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Executive Summary
Monmouthshire County Council commissioned this study on behalf of the Value of Usk Local Action Group (Vale of Usk LAG) to investigate transport challenges in Monmouthshire and Rural Newport and to identify ways of improving access to services and amenities for residents.

Monmouthshire has some of the most access-deprived areas throughout Wales. It has an older-than-average population and this is forecast to grow considerably over time. Rural bus services have been declining over time and austerity means that the subsidised network is under severe pressure.

However, there is a new policy impetus to examine accessibility to services, with the renewed focus on Well-being, supported by the development of Whole Place Plans. In addition, emerging technologies and service models are offering the potential to deliver new innovative transport services that more effectively address people’s access requirements.

Are there ways of rethinking how rural transport is provided to make it more effective at meeting future needs and more financially sustainable?

This project was commissioned to examine these options. To do this, we undertook a local context review, stakeholder consultation and reviewed a range of good practice ideas from around the country and beyond, examining both ideas for improving transport services, as well as ways of enhancing access to services and amenities (thereby reducing the need to travel to remote destinations).

We recommend a range of actions. First, Monmouthshire should seek to maintain a core network of public transport services connecting the principal service centres, towns and villages. Interchange facilities should be enhanced at these locations, whilst improving ‘first mile, last mile’ connections to these hubs. You should look to expand successful service models. Grass Routes has made good progress in providing non-commercial services and integrating service provision to provide school transport, social care and community functions. Its service could be expanded and would benefit from much improved information and marketing, including on-line.

Bridges runs a successful community car share scheme, targeting people with enhanced mobility needs, which could be extended throughout Monmouthshire.

Bus operators and taxi operators are interested in examining opportunities to make use of under-used resources, to facilitate sharing of taxi journeys and to investigate new demand responsive services.

You should improve on-line transport and journey planning information, to help raise awareness of transport options and to enable end to end journey planning. By bringing the diverse range of transport operators together onto a common platform, you can then seek to co-ordinate service provision and to investigate opportunities for being commissioned to provide services on behalf of other bodies. In the longer-term, this may lead into providing a rural Mobility as a Service solution.

We provide recommendations on the above and propose a project in a locality to look to take all these aspects forward together, and grounded on community research and involvement.
Executive summary: Challenges and opportunities

Some of the future trends that present challenges include:

- An ageing population: The Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment identifies the ageing population in Monmouthshire as the most important factor in the increasing prevalence of rural isolation.
- A growing number of children are reliant on parents in rural areas for transporting them to activities (due to declining services, lifestyle changes such as school choice, declining licence holding and affordability, and living at home for longer);
- Bus patronage is on a long declining trend in rural areas, further eroding the commercial network. Declining local authority budgets are putting pressure on the ability to subsidise bus services (as costs of social care and health care escalate);
- The older person’s concessionary bus pass is declining in usefulness as the availability of conventional bus services reduces. It is likely that the commitment to free travel over retirement age will be eroded in time;
- There is a trend of increasing out-commuting, particularly towards Bristol. There is already evidence of increased levels of commuting to Bristol due to the strength of the city region, a shortage of homes, and relative house prices and quality of life in Monmouthshire. Planned reductions in the Severn Bridge toll price (1) will increase the attractiveness of commuting to Bristol.

Some of the key opportunities for addressing transport and access challenges include:

- There are existing transport assets and services to build on: Grass Routes, Bridges Community Car Scheme, bus operators (exploiting under-used capacity), taxi providers (who are amenable to shared journeys);
- New technology could enable better customer information, improve real time management of transport services and enable new service models to develop. This could build a much better understanding of current demand and supply and enable new demand responsive services to be introduced, and for bookings to be made more instantaneously;
- Improved broadband and connectivity will overcome issues of poor connectivity in the future, enabling people to reliably access transport information on the move;
- Similarly, over time, smartphone and internet availability are becoming more pervasive and population cohorts are becoming increasingly used to using these and to participating in the sharing economy, meaning a cultural shift is possible to using more dynamic, shared transport modes;
- Despite austerity, a large amount of money is spent on transport provision by public sector, including transport department, health sector, social care, statutory provision to schools etc. Can some of this money be used to deliver more cost-efficient services?
- Monmouthshire has good tradition of volunteering: can new systems and services build on this (rather than undermine it by cutting across it or introducing overly bureaucratic solutions)?
Executive Summary: Recommendations on strategic approach

A long-term approach and vision

Access to services and amenities should be enhanced through encouraging local provision where possible and through co-ordinating a range of transport services to meet needs and ensure coverage across Monmouthshire and rural Newport.

Users should be easily able to identify travel options for end to end journeys (including journey times and costs) and to book them where required.

Emerging technologies and platforms should be used to better understand and match demand and supply.

A social entrepreneurial approach should be used to identify new opportunities for providing new services or services on behalf of third parties in order to make better use of assets.

Monmouthshire should promote itself as a test bed for trialling new service models and new technologies to address rural transport needs.

How should you do this?

In order to achieve this, you should:

• Define and seek to strengthen a core network of bus and train services between principal service centres.

• Provide high quality local interchanges at these locations for people to access these services, supported by provision for onwards travel, including demand-responsive, taxi, cycle and car parking.

• Extend the operation of successful service models, such as Grass Routes and Bridges Community Car Scheme into all areas.

• Improve the co-ordination of transport services, bringing together the full range of providers onto a common platform. Encourage brokerage where appropriate providers are matched with appropriate needs.

• Develop a user platform providing a journey planner and access to information about different transport providers.

• Seek to establish a financially sustainable “social entrepreneurial” model, where local service providers are encouraged and enabled to meet transport needs and to actively seek out opportunities for extending their service provision, such as securing commissioned work through agencies such as health providers, social care and school transport.

In the long-term, this approach could evolve into a ‘Mobility as a Service’ (MaaS) offering, where individuals make a journey request and are provided with a series of options from scheduled public transport service to demand responsive transport to taxi and can select which service they prefer. The process of people making journey enquiries provides further insight for the Authority and the ability to spot gaps in the market that may warrant a new service.
Executive Summary: Overview of integrated approach

Mobility service provider
- Peer to peer
- Car club
- Community transport
- DRT
- Travel buddy
- Health transport
- Wheels to Work
- Taxi / PHV
- Train
- Bus
- Education transport
- Social care transport

Opportunities for integrated planning and provision between different modes

On-line multi-modal journey planner
- Passenger enters journey requirements
- Journey options / prices return to passenger
- Passenger seeks information
- Journey booked (if necessary) and payment handled

User account
- User profile, characteristics & preferences
- Booking (passenger or commissioning organisation)
- Payment (passenger direct or by commissioning organisation)

Information & data collation

User (individual or organisation)

Capture of data on demands met and unmet, creating intelligence for service development

Mobility operators

User (individual or organisation)

Capture of data on demands met and unmet, creating intelligence for service development

Mobility operators
The report provides a long-list of measures that can be taken to improve the availability and quality of transport in Monmouthshire.

We have sought to show this in a way where many of these actions are building blocks to work towards a longer-term position where there is integrated service provision and co-ordination, and high quality passenger information, which has the potential to migrate into a full ‘Rural Mobility as a Service’ (MaaS).

In the short-term, we therefore recommend that you focus on delivering measures that are in the Local Transport Plan, such as enhancing interchanges. We recommend a review of the operation of Grass Routes to identify how the service can be improved and extended and whether it would be better placed to exploit new technology-enabled solutions and to respond to community needs by becoming a social enterprise.

We recommend that you start to blue-print an on-line platform for users to understand their transport options and plan journeys. The information passed over by transport providers for this platform can then be used to develop a co-ordination platform which can ultimately enable a rural Mobility as a Service offering to be developed. At the same time, this will enable a better understanding of journey requests and unmet need in order to identify where new services would be viable.

As you progress on these elements, we recommend you undertake a pilot that seeks to implement the different elements of the strategy in a locality. This should be taken forward in association with detailed research and consultation with the local community.

You should develop an appropriate governance framework for taking forward these arrangements, identifying a body such as the PSB, a Councillor champion and a Council officer to lead on the programme. This programme should be taken forward in collaboration with stakeholders and with local communities.

There is a range of potential funding sources to support the investigation of some of these new models. European funding sources could support the development of a pilot project in one of the communities. Innovate UK could support the examination of digital platforms. The Foundation for Integrated Transport could support the investigation of social-entrepreneurial models. Funding should be sought from Cardiff City Deal to investigate and trial innovative rural solutions which will help Monmouthshire connect into the City Region.

A business case should be assembled which seeks to identify the current costs of transport provision across many partners (subsidy of bus network, school and SEN transport, social care, health transport) to identify where new service models, integration and co-ordination could drive efficiency savings, whilst reducing the costs associated with poor access to services.
Executive Summary: Taking actions forward (overview)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User</th>
<th>Short term</th>
<th>Long term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve information</td>
<td>Integrated fares &amp; ticketing</td>
<td>Mobility as a Service (MaaS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Improvements to bus network</td>
<td>Demand responsive transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Hubs &amp; interchanges</td>
<td>Integrated service provision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Promoting active travel</td>
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Introduction
Introduction: purpose of commission

The Study Brief

The study, commissioned by Monmouthshire County Council on behalf of the Vale of Usk Local Action Group (Vale of Usk LAG), investigated the dynamics of rural transport in Monmouthshire and rural Newport.

The Vale of Usk LAG recognises the need to address issues such as rural isolation, access to basic services, rural poverty and poor digital infrastructure. All of these issues can be supported through the improvement of rural transport. The study has brought together and consulted with key stakeholders to address the issues of rural poverty, isolation and improving access to digital infrastructure.

The study includes recommended cost effective solutions that will help integrate transport with local services to alleviate issues such as:

- Rural isolation by helping connect those who have no means to getting to local services such as shops, doctors/hospital appointments, to socialise with others in their community and employment.
- Rural poverty by helping people reach advice surgeries, digital active areas, fresh produce and advice centres.
- Lack of digital infrastructure. By improving transport more people will be able to get to areas where there is free Wi-Fi such as village halls, local hubs and towns.

This report

The project method comprised the following steps. This report is presented in relation to these 4 areas:

1) Context setting: policy and context review, description of existing transport services, mapping of key demographic stats
2) Stakeholder and public consultation
3) Identification of challenges, opportunities and potential types of solutions
4) Recommendations

Appendix A provides a range of good practice case studies featuring a variety of schemes that have sought to improve accessibility to services and facilities in rural areas, or have sought to improve transport access. Appendix B provides a write up of the stakeholder workshop held on 24th November 2017.
1. Setting the context
Setting the context: Background to the Vale of Usk

Overview

The Vale of Usk comprises Monmouthshire county and the rural wards of Newport, with a total population of 127,964 (1). The Vale of Usk concept was created by the Vale of Usk Local Action Group (LAG), as the areas are similar in nature and have shared transport connections.

The region is a beautiful rural area located adjacent to the Brecon Beacons and the Welsh Borders / Offa’s Dyke. Although predominantly rural in nature, there are key service centres at Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow, Caldicot, Caerleon, Usk, Magor and Gilwern, with the majority of the population concentrated around the M4 corridor and Abergavenny district.

The Vale of Usk is an affluent part of Wales, with none of its constituent lower super output areas in the most deprived 10% in Wales (2014 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation). Monmouthshire and Newport both have relatively high proportions of economically active people; 79% and 77% respectively (1). Although there is employment in the local area, there is also a strong element of out-commuting to other major centres such as Cardiff and Bristol. A significant proportion of Monmouthshire’s working age population work from home (8.9%) (2).

Tourism plays a significant part in Monmouthshire’s economy, contributing £165.5 million and 12.1% of employment in the region, higher than the Welsh average (9.6%). High proportions of employment are also in the public sector (33.3%) and retail / leisure (27.4%) (2).

Population projections for Monmouthshire show that the population is ageing, with the proportion of residents aged over 65 expected to increase from 24% to 37% by 2039 and the population aged 85 projected to increase from 3.1% to 8.7% (3). The county also has a lower than average proportion of young people.

Monmouthshire has a strong volunteer base, both formal (63.3%) and informal (77.4%) (3). It is evident that neighbours, friends and families informally volunteer by providing transport and practical help to access services.

1) Vale of Usk LAG, Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy, 2014
2) Monmouthshire County Council, Adopted Local Development Plan, 2014
3) Monmouthshire Public Service Board, Well-Being Assessment, 2017
The Vale of Usk includes 47 wards, 5 of which are in Newport and the rest comprise Monmouthshire county. There are 8 towns in the region.
Setting the context: Services and amenities in town centres

The map shows that the majority of services are concentrated in the town centres, with Abergavenny and Chepstow being the best provided for. Some villages have a limited number of services, namely post offices and convenience stores.

