is completely changing public transport and I hope this is successful as it's a challenging issue.

One successful project I've seen happening is with The Welsh Government and Transport for Wales and the introduction of [Fflecsi bus services](#).

Rod, Dolen Teifi CT: We've been working closely with the Burns Foundation and operate one EV on their behalf for communities and individuals. We've looked at how we can invest in vehicles to make them a lifetime legacy. Since the pandemic, we've found a large amount of isolated people in rural and urban areas due to a lack of services.

We've got 22 vehicles dotted around the countryside and it's not enough to meet demand. 11 of our vehicles are electric due to the carbon footprint and they are much, much cheaper to run.

Our partnership model seems to be working because we have a queue of 14-15 communities to get involved.

Jeffery Davies, DANSA: We provide community transport in the Neath and Amman valley areas. We work with the LA in Swansea and received funding for community transport. We have around 8 vehicles in the Swansea area. We are busy and there is always room for more capacity.

I believe we could do a lot more work if we could tap into more volunteers or paid drivers. That is an area the LA is struggling with, especially filling school contracts. I'd

be interested in working with anyone to increase volunteers and provide an apprenticeship scheme to get people into the transport industry.

Zoe Antrobus: We've heard a lot about the struggles to get volunteers. I wonder if some of the money could go towards a recruitment campaign.

Paul, Sustrans: Ebikes are a lot of fun and take 60kilos of luggage. We have a monitoring unit that tracks journeys people take. There's an opportunity to study where people don't go and why and to address the reasons why people may not visit. I think a bike booking loan scheme is a way forward.

Rod, Dolen Teifi CT: We're also looking at encouraging people to use bikes. The challenge we have is ensuring cost recovery to keep them on the road, to ensure that people are safe using the bikes and to ensure that we receive the bikes back.

Roger Dutton, Sustrans: I promote active travel in schools. Infrastructure is an issue and there are so many barriers. If we could make streets safer, especially around schools. The owner of Ripples in Mumbles is keen to create a low traffic neighbourhood / healthier neighbourhoods, I'm working with schools in the area to reduce traffic speeds.

I think the general consensus is we need more active travel routes and provide more options for people other than the car. It's important to encourage children and break the chain. Investment in roads needs to be reversed, money which should be invested more into public transport.

Chizobam, African Community Centre: I am a project manager of our Asylum Seekers Transport Scheme. We used to be heavily reliant on volunteers for this service, we lost a lot of volunteers after the pandemic eased. It became difficult to help people who needed transport.

We're funded by the National Lottery Fund and I reached out to them to ask for advice and they helped us secure a minibus and a paid driver which has made a huge difference. We do around 6 journeys a day and run between 9am to 4:30pm. With the success of this, we're finding demand is increasing and we need to secure more drivers and vehicles. I think community transport schemes require a collaborative approach.

Ross Bullitt: Leading on from Andy's reflection, I run a music venue and we have dozens of people say they can't attend because they're unable to get home at night. I've looked into minibus services and we're getting quotes for £290 to take 20 people home which is really unfathomable, I've even looked into hiring a minibus and driving them myself.

Julie Jones: It's very interesting to hear from everyone. I became keenly aware of issues with transport during the pandemic. One idea I've been discussing with our councillor is potentially having a park and ride service from our community centres in Swansea. It's an exciting opportunity as it's so important. I used to work in Singleton Hospital and the impact of losing one's driving licence due to age is a massive blow to independence and wellbeing.

Philip McDonnell: While there is a small grant fund available, it may not just be about the money, it may well be about getting people together and work out how a particular project may work with potential key partners.

We are also keen to explore other approaches too, not just traditional community transport models - whilst respecting that as a core service.

Chizobam: I think it's important to speak to people or organisations in the forefront of helping people with transport. The issue we normally face is maybe funds are allocated, we run the project and then the support is not available when the project ends. It's important to run it as an on-going service.

Rod: Seed funding is great but it's about getting the most out of it. If i'm to buy an electric vehicle, it would cost me around £50k. I think the best way to spend funding is looking at what assets you have now and building upon that.

One project we did was looking at underused vehicles and looked into how we could repurpose them for community use. We found a lot of people hesitant to engage due to potential damage and not knowing who would be driving their vehicles.

Dawn Lyle: We need to identify enthusiastic people and community leaders to lead projects in areas.

Next Steps

There's a lot we can follow up on in this discussion. We have Ben George attending our South West Wales Connected Wider Steering Group tomorrow to speak about the South Wales metro, people are welcome to attend. We are going to circulate the application forms at a later date.

What would make things better?

GETTING AROUND Swansea
COMMUNITY-LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS
MYND O GWMPAS Abertawe

More shops delivering to local communities.

Build on the networks people created in lockdown, sometimes street-by-street.

Volunteers need to be dementia friendly and more aware of peoples' needs.

An online lift-brokering platform.

Posters advertising for volunteers in the local area.

A friendly face, a buddy, can help people deal with anxiety.

A community-owned Uber-type service.

Support for people to volunteer with their own vehicles - risk assessments, DBS checks, insurances

A weekly shopper service, as a social activity and help people access shops.

Get local companies to sponsor local bus services, like in Harrogate.

An asset-based community-led approach to solving local transport challenges

What would make things better?

GETTING AROUND Swansea
COMMUNITY-LED TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS
MYND O GWMPAS Abertawe

A bike hub, like in Mount Pleasant.

Needs a community solution to get people up and down the hill.

A suitable online booking system for the bike hub.

Having an 8-seater people carrier that you could hop on and hop off would make things easier.

Churches that offered transport saw an increase in attendance

For older people, community transport is amazing, tackles isolation.

We need to link more volunteers to community transport schemes.

A community shuttle car

Volunteers are more likely to help if its hyperlocal, not Swansea-wide.

An asset-based community-led approach to solving local transport challenges

What are the needs people have?

Bus frequency is the issue, one or two a day and none in the evenings.

You don't want kids to walk to school alone because the roads are busy and you'd worry about safety.

Access to food banks in other areas on specific days.

Community transport is prioritising hospital appointments over other activities like shopping.

Air pollution disproportionately affects poorer people.

Asylum seekers have particular needs. Sometimes the kids schools are miles away and they have to walk.

People with mobility problems can't access public transport or sometimes even community transport.

Can't get hold of a pass to enable them to take a mobility scooter on the bus.

Traffic near the primary school

An asset-based community-led approach to solving local transport challenges



What are the needs people have?

People can't access jobs because there is a lack of public transport

Poverty affects peoples' access to activities and opportunities

There is less and less transport in rural areas.

Living on a hill makes things even harder if you have limited mobility.

In rural communities, older people in particular are isolated, lonely.

Community cars can't accommodate wheelchairs.

Cost of taxis is an issue for people

Isolation and loneliness are huge issues.

You can put groups on, but if people can't get to them, what then?

Anxiety or mental health problems are a barrier for people getting on a bus.

Buses don't go where people want to go.

An asset-based community-led approach to solving local transport challenges



Attendees:

- John Davies - BayTrans
- Paul T, Roger Dutton - Sustrans
- Deborah Hill - Swansea Council
- Chizobam Ekenna - African Community Centre
- Julie Jones - Gower Gas & Oil
- Jeffrey Davies - DANSA
- Mary Sherwood - Fairer Future
- Philip McDonnell - Swansea Environmental Centre
- Ross Bullitt - Hangar 18
- Rod - Dolen Teifi Community Transport
- Andy Satshop - Swansea Resident