



Social Connectivity, Health & Wellbeing

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Executive Summary

The Charlton Integrated Community Transport project aimed to develop a sustainable transport model that caters for the needs of the whole Charlton community.

It commenced in early 2020 with funding from the Flexible Local Transport Options program (Department of Transport), but was put on hold in March 2020 when Covid-19 restrictions came into effect and resumed later in the year once restrictions had eased.

The project was overseen by a Project Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Charlton Neighbourhood House, Department of Transport, Charlton Community Car, Buloke Shire Council and the North Central LLEN.

There were seven key stages:



1. **Project Plan:** A Project Plan was developed to align with the Memorandum of Understanding and key project milestones (see Appendix One).
2. **Environmental Scan:** An environmental scan was undertaken to see what was happening in the community transport sector with rural and regional Victoria, other Australian states and internationally (see Appendix Two).
3. **Community Consultation:** A comprehensive community consultation process was undertaken with individuals and organisations representative of the Charlton community and more than 100 surveys were completed (see Appendix Three).
4. **Options for consideration:** Based on the environmental scan and community consultation process, four options were put forward. For each option, consideration was given to what would happen, how it would happen, what it would cost, the likely outcomes and benefits, and management and governance suggestions. In addition, two hybrid models were identified (ie. a combination of two of the four options).
5. **Recommendation:** The report recommends adoption of a hybrid model which will see the establishment of both a social enterprise and a public-private partnership with local small business Start's Bus Lines. This option allows the Charlton Neighbourhood House to consolidate current services and grow these over time, as well as allowing for expansion into a new tourism venture that will have economic, social and community benefits. Current gaps in the provision of community transport services will be filled with the creation of new offerings to support young people, people with a disability, and those who are transport disadvantaged. It will also make the current community transport program more viable in the long term.
6. **Future Actions:** A total of 11 actions were identified for better community transport to meet the needs of the Charlton community.
7. **Governance documents:** A range of policies & procedures and other governing documents were prepared to support the four options presented to the Project Steering Committee.

Project Overview

The Charlton Community Transport project aims to develop a sustainable transport model that caters for the needs of the whole Charlton community.

The project will have a particular focus on shortfalls for youth and non-eligible users under the current model.

In 2019, the Charlton Neighbourhood House applied for a grant from the Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program to undertake to develop a sustainable transport model that caters for the needs of the whole Charlton community.

This follows a successful fundraising campaign in 2018 by the Charlton community to purchase a car to provide transport to senior residents attending specialist medical appointments in Bendigo, Melbourne and other areas of Victoria.

The community car project operates under the auspice of the Charlton Forum, with the administration of this initially managed by Charlton College and more recently the Charlton Neighbourhood House who will take on the auspice arrangements once they are fully established.

In addition to the Charlton Community car, CharTSEC has five vehicles that may be available for community transport services, Charlton College has a 12-seater mini-bus, and the Buloke Loddon L2P program a further 2 vehicles. There is also an UBER driver living and working in the Charlton community, and a locally owned and operated School Bus & Charter Service with a fleet of 1 x 45 seater coach, 3 x 21-seater and 1 x 20 seater buses.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House has identified that the community car is potentially not meeting all of the needs of the community, and has therefore sought funding through the Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program to determine where the gaps in service delivery may lie and how these might be addressed.

Areas for consideration include:

- Health & Wellbeing – transport to local GP, rehabilitation and other health service providers
- Community connectivity – transport for local shopping, especially pharmacy and supermarkets
- Social Inclusion – transport to events, parties, movies, children's play dates and coffee dates
- Youth – transport for work placements, school-based apprenticeships, job interviews, sporting events, and incorporation into the L2P program
- CALD – transport for driving lessons

This will be achieved by:

- Gathering knowledge and modelling from various community transport programs
- Consulting with the Charlton community on additional needs for local transport
- Collating data from appropriate government sources
- Scoping a sustainable community transport model

A copy of the Project Plan is obtained in Appendix One.

What We Found...

As part of the environmental scan undertaken for the Charlton Community Transport project, we found:

- There are very few community transport models operating in rural and regional Australia that move beyond providing access to non-urgent medical treatment for people who are aged, frail, or have a disability.
- In some areas, community transport providers have extended their services to include social connectivity, however most are still limited to people who are elderly, frail or disabled.
- There is very little provided for young people and able-bodied adults who do not have a license or access to reliable public transport.
- The majority of community transport programs are funded through government grants and subsidies (e.g. VPTAS), with only a very few operating these on a social enterprise (Girgarre) or commercial basis (Peninsula Transport Assist).
- The largest barriers to operation are small population bases within large geographic regions making it difficult to make services commercially viable without grants and/or ongoing subsidies.
- The UK has some successful models that have elements that could be considered as part of the Charlton Community Transport project.
- Charitable status can help ensure the financial viability of a community transport service

What is Community Transport?

In 2008, the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) undertook a Community Transport Snapshot Project which defined as community transport to be:

- not-for-profit
- flexible
- able to adapt to the level of service required by passengers on the day of travel
- passenger focused

In addition, community transport was defined as transport that is designed primarily to support vulnerable and transport disadvantaged members of the community to access services and participate in community life.

Transport Disadvantage

Transport disadvantage occurs when local transport options make it difficult for people to access services, activities, education, employment and community networks. This can lead to social and economic exclusion and can affect the well-being of individuals and communities. It is more common for people in outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas where public transport services are limited, and for people who have low mobility due to age, disability, health issues or economic circumstances.

Community transport can play an important role in overcoming transport disadvantage. It consists mainly of services offered by councils and not-for-profit community organisations using cars, minibuses, brokered taxis, or a combination of these, to fill gaps in public and private transport.

The complete Environmental Scan is obtained in Appendix One.

TRANSPORT OPTIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN CHARLTON

The Charlton Community Car

The Charlton Community Car is managed by a Sub Committee of the Charlton Forum. The original project was overseen by a steering group, many of whom are no longer providing input. There is a long-term succession plan for the community car to be managed under the auspices of the Neighbourhood House.



The car is available to take elderly and disabled people to specialist medical appointments in Bendigo, Ballarat, Melbourne and other rural and regional towns. There are currently 13 drivers, with only 5 willing to drive in Melbourne. Walking aids and wheelchairs can fit into the boot of the car.

Volunteer drivers are recruited by word of mouth and through adverts in the Charlton Community Newsletter. Currently there are only 3 female drivers, with most of the travellers being female. Having a preferred driver is not always possible and could also be a deterrent to using the service.

Bookings for the community car are taken by staff at the Charlton Neighbourhood House who are reimbursed on a per-booking basis which does not cover the current costs of administering the program. There is no booking fee charged at the moment, and the community car project is only just covering costs (thanks to donations from local community organisations). The Community Car Coordinator currently takes call at all hours, which is not ideal, and also works more hours per week than she is paid for.

Some days there are duplications of trips and other days there are no bookings. Having 2+ people a trip would make the car more viable, but this is not always possible due to the nature of specialists availability.

Community Car Trips	2019						2020											
	Winter		Spring			Summer		Autumn			Winter		Spring					
Destination	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bendigo	16	9	3	5	16	6	15	13	7	8	4	10	10	5	12	5	12	11
Melbourne				3	1		1	1	1		1						1	
Castlemaine			1									1			1			
Ballarat										1								
Wycheproof*			1		1			1							2	1	3	1
Donald*														1				
TOTAL	16	9	5	8	18	6	16	15	8	9	5	11	10	6	15	6	16	12

Total trips between July 2019 and December 2020 (18 months) – 191 (av. 10.6 per month)

NB. Covid-19 restrictions impacted on trips between March and September 2020

Fares for trips are charged at 20c/km, which is the current VPTAS (Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme) rate. Destination marked with an * in the table above are not eligible for VPTAS reimbursement as they are under 100 kms (requirement to access the scheme) from Charlton.

Travellers pay up front, then claim back from VPTAS. This is sometimes a problem for people who cannot afford the upfront payment, and whilst there is an option to allow patients to request that payment go directly to the Charlton Community Car, this has not been allowed in the past.

Current Community Car Administrator Deb Finlay advises that there are some Charlton residents who do not access the service as they are not able to afford the upfront fee. Being able to claim direct to VPTAS for travel reimbursement could solve this, and allow more people to access the service.

The car has completed 90,000Km in less than 3 years. Acciona Berrimal Wind Farm has agreed to cover the cost of replacement of the car through a Memorandum of Understanding agreed to by both parties for the foreseeable future (we were not able to access a copy of the MOU so are not able to provide details of length and financial provisions).

In good faith, we believe that any transfer of car ownership would also see the transition of the MOU as the purpose of the project does not change, just the way in which it is managed and administered.

In the past a car-pooling service has been offered for social activities in town such as Jazz in July, but there was no interest in using such a service (as advised by Gary Larmour, Project Steering Committee Member).

It seems that many older people are happy to drive themselves around town, but do not wish to drive further (this was expressed a number of times during our listening posts, and community presentations – particularly by older members of the community who are no longer comfortable driving in larger centres such as Bendigo and Melbourne). They are also not used to have a community transport service other than for patient transport.

Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre (CharTSEC)



The current core activities of the Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre are to provide pre-driver and pre-licence education to all future drivers. It has been providing this service since 1988.

The centre currently has 5 vehicles. It is well used by schools within approximately a 200Km radius, with terms 1, 2 and 3 being the busiest.