Map showing service centres and key amenities

Table showing facilities in town centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Abergavenny</th>
<th>Chepstow</th>
<th>Monmouth</th>
<th>Caldicot</th>
<th>Caerleon</th>
<th>Usk</th>
<th>Magor</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>
Monmouthshire has a relatively low population density of 1.1 persons per hectare, compared to a Welsh average of 1.5 (Office for National Statistics). Additionally, only 53% of the population live in wards defined as being urban, reflecting the area’s predominantly rural nature (1). The map to the right shows Vale of Usk wards by population density, of which 32% have densities lower than 1 person per hectare (2). As expected, the areas with higher population densities generally correspond to the town centres. Due to its rural nature, residents face difficulties accessing local services causing negative impacts on isolation and exclusion. This is reflected in the poor scoring for Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation in regard to access to services. Of the 75 lower super output areas in the Vale of Usk, 20% are in the most deprived 10% for access to services. These issues affect more vulnerable populations, such as older and young people, disproportionately.

Map showing population density

1) Monmouthshire County Council, Adopted Local Development Plan, 2014
2) 2011 census
Although the areas with the largest proportions of elderly people are not classified as deprived in regard to access to services, there are areas which have significant elderly populations and fall into this category. These areas are situated in the middle of the Vale of Usk, and include Devauden, St Arvans and Llabadoc. These areas are also relatively more sparsely populated (see map previous slide) which is likely to accentuate these issues as this can lead to rural isolation to which the elderly are more vulnerable.
Setting the context: Policy background

Current policy lends support to improvements to rural accessibility and transport in Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Usk. The Local Development Strategy produced by the Vale of Usk Local Action Group (LAG) states promoting social inclusion as its main objective: “To develop a connected territory that links rural hubs and places through digital technology, up-skilling communities for community and social benefit whilst addressing poverty, exclusion and isolation”. As such, actions including training in digital technology and e-learning opportunities are suggested as methods to combat the social exclusion.

Monmouthshire County Council’s Local Development Plan sets out the Council’s vision and objectives for the development and use of land within its administrative area. The vision states that by 2021 Monmouth will be a place where “there is better access to local services, facilities and employment opportunities”. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) acknowledges the lack of realistic opportunities to car use in rural Monmouthshire, but places emphasis on improving the opportunities for sustainable travel through the ‘Achieving Sustainable Accessibility’ theme. These priorities are echoed in the Monmouthshire County Council LTP in a detailed programme of actions such as improvements to the Severn Tunnel Junction and Active Travel Network in Magor and Undy.

- Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy (2014-2021)
- Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) (2014)
- Newport City Council Local Development Plan
- Monmouthshire well-being Assessment
- Community Led and Whole Place Plans such as ‘Severn for Severnside’, ‘Better Bryn-y-Cwm’, The Narth & District Community Led Plan and Raglan Community Plan
- Monmouthshire County Council Local Transport Plan
- Regional Transport Plan
Policy background continued

The Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment
The Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment, produced by the Monmouthshire Public Service Board (PSB), provides an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area. Issues flagged include limited public transport and the ageing population.

Whole Place Community Plans
In 2012, Monmouthshire County Council embraced the new ‘whole place’ approach to community planning encouraged by the Welsh Government. A Whole Place Plan is produced after a series of consultations within the community. Monmouthshire is the only authority piloting an approach to “Whole Place” in Wales. Operating at population levels of approximately 20 – 25,000 people, the four main “administrative” areas provide a useful footprint around which to develop “Whole Place” in Monmouthshire. Plans have been developed for two of the areas so far:

- Severn for Severnside (Caldicot and surroundings);
- Bryn Y Cwm (Abergavenny and surroundings).

The plans summarise all the needs, issues and challenges facing the community and attempt to provide mechanisms of pooling available resources to address these.

Within the ‘Community Health and Well-Being’ theme in the Severn for Severnside Plan, improvements in access to health and well-being service provision and interventions designed to improve community health is prioritised. In addition to this, provision of enhanced facilities for young people is deemed as important.

The Bryn Y Cwm Plan recognises the challenges of the ageing population and rural isolation. Activities such as enhancing the focus of a library to act as a hub for life skills and a programme of inter-generational activities are suggested to combat issues.

Community-led Plans
Community-led plans enable all sections of communities to give their opinions on what is valued, what opportunities could be explored and what possible solutions there are to problems.

The Narth & District Community Plan indicates a need for more youth oriented activities, as young people voiced concerns about the ability to meet up and hang out with friends. The plan also discusses the potential for mobile prescription and other delivery services in area.

In the Raglan Community Plan, raising awareness of the Grass Routes Community Bus Service was made an objective, as was the possibility of including an IT Centre in the local Community Centre.
Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk: Car ownership and usage

Car ownership and usage

Due to the rural nature of the area there is high car ownership and reliance in the region. 14% of households in the Vale of Usk have no car or van (1). This is significantly lower than the Welsh average of 23%. However, the impact on car-less households is significant due to relatively further distances to travel to services (2).

The map to the right shows percentage of households without a car or van. As expected, a higher proportion of the population own cars in rural areas compared to the more densely populated areas surrounding towns, as car ownership is less necessary and public transport more prevalent. Car ownership rates range from 63% to 94% of households between wards in the Vale of Usk.

Map showing percent no car

1) 2011 census
2) Monmouthshire Public Service Board, Well-Being Assessment, 2017
Setting the context: Travel patterns

Journey to work

Using Census 2011 data, the map shows a journey to work ‘spider diagram’. The strong lines show the movements between primary centres. Cardiff and Bristol are strong pulls outside the region. The rural nature of the region means origins are dispersed, creating challenges for providing strong public transport services.

This diagram echoes the results of the 2011 Census, which suggests that only 47% of Monmouthshire’s working population work locally. The remaining 53% commute out of Monmouthshire to Newport, Torfaen and Cardiff. Further residents commute outside the Welsh border. In Monmouthshire, there is a net outflow of nearly 5000 commuters (2)
Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk: rail and bus

Rail services

There are four rail stations in the Vale of Usk area. Abergavenny station lies on the Welsh Marshes line which runs from Newport to the North West of England via Hereford. There are also stations at Severn Tunnel Junction, Caldicot and Chepstow served by Gloucester – Cardiff services.

Rail passenger growth at the stations in Monmouthshire has been substantial. Over the ten years of the Arriva Trains Wales franchise, Abergavenny has seen growth of 43%, Caldicot 88%, Severn Tunnel Junction 92% and Chepstow 136%. Interchanges at Severn Tunnel Junction are estimated to have increased by more than 300% (1).

Newport station is not included in the Vale of Usk, but is an important mainline station on the Cardiff/West Wales and Bristol/London route.

Bus Services

Operators

A range of bus operators serve the area, including national groups First and Stagecoach, local providers (George Young, James Bevan, Phil Anslow and Rees Travel), and municipal operations including Newport Buses and Monmouthshire County Council.

Bus network

The last 5 years have seen a decline in bus services. The only entirely commercially operated services in Monmouthshire are the X3, X7 and X20; all other services (22 in total) have either partial or full support to maintain them. 5 years ago, 45% of the network was operated commercially. However, with pressures on the viability of commercial services and local authority funding, there has been a general reduction in services and frequencies, which have led to falling patronage. In Newport, 80% of the network is operated commercially, with just 4 services in the Vale of Usk supported. Whilst a number of services have some limited provision on a Sunday (under contract to Monmouthshire County Council), only one corridor has an evening service (74 Chepstow – Newport).

£616k is spent each year on supporting bus services. This comprises £323k BSSG and £293k of County Council funding. A further £400k is spent in Newport.

Over £900k p.a. is spent in Monmouthshire on reimbursing bus operators for carrying concessionary pass holders.

A map of the network and listing of services is provided overleaf.
Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk: bus services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Llanelly Hill - Brynmawr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Monmouth – Ross on Wye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Monmouth – Ross on Wye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35a</td>
<td>Monmouth – Cinderford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Monmouth – Hereford</td>
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<tr>
<td>43/43</td>
<td>Abergavenny – Crickhowell – Brecon</td>
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<td>Abergavenny – Llwynu Estate</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Abergavenny – Knoll Estate</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Abergavenny Town Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Birdstow – Monmouth</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Monmouth – Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Cwmbran – Usk – Chepstow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Chepstow – Trellech – Monmouth</td>
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<td>74/X</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>Caldicot – Caerwent – Sudbrook</td>
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<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Abergavenny – Monmouth</td>
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<td>438</td>
<td>St Weonards – Abergavenny (Tuesdays only)</td>
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<td>Chepstow – Lydney</td>
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<td>761</td>
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<td>C1</td>
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<td>W3</td>
<td>Monmouth Town Services</td>
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<td>W5</td>
<td>Monmouth Town Services</td>
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<td>Hereford – Abergavenny – Cwmbran – Cardiff</td>
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<td>X4</td>
<td>Abergavenny – Brynmawr – Merthyr – Cardiff</td>
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<td>Bristol – Chepstow – Newport</td>
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<td>X20</td>
<td>Newport – Cwmbran – Abergavenny</td>
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Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk: Monmouthshire County Council fleet and Grass Routes

The Grass Routes service started in 2004 and has gradually expanded, replacing various occasional bus services. Currently, on busiest days there can be up to 17 vehicles performing Grass Routes services. In 2016-17, there were 58k passenger journeys on Grass Routes and the service cost about £530k to provide. Between 75 and 80% of passengers are concession holders.

The scheme operates on a membership basis and is open to all members of the community. The cost of membership is a one-off payment of £5 per household of up to four members.

The cost for Grass Routes services is £3 for single and £5 for return journeys made on the same day. There is a 50% discount for under 18s and concessionary passes are accepted. Vehicles are fully accessible and some with step free low floor entrances. Most Grass Routes journeys are between 0930 and 1430 for shopping and medical appointments.

To book a journey, members call a free phone number (0900-1630), 24hrs in advance. Calls are taken by staff in Chepstow. This has grown over time and is now operating almost at capacity.

Grass Routes provides a mix of semi-fixed and totally flexible services. Some services focus on certain market towns on certain days and others are timetabled, such as the 65 service between Monmouth and Chepstow. However, many journey patterns are repeated on similar days and at similar times each week. A morning and evening peak time commuter service links areas such as Magor and Caldicot to/from Severn Tunnel Junction station.

The in-house fleet used to operate Grass Routes has grown and currently there is no spare depot space. The authority is therefore looking for new depot facilities.

There are currently over 50 vehicles (including 22 coaches for school transport) in the fleet. Larger vehicles operate under a PSV operator ‘O’ licence, whilst minibuses operate under section 19 or 22 permits. Coach drivers have full PSV licences and Driver Certificates of Competence. Some Grass Routes services use volunteer drives (although this has decreased over years). Minibuses are available for hire by community groups and local organisations.

The Council has developed its own fleet because of the lack of commercial bus, coach and minibus operators across the area. Operators are also constrained by shortages of drivers and the increasing age of drivers. The Council is moving to a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for its procurement of transport services – this will allow operators to join at any time, as opposed to the current Framework.

The in-house fleet performs private hire work, earning about £490k p.a.

Some areas of Newport also have demand responsive transport (DRT) services. These provide direct links to shopping or health facilities or feed into other conventional bus services. Calls for these services are taken by Newport Bus. There is no community transport scheme in Newport. Grass Routes provides a service for Newport City Council, which replaced New Link run by Newport City Council.
Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk: Community transport / volunteer car schemes

Monmouth Dial-a-Ride
Monmouth Dial-A-Ride is a local transport service run by Bridges and Monmouthshire County Council. The service is available Mondays and Thursdays, picking up between 0900 and 1700, using a fully accessible low-floor minibus capable of transporting wheelchairs (1)

Bridges Community Car Scheme
The Bridges Centre also operates a community car scheme aimed at people who face barriers in using public transport, taxis or existing community transport. The scheme relies on volunteer drivers who use their own cars to support people to access facilities and appointments. The scheme started in 2016. There is a 50p booking fee and 45p per mile charge to cover fuel expenses for the driver(2).

Torfaen
Torfaen Community Transport is based at Cwmbran Shopping Centre and has served disabled, elderly and people with limited mobility for the past 30 years. 28,000 journeys are made annually and the help of volunteers is always being sought (3)

1) Bridges Centre, Community Transport, 2016
2) Bridges Centre, Bridges Community Car Scheme, 2016
3) South Wales Argus, AM visits community bus service which is lifeline for elderly, 2015
School transport
Primary school children receive free transport if living more than 1.5 miles from the catchment or nearest school.
Secondary school children receive free transport if living more than 2 miles from the catchment or nearest school.
Post-16 students receive no supported transport, apart from concessionary places being available on school contract vehicles. The main college destinations are Newport or Pontypool.

In Monmouthshire, eligibility extends to catchment school as well as nearest available school. Therefore, in some areas in-between towns (e.g. between Abergavenny and Monmouth), transport is provided in two directions (and sometimes three where schools are equidistant), where one school is nearest and one catchment.
Pupils from Usk attend secondary school in Caerleon (Newport), although some parents choose to send their children to Monmouth.
The authority arranges a transport service on behalf of (and paid by) a school in Gloucestershire to which some parents choose to send their children.

Transport is provided to Catholic schools in Newport (St Joseph’s) and Pontypool (St Alban’s). There is also transport to Welsh schools in Pontypool (currently 3 buses and a minibus) and Newport (currently 2 buses). Here they are building a new school, so it is likely that its attraction will grow.

In Newport, most school transport is provided by issue of season tickets to pupils to travel on the public bus network.
Since 2015, young people aged 16-18 are legally required to be in some form of education or training. However, they are not entitled to home to school transport, creating demand for affordable transport options from young riders.

