

Mearns

Area

Partnership

A local rural partnership

Transport in the K&M Coastal Regeneration Area

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Introduction.

In 2010 the area within Kincardine and Mearns from Catterline to St Cyrus was designated a Regeneration Priority area (RPA). Mearns Area Partnership (MAP), which is a partnership of statutory, voluntary and community organisations, established in 1992, with a focus on disadvantage in rural areas is one of the partners on the RPA. Transport was recognised as one of the key themes and MAP was invited to lead on this due to previous work the Partnership had undertaken on transport and subsequent development of Mearns Community Transport (MCT) project. Funding was sought from the RPA budget for MAP to employ a part time project worker for a 6 month post to review transport in the RPA and identify workable and achievable solutions that might provide integrated solutions to transport in the area.

This summary report brings together the key findings and recommendations from the review. The full report can be found at www.mearnsareapartnership.org.uk

Public consultation survey.

A survey took place during June to August to gain feedback from the public on community transport issues. There were 71 respondents to the survey.

Key Findings:

- Identified how people use public transport and the reasons those who don't use it have for not doing so.
- Discovered that a majority 45% respondent wanted an Inverbervie and Gourdon Town service which supported the 2010 survey outcome..
- Confirmed the 2010 survey results which indicated a service between Laurencekirk and the RPA coast would be useful with 78% of respondents agreeing.
- Identified how car owners in the area use their cars with 65% social use being the top answer followed by shopping trips at 60%.
- Discovered 47% of motorists do less than 10,000 miles putting many of them in a position where they would be financially better off as part of a car club.
- Demonstrated that the majority of households have just one car and that 79% of households have access to a car compared with the national average of 67%.
- Found that 46% of respondents would be interested in car sharing as either a driver or passenger.
- Discovered 75% of responders had not heard of the Aberdeenshire liftshare website.
- Identified that 33% of responders wanted to know more about car clubs.

- Demonstrated 60% of people completing the survey felt that a Wheels 2 Work project would be beneficial to the area.

Other Survey work conducted by the Development Worker included:

- Carrying out a review of groups to ascertain the need for group transport needs in the RPA. This resulted in 5 groups indicating they might have a need for occasional minibus hire.
- Carrying out a GP consultation exercise to determine local GP's of transport issues affecting their patients. This resulted in 4 GP's indicating they were aware of transport difficulties for some patients in the area with current hospital patient transport being a key concern along with issues of rural Isolation.

The Community Transport Sector.

A review of community transport in the area was undertaken along with networking with the Scottish Community Transport sector. There were 8 operators identified in the RPA and Mearns area. Numerous concerns relating to funding issues exist amongst the national sector.

Integrated Transport in the RPA and Laurencekirk area.

A review of train times and connecting buses was undertaken by the Development Worker with compilation timetables being drawn up for all related services in the key locations of Montrose, Laurencekirk and Stonehaven.

- Montrose is the key transport hub for destinations in the RPA.
- There are no direct links to rail transport in Stonehaven from the RPA
- There are no direct bus rail links into the RPA from Laurencekirk.
- Though Montrose is the key transport hub for rail bus links into the RPA there are several cases of buses not being timetabled to meet trains.
- School contract work appears to impact both existing commercial operators' abilities to deliver bus services during the early morning and mid afternoon to early evening periods.

Recommendations from this review.

In all there are 17 recommendations arising from this review which can be found in section 10. Recommendations 1-7 relate to projects which can be progressed in the short term and include 3 community bus pilot routes, a car club scheme, a bicycle recycling project and a moped loan scheme.

The remaining 10 recommendations relate to further research work required and possible ways of investing and improving the community transport sector in the area whilst providing increased value to the public purse.

A summary of the recommendations made are:

Recommendation 1: Inverbervie/Gourdon Town Service. This Service is now being piloted by the Aberdeenshire Council 65 Special dial a bus service.

Recommendation 2: Catterline & Kinneff Service. This Service is now being piloted by inclusion in the Aberdeenshire Council 65 Special dial a bus service.

Recommendation 3: Laurencekirk community bus route. This service will pilot initially on a Thursday weekly and a Saturday monthly.

Recommendation 4: Car pool project. This project is currently being developed and a two car pilot scheme is to be launched in the spring of 2012 providing sufficient interest is demonstrated. Two vehicles, a 4 seat and a 7 seat are proposed

Recommendation 5: Wheels 2 Work. This project is currently being developed and will be operational in the spring of 2012.

Recommendation 6: Bicycle Workshop Project. This project is currently being developed and will be operational in the spring of 2012.

Recommendation 7: A Project Worker will be required to work on a part time basis to help establish key elements of the RPA transport project during the 2012 period.

Recommendation 8: Increased public investment in the Community Transport sector

Recommendation 9: Explore the potential of transferring existing Aberdeenshire Council Community Transport assets to the Third Sector

Recommendation 10: Consider transferring all social work transport contracts to the Third Sector.

Recommendation 11: Further research should take place into the effectiveness of existing patient transportation for residents in the RPA.

Recommendation 12: Further research needs to be undertaken into rural isolation issues within the RPA and wider Mearns areas.

Recommendation 13: Further work is required to ascertain future public transport company's aims and objectives in relation to provision of services both in the RPA and in the central Mearns area.

Recommendation 14: Improve the coordination of Public Transport timetabling.

Recommendation 15: The issues surrounding school contract work needs to be closely looked at and the impacts this has on providing effective public transport services during the day.

Recommendation 16: Further ongoing consultation work is required, particularly with younger people, low income groups and migrant agricultural workers.

Recommendation 17: Encourage bus operators to accommodate cycles on board their buses or in cycle racks on the rear of the bus.