When the community car has more requests for trips on the same day than it can service, the CharTSEC cars can be made available for use. There is a charge of 20c/Km for the car trips. This amount only just covers the costs, not including replacement costs. The Manager of CharTSEC has to prepare the car for each trip, and does this on a voluntary basis (which takes approximately 15 minutes each time a car is required).

There are about 10 instructors at CharTSEC, but not all live in Charlton, and not all would be available as volunteer drivers (their work at CharTSEC is paid on a hourly basis, however some have indicated they would be willing to become volunteer community car drivers in the future).

The instructors are NOT licenced taxi drivers, but do have to complete training in the Certificate IV in driving instruction, which is issued by the Taxi Directorate. CharTSEC pays for the initial training, but instructors cover the ongoing costs plus their licence.

Future activities at the CharTSEC site could include, but are not limited to, safety education incorporating: L2P, Keys to Drive; Bicycle Safety; Gopher Safety; Drug and Alcohol Awareness; and specialist curriculum for Indigenous, Culturally Diverse and Disadvantaged Youth.

Charlton College Mini Bus

Charlton College is the owner/operator of CharTSEC as outlined above. Their cars can be available to support the community car program, and with approval from the College Council, may be made available for other reasons.

The school has an 11 seater minibus which is used to transport students to work placements etc when required, but is also loaned out to groups that have connections with students eg the cricket club uses the minibus to transport students to away games. The fee is the cost of fuel (approximately 50c/Km). It is self-drive with a minimum age driver age of 25. The bus has minimal use.

TAC L2P Vehicles

The Buloke Loddon TAC L2P program has two vehicles used to provide assistance to young people who are facing significant barriers to completing their mandatory 120 hours of supervised on road driving experience through the support of volunteer mentors from the community.

There are times when these vehicles are not being used for this purpose and could be made available to alternative community transport purposes, especially the key target audience for this program: young people between the ages of 16 and 20 years who are transport disadvantaged.



Start's Bus Lines

Start's Bus Lines is a commercial bus company based in Charlton providing the school bus service for Charlton College, and charter services for various community groups, organisations and individuals.

Their fleet consists of 1 x 45-seater coach, 3 x 21 seater and 1 x 20 seater buses. Most of the charter

work is in the evenings or weekends, but a 21-seater coach is always available (unless already being chartered).

The school buses can be used during school hours, if they are not required by the school for athletic carnivals etc. The drivers are all locals, and the service of each vehicle is also completed locally. All drivers have police checks, working with children checks, and medicals.

School bus run contracts are vulnerable to the number of children using the service. Low numbers can impact on the viability of a particular service, and the Department sometimes changes the routes when contracts are renewed.

The numbers for each of the Charlton school bus runs are solid and are likely to stay static for the medium to long term (as advised by Jamie Start).

Bus replacements are built into the school bus contracts, and all replacements must be new buses, so this has to be factored into Start's costings and service delivery. Future replacements may be Electric Buses.

As well as the school bus service, Start's also has a Country Regional Urban Bus Service.

This is an independent contract with the State Government to provide a service to pick up school students in town, who are not eligible for the school bus service.

It is not subsidised, and parents have to pay for the service each term up front.

Other people can use the bus service too (at the same time it is being used to transport school students and under the same conditions, i.e. passengers are required to pay for a terms use up front).

There are two routes – one "up the hill" and a second covers the "lower town" area and they operate Monday to Friday during school terms. The service delivered up the hill is well used, however the lower town service is not, but it is still a priority for the company as they see it as a community service to both students and local residents.

Like many small rural businesses, Start's Bus Lines is woven into the fabric of the community, as it supports some community organisations to by offering free or low-cost charters to surrounding towns for fund raising activities.

They would like to do more, but still have to remain a viable business, with their main source of income being the school bus runs.

Around 2007, Start's bus lines piloted a town service, running it twice a day. It was well marketed and promoted, the bus had an automatic step to help people alight easily, and had room for walkers and push chairs etc.

The fare was a gold coin donation. However, the service was not used by locals and so had to be discontinued.

As a charter service, the company is used regularly and often by community groups, organisations and private individuals for weddings, family outings, events and so on. They will consider any ideas.

Start's are keen to work with the community to provide a transport service that they need and want.

INQUIRY TO INTO THE USE OF SCHOOL BUSES IN RURAL AND REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Victorian Parliament is currently conducting an Inquiry to into the use of school buses in rural and regional Victoria.

Members of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee have been asked to inquire into, consider and report, by no later than November 2021, on extending school buses for use by the wider public to enhance the mobility of regional and rural Victorians, including, but not limited to:

- (1) an independent analysis of the transport disadvantages experienced by regional and rural Victorians, specifically youth, the elderly and low-income households;
- (2) investigating the potential social and community impacts of improving mobility options by widening the mainstream school bus system and an analysis of the examples and trials from other jurisdictions both locally and overseas;
- (3) investigating technology and systems that would be effective in ensuring child safety on mainstream school buses;
- (4) identifying any existing or potential barriers to allowing public access to the mainstream school bus network;
- (5) identifying the spare capacity of existing assets in the school bus program and how that might be used to enhance public transport options in regional and rural Victoria; and
- (6) investigating the costs of extending mainstream school buses to the general public and how a fare system would function.

What we heard...

People in Charlton and surrounds were consulted in a number of ways to obtain a diverse range of views and ideas.

We spoke to a number of people in person, conducted two listening posts at the Charlton Neighbourhood House, facilitated two focus groups, presented to number of community group and undertook more than 100 surveys.

A media release was also produced and sent to the Buloke Times and North Central News, and information was posted on the Charlton Neighbourhood House Facebook page and posters were displayed around town at key locations.



Who we Met with:

As part of the Consultation Process to support the development of a new community transport model we spoke to the following people/organisations:

- Charlton Neighbourhood House (Kaylene Cossar)
- Charlton Community Car Project (Gary Larmour & Deb Finlay)
- Buloke Shire Council (Wayne O'Toole and Rose Harris)
- Charlton College (Kelvin Baird, VCE Class)
- North Central LLEN (Mary-Ann Sait)
- CharTSEC (John Harley)
- Rex Theatre, Hayden McKinnon
- Mallee Regional Partnership (Win Scott)
- Start's Bus Lines (Jamie Start)
- Charlton Forum - Member presentation, Carolyn Olive interview
- Charlton Rotary Club (Member presentation)
- Charlton Playgroup (Member presentation)
- East Wimmera Health Service Planned Activities Group (Member Presentation)
- Bendigo Health (Anna Feiss)
- Hayden McKinnon (Rex Theatre)

NB. There are some groups who chose not to meet with us (CWA), and others who cancelled meetings at short notice due to a snap Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020 (Lions, Oasis, Senior Citizens) which were not able to be rescheduled within the consultation timeframe, so not all organisations on our original consultation schedule were spoken to, whilst others were added (Hayden McKinnon, Caroline Olive, Anna Feiss).

What they told us

Like many small rural towns, Charlton has a need for improved transport options, particularly for those who are transport disadvantaged. While the elderly and people with disabilities are often the priority group for community transport projects, this research also found that able bodied people also require a range of transport options too.

For example:

- Parents may not be able to attend playgroup in Charlton if it is on a day they are working, and cannot attend in another town as they do not have access to a vehicle, or cannot afford the fuel costs.
- Students studying VET or VCAL may not be able to access work placements or work experience if their parents cannot take them

There are a number of community vehicles in Charlton that often sit idle (as outlined above – community car, CharTSEC, L2P, Charlton College mini-bus at different times of the day) which could be used to provide on demand transport for the community.

Rural people are often disadvantaged, having no access to public transport, which can limit their attendance at social events in town. Community transport can provide an outreach service to rural people.

There are currently no formal options for grocery or pharmacy prescription delivery services, however both the supermarkets and pharmacies do offer an informal service for people unable to attend the premises in person due to ill-health or mobility when required.

Transport options discussed also included walking, cycling and the use of mobility aids. Infrastructure improvements are required to ensure safety and accessibility to all areas of the town including the school, sporting clubs and the riverfront.

Transport is an emerging theme in the community plans being developed for Buloke 2030. The Shire are also keen on active transport i.e. having walking tracks and footpaths that are accessible by everyone, and that connect all areas within a town, for example in Charlton, connecting the riverfront, town centre, the weir on the Avoca River, Charlton Sporting complex, Charlton College and the Cemetery with the town centre. Currently there is a safety concern for gophers, crossing safety and funding availability.

Road safety is an issue for drivers, walkers and cyclists as the rules about U-Turns and speed limits are not always adhered to. Several people suggested that a truck route was needed to improve the safety for everyone in town.

Advocacy across all levels of government to improve infrastructure, public and community transport is needed

As there are increasing social activities and tourists coming to town, special package deals could be developed for both residents and visitors/tourists alike, including meal deals to the Rex Theatre, and monthly trips to surrounding locales.

Current volunteer community car drivers are getting older, so a recruitment drive with comprehensive volunteer training is required. There is an opportunity to recruit new residents to town as volunteer drivers, and in particular more female drivers for the community car are required.

There is enthusiastic support for a minibus to be available for community use. This could be used for families to attend Playgroup who are transport disadvantaged; and connecting people to other communities in Buloke Shire and nearby towns.

Cost could be a barrier, especially for those who are transport disadvantaged as they may not be able to afford services provided on a "user pays" basis.