SEN provision
Special Educational Needs schools are virtually all out-of-county (Bristol, Ebbw Vale, Worcester), resulting in a relatively high cost of transport per pupil. Transport is via dedicated services. For example, there are 3 taxis to a school in Bristol every day, each with a passenger assistant.
The average cost of transport per SEN pupil is £10k p.a., which is significantly more than many other authorities.
Concessions for older people
Travel free of charge on almost all local bus services in Wales and, in some cases, to towns just over the border in England.

Disabled persons concessions
A disabled person’s concessionary travel pass is issued to people in Newport and Monmouthshire who are: blind or partially sighted, or profoundly or severely deaf, or without speech, or have reduced ability to walk or are unable to walk, or are without arms or have a long-term loss of use of both arms, or have a learning disability, or are unfit to drive for medical reasons.

Eligibility guidance is provided at:

Monmouthshire residents must request a disabled persons travel pass application from their local one stop shop.

Companion bus pass
A companion bus pass is issued to people who meet the criteria for a disabled persons’ concessionary travel pass and who are so severely disabled that it would be impossible for them to use public transport without help from a companion.
Setting the context: Transport provision in the Vale of Usk
Health and social care transport

Health Transport
Non-emergency patient transport (for those eligible due to medical need) is provided by the Welsh Ambulance Service, aided in some areas by community transport providers. To book transport, there is a first time booking number available between 0830 and 1800 on weekdays. Subsequent appointments are booked on a different number, which can be called between 0800 and 1630 on weekdays.
A variety of vehicles are deployed in order to convey a wide range of patients, including those who need stretchers, wheelchairs and patients with limited walking mobility. Some journeys are made by volunteer drivers.
For the Vale of Usk, most appointments are at the hospitals in Abergavenny or Newport. Over the years, attempts by Monmouthshire County Council to collaborate with the NHS on transport provision have been made, but have not got anywhere. For example, prices were given to the Ambulance Service to provide transport for renal dialysis patients, but ultimately these were not taken up. However, it is understood that Torfaen Community Transport does provide some renal patient transport for the Ambulance Service.
Grass Routes reports that it is used by people for medical appointments. Bridges reports that a little under half of its journeys are for medical appointments.

Social Care Transport
Social care transport is not arranged by the Passenger Transport Unit, apart from a couple of the in-house fleet vehicles (Grass Routes) being used to provide some runs (e.g. Severn View Day Care Centre).
Some day centres have their own vehicles, although overall provision has been reducing over recent years because of falling numbers of people attending day care (due to changing eligibility criteria and moves to more personalised packages of care).
There was a previous attempt to integrate social care transport with other transport but it was unsuccessful, particularly because drivers were also carers at centres and so were not available to driver their vehicles between 1030 and 1430.
Setting the context:
Organisation of transport in Monmouthshire and Newport

Monmouthshire County Council has a Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) that is responsible for planning and procuring the provision of supported local bus services and mainstream and SEN school transport. It also manages and operates the in-house fleet, including Grass Routes service, and has responsibilities for concessionary travel, information provision and community transport. It is also responsible for liaising with the rail industry.

The PTU holds the budgets for both public transport and home to school transport (total of £5m). The PTU is organised into two parts – one looking after administration and public transport and the other with responsibility for the operations side, including the deployment of the in-house fleet.

Newport also has a small team dealing with public and home to school transport.

Both the Monmouthshire and Newport teams are managed by the same Manager, providing some economies of scale and ensuring co-operation and co-ordinated approaches.

The diagram opposite shows how Devon organises its transport provision. Could Monmouthshire map its provision?
2. Stakeholder and public consultation
Introduction

There has been a lot of consultation and research carried out in Monmouthshire and rural Newport to discuss and examine transport issues. As well as consultations on the Local Development Plan, Local Transport Plan and Regional Transport Plan, stakeholders and the public have been consulted during the production of the Vale of Usk Development Strategy and the Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment. Community-led and Whole Place Plans have subsequently been developed, incorporating local consultation.

The diagram opposite, from the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy, shows people’s ratings of various attributes and amenities locally. It clearly demonstrates that transport and accessibility issues are high priorities, with public transport scoring poorly, as did local job opportunities and quality of mobile phone signal and broadband.

Dr Liz Bickerton’s research involved deep engagement with five illustrative communities around Monmouthshire to explore detailed accessibility and mobility issues affecting different types of people in different areas.

Community Councils have been tasked with consulting and involving people in the localities in discussing issues relating to well-being and whole place plans.

For this project, we undertook stakeholder consultation through a workshop, held at Saint Michael’s Centre, Abergavenny on 24th November 2017, which we highlight overleaf.

1) Vale of Usk LAG, Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy, 2014
A stakeholder workshop was held on 24th November.

A total of 53 participants attended, including a wide range of Council services, community representatives, and other stakeholders such as health services and transport operators, including bus, taxi and community transport.

The workshop was run in ‘cabaret style’. Short presentations were given followed by structured discussion sessions at tables with facilitators.

The five discussion sessions were:

• What problems are there accessing services and facilities locally?
• What are the deficiencies with current transport services in addressing people’s mobility needs?
• How could services be made more accessible locally?
• What transport solutions could help address unmet needs in rural Monmouthshire and rural Newport?
• Take one of the ideas from above and work up into a solution.

Discussions were held at seven tables, each of which had a specific focus on a particular type of service or facility: accessing health services, accessing employment, education and children’s activities, shopping and personal business, and entertainment and leisure.

There was a lot of consensus about the importance and nature of transport challenges in Monmouthshire and rural Newport. Social changes, an ageing population and increasing pressure on health and social care are heightening these challenges over time.

This is happening against a backdrop of reducing rural bus services and notable gaps in bus service provision, both in terms of areas and times of day, with many services not starting early enough or finishing late enough to effectively address travel to work / training / college, travel from work or evening entertainment. Diverse travel needs and increasingly dispersed origins / destinations add to this challenge.

There was acknowledgement that funding isn’t there to run a comprehensive network of traditional bus services. Instead, more demand responsive, technology-enabled solutions are needed, as well as exploring opportunities to increase levels of ride-sharing (via community car share schemes through to informal arrangements).

In terms of potential solutions, there was strong emphasis on the need for better information provision, to increase awareness of what is available, and better co-ordination of existing transport supply. Several groups identified a transport co-ordination / brokerage role as an important step.

A full write up of the workshop notes is included in Appendix B.
3. Challenges and opportunities
Introduction

This section brings together information from the background research, policy context and consultation to consider what some of the key accessibility and mobility challenges are for the area. Which types of people are likely to face accessibility and mobility challenges, for what types of journeys and in what types of locality?

Some of the demographic groups particularly at risk include:
- Older people;
- Young people who cannot drive due to lack of a driver’s licence or affordability;
- Low income households;
- Non-car owning;
- Living outside the main towns / service centres;
- People with disabilities / mobility impairments, where the issue of poor rural accessibility is compounded by inaccessible transport services or infrastructure.

Some journeys which are particularly difficult to make include:
- Journeys to rural GP surgeries and to some of the hospital locations;
- Some commuting to work locations;
- Trips to education, particularly to FE colleges outside the area;
- Access to the evening economy.

The key locations where access is particularly problematic are the more rural wards away from the main towns which are in the 10% most accessibility deprived in Wales.
Challenges: Accessibility challenges for different demographic groups:
Older people

Older people face particular accessibility challenges due to their declining mobility coupled with the increased need to access certain facilities, such as health services.

Population projections for Monmouthshire show that the proportion of residents aged 65 and over is expected to increase from 24% to 37% by 2039. Furthermore, the population aged 85 and over is projected to increase from 3.1% to 8.7% over this time period\(^{(3)}\). These proportions of older people are higher than the Welsh average.

Older people are less likely to own a car than their younger counterparts due to factors such as confidence issues, health conditions and affordability. Of the 20,709 over 65s living in the Vale of Usk, 16% live alone without a car. This is significantly higher than the Welsh average of 3% (Census, 2011).

Financial poverty in rural areas is highly concentrated amongst older people\(^{(3)}\). An ageing population is the most important factor in the increasing prevalence of rural isolation\(^{(1)}\).

The lack of access to a car can be worsened by living alone as social contacts cannot be satisfied within the home and chances of getting a lift are lower. Evans (2001) states that elderly people with no access to cars are considered “among the least mobile, among those most at risk for social isolation and inadequate service availability”\(^{(3)}\).

The lack of public transport in many areas is likely to leave many older people in the Vale of Usk with unmet travel needs.

Where there is public transport, some older people face problems in using it due to difficulties in boarding and alighting and also where stops are more than a critical distance from home or destination. Access to bus transport arose as a major issue in Liz Bickerton’s research\(^{(4)}\) with concerns including difficulty in reaching steep footbridges, lack of dropped kerbs and general dissatisfaction with destinations, routes and frequencies. Issues of overcrowding on certain bus routes were also highlighted by respondents, which are likely to affect elderly passengers disproportionately and discourage them from making certain journeys. There is also a lack of awareness of the Grass Routes demand responsive service amongst non-users.

As a result of the lack of transport options, some elderly people may be unable to access the services that they value, such as local village shops and post offices. These services act as community hubs and provide a place for daily interaction. This can lead to loss of independence, feelings of loneliness and poor health.

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2) Local Government Association, *Health and well-being in rural areas*, 2017
3) Evans, E.L, *Influences on mobility among non-driving Americans*, 2001
Challenges: Accessibility challenges for different demographic groups
Younger people, non-car owners

Younger people

The ability to drive is considered ‘vital’ for older young people due to limited public transport to access education and social destinations. However, this presents challenges for younger people due to affordability, high insurance costs and low financial independence. Those unable to drive tend to rely on transport from parents in order to participate in activities and access education and work.

Without private transport, young people living in rural areas face being socially isolated in the Vale of Usk. This can negatively influence education, job and training opportunities.

Research commissioned by the Audit Commission in 2010 estimated the average lifetime cost of individual young people not being in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16-18 to be around £56,000 in public finance costs and £104,000 in resource costs (lost labour market potential). NEET figures for Monmouthshire have been consistently below the Welsh average, though the Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy continues to pursue commitment to reducing the NEET population (1).

Liz Bickerton’s research identified a lack of facilities for young people to undertake ‘meaningful activity’ and that instead, young people were hanging around shopping centres and bus stops.

Non-car owners

Services such as hospitals, supermarkets and schools are located in urban areas or are designed to be accessed by car. Therefore, for those living in rural areas, the car is generally the favoured mode of transport. Unlike public transport, it is available at any hour, provides door-to-door transport and allows people to travel where and when they want. For those without a car and living in rural areas, issues of mobility and accessibility arise.

15.2% of households in Monmouthshire are without access to a car (1), this is lower than the Welsh average, but, considering the rural nature of Monmouthshire and the Vale of Usk, the impact on car-less households is likely to be significant.

1) Monmouthshire County Council, Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy, 2015
2) Monmouthshire Public Service Board, Well-Being Assessment, 2017
Challenges: Accessibility to services and amenities

Access to services from rural areas

There is notably higher average public transport time to services for Monmouthshire residents than in than in other parts of Wales.1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average public transport time to Services</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Gwent</th>
<th>Wales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average public travel time to food shop (minutes)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average public travel time to GP surgery (minutes)</td>
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<td>Average public travel time to primary school (minutes)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Average public travel time to secondary school (minutes)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average public travel time to post office (minutes)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average public travel time to public library (minutes)</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>Average public travel time to pharmacy (minutes)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average public travel time to leisure centre (minutes)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
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Accessing hospital appointments is an issue in this area, particularly as those with mobility difficulties are likely to have proportionately more appointments. The Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment links this issue with limitations to the Grass Routes Bus Service, and Liz Bickerton’s research identifies the hospital in Usk as being inaccessible for residents of Llangybi.

Similarly, there are access issues for children going to school which are accentuated by the inability to drive. 45% of primary school and 80% of secondary school pupils travel over 1 mile to school. This means parents either have to drive children themselves or they use a school bus service.

There is anecdotal evidence reported in Liz Bickerton’s research that business rates charged to community halls by Monmouthshire County Council have had a negative impact on the ability of community halls to fulfil local functions.

Connectivity

Rural isolation can be exacerbated by the lack of a wireless internet connection or mobile phone signal. The importance of improving digital connectivity in the Vale of Usk is reinforced in the Local Development Strategy, in which “exploitation of digital technology” was ranked as first priority theme in consultation within the Vale of Usk committees and stakeholders.

There is widespread demand for faster broadband and better mobile coverage in the Vale of Usk, hence 90% of respondents stated they would like faster broadband in the Llangdo Community Plan. However, difficulties in supplying small villages with wireless broadband is noted by Liz Bickerton in her research.

In the Narth & District Community Plan, informing public representatives and communications service providers of the strength of feeling about poor mobile phone and broadband services is set as an objective.

Despite difficulties and weak connections, 79% households in Monmouthshire currently have internet access.2 This varies depending on household composition. Liz Bickerton’s research found a reluctance to use technology especially for anything financial and especially amongst older residents, reflecting The Older People’s Commissioner notes that 35% of people aged 50+ in Wales are digitally excluded.3

Challenges: Transport provision

Bus

Residents of the Vale of Usk appear to be dissatisfied with the bus service on offer. In Liz Bickerton’s research, this was identified as a problem in most of the pilot communities.

A large proportion of people never use the bus (e.g. 51% in Raglan) (1). Therefore buses are generally under-used, leading to a downward spiral of decline. Factors influencing this include frequency and range of destinations. In the Narth Community Plan, 52% of respondents said they would use the bus more often if timetables were more suited to their needs. Currently, only 5% said they used the bus at least once a week (3). Specifically, the following comments were made in residents’ consultations in different sub-areas:

Magor and Undy: The only bus service running through the Magor and Undy community is the 74 from Newport to Chepstow. [Note: problems raised regarding the lengthy journeys and overcrowding have since been overcome with more recent service changes].

Young adults in Magor and Underwood reported that they relied on parents to reach work or college.

Bishton and Underwood: There is an on-demand bus service (62) provided by Newport Bus that runs between Bishton – Newport. It is pre-booked by customers and uses smaller vehicles than buses. Transport can be booked at least 24 hours in advance. This service offers greater flexibility to cope with local people’s appointments and work schedules. However, residents of Bishton reported that the 62 on-demand bus is not able to link to Underwood or to Chepstow Road, Maindee [Note: stops have been added since and now serves Magor and Maindee]. Underwood is served by service 74 Newport to Chepstow, and every second bus goes via Maindee, but has issues with overcrowding [Note: Since then, has become service 74a/c and bus only serves Underwood].

Llanover: residents reported that the village falls in a gap between the Abergavenny circular which comes out to Llanelen and the ASDA bus which comes out to Goytre. Llanover residents also said buses were costly.

Llanyby: In Llanyby, residents reported issues with using the bus to access health services in Usk. Additionally, the 60 bus service between Newport, Caereleon and Usk has been cut, which used to run through Llanyby. Residents report long waits in Usk when trying to attend doctor’s appointments in the town. Residents were concerned about their mobility if they were unable to drive in the future due to the unreliability of bus services.

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Challenges: Transport Provision
Grass Routes, Taxi

Grass Routes

Signing up for Grass Routes is difficult as there is no on-line platform for doing so. Instead, there is a contact number for signing up and booking seats. This may discourage people from signing up and using the service, especially as calls have to be made between 0900 and 1630. Journeys have to be booked 24 hours in advance, providing barriers to spontaneous and discretionary travel.

As such, in Raglan 80% of people reported they had never used Grass Routes and 81% felt that it didn’t travel to their desired destination (1). Residents of Llangbi and Llanover gave a similar response (2). However, this was not consistent, as some groups such as pensioners in Underwood (1) used Grass Routes regularly, suggesting that there are disparities in availability and ease of access to these services. Possibly word of mouth is important in spreading its usage.

Grass Routes is running close to capacity and currently has no depot space for expanding its number of vehicles.

Taxi

Liz Bickerton’s research identified that taxis were used in communities, but for most only for very special and essential journeys due to cost. However, those who used taxis frequently reported inadequate supply, especially for those with disabilities who said that appropriate taxis were not always available. Due to the high cost of taxis in Monmouthshire, some people use them to link to bus or rail services, such as pupils of Hereford Sixth Form College living in Llangdo who get taxis to link to the Monmouth bus.

These issues suggest that expansion of the taxi service on offer would be valuable in the Vale of Usk if prices were lower, accessible taxis more readily available, and there was an easy way to share taxi rides.

1) Raglan Community Council, Raglan Community Plan, 2014
Summary: Challenges and opportunities for the Vale of Usk in the future

Some of the future trends that present challenges include:

- An ageing population: The Monmouthshire Well-Being Assessment (1) identifies the ageing population in Monmouthshire as the most important factor in the increasing prevalence of rural isolation.

- A growing number of children are reliant on parents in rural areas for transporting them to activities (due to declining services, lifestyle changes such as school choice, declining licence holding and affordability, and living at home for longer);

- Bus patronage is on a long declining trend in rural areas, further eroding the commercial network;

- Declining local authority budgets to subsidise bus services (together with increasing costs of social and health care);

- The older person’s concessionary bus pass is declining in usefulness as the availability of conventional bus services reduces. It is always possible that the commitment to free travel over retirement age may be eroded in time;

- There is a trend of increasing out-commuting. There is already evidence of increased levels of commuting to Bristol due to the strength of the city region, a shortage of homes, and relative house prices and quality of life in Monmouthshire. Planned reductions in the Severn Bridge toll price (1) will increase the attractiveness of commuting to Bristol.

Some of the key opportunities for addressing transport and access challenges include:

- Existing transport assets and services to build on: Grass Routes, Bridges Community Car Scheme, bus operators, taxi providers (who are amenable to shared journeys);

- Spare capacity amongst operators (such as buses between school runs);

- New technology enabling better connectivity, real time information, dynamic fleet management and booking. This could build a much better understanding of current demand and supply and enable new demand responsive services to be introduced, or for bookings to be made more instantaneously;

- Improved broadband and connectivity will overcome issues of poor connectivity in the future, enabling people to reliably access transport information on the move;

- Similarly, over time, smartphone and internet availability are becoming more pervasive and population cohorts are becoming increasingly used to using these and to participating in the sharing economy, meaning a cultural shift is possible to using more dynamic, shared transport modes;

- Despite austerity, a large amount of money is spent on transport provision by public sector, including public transport, health sector, social care and statutory provision to schools. Can some of this money be used to deliver more cost-efficient services? Invest to save?

- Monmouthshire has good tradition of volunteering: can new systems and services build on this (rather than undermine it by cutting across it or introducing overly bureaucratic solutions)?
Potential types of solutions

Potential types of solutions to the rural challenges faced can be grouped around two themes: improving accessibility to services and improving transport to destinations.

Appendix A provides some case study examples of methods to improve accessibility of services and improve rural transport under these themes.

Improving accessibility to services:
- Encouraging local services
- Strengthening village shops;
- Enabling local deliveries;
- Digital connectivity.

Improving transport:
- Enhancing the public transport network (strengthening core routes, retiming to address departure/arrival times);
- Improving publicity and marketing of services;
- Strengthening the role of community transport / encouraging enterprise in this sector;
- Integrating transport provision: schools / non-emergency health incorporated into ‘mainstream’ public transport; making the most of under-used resources;
- Integrated portals for journey information;
- Integrated portals for brokerage and co-ordination;
- Demand responsive services;
- Crowd-sourced services;
- Shared transport: community taxi schemes; car clubs (for community and for Council pool fleets); ride-sharing
- Rural Mobility as a Service (MaaS);
- Enhancing the link to public transport (first mile/last mile): interchanges, e-bikes
4. Recommendations
In this final section of the report, we provide our recommendations on appropriate next steps.

Many parts of Monmouthshire and rural Newport experience significant transport and accessibility problems. These are likely to get worse over time due to declining bus services and funding challenges. This will be compounded by an ageing population, with lower than average mobility and higher than average health and social needs.

Despite the above, there are numerous opportunities to improve rural transport and access to services. The area already has some good services and providers. Grass Routes has made good progress at integrating school, social care and community transport, alongside some non-commercial scheduled bus services. Bridges Community Car Scheme provides an exemplar of community action to address the needs of less mobile individuals.

New technologies and service models offer the potential to enable better integration of services, a more demand-responsive service and potentially enabling new types of transport supply to be introduced. At the same time, these technologies could improve the user experience of transport, with better access to more comprehensive information and more bespoke end to end journey solutions.

In parallel with the above, action can be taken to make services and amenities more accessible to people at home or in their local village or service centre. There are numerous examples within the area and beyond of rural communities developing new services and activities locally.

Nonetheless, a ‘subsidy’ model for providing transport services is not sustainable in the long-term as financial stringencies are likely to worsen and needs are likely to grow.

Creative approaches need to be developed to improve the efficiency of rural transport and to bring in new revenue sources in order to make services financially sustainable in the long term, including customer revenue and income from commissioning. ‘Social entrepreneurial’ models need to be investigated.

The above needs to be done in a way that:

- Builds on existing services and assets, rather than undermine or replace them;
- Builds on and utilises Monmouthshire’s tradition of volunteering;
- Recognises that technology is an enabler, not the solution, and that it adds to, rather than replaces, other means of service operation or communication with users.

Over the next pages, we suggest a long-term vision, a long list of measures and an action plan, alongside recommendations on governance and funding.
Recommendations: Strategic approach

A long-term approach and vision
Access to services and amenities should be enhanced through encouraging local provision where possible and through co-ordinating a range of transport services to meet needs and ensure coverage across Monmouthshire and rural Newport.

Users should be easily able to identify travel options for end to end journeys (including journey times and costs) and to book them where required.

Emerging technologies and platforms should be used to better understand and match demand and supply.

A social entrepreneurial approach should be used to identify new opportunities for providing new services or services on behalf of third parties in order to make better use of assets.

Monmouthshire should promote itself as a test bed for trialling new service models and new technologies to address rural transport needs.

How can this be achieved?
The following will contribute to the achievement of the vision:

- Define and seek to strengthen a core network of bus and train services between principal service centres.
- Provide high quality local interchanges at these locations for people to access services, supported by provision for onwards travel, including demand-responsive, taxi, cycle and car parking.

- Extend the operation of successful service models, such as Grass Routes and Bridges Community Car Scheme into all areas.
- Improve the co-ordination of transport services, bringing together the full range of providers onto a common platform. Encourage brokerage where appropriate providers are matched with appropriate needs;
- Develop a user platform providing a journey planner and access to information about different transport providers.
- Seek to establish a financially sustainable ‘social entrepreneurial’ model, where local service providers are encouraged and enabled to meet transport needs and to actively seek out opportunities for extending their service provision, such as securing commissioned work through agencies such as health providers, social care and school transport.

In the long-term, this approach could evolve into a ‘Mobility as a Service’ (MaaS) offering, where individuals make a journey request and are provided with a series of options from scheduled public transport service to demand responsive transport to taxi and can select which service they prefer. The process of people making journey enquiries provides further insight for the Authority and the ability to spot gaps in the market that may warrant a new service.
**Recommendations: Long list of potential measures:**

**Introduction**

We present a long-list of measures in relation to the following themes:

- Improvements to the core public transport network;
- Improving interchange at hubs for ‘first mile, last mile’ transfer;
- Development of demand responsive services;
- Integrating service provision through co-ordination and commissioning;
- Providing better information for users;
- Providing integrated ticketing and payments for users;
- In long-term seeking to bring together the above into a ‘Rural Mobility as a Service’ offer.

At same time as the above, complementary work can be undertaken:

- Promoting active travel;
- Reviewing Council work practices and business travel with a view to introducing car club solutions;
- Strengthening the role of service centres and villages, using variety of techniques and local capacity to make services available locally and improve the vitality of villages. New housing, employment and development should be focused around these hubs.

In addition to the ‘long-list’ of measures, we make recommendations regarding:

- Governance: how the programme should be driven forward and the roles of different partners;
- Funding sources for implementing different elements;
- Making the business case for this approach;
- An action plan of priority projects to be taken forward.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Improvements to bus network

We recommend a long-term approach to seeking to strengthen core public transport services (bus and train) between principal service centres, supported by local ‘first-mile’, ‘last-mile’ solutions and focused on transport interchanges (similar to Lincolnshire inter-connect model, featured in Appendix A). These interchanges could be village centres or rail stations. At these locations, a mixture of local bus services, demand responsive transport and taxis would provide the onward connection, as well as provision for cycling and for car parking.

Specific recommendations include:

- Upgrading of X43 Brecon to Abergavenny service to TrawsCymru, with extension of the service to Monmouth (LTP proposal) and Chepstow;
- Chepstow / Caldicot to Newport bus corridor improvement (LTP proposal);
- Rail-bus link services (LTP proposal);
- Investigate the opportunity to improve the regularity of the train service from Abergavenny to Newport (currently, there are some inconsistencies in departure times and gaps in the service), though patronage growth has been strong on this line.

In addition to the above, it is important to ensure that all bus stops are fully accessible. All should incorporate, as a minimum, a flag, timetable case, up-to-date timetable and access to phone and web enquiries. Bus stops in poor state of repair to be replaced and a cleansing regime introduced. The opportunity to engage local communities to help maintain bus stops or fault report should be investigated.

The opportunity to provide hail and ride to provide more flexibility of use should be investigated. This should include formal accessible boarding points.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures:
Hubs and interchanges

We recommend that there is a strong focus on improving interchange, both to improve the quality of public transport journeys as well as to build the infrastructure for future ‘first mile / last mile’ solutions, including demand responsive transport and shared taxis, cycle parking, electric car and bike charging, car club (where appropriate), and car parking.

These locations should provide comprehensive, easy to use passenger information, including orientation maps of the local area, printed, leaflet and real time travel information as well as web / phone support.

These interchanges should be branded and a focal point of the transport network (similar to the Mobil.Punkt concept highlighted in Appendix A).

They should also be complemented by developing Active Travel networks in local communities to facilitate and encourage walking and cycling within towns and villages and to transport hubs, where practicable.