People are not used to having community transport options so it would take some time to adjust if they were introduced – people don't miss what you don't have!

Survey Results

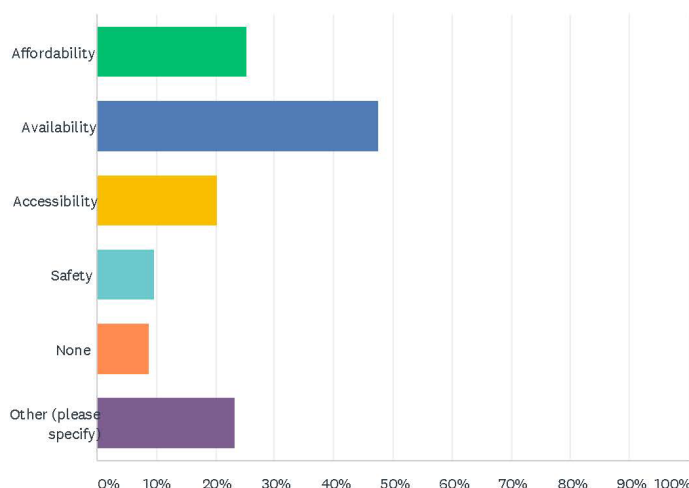
We received a total of 103 survey responses fairly representative of the Charlton community across all age groups (20% under 18 years of age, 12% were aged between 19 and 40, 15% between 41 and 60, 42% between 61 and 80 and 11% aged over 81+. Females responded more than males and almost 74% lived within the town boundary.

Over 50% of people surveyed think it is important to have community transport options available in Charlton, with young people, the elderly and disabled the main focus of any future program.

More than 55% of people were highly likely or likely to use the service, mostly on a weekly or less often basis.

Q15 What barriers would prevent you from using community transport if it was available?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



A full report on what we heard is contained in **Appendix Three**.

Options for consideration...

After completing the Environmental Scan and Community Consultation process, we have developed four different options to be considered by the Project Steering Committee.



For each of these we have considered the following:

- What will happen
- Why it should happen (outcomes)
- How it Will Happen (including constraints and costing)
- Who will make it happen (Management and Governance)

Option One: Status Quo

Continue the current community transport arrangements within the Charlton community:

- Charlton Community Car: non-urgent patient medical transport
- Charlton College Bus: activities that involve students from Charlton College to participate in school, sport and community activities
- CharTSEC vehicles: Driver instruction
- TAC L2P vehicles: Driver instruction

with minor changes to achieve community transport efficiencies and best practice.

- 1 Transfer of ownership and management of the community car to Charlton Neighbourhood House
- 2 Introduction of a non-refundable booking fee of \$10 per trip (hardship clauses can apply) to help service viability
- 3 Development of a structured volunteer management program to support community car drivers

1. Transfer of ownership and management of the community car to Charlton Neighbourhood House

Transfer of ownership and management of the community car to the Charlton Neighbourhood House would provide clarity around the service and an opportunity for future growth.

The current structure sees a Community Car Project Group auspiced by the Charlton Forum, with the Charlton Neighbourhood House providing administration of the service on a fee-for-service basis (which is not economically viable in the long-term as it is being subsidised by the Neighbourhood House).

If a volunteer were to be injured whilst undertaking duties as a community car driver (outside of the vehicle – recognising that TAC covers rehabilitation costs from motor vehicle accidents), for example they hurt their back whilst unloading a walking frame or wheelchair from the boot of the vehicle, it is uncertain as to which volunteer insurance policy would cover any expenses incurred – are the volunteers working on behalf of the Project Group, Charlton Forum or the Charlton Neighbourhood House?

The Neighbourhood House already has comprehensive volunteer insurance, as well as access to a range of opportunities and resources through the Neighbourhood House network. This is why many other community car services across rural Victoria are managed by a Neighbourhood House.

They are able to facilitate a structured volunteer management, recruitment and induction process that will meet the National Volunteering standards, offer adult education program such as first aid, and have a network of volunteers that they can tap into to grow the number of volunteer community car drivers.

They will also be able to integrate the management of the Community Car program within their existing program of offerings which, like the community car, are designed to create positive outcomes and opportunities for local community members.

2. Introduction of a non-refundable booking fee of \$10 per trip (hardship clauses can apply) to help service viability

Current figures provided by the Community Car Project Group show that the service is not currently economically viable and only continues thanks to generous donations from local service clubs (eg. Charlton Lions).

The introduction of a non-refundable booking fee, whilst a cost impost on some who may not be able to afford it – hence the need for a hardship clause, will take steps towards making the service more viable.

It will also go toward covering a small amount of the cost incurred when bookings are cancelled (currently if a booking is cancelled the patient does not have to pay at all despite the work already undertaken the Community Car Coordinator to arrange transport).

3. Development of a structured volunteer management program to support community car drivers

The Charlton Community Car service should be underpinned by a structured volunteer management program that aligns with National Volunteering standards

(https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Standards-Document-FINAL_Web.pdf).

In addition to an annual recruitment campaign for new drivers, there should be an orientation package provided to all drivers and a compulsory induction component, as well as ongoing training and support (see Volunteer Management Program Manual in Part Two of this report).

This provides safety and security for passengers, drivers and the organisation that manages the service.

Why it should happen (outcomes)

This option continues to provide important community transport services with no additional risk on behalf of any Charlton organisation, indeed in the case of the community car a more structured volunteer management program and the introduction of a non-refundable booking fee have the potential to reduce risk and increase viability.

The community is generally happy with the services they currently have and some felt there was no reason to change the status quo.

How it Will Happen (including constraints and costing)

Even though this recommendation is for the status quo, we still recommend that ownership and management of the Charlton Community Car be transferred to the Charlton Neighbourhood House who currently undertake the administration for this.

We also suggest a volunteer recruitment campaign be undertaken with all new and existing volunteer drivers to undertake a formal induction and training to enable them to undertake their role safely.

To make the service viable, a \$10 non-refundable booking fee will be applied to all community car bookings (special hardship clauses could apply) and a concerted marketing campaign will need to be undertaken to increase service patronage (currently averaging just under 11 trips per month there are many days when the vehicle is not in use).

Finally, governance documentation to support the Community Car should be tightened including new policies and procedures to cover motor vehicle safety, OH&S and a code of conduct for both drivers and passengers to adhere to.

What it will cost

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET – FIRST YEAR (ESTIMATE ONLY): All figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours/ Rate	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
INCOME			
Patient transport fares (15% increase on 2019/2020 figures)		\$0.20	\$10,280.00
Booking Fee (non-refundable)	150	\$10.00	\$1,500.00
Grants, Donations and Other income Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lions Club • Rotary Club • Buloke Shire Council Community Grants • Bendigo Bank Community Grants • Graincorp Foundation • FRRR 			\$5,000.00
TOTAL INCOME			\$16,780.00
EXPENDITURE			
Governance, Management, Marketing & Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management & Marketing • Administration 	5 hrs	\$40.00	\$10,400.00
Volunteer Recruitment, Induction & Training – annual program	30 hrs	\$40.00	\$1,200.00
Vehicle Registration			\$725.00
Insurance			\$875.00
Fuel			\$4,500.00
Service			\$1,000.00
Tyres			\$500.00
Cleaning/Detailing including sanitiser			\$400.00
Other vehicle expenses – RACV, Tolls, etc			\$300.00
Miscellaneous			\$200.00
TOTAL COST			\$20,100.00
Operating Surplus (Deficit)			(\$3,320.00)

NB. Even with the introduction of the non-refundable booking fee and a modest increase in patronage (15%) the service will still run at a loss. There would need to be a 50% increase on current patronage for the service to operate on a break-even basis (and that still includes a \$5,000 contribution from grants and donations).

Who will make it happen (Management and Governance)

The Charlton Neighbourhood House will be responsible for the management, administration and governance of the Charlton Community Car.

Governance documentation

In order to successfully implement this option, the following Governance documents and considerations will be required:

- Transfer of ownership and management of the Community Car to the Charlton Neighbourhood House. This will include:
 - A motion prior to June 2021 at a meeting of the Charlton Forum that the ownership be transferred prior to the start of the new financial year.
 - All documentation updated to reflect the new structure (current policies and procedures relating to the car).
 - Community Car to be added to the list of programs/services delivered by the Charlton Neighbourhood House.
 - Employment contracts or position descriptions for staff to be amended to include management/facilitation of the community car.
- Implementation of the structured management program to oversee the recruitment, induction, training and management of volunteer community car drivers. *Refer to Volunteer Management Program manual in Part Two of this report.*
- Adoption of the draft policies contained within Part Two of this report: Code of Conduct, Motor Vehicle Policy, Workplace Safety, and the Volunteer Policy

Option Two: Social Enterprise

Grow current community car model

Currently in Charlton, there is a Community Car, a minibus owned and operated by the Charlton College, five CharTSEC cars and two L2P cars offering different levels of community transport to people living in Charlton and surrounds who are transport disadvantaged.

There are opportunities to utilise these vehicles to deliver a collaborative range of transport services for the local community beyond what they each do now.

By expanding the use of the community car and the school minibus, and later on, the other community owned cars, the sustainability of community transport is feasible, and the community needs would be met to a large extent.

To make the service viable, a \$10 non-refundable booking fee will be applied to all community car bookings (special hardship clauses could apply).

Any profits from the services provided would be used to manage the service and to support the service/maintenance/replacement regimes for all vehicles.