These interchanges should be primary locations, such as main service centres, village centres and train stations. Interchanges should provide good quality heated waiting facilities and amenities such as cafés and refreshments, as well as digital access.

Depending upon the local context, you should seek to link physical interchanges with amenities such as café, or village hall, with digital access. Is there an opportunity to provide further services at or close to these interchanges, such as child care or click & collect / delivery services?

Several existing proposals in LTP should be taken forward using this philosophy.

- **Abergavenny rail station access & interchange improvements:**
  Improved cycle and pedestrian access, (incorporating level access) to the rail station, information provision and signage, cycle storage, new park & ride car park facility to the east of the station, and a bus turning point to enable direct bus access.

- **Magor & Undy new walkway rail station – access & interchange improvements:** There are advanced proposals for a unique community walkway station for Magor & Undy, with a GRIP study to be conducted to evaluate the site. It is proposed for the station to incorporate a community centre, active travel access measures, information provision and signage, integration with buses and a traffic management scheme for Magor with Undy. MCC would look to work with WG/NR in developing and implementing bus and active travel access measures for the station.

- **Abergavenny Bus station improvement:** Improve bus and pedestrian access, facilities infrastructure and information, including signage and visitor information.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Demand responsive services

Demand responsive covers a range of services from taxi and community car schemes offering door-to-door, end-to-end journeys through to semi-fixed public transport routes.

Levels of demand and dispersed journey patterns in ‘feeder areas’ make scheduled, fixed public transport routes unviable. Existing and emerging technology makes the ability to run demand responsive services easier, as well as the ability to take passenger bookings more immediately and to track vehicles in real time.

There is an opportunity to extend demand responsive services in the area.

- Grass Routes already operates a number of demand responsive services and has the operational capacity and know-how to deliver more. What needs to be done to extend their availability throughout Monmouthshire?
- Bridges Community Car Scheme / Dial-a-Ride already offer bespoke rides for people with limited mobility in the Monmouth area and could extend across Monmouthshire with additional co-ordinator capacity.
- There are synergies between Bridges and Grass Routes, such that economies of scale (back-office; administration; vehicle deployment) could be achieved through some co-ordination between the two.

- Severn Tunnel Junction Rail Station pilot: this rail station has shown significant growth in use by out-commuters travelling towards Bristol / Cardiff and suffers car parking pressure. Is there an ability to pilot a demand-responsive bus service to bring people in to the station from its catchment, in a similar style to the Arriva Click service (see Appendix A)?

- Making better use of under-used assets. Many school bus services remain dormant during the day (between ~9.30am-2.30pm) and could potentially be used to offer community services at a relatively low marginal cost during this time. Oxfordshire’s Comet service has utilised this model.

- In other parts of the country, crowd sourcing has been used to demonstrate demand for a new service (see for example, Vamooz in Appendix A). Community Council consultations with their constituents could be used to understand whether there is demand in a locality that could lead to a viable service.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Integrated service provision

Co-ordination

There is currently a wide range of different service types operating in different parts of Monmouthshire, serving different client bases. There is evidence that better co-ordination of services and better awareness of what’s available could enable efficiency gains and use to be grown. Furthermore, there may be opportunities for transport operators to identify opportunities for them to provide services that are not currently available or to provide commissioned services, such as trips to health facilities. Bringing together operators and services onto a common platform will start to enable potential opportunities to be identified, as well as being a necessary step to provide better customer information and awareness and providing the basis for potential brokerage.

In order to enable better co-ordination, the following steps should be taken:

- Operators to make available their data on services, including routes and timetables for fixed services, information on areas covered by demand responsive operations, eligibility criteria for use of their services, fare information and booking procedures.
- Development of a platform to hold information about services. Zipabout have developed a platform for Oxfordshire County Council which they are offering to make available, free of charge to Local Authorities across the country.
- Start to develop this co-ordination platform in a pilot area with a Monmouthshire County Council resource.

Commissioning

Dialogue should be initiated with bodies commissioning transport services, such as health care and social care to identify opportunities to fulfil their journey requirements via existing services or available capacity. This could potentially provide financial savings for commissioning bodies by providing less costly journey solutions as well as improving outcomes, such as reducing the number of do not attends.

Torfaen Community Transport has undertaken some work for the Welsh Ambulance Service under a Service Level Agreement and could offer insight into appropriate routes into provision of some health transport.

In order to investigate opportunities for commissioning services:

- Initiate discussion with Torfaen Community Transport to understand how their service operates and its replicability elsewhere in Monmouthshire;
- Initiate discussion with Aneurin Bevan Health Trust Board on potential for providing some non-emergency health transport.
- Initiate discussion with Welsh Ambulance Trust on potential for undertaking some of their contracted services.
- Initiate discussion with Social Services on opportunities for co-ordination.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Better information provision for users

The disparate range of services and types of journeys being undertaken in rural areas means that many people struggle to understand what transport is available. It has been identified that many people are not aware of Grass Routes services for example.

There is a need to significantly improve information availability and awareness. This should include information on routes and timetables, areas served by different demand responsive services, eligibility criteria for different service providers, registration and booking information.

By pulling together the supply information (see previous slide), this information will be available to be presented on a user-focused platform. A journey planner, which recognises multi-modal trips and demand-responsive services – will further help to make services more easy for people to investigate and to use. This will also be an important preparatory step in developing the systems for a rural Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform.

In addition to putting information onto an on-line platform, it is important to ensure that up-to-date information is provided across the transport network, at interchanges, community facilities, bus stops etc.

There should also be information about eligibility for different transport services or concessions (e.g. areas covered by services, who can use Dial-a-Ride, etc.) as well as a personal enquiry form which allows individuals to enter details (such as age, home location, any mobility issues) which shows them what services are available and what support exists (e.g. concessionary pass), with opportunity to register and sign-up for these.

The following steps should be taken to improve information:

- Investigate potential platforms for hosting user information and providing a journey planner. We recommend an initial discussion with Zipabout, who have developed a user platform for Oxfordshire.

- Consider developing a user enquiry form that enables individuals to enter personal profile details and journey requests to provide further insight into types of movement, as well as to enable individuals to be advised on their eligibility (e.g. for concessionary passes) and services they can register for.

- As part of their consultations with their communities, ask Community Councils to investigate how different types of people in their localities search for information to make journeys.

In association with the above, when these systems are on-line, there should be a concerted marketing and outreach campaign to raise awareness and sign up users.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Integrated ticketing and payment

If we want to stimulate demand to increase the viability of services and encourage people to use the range of transport services from bus and rail to demand-responsive buses, community car schemes and taxis, including multi-modal journeys, we need to make it easier for people to pay an appropriate amount for their journeys.

The ultimate objective is to provide end-to-end journey fares and payment mechanisms, and is an enabling measure to move towards a rural Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solution.

But the ability to understand how much different services cost and how to purchase the best ticket is a fundamental starting point. It is still very challenging to find out information about bus fares on-line for example.

As stated on the information slide, it is important that fares information is passed over so that information can be presented to users on the costs of different journey options. This should be linked to eligibility (such as whether they are eligible for a concessionary pass).

The current older persons’ concessionary fare system is not fit for purpose in the rural context. Many people who qualify for a pass do not have access to a regular bus service. People fortunate enough to be close to a rail service cannot use concessionary passes on the train. There is evidence that some people entitled to concessionary passes do not take them up, or, having taken them up, do not use them.

At the moment, concessionary travel rules are nationally set. However, continued financial austerity and an ageing population mean that it may not be sustainable in the long-term. A concessionary scheme that offered discount across all modes rather than free bus and full price for everything else would be more equitable and more suitable to serving Monmouthshire’s transport needs.

The following steps should be taken:

- Seek to bring fares data over into a user portal so that people can have access to fares information when planning journeys;
- Explore the possibility of conducting a pilot where concessionary users get an allowance across all modes.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Towards a rural Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solution

The above actions on transport co-ordination, information, fares and payment will help lay the foundation for providing a rural MaaS system in the future, where transport suppliers are co-ordinated and passengers are able to plan end-to-end journeys that display all the transport options and fares, and enable them to choose and book the appropriate journey.

The diagram below shows how a digital booking platform and booking form mediates between suppliers and passengers.\(^{(1)}\)

`Liberty` in the US is the first company seeking to develop rural MaaS solutions and has some initial schemes operating in several US states. It is keen to trial a couple of international pilots in the medium-term. To investigate the potential for Liberty, it has an application process open in May 2018. It will then work with successful applicants to assess whether a system can be introduced, which would potentially be on the ground a year later.

- Continue conversation with Liberty, with a view to expressing an interest in the service in May 2018.

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**TRANSPORT SUPPLIERS**
- Suppliers agree to commercial terms in order to have their services sold on platform. These include rules around fares and publishing open data on activity.
- Any commercial operator with the requisite licence and vehicle conditions is eligible.
- Contract is directly with the passenger for each journey.

**DIGITAL BOOKING PLATFORM**
- The local authority can operate or support a digital booking platform acting as a third party booking agent.
- Can set fares and conditions of travel for platform users.
- Authority must work together with the local Traffic Commissioner to reduce registration period for new flexible routes to a minimum.

**PASSENGERS**
- Signing up to platform terms means users aren't 'general public' and are part of a membership group.
- Passengers can book and pay digitally in advance of their journey.
- Passengers enter into a direct contract with the supplier for each individual journey.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Promoting active travel

Whilst this report focuses mainly on mechanised transport, where journey distances and personal mobility permit, active travel (walking and cycling) should be promoted and enabled. This will be particularly relevant for short journeys within towns and villages, including the ‘first mile, last mile’ connection between a transport hub and a person’s home.

Proposals already exist within the LTP for developing Active Travel networks in many of the key settlements, including:

- Abergavenny and Llanfoist Active Travel Network
- Magor & Undy Active Travel Network
- Usk Active Travel Network
- Caldicot Active Travel Network
- Gilwern Active Travel Network
- Active Travel Mapping for communities

The development of these networks should include the following considerations:

- Focus on links to/from main village centres and transport interchanges;
- Ensure that secure and visible cycle parking is provided at destinations;
- Encourage (perhaps as a trial), the uptake of e-bikes for residents, and at appropriate tourist destinations, for visitors;
- Provide active travel maps showing walking/cycling links in the locality, alongside public transport routes and transport services (including locally available demand-responsive, taxis and community transport services).
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Council working practices, business travel and car club

The Council should promote agile working practices, and methods to reduce business travel. Where business travel is required, encouragement should be given for staff to use pool vehicles, which could be made available to local communities.

**Smarter Ways of Working**

The Council should investigate opportunities for reducing its travel needs through smarter working, including better use of technology, and remote and agile working.

**Business travel**

The Council should examine its expenditure on business travel and consider whether the introduction of a business travel hierarchy could drive financial savings at the same time as providing a community transport resource. A business travel hierarchy encourages staff to consider the need to travel and then to use sustainable travel modes if available, then to use pool cars, and finally, to use ‘grey fleet’ (personal car) as a mode of last resort.

In many cases, a pool fleet has been introduced that is block-booked by the Council during the day and available to the community in the evening and at weekends. (see Salford City Council case study in Appendix A).

Typically, where these arrangements have been introduced, they have been able to reduce total business travel by 20-35% (due to the encouragement to use sustainable modes and the disincentives for staff to use their own car), whilst generating substantial business cost savings.

We recommend that the Council undertakes a rapid review of its current business travel mileage, the number of staff and essential car users and total business travel costs, in order to assess the potential scale of savings that could be made by adopting a business travel hierarchy.
Recommendations: Long list of potential measures: Strengthening village assets

There is a diversity of ways in which local communities can be encouraged and enabled to deliver services and amenities, providing local access and obviating the need for travel to a remote location. Solutions include:

- Setting up new services: start-up grants or reduced business rates can assist;
- Pop-up services: providing a venue for pop-up services to visit a locality;
- Collection / delivery services such as medical prescriptions, local food producers supplying to a central pick-up point, crowd-sourcing to generate sufficient demand to get deliveries brought to a village.

At the same time, digital connectivity can be improved, providing better broadband and Wi-Fi, but also providing access to on-line services and training in using them.

Digital hub projects

The following digital hub projects should be supported:

- Llanover: has 3 village halls in clusters and have received a £120k grant to provide amenities. The intention is to provide on-line access to enable people to access services such as on-line banking etc. There is an opportunity for training people in using on-line services, including job seekers and older people at risk of digital exclusion.

- Abergavenny on-line town: Abergavenny Town Council is exploring the potential of introducing a town-wide public Wi-Fi.

- Abergavenny Life Station and Learning for Life community: To enhance the function of a new proposed Library facility, the plan is to offer a place for enabling personal fulfilment for the widest cross section of the population, acting as a hub for a Life Skills curriculum delivered via a network of community facilities. (Better Bryn y Cwm Community Plan)

Enhancing services project

We recommend that a project is commissioned to investigate the opportunities for providing more services locally and for enhancing access to digital within the community. A designated local authority officer should work with a specific community to identify local needs and opportunities and develop solutions with the community. This should include consideration of services and amenities for younger people, as this has been identified as a significant weakness in many localities. This should be done in association with the broader research on community access needs (see later slide). The project could select Llanover, for example, to tie into their existing programme on improving local amenities.
Recommendations: Governance and delivery

To take forward actions, appropriate governance and delivery mechanisms need to be established.

- Develop an action plan of priority projects to work on (see later slide).
- Appoint a lead body to take forward (PSB /Future Monmouthshire Board?).
- Identify a Councillor to champion the programme.
- Identify a Council officer to take the lead on delivering the priority projects and reporting on deliverables. It may be appropriate to have one Officer leading on transport interventions and another officer leading on interventions to improve provision of services and amenities within communities.
- Commission Community Councils to undertake community engagement to investigate community access and movement needs.
Recommendations: Funding

As has been acknowledged, a ‘subsidy model’ of supporting non-commercial services is not viable and mechanisms need to be found to establish service models that are financially sustainable in the future.

Nonetheless, there are funding opportunities to support more conventional transport measures (such as LTP funding to support interchange enhancements) and innovation and research monies to support the investigation and piloting of new service models. There is also potential to investigate funding through delivering savings, such as providing transport for commissioning bodies such as the health sector, or changing business travel policies in the Council to drive financial savings and enable the provision of car club cars.

**Funding sources**

- LTP to pay for infrastructure and interchange improvements
- City Deal: given that Monmouthshire is receiving relatively little investment in hard infrastructure / service improvements compared to other areas, is there an opportunity to request a relatively small amount of funding to investigate more innovative rural solutions?
- CTA ‘Connecting Communities in Wales’ funding: potential to use this funding to support the expansion of community transport schemes such as Bridges and to investigate, support and pilot new models of CT operation.
- Leader & Horizon programmes: opportunities to undertake pilots as part of these projects, in collaboration with other partners.
- Innovate UK Challenge Fund: to support programme elements investigating digital solutions including digital hubs and on-line platforms.
- Foundation for Integrated Transport Community Integrated Transport fund: £10k grant to support the development of an investable social enterprise proposition for community scale transport integration (e.g. to examine opportunity for Grass Routes or similar to run expanded services). This can explore the role of new, modified or expanded social enterprise, and identify local business expertise and/or social entrepreneur(s) to take a new perspective on these issues to convert to an investable proposition. Possible subsequent social enterprise investment bodies include NESTA, UnLtd, Foundation for Integrated Transport, Power to Change.
- ZipAbout: opportunity to take up their offer of providing a platform for co-ordinating transport services.
- Liberty: potential to express interest in May 2018, for them to investigate the viability for running a service in Monmouthshire from mid-2019.
- Opportunity for Council to introduce car club to drive down business travel costs and fund new community resource.
Recommendations: Business case

This is not a traditional commercial business case. Rather it is about saving money, delivering services more efficiently and reducing problems associated with lack of access to services and mobility.

In order to do this, the following steps should be taken:

1) Establish the cost of providing transport at the moment:
   - Level of subsidy provided to bus network;
   - Concessionary fares reimbursement;
   - School transport contracts;
   - SEN provision;
   - Health care transport provision (NEPT costs NHS nationally at least £150m p.a., and could save up to £74.5m by commissioning in more joined up way);[3]
   - Social care transport;
   - Council business mileage;

2) Quantify (or qualify) the costs of lack of access and mobility:
   - Lack of access to education or training;
   - Unemployment (and % due to lack of ability to reach opportunities);
   - Under-employment (i.e. people not taking higher quality jobs, or having to reduce work hours due to lack of mobility);
   - Missed health care appointments;
   - Number of people suffering from isolation / loneliness.

3) Qualify future costs of failing to address problems:
   - Ageing population with increasing challenges of accessing facilities, health care and remaining independent
   - Younger people moving away from area due to lack of opportunity

4) Assess relative costs of providing services through better deployment of alternative models.

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Recommendations: Action plan

The long-list of recommended measures shows the many different actions that can be taken to improve the availability and quality of transport in Monmouthshire.

We have sought to show this in a way where many of these actions are building blocks to work towards a longer-term position where there is integrated service provision and co-ordination, and high quality passenger information, which has the potential to migrate into a full ‘Rural Mobility as a Service’ (MaaS).

In the short-term, we therefore recommend that you focus on delivering measures that are in the Local Transport Plan, such as enhancing interchanges, examine opportunities to expand already successful service models, and start to research and pilot new service models.

Over the next two slides, we propose 8 priority projects for the Council to lead on.

On the following slide, we propose that these themes could be brought together for a localised pilot, focusing on a particular locality.

In addition to these priority projects, there are a range of enabling actions and other activities to support taking forward the programme:

- Initiate stakeholder discussions with Health Board and Social Services to investigate the opportunity for them to commission some transport services from existing providers.

- Undertake a rapid review to assess the amount of business mileage distance and costs for Council business travel and the potential scale of savings that could be made in order to decide whether worth pursuing.

- Through the research and information gathering inherent in the priority projects and above tasks, assemble the data to inform the business case the business case (in the slide above), to help build the case for investment and to demonstrate the financial savings and benefits that this approach could yield.
# Recommendations: Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Initial actions</th>
<th>Inter-relationships</th>
<th>Who to lead</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interchange improvements</td>
<td>Improvement to or creation of identified interchange points in service centres and at public transport hubs as focus of transport network with 'first mile, last mile' onward connections</td>
<td>Identify key interchange locations throughout the area (service centres, rail stations and interchange points on public transport network). Audit current provision and identify gaps in relation to aspirations laid out in this report. Look to progress interchange improvements already identified in the LTP (e.g. Abergavenny, Magor), in keeping with principles proposed in this report.</td>
<td>Public transport MCC network</td>
<td>Richard Cope, Huw Jones, MCC</td>
<td>LTP / RTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transport network</td>
<td>Improvements to key inter-urban bus routes and to bus stop infrastructure</td>
<td>Define core network in relation to interchange locations. Audit corridors to identify which provide satisfactory level of coverage and where there are gaps.</td>
<td>Interchange improvements</td>
<td>MCC</td>
<td>LTP / MCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass Routes operations review</td>
<td>Review of Grass Routes operations to assess potential improvements to service and way operation is run</td>
<td>i) review current service offer could be improved - coverage, how service is promoted etc.; ii) assess operational requirements to extend service offer (vehicles, drivers, depot space, management systems); iii) undertake review to assess benefits of Grass Routes becoming a social enterprise</td>
<td>GR on-line</td>
<td>Richard Cope, Huw Jones, MCC</td>
<td>MCC / FIT (for examining potential for social enterprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass Routes on-line</td>
<td>Putting information about Grass Routes service on-line, including timetables of scheduled services, areas covered by demand responsive, eligibility, on-line registration and on-line booking.</td>
<td>Collate service information in format for display online and for transfer to journey planning platforms. Design blueprint of a website to provide journey planning information, registration and booking.</td>
<td>GR social operations review; on-line journey planner</td>
<td>Richard Cope, Huw Jones, MCC</td>
<td>MCC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# Recommendations: Action Plan

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridges expansion</td>
<td>Expansion of Bridges Community Car scheme to cover whole of Monmouthshire. Putting information on-line including on-line registration and booking.</td>
<td>Co-ordinate with Grass Routes on-line service to ensure similar customer experience in registering and booking, to aid potential future integration through a common booking portal.</td>
<td>GR on-line</td>
<td>Bridges, MCC</td>
<td>CTA Connected Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line journey planner</td>
<td>Investigate the potential for developing an on-line journey planner that incorporates all transport options, including scheduled public transport, demand responsive, community transport, taxi operations. Specify the requirements for such a journey planner.</td>
<td>Meet with Zipabout to discuss the suitability of their platform and the next steps that would need to be taken.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Powell, MCC</td>
<td>MCC / RTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line brokerage</td>
<td>Investigate the potential for on-line brokerage which enables individuals to submit journey requests and for appropriate journey solution / providers to be identified and booked</td>
<td>Meet with Zipabout and with Liberty to discuss the suitability of their platform and the next steps that would need to be taken.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Powell, MCC</td>
<td>MCC, Innovate UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRT trial</td>
<td>Investigate the potential for undertaking a DRT trial in a location, such as commuter link to a rail station, or to address service gaps in a pilot locality.</td>
<td>Identify potential candidate locations. Undertake detailed research with local community to identify need/demand.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Powell, MCC</td>
<td>LEADER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations: Actions:
Bringing it all together: A local pilot to take forward the strategy

To bring together the above strands, as well as potentially to make the programme more manageable and easier to attract supporting funding, we recommend that you also focus on delivering a comprehensive set of interventions in one particular locality.

Detailed research and consultation with the local community will identify where people travel to in order to access services and amenities, flagging up unmet travel needs, as well as identifying the potential for some services to be provided locally. This will include detailed travel diaries with volunteers representing different demographic groups (older retired people, young people, families etc.). This could include tracking of mobile phone data through apps such as Modalgo, as well as broader harvesting of mobile phone data.

Current transport provision will be identified, including scheduled public transport services, community transport and taxi provision. The community will identify gaps in transport service provision.

The project will then look to develop local solutions based on the principles in this strategy, including identifying a key interchange point for focusing services on and enhancing connections to this location.

Transport information about all services and providers in the locality will be pooled together onto a local website, including how to register for membership services (such as Grass Routes, Bridges).

A beta version journey planner will be created that seeks to provide all forms of transport service available. In due course, this will offer booking of services that require booking.

A pilot programme will be run with the Health Board and Welsh Ambulance Trust examining more efficient ways of getting patients to non-emergency appointments.

The community research will identify potential demand for new services, including demand responsive, or the use of idle capacity (such as school buses during the day time).

Through the above, there will be opportunities for providers to identify gaps in provision and to trial new services. This could incorporate crowd-funded solutions.

This work should be undertaken as a project, seeking funding from the Cardiff City Deal – to demonstrate new ways of addressing rural accessibility, as well as drawing in funding as appropriate from innovation sources, such as Innovate UK, FIT, LEADER (to support designing of on-line platform, trialling of demand responsive services, support for social entrepreneurial approaches).

This should be done in collaboration with a host Community Council who will execute the community needs research in partnership with you.
Appendix A. Good practice case studies
Introduction

This section introduces a range of good practice case studies around the two themes of improving accessibility and improving transport provision.

The following case studies of strengthening village services are presented:

- Local shop receiving deliveries
- Medical collection service;
- Community-run shops;
- Digital health services;
- On-line towns and regions.

The following case studies of improving transport provision are presented:

- Transport Co-ordination: Devon Patient Transport Services booking system;
- Transport Information Portal: Gloucestershire and Somerset
- Crowd sourced services: City Mapper, Yemooz
- ‘Community Uber’: Ride Austin, US, and Circulation, Boston, US;
- Rural Mobility as a Service (MaaS): Liberty, US;
- Car clubs: rural car clubs, Harbury Warwickshire; Council car clubs: Salford;
- Ride-sharing;
- Independent travel training: Gloucestershire;
- Rural e-bikes: Isle of Wight and various;
- Transport Interchanges: Mobil.Punkt, Bremen
Improving access to services: strengthening services in village shops

Mrs Milk – Narth & District
Deliveries of milk, bread, newspapers and a variety of dairy and baked products are available from Mrs Milk, who delivers throughout Narth and District. Residents are able to place orders via ringing a telephone number or sending an email. The Narth Community Plan identifies that just under half of respondents currently use the service and knowledge of the service was good (1).

Brown’s Stores, Llandogo
This store has arranged a medicine collection service, with prescriptions delivered to the store and distributed to local residents when they come into the shop.

Pwllglas village shop (2)
After closure in the 1990s, a local store in the village of Pwllglas, Denbighshire was re-opened by the local community three years ago thanks to help from the Big Lottery Fund’s Village SOS programme. The shop forms part of the community hall and is run as a social enterprise. Prior to opening, there was no shop in the village and no meeting place for people. Additionally, the local bus company went out of business so it was difficult for those without a car to get what they needed.

Now, the shop and community hall gives residents of Pwllglas an opportunity to purchase goods, access services and somewhere to congregate. The shop is open 7 days a week and provides innovative services such as a Thai delivery service, a dry cleaning service and a shop lottery. They also offer vegetable boxes from local producers and take bulk orders for heating oil which means that local people can heat their homes at a reduced rate. The shop receives a weekly delivery of fresh local vegetables, sells products made by local people and allows business to advertise on the community noticeboard.

The shop has 3 employees but is supported by over 20 volunteers. Sharon, the Chair of the Board of Directors notes that “Four of our volunteers are over 80 years old and some of them have recently lost their partners. Volunteering at the shop has really helped them with their grieving and issues around loneliness and made them feel part of village life” (2)

2) The Big Blog Wales, So much more than a shop, 2016
Cwmni Cletwr / Siop Cynfelyn

Cwmni Cletwr in Ceredigion is a company limited by guarantee formally creates in April 2012. The company, following the closure of the Cletwr Garage in 2010 a group of local people decided to re open it as a non profit community venture. The Shop and Café re-opened in 2013.

Through the Shop and Café local people now benefit from a range of services. Reverse Credit Account – enables locals to pre pay for their goods through prepaying into an account which is then used to pay for goods in Siop Cynfelyn. This enables locals to shop without having to remember to take money with them, send children into the shop without giving them cash to carry, allow goods to be purchased at the end of the month once wages have been used up and to also support the shop in bulk buying goods to improve the range and quality of stock.