We recommend:

- 1) Expand community car usage to include community connectivity transport options
- 2) Develop a network of community transport providers along the Calder & Sunraysia Highways to achieve efficiencies and more service opportunities
- 3) Utilise Charlton College mini-bus to provide additional services for the local community
- 4) Create opportunities for youth transport services, eg. school holiday program, training and work transport
- 5) Develop a community transport program that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS
- 6) Include transport to attend court hearings in Bendigo, Melbourne and other regional centres where no alternative is available as part of the community car remit
- 7) Develop a ride share program to support demand on services at peak times or outside normal hours
- 8) Explore opportunities to transport people to train stations to link to Melbourne Trains
- 9) Explore the use of an "app" to manage the community transport program

1. Expand community car usage to include community connectivity transport options

Currently the community car is used exclusively for specialist medical appointments in Bendigo or other larger towns. While the Community Car officer currently collates trips with more than one passenger if possible, this is done on an informal basis.

While the use of the Community Car for specialist medical appointment must remain a priority, the Community Car service could be expanded to include activities that have a health and wellbeing and community connectivity focus.

An expanded service would operate at times outside the priority use times. An expanded service would allow the use of the car to attend social activities and events, for local shopping and medical appointments, and to avoid extreme weather (very high temperatures or rain). This would be particularly useful for those who are transport disadvantaged, but could be accessible by everyone, including rural residents (outside town limits).

It is envisaged that an expanded service will grow over time, and at times will require more than one vehicle to provide the services, especially at peak times or for large gatherings and social events.

Accessing the vehicles that are housed at the CharTSEC and not being used will assist with responding to demand. Negotiations with Charlton College should begin in 2021 to develop a formal MoU to access the vehicles for this purpose.

2. Develop a network of community transport providers along the Calder & Sunraysia Highways to achieve efficiencies and more service opportunities

There are a number of community transport vehicles in operation by Neighbourhood Houses and other non-for-profit providers along the Sunraysia and Calder Highways.

By developing a network of community transport providers with a shared booking system (see recommendation 9) there could be the opportunity for a vehicle to collect patients in multiple

towns enroute thus achieving economies of scale and increasing the economic viability of all of the services (the more passengers in each vehicle the greater the income per trip).

The following organisations could be approached to participate:

- Sea Lake Neighbourhood House
- Wycheproof Neighbourhood House
- Birchip Forum
- Donald Community Centre
- Wedderburn Community Centre (does not have a service, so residents could benefit from Sea Lake, Wycheproof and Charlton services who all travel through Wedderburn to Bendigo and Melbourne)
- Inglewood Community House

3. Utilise Charlton College mini-bus to provide additional services for the local community

Charlton College has an 11-seater minibus, which is used during school times for various activities. The bus can only be used to transport school aged students to activities and events. Outside of school hours, it is generally used by the local Cricket Club to take student team members to matches in other towns.

It is possible that the bus could be used by other sporting teams or community organisations that work with school aged students to access the bus, and where opportunities exist other members of the Charlton community.

An example of how this could be used for additional community benefit is the scheduled trip to the Breast Screen Bus at Birchip during June 2021 allowing a group of women to access this important health service without the need to worry about transport.

4. Create opportunities for youth transport services, eg. school holiday program, training and work transport

One of the most transport disadvantaged groups within the Charlton (and region) community are young people under 18 years of age who are not able to obtain a licence and are totally reliant on others for their transport needs.

It is proposed to use the extended community transport program to develop youth transport services include assistance for work and training purposes, as well as school holiday programs to provide opportunities for young people to explore the region and beyond.

5. Develop a community transport program that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS

The NDIS funds disabled people to access a range of services as part of their NDIS Plan, however many in the Charlton community (and surrounding district) are unable to do so because they are transport disadvantaged. There are currently 107 residents Charlton residents who are NDIS participants (ABS data).

By expanding the Community Car program, and adding the additional vehicles and Charlton College mini-bus, there is the opportunity to provide transport services to NDIS Plan recipients on a fee-recovery basis (funding provided through the NDIS -

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/ndis-and-other-government-services/transport>).

Link Community Transport in Melbourne is a registered NDIS provider and offers a door-to-door transport service for people with permanent and significant disability to get out and about and meet their travel needs.

The transport service is customised to each individual's specific requirements with many customers utilising their NDIS allocation to travel to respite, school, support groups, medical appointments, art classes and social outings (<http://www.linkcommunitytransport.org.au/ndis/>).

6. Include transport to attend court hearings in Bendigo, Melbourne and other regional centres where no alternative is available as part of the community car remit

Victims of family violence, and others subject to the court system, are often transport disadvantaged and find it difficult to attend court appearances which usually take place in Bendigo, Melbourne or other regional centres.

By extending the remit of the community car program to include this vulnerable cohort, this is one less stress for the victims to deal with.

Funding may be available from the Department of Justice to support this extension to the community car program depending on the reason for the court appearance. Victims of crime and witnesses are both eligible for assistance - <https://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/going-to-court/financial-assistance-and-compensation-for-victims-of-crime>.

7. Develop a ride share program to support demand on services at peak times or outside normal hours

Use of a rideshare program to link up local people who are driving somewhere with people who want to go there too but are transport disadvantaged. The program could be a locally based one using an excel spreadsheet, or an app/website such as <https://www.shareyourride.net/carpool/Australia/VIC/Bendigo/> and managed by the Neighbourhood House.

For example, Peninsula Transport Assist provide a rideshare service for their communities using volunteer drivers in their own cars. All volunteers are police checked and have completed a driving assessment through a qualified driving instructor. All vehicles are assessed and must meet minimum safety standards. The trained volunteers provide a door-to-door service and may stay with the client if required. Their charges are:

- Trips that are 10 km or less (return) incur a flat rate cost of \$20
- Trips that are between 11 and 20 km (return) incur a flat rate cost of \$30
- Trips between 21 and 40 km (return) incur a flat rate cost of \$40
- Trips over 41 km (return), the cost is \$0.95 per km

A similar scheme could be implemented in Charlton utilising the community car when not being used for non-patient medical transport to attend social and community activities such as Café Culture, the Charlton Art Show, Charlton Harness Races, the annual Film Festival and weekly movies at the Rex - any situation where there may be demand for a Taxi/Uber type of service.

Prices would be for the trip (like a Taxi/Uber) regardless of the number of passengers, making this an extremely economical option to attend a social event with the family or a group of friends.

8. Explore opportunities to transport people to train stations to link to Melbourne Trains

Many specialist medical appointments are in Melbourne rather than Bendigo. Travellers Aid (<https://www.travellersaid.org.au/>) can arrange for volunteers to meet people at Southern Cross station and escort them to other public transport options or to their appointment if necessary.

By linking people with the train in this way, the community car could be freed up for other passengers whilst still providing support to patients that need it.

9. Explore the use of an "app" to manage the community transport program

Trips software (<https://tripssoftware.com.au/>) is specifically designed for non-emergency patient transport, multi service outlets, community and disability transport providers.

It allows users to manage all aspects of your transport service including vehicle, driver and client information and scheduling and would be particularly beneficial if the community transport network (recommendation 2 above) was established.

Why it should happen (outcomes)

This model has the potential to achieve the following community transport outcomes for the Charlton community:

- Better support for the most transport disadvantaged members of our community – elderly, disabled, youth and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged
- Synchronisation of specialist medical appointments (currently done incidentally by Deb Finlay) to achieve efficiencies (community car becomes more cost effective) and more residents are able to access the service
- Access to other health services such as the Breast Screen Bus in neighbouring towns
- Provision of a weekly intra-town transport to enable people to shop, eat out, attend activities (bowling, book club, senior citizens, etc)
- Weekly Playgroup pick-up service for parents who are transport disadvantaged (funding could be available for a pilot program to support this and determine need/viability)
- Transport options (courtesy bus) for social events at The Rex and other venues within the Charlton community on a user pays basis to cover expenses.
- Other sporting and recreational and community groups (where school-aged students are involved) utilising Charlton College mini-bus (eg. Cricket) outside of school hours – junior football/hockey/netball, youth group, etc.
- Better alignment with North Central LLEN Youth Programs, eg Engage and Youth Council, to encourage more student involvement in civic activities
- Establishment of school holiday activities for young people (eg. Bowling trip to Kerang, The Zone in Bendigo, canoeing at Boort, etc.) coordinated and managed by the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- Increased numbers of people attending the Rex Theatre and local eating establishments with the creation of a "Rex Movie Meal Deal" on Saturday and Tuesday nights (transport, meal, movie package)
- Additional volunteering opportunities to enable local residents to meet their mutual obligation to receive welfare assistance where required:

MUTUAL OBLIGATION - Volunteering

Volunteering can act as a valuable stepping stone into paid employment, where participants may gain important work-related skills and experience. For this reason, job seekers may count voluntary work towards their requirements if their provider considers the voluntary work to be beneficial in providing them with the necessary experience to help them into paid employment. Volunteer work is also an approved activity that may be counted towards job seekers' annual activity requirement.

In addition, those aged 55 and over can choose to fully meet their requirements through 30 hours of approved combinations of paid and volunteer work. If job seekers meet their requirements in this way, they are considered to be fully meeting their requirements under provisions of social security law and do not have to undertake any additional requirements such as job search, attending provider appointments and annual activity requirements.