Customers are currently spending £25k per year through this scheme.

The shop promotes bulk ordering to support residents in saving money. Items such as disposable nappies, mainstream or more specialist foods can be ordered from a catalogue. Through paying wholesale prices plus a 10% margin residents typically receive a discount of 15% on normal retail prices. Residents are also able to buy local lamb reared in the local area.

The Jambusters initiative started in 2015 following a surplus of fruit has seen local residents producing chutneys and jams in the kitchen when the Siop is closed on a Monday. Produce is then sold in the Shop and also used in the Café. Much of the produce is made from fruit and vegetables grown in resident’s gardens.

The Café has recently been made a Tourist Information point by Ceredigion County Council to enable tourist and locals to be provided with information on local attractions and services.

Club Cosy which operates in the village and is ran through the Company brings local people together to bulk buy their oil and electricity. Services are still delivered to individual’s homes and are paid for separately but by coming together for the purchasing members were able to save £150 in electricity in 2015 and 5p+ a liter on oil for heating.

Many other initiatives and events are held at the Shop including Welsh language classes and sessions, talks and book signings and a range of events at Christmas.
Improving access to services: digital connectivity

Cumbria Rural Health Forum (1)

The Cumbria Rural Health Forum, led by the University of Cumbria, brings together around 50 public, private and third sector organisations with the common aim of exploring whether ‘digital can help as part of the rural solution’. The term ‘digital health’ is used to refer to information and communications technologies to replace, augment or complement conventional face to face health and social care delivery.

So far, the Cumbria Rural Health Forum has mainly focused on health and care services rather than public health. However, Cumbria County Council has piloted the www.kooth.com web-based counselling service which offers emotional and mental health support for children and young people.

The potential for ‘digital health’ and other digital services should be explored in the Vale of Usk. A success story has already been present regarding library visits in Monmouthshire, as in recent years there has been an increase in visits to online services and in 2015/16 online visits accounted for 27% of visits to libraries (2)

Llandrindod Wells: on-line town

In 2016, Llandrindod Wells became the first town in Wales to install an open-access Wi-Fi system. The Wi-Fi-system was funded through the Tesco £106 development fund and Powys County Council’s regeneration grant.

The system was installed by Telemat, a Welsh company, in several locations around the town including the public transport interchange. Residents and visitors are able to access the free Wi-Fi by logging onto a system via a portal page that is part of the town’s new website.

Clr Avril York, Powys County Council’s cabinet member for regeneration said: ‘The system will benefit local people, residents and visitors and will provide access at places in Llandrindod Wells where events and gatherings take place.’ (3)
Improving access to services: an overarching approach
Case Study: County Clare

Clare County Council, in the West of Ireland, aims to make rural Clare a more attractive place to live through the development of technology-based solutions. The Council published a Rural Development Strategy earlier this year (2017) that details a 10 year plan.

The strategy advocates the development of community-run multi-service centres which offering GP, postal, social protection, health transport, advice and information from a single building.

The five local digital hubs are to be located in Kilrush, Feakle, Miltown Malbay, Ennis and Ennistymon and are to be set up over the next 18 months with high-speed broadband. The digital hubs will have a wide range of uses; “So if you’re a farmer who wants to file your returns or a commuter who wants to work ‘from home’ a couple of days a week, you can go to your local digital hub and take care of your business,” said Mr Ring (Minister for Rural and Community Development)

€944,000 is being allocated to Clare County Council to support the Rural Regeneration Strategy under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2017, an initiative under the Government’s Action Plan for Rural Development.

The project in receipt of the largest funding allocation (€200,000) is the Traderee Food Court in Newmarket-on-Fergus. The development involves the development of an incubation unit for four food-related start-ups, a production kitchen and a training unit.

In Ennistymon, there is a proposed ‘Multi-Service Innovation Centre’ in which will provide support for private enterprise, public services and tourism information.

In Kilrush/Kilkee, two buildings will be converted in each town, with a combined purpose of providing for the development of Enterprise Hubs, Hot Desk Facilities, Digital Hubs, Creative Hubs, Training Facilities and a Tourism Information Hub.

The programme also includes budget for the development of a rural car pooling app.
Improving transport: enhancing the rural network
Case Study: Lincolnshire InterConnect

Lincolnshire InterConnect is one of the longest standing and most celebrated rural bus networks. In 2001, the County Council, in partnership with the operators, reorganised the network to provide a simpler core network of high frequency inter-urban bus services, supported with Call Connect demand responsive services feeding into the main routes. Through tickets are available on most routes.

The base map for the InterConnect services and the localised Call Connect guides can all be viewed on the InterConnect website. An interactive map allows the user to click on routes to automatically bring up timetables.

To use Call Connect, passengers must register (which is free). People can register and book journeys on-line (or by phone). A call centre provides support Monday to Saturday.

Call Connect has expanded to neighbouring areas, such as Rutland and North Lincolnshire.

http://linsinterconnect.com/
Improving transport: Better marketing of bus services

The bus industry is notorious for poor quality marketing. Lack of marketing contributes to low awareness of services and poor brand image.

However, there are several examples where bus services have been well marketed. Trent Barton is nationally recognised as one of the best marketed bus companies in the country. It brands each bus route and conducts consultation and market research with local communities to ensure the route, brand and even the interior of the bus are designed to resonate with the communities they serve. Trent Barton have also been at the forefront of developing ticketing products, targeting their user groups, including products aimed at commuters, young people and groups. They offer a money back guarantee for services that are heavily delayed, their drivers have customer care training and each route has a dedicated route manager.

The New Forest National Park Authority developed a specialist visitor product, the New Forest Tour to target visitors to the area. First Group have branded their visitor-focused Dorset routes “The Jurassic Coast” and maintain consistent branding and visual identity across the fleet, bus stop flags, website and bus timetables.

Improving transport: integrating service provision
Case study: East Cambridgeshire Connect

East Cambridgeshire Connect is a Total Transport pilot project that was launched in April 2017. The project offers flexible, demand responsive, door to door minibus service available to all between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. The service allows the whole East Cambridgeshire District and allows any member of the public to travel between two points in that area.

The price for a single journey is £4 for adults, £2 for children and £2 for concessions. Journeys are booked by telephone or email and can be made between two weeks and one day in advance of travel. Regular journeys can also be taken.

The service integrates a number of different previous services, such as dedicated social care transport, weekly local bus services and specialist dial-a-ride. The service specification was put out to tender and the successful operator is Ely & Soham Association of Community Transport (ESACT).

There is a range of benefits felt by the service. Firstly, there is better service availability and ability to address diverse needs and demands, including greater personalisation of social care. There is greater choice for users and better utilisation of vehicles. Additionally, the integration removes duplication of services. The cost is also neutral.
Improving transport: community transport
Case study: Hackney Community Transport

The Hackney Community Transport group is a social enterprise providing transport services and community services in Bristol, Guernsey, London and Yorkshire. Hackney CT started life by agreement of 30 community groups to share their transport services. Now they run services in different geographic locations.

Witney (1)
West Oxfordshire Community Transport is run by a group of volunteers from across the community in Witney. In 2017, the group founded a not-for-profit bus service in replacement of lost GoRide bus routes in the area. The service connects estates in Witney with the town centre and now has three buses.

Jersey / Guernsey (2)
The LibertyBus service is an easy to use and accessible to all bus service that covers the island. The network of bus routes provides a high frequency of services to the main shopping centres, workplaces, beaches and visitor attractions.

Bristol (3)
Bristol Community Transport is Bristol’s largest community transport operator. Services fall into three broad categories; mainstream bus services, transport for community groups and individual transport. Individual transport includes:

- **Dial-a-Ride:** The Citywide Dial-a-Ride service is available to residents of Bristol who are unable to access conventional public transport and operates from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.
- **Personal Car Service:** Our cars are the perfect solution if you need pre-booked, guaranteed transport to take you directly to your destination with one to one support and assistance from your Driver/escort.
- **Community buses:** Helping older and disabled people reach a variety of essential local facilities such as post offices, medical centres and shops. All services operate a flexible route, so the bus can collect passengers from their homes and vary where they are dropped off.
- **Day trips:** Day Trips are a popular addition to the range of community bus services.
- **DART Shopper Service:** Weekly, bi-weekly and monthly scheduled services to local supermarkets and shopping centres.
- **Bristol Car Club:** Wheelchair accessible car hire with vehicles that are specially designed to accommodate at least one passenger in a wheelchair, and up to four other passengers.

1) Oxford Mail, [Community group launches new bus services as it eyes expansion outside Witney](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/local-news/community-group-launches-new-bus-services-as-it-eyes-expansion-outside-witney), 2017
2) LibertyBus, [Why use the bus](http://www.libertybus.net/why-use-the-bus), 2013
3) Bristol Community Transport, [About us](http://www.bristolcommunitytransport.org.uk/about-us)
Improving Transport: connections and flexible services: Case study: Coggeshall Community Bus and Arrow Taxis DaRT services

Coggeshall Community bus [1]

The Coggeshall Community Bus in Essex provides trips from the local community to the rail station for commuters to connect to/from trains to London. It also provides a middle of the day service to provide access to shops and local facilities, during its down time. The service is run entirely by volunteers. The service costs £1 for a single journey. The website and app enables users to track the bus in real time.

Arrow Taxis DaRT Services [2]

Arrow Taxis run DaRT services with support from Essex County Council. Bookings and scheduling are managed using the FlexiRoute system. The operator is able to deploy vehicles efficiently due to the mix of different types of work, such as school transport. Bookings can be made up to 1 hour before. Some services are fully flexible, whilst others have some fixed elements or connect with bus/train. The operator is proactive in promoting the service and ensures they complement its own taxi services.

1) http://www.coggeshallbus.co.uk/index.html
2) https://www.arrowtaxi.co.uk/index.html
Improving transport: demand responsive services: Case study: Slide, Bristol

Slide Bristol is a shared travel-to-work ride service operated by public transport operator RAPT Dev. It is an app-based demand-responsive high quality minibus service that roughly follows key commuter corridors. The app uses location data to match demand (passengers) with supply (vehicles). Users request a pick up within a time window within the proximity of the main corridor [1].

The service is available from 06:45-09:45 and 15:30-19:30 Monday to Friday. The goal is to create an affordable but convenient grouped service – with commuters as the target audience. Users can book a week in advance or just 10 minutes before they want to travel. Fares start from £4 – the same price as a day ticket on First’s network in Bristol – and there are discounts for regular users in the form of credits.

It is estimated that it replaced 10,000 car miles in the first two months, with 60% growth in users per week in its first month [2].

1) Slide Bristol
2) Passenger Transport, Taking a ride on Slide – a new option, 2016
Improving transport: demand responsive services: 
Case study: Arriva Click, Sittingbourne

Launched in March 2017, Arriva click is an on-demand minibus service based in Sittingbourne. The service covers a 19 square kilometre zone including the rail station and science park and is served by 5 minibuses. The service operates between 06:00 and 22:00 each day and are routed/scheduled in real time. A ‘corner to corner’ service is provided from and to virtual bus stops (pick up/drop off points).

Journeys are booked on the app which is managed by US ride-share system, Via and fares are £1/mile. New vehicles are disability accessible, with wide side doors and flat floor access. Also, when booking it will be possible to request wheelchair or buggy space, to avoid conflicting demands.

By September (8 months after launch), ridership had grown to 1,300 trips per week, with average utilisation of 4.65 passenger journeys per vehicle hour. Average wait times are 12 minutes and average journey length 2.6 miles, 4,000 user accounts have been created.

Journey purpose has become more diverse with time. 43% of journeys are commutes. 30% previously drove, whilst 24% walked, 22% used a taxi and 21% used a service bus.

Arriva considers the Click service concept to provide opportunities for rural areas and to blend with specialist forms of transport, such as health and social care.

https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/arrivaclick/
Improving transport: making the most out of under-used resources

Oxfordshire Comet

Oxfordshire County Council withdrew funding to most of its subsidised bus services, spending its money primarily on school transport and SEN transport.

A fleet of minibuses fulfil most of these journeys.

There was an opportunity to use these minibuses to offer community services during the day time between the morning and afternoon school runs.

The service has been branded the Comet and is open to anyone. It can be booked for exclusive use, for group travel or for shared travel.

Indicative costs are:

- Exclusive use - 5 mile journey from £7;
- Shared travel - 5 mile journey from £3.50;
- Group bookings - minimum of £20 per hour to cover our basic costs.

What is the Oxfordshire Comet?

A new, bookable transport service from Oxfordshire County Council.

If you are an Oxfordshire resident and don’t have access to suitable public transport, the Oxfordshire Comet can transport you from your door to any destination in the galaxy of Oxfordshire! The service is also open to wheelchair users and those with mobility issues.
Improving Transport: co-ordinated booking and planning systems
Case Study: Patient Transport Advice Service, Devon County Council

The Patient Transport Advice Service (PTAS) is a Total Transport pilot project launched in 2016. The project demonstrates joint working between Devon County Council (DCC) and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The service provides a single point for health journey bookings and referrals located within DCC.

Staff determine eligibility for non-emergency patient transport and place booking where required. For those not eligible, staff can advise on other options – public transport and community transport. PTAS uses same bookings / scheduling system (Cleric) as patient transport service provider.