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Training

<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Revised-VA-factsheet-Mutual-Obligations-28-September-2020.pdf>

How it Will Happen

This Option will require changes to the governance of the community car, negotiating for the use of the Charlton College minibus, and developing stronger relationships with the CharTSEC and L2P programs for use of their vehicles during down times.

- (1) Transfer ownership of the community car project from the Charlton Forum to the Charlton Neighbourhood House prior to 30 June 2021 (see page 12 for rationale).
- (2) Development of an MoU with Charlton College to support community bus usage and with CharTSEC for expanded use of vehicles for community connectivity/ wellbeing purposes.
- (3) Hold discussions with Murray PHN (charged identifying opportunities to improve health outcomes in our community, through better coordination and support of health services and by commissioning new services to address the health needs of our population, helps patients to receive the right care in the right place at the right time - <https://www.murrayphn.org.au/>) and other service providers (eg. Bendigo Health who we have had initial discussions with) to identify opportunities to achieve economies of scale by scheduling more than one Charlton resident for an appointment with specialists/medical treatment within a similar window of time on the same day to minimise trips and maximise economic return (without inconveniencing service users).
- (4) Become a recognised community transport provider for NDIS clients to enable them to access work opportunities, personal care, community access, and therapeutic supports. Promote this to local NDIS recipients.
- (5) Develop a volunteer recruitment and training program for the expanded services. The Buloke Shire has one of the highest levels of volunteering in Victoria. While this may be a statistic to celebrate, it is also one for concern. The population in Charlton and surrounding areas has been declining over the last 20 years, with many of the groups and organisations that provide a vital service in town relying on volunteers. The result is that many people volunteer in more than one group, replacing volunteers is difficult, and that many people delivering a service also require that service.

Succession planning for volunteers is therefore a high priority for any of the recommendations in this report to be implemented successfully and sustainably into the longer-term future. The

Charlton Neighbourhood House is well placed to develop a comprehensive volunteer marketing strategy, backed up by a volunteer training program, with succession planning focussing on the delivery of community transport.

VOLUNTEERING TRENDS

A research report released by Curtin University in January 2019 – “Volunteering Trends Study” (<https://chorus.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Chorus-Volunteering-Trends-Report-Executive-Summary.pdf>) found that volunteering trends are changing with more people volunteering, but for less hours and shorter lengths of time.

It also found that people are motivated to work with older adults for both personal benefit (e.g. improvement of resume, gaining new skills) and to help others (altruistic) and that people are more likely to continue to volunteer if they have a sense of purpose and feel they belong to an organisation that shares common values, goals and respect.

The Charlton Community Car project aligns with the research findings and we are confident that with the right resources, the number of volunteer community car drivers can be increased to meet the additional demands of the social enterprise model recommended.

The report found that volunteers who feel valued, acknowledged and appreciated by being told they are making a difference and by having their efforts recognised in the organisation are more likely to continue to volunteer, which supports the recommendation to provide ongoing training and support for volunteers, as well as activities that recognise the contribution of the volunteers (see Volunteer Management Program Manual in Part Two of this report).

Possible constraints

- This model relies heavily on the use of volunteers, so could become a victim of volunteer fatigue if not managed carefully and volunteer efforts recognised and celebrated regularly (eg. annual lunch during National Volunteers Week, gift of a movie voucher to the Rex each year) – see research findings above that indicate that for-purpose volunteering is actually increasing.
- The Charlton College mini-bus currently has a requirement that all extra-curriculum activities must have a youth focus and included students from the College. This limits opportunities for other community services such as the Breast Screen Centre and other community health, connectivity and wellbeing events where students are not involved.
- CharTSEC vehicles are dual control which means they are limited for the purposes for which they can be used outside of their core role of teaching young people to drive in a specialist facility. This should not be a prohibitor for non-urgent patient medical transport (for which the cars are periodically used) or local “taxi” type services to events within the Charlton district.
- The L2P program is funded by the TAC for a specific purpose and it is unclear whether or not vehicles could be used for other purposes when not being utilised to support young people to obtain their licence.

What it will cost

A costing has been put together to establish and manage this option. Please note, these figures are estimates only and we recommend seeking specialist financial advice before implementation of any changes to the provision of community transport within the Charlton community.

ESTABLISHMENT BUDGET (ESTIMATE ONLY) - All figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours/ Rate	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
Governance, Management, Marketing & Administration:			
• Transfer of community car ownership and management to Charlton Neighbourhood House	10 hrs	\$70.00	\$700.00
• MOU with Charlton College (Mini-Bus, CharTSEC vehicles, and L2P vehicles)	10 hrs	\$70.00	\$700.00
• Volunteer Recruitment, Induction and Training	30 hrs	\$70.00	\$2,100.00
• NDIS Accreditation	15 hrs	\$70.00	\$1,050.00
TOTAL COST	50		\$4,550.00

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET – FIRST YEAR (ESTIMATE ONLY): All figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours/ Rate	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
INCOME			
Patient transport fares (30% increase on 2019/2020 figures)		\$0.20	\$11,620.00
Booking Fee (non refundable)	150	\$10.00	\$1,500.00
Social/community event transfer fares – community car & Charlton College mini-bus	52 weeks	\$150.00	\$7,800.00
Social Tours using Charlton College mini-bus	12	\$200	\$2,400.00
NDIS/Specialist Transport Services	48 weeks	\$100.00	\$4,800.00
Youth Programs (school holidays)	4 periods	\$1,000	\$4,000.00
Ride-share booking fees (\$2 per booking X 25)	52 weeks	\$50.00	\$2,600.00
Grants, Donations and Other income Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lions Club, Rotary Club Buloke Shire Council Community Grants Bendigo Bank Community Grants Graincorp Foundation, FRRR 			\$5,000.00
TOTAL INCOME			\$39,720.00
EXPENDITURE			
Governance, Management, Marketing & Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management & Marketing Administration (community car, specialist transport services, social community event transfers, ride-share booking management, youth programs) Annual Volunteer Recruitment, Induction & Training 	12 hrs	\$42.00	\$26,208.00
Volunteer Management expenses – insurance (%), security checks, catering, etc			\$1,000.00
Vehicle Registration			\$725.00
Insurance			\$875.00
Fuel			\$7,500.00
Service			\$1,000.00
Tyres			\$500.00
Cleaning/Detailing including sanitiser			\$400.00
Charlton College Mini-Bus Hire, CharTSEC Vehicles			\$2,000.00
Other vehicle expenses – RACV, Tolls, etc			\$300.00
Miscellaneous			\$200.00
TOTAL COST			\$40,708.00
Operating Surplus (Deficit)			(\$988.00) *

* Service will make a small loss in its first year based on true cost recovery, but anticipate this will become a small profit in subsequent years as patronage increases.

Who will make it happen

The program will require goodwill on the part of all current players within the Charlton Community Transport space including a willingness to be flexible to enable vehicles to be used to support community connectivity and health and wellbeing outcomes beyond the purpose for which they are currently used.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House will need to take the lead on this project at all stages:

- Establishment
- Management and Administration
- Marketing and Promotion
- Volunteer recruitment, induction and training program

Governance documentation

In order to successfully implement this option, the following Governance documents and considerations will be required:

- Transfer of ownership and management of the Community Car to the Charlton Neighbourhood House. This will include:
 - A motion prior to June 2021 at a meeting of the Charlton Forum that the ownership be transferred prior to the start of the new financial year.
 - All documentation updated to reflect the new structure (current policies and procedures relating to the car).
 - Community Car to be added to the list of programs/services delivered by the Charlton Neighbourhood House.
 - Employment contracts or position descriptions for staff to be amended to include management/facilitation of the community car.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Charlton Neighbourhood House and Charlton College regarding the use of the school mini bus. The MoU should reflect:
 - Responsibility of the College and the NH
 - Cost of hire
 - Purpose of hire
 - Review terms
- Memorandum of Understanding between Charlton Neighbourhood House and Charlton College regarding the use of the CharTSEC and L2P vehicles when required. The MoU should reflect:
 - Responsibility of the College/CharTSEC and the Charlton Neighbourhood House
 - Cost of hire
 - Purposes of hire
 - Review terms
 - Availability
- Implementation of the Volunteer Management Plan – refer document contained in Part Three of this report.

Option Three: Public Private Partnership

Charlton has increasing numbers of visitors to town including travellers who stay at the Travellers Rest; local motels, B&Bs and apartments; and Wooroonook Lake and other public camping areas, for a few days to a few months, those passing through on the silo art tour, or to attend one of the many events and activities in town such as music/film festivals and art shows.

There is a need for community transport options to take people to these events, if they are not within a short walking distance, for those who live rurally, or those that would rather join a tour than be a tourist on their own.

There is also an opportunity for tourism opportunities for both visitors and locals alike to visit attractions that profile local businesses, and also provide a social connection, which many people crave.

A public/private partnership could provide an opportunity for the local bus company and the neighbourhood house to meet the needs of the community by partnering to offer a range of programs that support economic and social development, provide employment and further develop Charlton as a destination and vibrant hub.

This option provides some exciting benefits for each party without significant cost impost to either.

- 1 Enter into a formal partnership (MOU) with Start's Bus Lines to develop a tourism venture to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors
- 2 Regular monthly tours for visitors to the Charlton district with trained volunteer guides that know the region well
- 3 Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids
- 4 Establish a range of day tours which encourage local residents to explore their region and beyond
- 5 Provide short tours of the Charlton township (walking and mini-bus options) highlighting points of significance

1. Enter into a formal partnership (MOU) with Start's Bus Lines to develop a tourism venture to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors

Enter into a formal partnership with Start's Bus Lines that will be mutually beneficial to both parties and to the Charlton community providing a range of tourism and day trip opportunities of interest to both visitors and local residents.

We recommend that the Charlton Neighbourhood House works with Start's Bus Lines to develop a formal MOU to govern the relationship and outline the responsibility of each party, and meet regular to review its effectiveness and plan future opportunities (see sample MOUs in Part Two of this report).

2. Regular monthly tours for visitors to the Charlton district with trained volunteer guides that know the region well

Develop a schedule of regular monthly day trips with knowledgeable guides for visitors to the Charlton District departing from the Charlton Neighbourhood House during school hours (9 am to 3 pm) with a picnic lunch.

Suggestions include:

- Nullawil silo art and a tour of the Auchmore historical museum
- Mural & Silo art trail – Charlton, Wycheproof, Nullawil, Sea Lake and St Arnaud)
- Mighty Mountains of the Wimmera Mallee – Wycheproof, Jeffcott, Buckrabanyule
- Boort Food, Culture and Heritage Tour
- History Tour – Charlton, Donald, St Arnaud
- Donald Races – Fun Day out
- Lakes and Rivers of the Wimmera Mallee – Avoca, Avon-Richardson, Wooroonook, Tchum, Watchem
- Wedderburn community art & Inglewood antiquities
- Sea Lake & Lake Tyrell (this would need to be afternoon/evening with dinner at the Sea Lake Hotel)

3. Transport equipment for hire – E-bikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids

Establish an equipment hire service offering rental of e-bikes, gophers, wheelchairs and mobility aids to local residents and visitors to the region requiring assistance on a fee-for-service basis.

4. Establish a range of day tours which encourage local residents to explore their region and beyond

Develop a quarterly program of events (similar to that provided by the Maldon Neighbourhood House) for Charlton residents to visit neighbouring towns within approximately 100 kilometres during school hours. Suggestions could include:

- Op Shop Tours
- Wineries and Distilleries (St Arnaud/Stuart Mill)
- Historical Societies
- Exploring surrounding towns – Wycheproof, Boort, Birchip, Donald, St Arnaud, Wedderburn, Inglewood and Bridgewater

In addition, tours could also be scheduled to Melbourne and other regional centres for Art Exhibitions, Open Gardens, Theatre productions, AFL Football matches, and other major events.

5. Provide short tours of the Charlton township (walking and mini-bus options) highlighting points of significance and telling their stories

The Charlton Neighbourhood House could develop a walking tour of the Charlton township that could be used as a self-guided tour, or as part of a monthly group tour for visitors to the region (and locals if interested), with both walking and mini-bus options (for those with limited mobility)

6. Commercial Passenger Vehicle (Uber Style) or Taxi Service

Establish a Commercial Passenger Vehicle Service (<https://cpv.vic.gov.au/drivers>) – UBER or Taxi Service (or similar) to meet the needs of the local community on a commercial fee-for-service basis utilising interested drivers from the Charlton community and private vehicles.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House to become an accredited Booking Service Provider (<https://cpv.vic.gov.au/booking-service-providers>) to manage the service on behalf of the drivers, receiving a booking fee for each trip made through the service from the driver.

Companies like Jugnoo (<https://jugnoo.io/>) provide customisable apps that include:

- Commercial passenger vehicles
- Rideshare/carpooling
- Bike and other mobility equipment rental
- Shuttle Services (tours, etc)

Why it should happen (outcomes)

Potential outcomes from a public-private partnership include:

- Strengthen both the Charlton Neighbourhood House and local small business operation Start's Bus Lines
- New tourism offerings with day trips to tourism attractions within 100 kms of Charlton
- Increased reasons for visitors to stay additional nights within the Charlton district (and therefore spend money locally)
- Better awareness of local tourist attractions and businesses
- Repeat visitations from satisfied tourists
- Provision of social opportunities for local residents on a regular basis
- Alignment with school bus run times to make cost effective and increase employment options for bus drivers
- Civic pride in the Charlton community based on greater knowledge of the town's history and key features

How it Will Happen (including constraints and costing)

As indicated above, the first and most important step is for discussions to begin between the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines to develop a partnership agreement and a business plan that outlines the benefits to both parties and the broader Charlton community.

Who will make it happen (Management and Governance)

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines would allow each entity to use their expertise and experience to make this project a reality, and at the same time identify the risk and profit-share for each organisation so all parties are clear on the venture.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Charlton Neighbourhood House - engage with the local community, the Buloke Tourism Group and visitors to the town, promoting the opportunities for town and wider tours

Start's Bus Lines - provide the bus service, negotiate timings and routes providing specialist drivers that will ensure the safety and comfort of passengers.

A Business Plan will need to be developed to outline exactly what the Partnership will do, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, costing and desired outcomes. This Plan will need to be regular evaluated and updated as the Partnership grows over time.

Possible Constraints

Goodwill from both parties – no partnership can be successful without trust and engagement from both parties.

Marketing of the program – people do not miss what they don't have and this will be a new offering so will need to be promoted well to encourage people to join one of the tours.

What it will cost

A costing has been put together to establish and manage this option. Please note, these figures are estimates only and we recommend seeking specialist financial advice before implementation of any changes to the provision of community transport within the Charlton community.

ESTABLISHMENT BUDGET (ESTIMATE ONLY): All figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
Establishment of the Public Private Partnership including MOU detailing roles and responsibilities of both parties	10 hrs	\$70.00	\$700.00
Development of a Business Plan	30 hrs	\$70.00	\$2,170.00
Volunteer Guide Recruitment, Induction & Training	30 hrs	\$70.00	\$2,170.00
Purchase Community Transport Equipment for Hire*			\$15,000.00
TOTAL COST			\$20,400.00

* It should be possible to obtain grant funding to purchase community transport equipment for hire through a number of grant programs including the Buloke Community Grants, Charlton Bendigo Bank Community Grants, FRRR Seeds of Renewal/Tackling Tough Times, TAC or a combination of the above.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET – FIRST YEAR (ESTIMATE ONLY): NB. Figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours/ Rate	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
Income			
Ticket Sales:			
Monthly tourist excursions	12 X 18	\$50.00	\$10,800.00
Day tours for local residents	12 X 18	\$25.00	\$5,400.00
Charlton town tours (walking and mini-bus)	12 X 15	\$10.00	\$1,800.00
Equipment Hire Service	12	\$400.00	\$4,800.00
Grants, Donations, Other Examples include:			\$5,000.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lions Club, Rotary Club Buloke Shire Council Community Grants Bendigo Bank Community Grants Graincorp Foundation, FRRR 			
TOTAL INCOME			\$27,800.00
Expenditure			
Management, Marketing & Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management & Marketing Administration 	3 hrs per week	\$42.00	\$6,240.00
Volunteer Tourist Guide – recruitment, induction, training, management and support			\$1,000.00
Bus – driver, vehicle and on costs			
Tourist Excursions (6 hrs)	12 trips	\$600.00	\$7,200.00
Day Tours (6 hrs)	12 trips	\$600.00	\$7,200.00
Charlton town tours (1 hr)	12 trips	\$100.00	\$1,200.00
Morning Tea and Lunches (tourist excursions)	12 X 18	\$15.00	\$3,600.00
Marketing and Promotion			\$500.00
Hire Equipment Insurance, Maintenance			\$1,000.00
Miscellaneous			\$200.00
TOTAL COST			\$28,140.00
Operating Surplus (Deficit)			(\$340.00)*

* Partnership will make a small loss in its first year based on true cost recovery, but anticipate this will become a small profit in subsequent years as usage increases.

Governance documentation

In order to successfully implement of this option, the following Governance documents and considerations will be required:

- Transfer of ownership and management of the Community Car to the Charlton Neighbourhood House. This will include:
 - A motion prior to June 2021 at a meeting of the Charlton Forum that the ownership be transferred prior to the start of the new financial year.
 - All documentation updated to reflect the new structure (current policies and procedures relating to the car).
 - Community Car to be added to the list of programs/services delivered by the Charlton Neighbourhood House.
 - Employment contracts or position descriptions for staff to be amended to include management/facilitation of the community car.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Charlton Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines. The MoU should reflect:
 - Responsibilities of the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines
 - Cost of hire
 - Purpose of hire
 - Review terms
- Development of a Business Plan by the two parties that outlines what will happen, when it will happen and the commitment required from the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines to make this venture a success.
- Implementation of the Volunteer Management Plan – refer document contained in Part Three of this report.

Option Four: Community Transport Company

This is the most ambitious option of all and has the highest risk factor, but has the potential to deliver a range of social and economic advantages the Charlton community.

This Option would include the transfer of ownership and management of the Community Car to an independent Community Transport Company (similar to UK models) to manage and operate.

The Company (limited by guarantee) would operate as a registered charity with DGR status enabling it to provide a comprehensive range of options to the community.

The community car would be transferred to the company and provide a transport service on demand, with the priority for the people who require specialist medical appointments, and also offering a social connection service, as detailed in Option 2 above.

This company limited by guarantee would also purchase a bus (Start's Bus Lines currently has one for sale) and running a community transport service along commercial lines (potentially with some hardship provisions to meet the needs of those who are transport disadvantaged). Profits would fund replacement vehicles and future expansion if the company is successful. The bus could be as small as a maxi cab, or as large as a 45 seater coach.