The NEPT provider and CCG have access to wider range of other transport suppliers to meet demands through use of DCC’s dynamic purchasing system (DPS).

The service allows for better planning of transport that is less chaotic and more joined up, and provides a single point of contact for users. The service suggests the most appropriate transport, tailored to specific needs and patients are able to review services to guide others. So far, the benefits, including better customer service and savings for the NHS, have been recognised and the area is expanding to include Plymouth.

Further efficiencies and service improvements have been identified and will be introduced as opportunities arise.
Improving Transport: on-line portal
Online portal for information, journey planning and bookings, Gloucestershire and Somerset County Councils

For its Total Transport project, Gloucestershire and Somerset County Councils have joined forces to create an on-line portal to provide journey planning and booking across multiple modes of transport.

The aims of the project are to:
- Improve the coordination of transport resources to generate efficiencies,
- Improve information about transport solutions (and unmet transport needs), and
- Improve access to transport services

The programme intends to:
- Supports journey planning for scheduled and unscheduled transport
- Enables booking of journeys for scheduled and unscheduled transport
- Supports purchase of County-wide tickets (and application for passes e.g. concessionary, spare seats)
- Provides business intelligence to inform on unmet demand
- Facilitates car sharing and community commissioning of transport
Improving transport: crowd sourced services:
City Mapper

The journey planning app, City Mapper, has introduced its first commercial bus service. Using the data it accumulates through users of its app, it spotted a gap in the London network and has put on a commercial night bus service in East London (CM2).

The buses are tracked via tablets. Drivers utilise City Mapper’s “headway management system” to keep buses running optimally.

The buses come equipped with smart displays and USB chargers, accept contactless ticketing and Apple Pay/Android Pay.

https://medium.com/citymapper/cm2-night-rider-our-first-commercial-bus-route-d9d7918be899
Improving transport: crowd-sourced services: Case Study: Vamooz

Introduced and overseen by Transdev Blazefield and launched in the Harrogate area, the concept has been adopted in other parts of the UK, particularly parts of Lancashire and Reading (in the latter provided by Reading Buses).

People download the app and are then able to choose a trip to join or suggest a trip. If sufficient people sign-up for a trip then it runs and the more who do, the cheaper it becomes. As well as trips out, it has been used to create interest in possible school bus services and to generate interest in a service for Hornbeam Park in Harrogate for workers.

http://govamooz.co.uk/
Improving transport: community taxi and transport to health care
Case Study: Ride Austin

Ride Austin is a not-for-profit ride sharing app that was introduced when Uber and Lyft quit Austin in 2016. By being not for profit, drivers earn more and passengers pay less. 2m trips were made in the first year of operation. Ride Austin are committed to open data to provide transparency and promote research. They have a round up function that donates to charity and has raised $250k over first year. They offer various features, including fare estimate, ETA, split fare and female driver option for female passengers.

Partnering to deliver health care services
Dell Medical School at The University of Texas, RideAustin and the Community Care Collaborative (CCC) have joined forces to use ride-share services to help uninsured and low-income residents of Travis County access the care they need. CCC received a Transportation Empowerment Fund grant from Capital Metro Transportation Authority in March 2017 to develop a pilot program that would allow residents to request a ride to and from a medical appointment.

The programme is designed to give patients free and convenient transportation to medical appointments and pharmacies within the CCC network, initially targeting patients with the most need for transportation assistance.

Dell Med said that its Design Institute for Health is analysing and researching the CCC patient population’s specific needs and how the programme will improve existing voucher programmes, aiming to gather data on the technological literacy of the population and its usage of data plans and apps. The institute will also help with the selection, on-boarding and training of patients for an initial prototype, which is scheduled to launch in August 2017.

http://www.rideaustin.com/
Improving transport: transport to health care
Circulation: demand responsive services to health care facilities

For many people making it to an appointment poses a difficulty. They may not own a car or another mode of transit; public transportation in their area may be unreliable or non-existent.

Where transportation is an issue, on-demand services like Uber have a way of edging in as the obvious solution. Robin Heffernan, a former venture capitalist and entrepreneur in the healthcare space, saw an opportunity to link ride-share services with healthcare providers, and founded Circulation in 2016 as a partnership between Uber and a handful of Boston-based medical practices to provide free rides to non-emergency medical appointments. After a successful pilot launch in Boston late last year, the company has since raised nearly $10 million and expanded to around 1,000 healthcare facilities around the country. Compared to the industry-wide no-show rate of around 25%, those facilities that use Circulation have brought that number down to 8%.
Improving transport: transport brokerage and Mobility as a Service
Case study: Liberty

Liberty Mobility Now (Liberty, http://libertymobilitynow.com/) is a rural and small urban Mobility as a Service (MaaS) provider. They are on a mission to connect communities through technology, public-private partnerships, and deploying Liberty Drivers where there is need. They provide advanced smart phone technology designed to work in rural areas for individuals to request trips as well a call center for those who want to visit with a person to set up an account or book a trip. With Liberty individuals can access multiple transportation options with one tap, click, or call.

Liberty is also working with the medical community so that hospitals and other health facilities can book rides on behalf of their patients. As part of its “caregiver platform,” the company will work with these clients to see if grants and other funds can cover the cost of the rides (1)

If someone requests a ride far in advance, the company may refer him or her to a cheaper or more efficient public-transit alternative. Similarly, transit agencies like Panhandle Trails would refer their clients to Liberty if a bus service isn’t available. “Public transportation is always going to be cheaper, but the benefit is they’ll have another resource,” says Liberty.

Travel with Freedom

In small urban and rural communities transportation options can be limited. Here at Liberty we’re looking to change that, by giving folks multiple transportation options with the click of a button, tap of smart phone, or dial on the telephone.

- Looking for a ride to the doctor?
- Need someone to take Dad or Mom to the grocery store?
- Headed to church?
- Car in the shop and need to grab a ride to work?
- Need a lift home from the bar?

Anyone can use Liberty to get where they need to go – when, and how they wish to get there.

Friends and family can also use Liberty to make sure loved ones can travel to where they need to go safely – giving everyone the freedom to do what they need to do – without the burden of asking or changing schedules around.

Organizations also work with Liberty to offer transportation options for their clients, patients, students, or customers. We are one of the first organizations globally to offer mobility as a service.

Currently we are planning deployment in 7 states in 2017. By 2020 Liberty plans to be available nationwide in the US and operating in several countries around the world.

1) The Atlantic Daily, Uber but for Rural Nebraska, 2016
Improving transport: shared transport solutions
Harbury e-wheels and Bristol wheelchair accessible car club car

An all-electric 2-car car club was developed in 2015 in Harbury, Warwickshire HEI (Harbury Energy Initiative). It had dual environmental and social priorities; the use of electric vehicles is linked to previous development of extensive PV panel installation on the village hall. It is operated by e-car club.

The focus on social and community benefit was partly in response to reduction in bus service provision in the area, and to complement and extend the reach and capacity of existing Community Transport. In its first year, the car club:

- Provided transport to medical appointments and deliveries to food banks
- Accepted referrals from social care agencies and children’s centres
- Delivered more than 520 miles of free transport

It was developed with support from the DfT Carplus Developing Car Clubs in England programme, the Big60Million, E-car club and Coventry Diocese Together for the Community Fund.

Wheelchair accessible car club vehicles (WAVs)

Britain’s first WAV in a car club was developed through Bristol Community Transport (BCT) in partnership with Co-wheels CIC in Bristol. BCT has been providing WAVs for 30 years but these have only been available by visiting the depot during office hours and collecting keys. By including the WAV into the car club, the vehicles are available 24/7 via the Co-wheels online booking system. Steve Bullock, a scheme member says “Wheelchair accessible vehicles have made a world of difference, it has enabled me to retain some independence and get to destinations that I could not on public transport, and using taxis would be too expensive.”

https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/harbury-electric-car-club-launch/
Improving transport: shared transport solutions
Case study: Salford Car Club

Salford City Council (SCC) introduced a new management regime for business travel in 2015. This involves a Travel Hierarchy which stipulates how travel on Council business should be undertaken. First, the need to travel should be questioned (can tele- or video-conferencing replace the trip or can the trip be linked with another activity), then the use of public transport, walking or cycling is promoted. Where a car is the most practicable option, staff should use the new car club or, for longer journeys, a hire car. Grey fleet should be used as a mode of last resort and requires special sign off by managers.

The scheme has three primary objectives: providing financial savings for the Council, reducing environmental emissions generated by Council activity, and providing community benefits (by kick-starting the provision of a local car club).

Prior to the scheme, there were 384 essential car users and 1,123 casual car users at SCC. Car business mileage per annum was estimated at 1,700,000 miles. SCC paid £1.1 million in car mileage and essential user payments in 2014.

After one year of running the scheme, business mileage had reduced by 27% and total net savings of £200,000 made.

https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/salford-green-wheels-travel-plan/
Improving transport: shared transport solutions

Ride sharing

Ride sharing (or “2+ carsharing”) is when two or more people share a car and travel together. It allows people to benefit from the convenience of the car and sharing travel costs whilst alleviating the associated problems of congestion and pollution. Ride sharing can contribute to community cohesion, connecting people with shared interests or similar lifestyles.

Informal ride sharing is best achieved by word of mouth among existing social networks. Some communities – such as WI groups or groups of parents of scout or school groups - use sign-up sheets and – increasingly – Facebook groups.

More formal ride sharing is organised through dedicated online booking systems. These allow drivers to advertise trips, passengers seeking a lift can search for journeys. One of the people travelling usually owns the car and the other(s) will generally make a contribution towards fuel and other associated costs for journeys they are making in the same direction, on a regular or one-off basis. The passenger(s) can arrange a drop-off either on-route or at the driver’s destination. These are often commissioned by larger employers or across whole areas by local councils. Further information on operators and employer case studies is available at https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/what-is-shared-mobility/2plus-car-sharing/
Improving transport: Independent travel training
Case study: Gloucestershire independent travel training programme

Training people with learning difficulties can enable them to use regular public transport, providing them with greater independence whilst reducing the need for the Authority to lay on specialist transport.

Gloucestershire’s travel training programme in 2016 comprised several elements including:

- **Travel Training Workshops** with groups to discuss aspects of travel, including road safety and using public transport. This included activity sessions, including role play, planning a journey and mapping the local area. It also incorporated “What if” scenarios to help the participants identify strategies for coping with an unexpected situation during their journey, such as the bus being delayed.

- **One-to-One Journey Planning sessions**: were held with each learner in order to plan a journey they would like to complete or practice. Journeys were planned to a range of destinations including home to school, college or leisure / social destinations as selected by the learner.

- **Buddying Sessions**: after learners had completed the one-to-one journey planning, the next step was to complete their buddy sessions. Each learner was able to receive a maximum of four buddy journeys which was defined as a trip from an origin to a destination. Buddy sessions were tailored to suit parents, teachers and the learners themselves, including travelling by bus and changing between bus services.
Improving transport: enhancing links and interchanges: rural e-bikes

E-bikes provide assistance when pedalling. Rapid advances in quality, lightness and range mean that sales are booming; in some parts of Germany and the Netherlands, e-bikes outsell pedal cycles. E-bikes appeal to those who can-but-don’t cycle, and increasingly to younger people. Given that they often cost more than £1,000, they are increasingly being included into bikeshare. Bikeplus’ Shared Electric Bike programme (2015-16) showed that 1-in-3 users rarely cycled, users felt happier (58%) and fitter (41%), enabled longer trips to be cycled (5 miles compared to 3 by pedal bikeshare) and were popular as part of commuting. The recent Cycle Boom project (1) demonstrated the physical and mental health benefits of access to e-bikes among older people and others recovering from illness.

Oxford’s OXONBIKE (2) and Exeter’s Co-bikes (3) are good examples of on-street public e-bike hire. In less urban areas, shared e-bikes often combine multiple user types, often residents, visitors and businesses and are based out of hosted businesses. For example, the Isle of Wight’s Red Squirrel Bikes (4) mainly provides e-bikes out of visitor information centres and the New Forest’s PEDALL (5) scheme includes adapted e-bikes to provide opportunities for less able people to enjoy cycling.

Several schemes provide e-bike loans. Rotherham’s Journey Matters (6) offers e-bikes on loan to employees, job-seekers and the public via a popular mobile hub, aiming to attract commuters who previously do not cycle with short loans.

Further details on these case studies and more are available at:

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(1) https://www.cycleboom.org/
(2) https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/project_page/oxonbike-oxford/
(3) https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/project_page/co-bikes-exeter/
(5) https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/project_page/new-forest-pedall/
(6) https://www.carplusbikeplus.org.uk/project_page/rotherham-journey-matters/
The City of Bremen introduced sustainable transport hubs (“mobil.punkt”) to promote first mile/last mile travel to interchange points. At these locations, people can change onto public transport services or into car club cars. The locations incorporate bike parking so that people can cycle to the interchange. The interchanges also incorporate electric charging infrastructure for car club cars (and for private cars). Where possible hubs are located adjacent to cafés and shops and locations where people can get wi-fi access. The interchanges are branded to raise their profile.

http://mobilpunkt-bremen.de/english/