The new bus could also provide day-trip and tourism opportunities for local residents and visitors alike (similar to the public-private partnership).

With the company bus, the company would be able to provide a charter and tour service. The suggestions outlined in Option 3 above could easily be transferred to the Community Transport Company.

Many people have also expressed an interest in using a taxi service around town. The company could provide Commercial Passenger Vehicle services and take on the role of the Booking Service Provider as well as managing the independent fleet of drivers and vehicles as well as utilising the community car as part of this service (when not being used for patient transport).

- 1) Creation of an independent community transport company (Company Limited by Guarantee)
- 2) Transfer ownership and management of the community car to the new independent community transport company
- 3) Become a registered NDIS community transport provider that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS
- 4) Purchase a mini-bus to use for community transport services
- 5) Develop a range of day tour options for both local residents and visitors to the region
- 6) Establish a charter hire service to subsidise running expenses for other elements of the business
- 7) Commercial passenger vehicle (Uber Style) or Taxi Service
- 8) Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids

1. Creation of an independent community transport company

Creation of an independent transport company (company limited by guarantee) will enable the establishment of a fully integrated community transport program encompassing patient medical transport, local transport services for people who are transport disadvantaged, tour opportunities to provide connectivity and wellbeing opportunities, and mini-bus hire.

2. Transfer ownership and management of the community car to the new independent community transport company

Transfer of ownership and management of the community car to the Charlton Neighbourhood House would provide clarity around the service and an opportunity for future growth. See page 12 of this report for details.

3. Become a registered NDIS community transport provider that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS

The NDIS funds disabled people to access a range of services as part of their NDIS Plan, however many in the Charlton community (and surrounding district) are unable to do so because they are transport disadvantaged. See page 18 of this report for details.

4. Purchase a mini-bus to use for community transport services

By purchasing a mini-bus, the new Charlton Community Transport company can become truly self sufficient offering a range of services using both the community car and the newly purchased bus to meet the transport needs of local residents, with no limitations on use and access.

5. Develop a range of day tour options for both local residents and visitors to the region

These new offerings for both locals and visitors to the region, will utilise the newly acquired mini-bus and employ a driver (new employment opportunity) to service the transport needs of the community.

6. Establish a charter hire service to subsidise running expenses for other elements of the business

By making the new mini-bus available for hire, the company is providing an additional product and service to the community and at the same time obtaining income that will help keep it viable into the future.

7. Commercial passenger vehicle (Uber Style) or Taxi Service

The establishment of a commercial passenger vehicle service will provide community transport to Charlton residents on-demand, similar to regional and metropolitan communities that have access to both commercial taxi services and ride-share initiatives such as UBER.

It will also provide casual employment opportunities for local residents to supplement existing income streams.

8. Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids

Establish an equipment hire service offering rental of e-bikes, gophers, wheelchairs and mobility aids to local residents and visitors to the region requiring assistance on a fee-for-service basis.

Why it should happen (outcomes)

Potential outcomes from the establishment of an independent community transport company include:

- Independence from other community organisations and therefore not limited in its activities
- Registered charity with DGR status to access philanthropic funding and support
- Provision of a commercial passenger vehicle service – UBER/Taxi to meet community needs on-demand
- Provision of a charter bus hire service to the Charlton community
- New employment opportunities within the Charlton community for both a bus and commercial passenger vehicle/taxi drivers
- Opportunity to grow and expand as needs and opportunities arise

How it Will Happen (including constraints and costing)

This option will require substantial work in the establishment phase to get the foundation right.

This will include bringing together a steering committee of committed people to register the company limited by guarantee and put in place the Board of Directors to oversee its future direction. Registration as a charitable organisation with the ACNC and applying for deductible gift recipient status will also require commitment, time, energy and money.

Possible constraints

The largest constraint will be the resources required to establish the company and get it operational in the first instance (see potential funding sources below).

What it will cost

A costing has been put together to establish and manage this option. Please note, these figures are estimates only and we recommend seeking specialist financial advice before implementation of any changes to the provision of community transport within the Charlton community.

This option will require considerable fundraising or crowdfunding to establish the new company.

ESTABLISHMENT BUDGET (ESTIMATE ONLY): NB. Figures are ex-GST

Item	Total Cost
Company structure model (Company Limited by Guarantee)	\$2,500.00
Register with the ACNC as a charity, Obtain DGR Status *	\$8,000.00
Establishment of a Board of Directors, Board training – initial and ongoing	\$3,000.00
Transfer of community car ownership and management to CNH	\$1,200.00
Development of a Business Plan	\$5,500.00
Staff Employment	\$5,000.00
Bus Purchase	\$60,000.00
Commercial Passenger Vehicle – UBER/Taxi established	\$30,000.00
TOTAL COST	\$115,200.00

* We are aware that the Charlton Neighbourhood House is a registered charity who have DGR status through a parent body, so is aware of the steps required. They may also be able to access pro bono legal services through Melbourne legal firm Allens & Co which would reduce this budget amount.

Potential Funding Sources

With over \$100,000 required to establish this model, considerable funding will need to be sourced. Potential (large) grant opportunities include:

Government:

- **Mallee Regional Partnership/Regional Development Australia Loddon Mallee** – funding support for a pilot project that may be adaptable to other areas of rural Victoria
- **Stronger Regional Communities Program** (<https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/stronger-regional-communities-program>) - The Stronger Regional Communities Program aims to support rural and regional towns in attracting families and young people to live and work in regional Victoria. It will do so by investing in community-led initiatives and partnerships that create or enhance the conditions for economic growth and build resilient, diversified and sustainable economies.
- **Flexible Local Transport Solutions program** (<https://transport.vic.gov.au/our-transport-future/our-projects/regional-victoria/regional-network-development-plan/local-transport-in-victoria>) - The program provides financial support to help seed small-scale initiatives across regional Victoria that address transport disadvantage, integrate with other local transport options and improve transport access. It aims to support flexible, tailored transport services or trials in regional Victoria.

Philanthropy

- **FRRR Tackling Tough Times Together Grant Program** (<https://frrr.org.au/funding/disaster-resilience-and-climate-solutions/tackling-tough-times-together/>) is available in drought affected communities for projects which focus on building community resilience; developing organisational resilience and capacity; Enhancing environmental sustainability; Fostering cultural vibrancy; lifelong learning and education; economic strength; and/or improving community health and social wellbeing.
- **Helen MacPherson Smith Trust** (<https://hmstrust.org.au/>) aims to help build fair, creative and resilient Victorian communities through initiatives that promote positive change.
- **Hugh DT Williamson Foundation** (<https://www.eqt.com.au/philanthropy/hugh-williamson-foundation>) supports and strengthens communities in Melbourne and rural Victoria; establishing educational opportunities and building leadership skills in young people; helping the aged and economically and intellectually disadvantaged; and finding ways to enhance the cultural life of Victoria for all Victorians.
- **Ian Potter Foundation** (<https://www.ianpotter.org.au/>) – Open Program Area funds community wellbeing, education, environment & conservation, and science initiatives.
- **Perpetual Trustees** (<https://www.perpetual.com.au/financial-advice/supporting-not-for-profits/how-to-apply-for-funding-from-perpetuals-impact-philanthropy-application-program>) is trustee for approximately 1000 charitable trusts and endowments and distributes more than \$100 million annually including initiatives in arts and culture, education, conservation and the environment, social welfare, medical research and more.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET – FIRST YEAR (ESTIMATE ONLY): NB. Figures are ex-GST

Item	Hours/ Rate	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
INCOME			
Patient transport fares (15% increase on 2019/2020 figures)		\$0.20	\$10,280.00
NDIS Transport income			\$2,400.00
Booking Fee (non refundable)	150	\$10.00	\$1,500.00
Commercial Passenger Vehicle Service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-Bus • Community Car • Private Vehicles (Booking Service Provider fees) 	52 wks	\$2,100.00	\$109,200.00
Local Tours	12 X 20	\$25.00	\$6,000.00
Special purpose tours to Bendigo, Melbourne and other destinations	6 X 20	\$40.00	\$4,800.00
Charter Hire	40	\$120.00	\$4,800.00
Grants, Donations and Other income Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lions Club, Rotary Club • Buloke Shire Council community grants • Bendigo Bank community grants • Graincorp Foundation • FRRR 			\$5,000.00
TOTAL INCOME			\$143,980.00
EXPENDITURE			
Governance, Management, Marketing & Administration	10 X 52	\$42.00	\$21,840.00
Staff – bus and commercial passenger vehicle service	30 X 52	\$42.00	\$65,520.00
Vehicle Registrations (mini-bus, community car)			\$3,000.00
Insurance			\$3,000.00
Fuel			\$15,000.00
Service			\$2,000.00
Tyres			\$2,400.00
Cleaning/Detailing including sanitiser			\$1,200.00
Marketing and Promotion			\$1,000.00
Tour expenses			\$3,600.00
Mini-bus and vehicle depreciation (25%)			\$25,000.00
Miscellaneous			\$1,000.00
TOTAL COST			\$144,560.00
Operating Surplus (Deficit)			\$580.00

* Company will make a small loss in its first year based on true cost recovery, but anticipate this will become a small profit in subsequent years as usage increases.

Who will make it happen (Management and Governance)

Significant work will be required to establish this model including:

- Development of a Company structure model (Company Limited by Guarantee). *Refer to Part Two for a Check List to guide this process*
- Establish a Board of Directors
- Register with the ACNC as a charity
- Obtain DGR Status
- Development of a Business Plan
- Board training – initial and ongoing
- Financial training and management
- Insurance and Liability
- Staff Employment

Comparison of Options

What it offers	Status Quo	Social Enterprise	Public Private Partnership	Community Transport Company
Risk required	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Non urgent patient transport to medical appointments	✓	✓	✗	✓
New community transport options for local residents	✗	✓	✓	✓
Provision of a range of transport services to meet the needs of young people	✗	✓	✗	✓
Social connectivity options for Charlton residents	✗	✓	✓	✓
New tourism offerings to visitors to the Charlton region	✗	✗	✓	✓
Revenue source for the Charlton Neighbourhood House	✗	✓	✓	✓
Increased volunteering opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increased employment opportunities	✗	✓	✓	✓
Provide transport assistance for disabled residents to access NDIS services	✗	✓	✗	✓
Offers opportunities to obtain funding to implement elements of this Option		✓	✓	✓
Able to be scaled for use by other rural communities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Good for the Charlton community	✓	✓	✓	✓
Impact on existing providers	Low	Compliments	Compliments	High

A hybrid model...

In addition to the four options outlined above, there is the option to implement a hybrid model combining options as follows:

Option 1 & 3

Option 2 & 3

Option 1 & 3

The Charlton Community Car could continue to operate to transport patients to non-urgent medical appointments and at the same time the Charlton Neighbourhood House could enter into a public-private partnership with Start's Bus Lines to start a new tourism business venture to service both local residents and visitors to the region.

Option 2 & 3

The Charlton Neighbourhood House could grow current community car model and also work in partnership with Start's Bus Lines to deliver a comprehensive community transport program that is available for both private, community and visitor use.

This option would enable the hybrid service to raises funds to replace the community car, support the employment of a person to facilitate the transport options, and develop the program to include a range of community transport offerings.

Our Recommendation...

After carefully reviewing the information uncovered as part of the environmental scan, what we heard during the community consultation process, and each of the four options put forward for consideration, we believe that a hybrid of option 2 and 3 is the best option to meet the future community transport needs of the Charlton community.

Option 2 & 3







By combining options 2 and 3 – a mix of social enterprise and public-private partnership, a new and unique offering will be available to both local residents and visitors to the region that has benefits for the Charlton Neighbourhood House and local small business Start's Bus Lines.

It allows the Charlton Neighbourhood House to consolidate current services and grow these over time, as well as allowing for expansion into a new tourism venture that will have economic, social and community benefits.

Current gaps in the provision of community transport services will be filled with the creation of new offerings to support young people, people with a disability, and those who are transport disadvantaged.

It will also make the current community transport program more viable in the long term.

This option would see:

-  Expand community car usage to include community connectivity transport options
-  Develop a network of community transport providers along the Calder & Sunraysia Highways to achieve efficiencies and more service opportunities
-  Utilise Charlton College mini-bus to provide additional services for the local community
-  Create opportunities for youth transport services, eg. school holiday program, training and work transport
-  Develop a community transport program that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS
-  Include transport to attend court hearings in Bendigo, Melbourne and other regional centres where no alternative is available as part of the community car remit
-  Develop a ride share program to support demand on services at peak times or outside normal hours
-  Explore opportunities to transport people to train stations to link to Melbourne Trains
-  Explore the use of an "app" to manage the community transport program
-  Enter into a formal partnership (MOU) with Start's Bus Lines to develop a tourism venture to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors
-  Regular monthly tours for visitors to the Charlton district with trained volunteer guides that know the region well
-  Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids
-  Establish a range of day tours which encourage local residents to explore their region and beyond
-  Provide short tours of the Charlton township (walking and mini-bus options) highlighting points of significance

The outcomes would be:

- Better support for the most transport disadvantaged members of our community – elderly, disabled, youth and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged
- Synchronisation of specialist medical appointments (currently done incidentally by Deb Finlay) to achieve efficiencies (community car becomes more cost effective) and more residents are able to access the service
- Access to other health services such as the Breast Screen Bus in neighbouring towns
- Provision of a weekly intra-town transport to enable people to shop, eat out, attend activities (bowling, book club, senior citizens, etc)
- Weekly Playgroup pick-up service for parents who are transport disadvantaged (funding could be available for a pilot program to support this and determine need/viability)
- Transport options (courtesy bus) for social events at The Rex and other venues within the Charlton community on a user pays basis to cover expenses.
- Other sporting and recreational and community groups (where school-aged students are involved) utilising Charlton College mini-bus (eg. Cricket) outside of school hours – junior football/hockey/netball, youth group, etc.
- Better alignment with North Central LLEN Youth Programs, eg Engage and Youth Council, to encourage more student involvement in civic activities
- Establishment of school holiday activities for young people (eg. Bowling trip to Kerang, The Zone in Bendigo, canoeing at Boort, etc.) coordinated and managed by the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- Increased numbers of people attending the Rex Theatre and local eating establishments with the creation of a “Rex Movie Meal Deal” on Saturday and Tuesday nights (transport, meal, movie package)
- Additional volunteering opportunities to enable local residents to meet their mutual obligation to receive welfare assistance where required:
- Strengthen both the Charlton Neighbourhood House and local small business operation Start’s Bus Lines
- New tourism offerings with day trips to tourism attractions within 100 kms of Charlton
- Increased reasons for visitors to stay additional nights within the Charlton district (and therefore spend money locally)
- Better awareness of local tourist attractions and businesses
- Repeat visitations from satisfied tourists
- Provision of social opportunities for local residents on a regular basis
- Alignment with school bus run times to make cost effective and increase employment options for bus drivers
- Civic pride in the Charlton community based on greater knowledge of the town’s history and key features

Next Steps...

Assuming the Project Steering Committee accepts our recommendation, the following steps should take place over the next 14 months:

Activity	2021								2022					
	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Project Steering Committee meets to discuss and accept reports recommendation														
Transfer of ownership of Charlton Community Car to Charlton Neighbourhood House														
MOU with Charlton College														
Partnership Agreement with Start's Bus Lines														
Development of a Business Plan for the new Community Transport Program (social enterprise/public private enterprise hybrid)														
Community transport network of providers along Calder and Sunraysia Highways														
Volunteer Driver Recruitment, Induction & Training program														
Establish service for NDIS recipients														
Extend community car program to assist victims and witnesses to attend court appearances														
Apply for grants and funding to support new hybrid model*														
Establish Ride-Share program (may incorporate commercial passenger service option of UBER/Taxi service)														
Establish community transport links to V/Line Services utilising Traveller's Aid program														
Calendar of events: Local tours for residents														
Calendar of events: Guided tours for visitors														
Volunteer Tourist Guide recruitment, induction and training program														
Youth Program of events utilising new community transport options														
Purchase portable transport equipment and set-up hire service														
Begin Tours														

* Funding options could include:

- Business Plan – Regional Development Victoria
- Ride sharing program/app – DoT Flexible Local Transport Options program
- Community Car Program – Charlton Lions and Rotary Club
- Tourism program – Buloke Shire Community Grants Program/Bendigo Bank Grants program
- Local tours – Buloke Shire Community Grants Program/Bendigo Bank Grants program
- Equipment Hire – FRRR Tackling Tough Times Grants program
- Volunteer Management Program – Australian Government Volunteer Grants Program
- Youth Program – Youth Week Grants, Philanthropy

Future Actions for better community transport...

There are a number of changes that could be made to improve community transport options for the Charlton community:

Service improvement

1. Implementation of a structured Volunteer Management Program (VMP) for community transport drivers

Whichever option the Project Steering Committee plans to pursue, a structured volunteer management program will ensure that the service operates in a safe and professional manner protecting both the drivers and the clients that utilise the services.

A proper induction and training program will ensure that all drivers are aware of their responsibilities and have the skills necessary to deal with any emergencies safely and effectively should they arise.

2. Learn Local Accreditation

Charlton Neighbourhood Houses continues accreditation to become a Learn Local training provider to assist with the delivery of the volunteer driver and volunteer guide programs as well as to access the Capacity and Innovation Fund (only available to Learn Local providers) which provides opportunities for Learn Local to develop and implement projects designed to meet learner needs and to increase participation and attainment in pre-accredited training programs.

This could include pre-accredited training for driver education (eg. defensive driver training/volunteer driving training/gopher driver training) which could take place at CharTSEC

3. TAC Community Safety Grants

In collaboration with other community transport providers within the Charlton region and Buloke Shire Council apply for a TAC Community Safety Grant to offer gopher training and older driver lessons at CharTSEC

4. Annual Community Transport Forum

In conjunction with the Department of Transport, coordinate an annual forum inviting all Loddon Mallee Community Car organisations to come together to talk all things community transport.

Sector Reform

5. Prepare a submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry (<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/eic-lc/article/4613>) into the use of school buses in rural and regional Victoria

This Inquiry has the potential to provide additional community transport opportunities for people living in rural communities such as Charlton. A submission outlining the benefits of allowing non-students to utilise school buses could help convince the Panel members of the value of this extension.

6. Submission to VPTAS scheme regarding reimbursement rates

The current reimbursement rate for patients to claim travel assistance as part of the VPTAS (Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme) is only \$0.20 per kilometre, even when the service is provided by a community transport program.

This is not viable - the RACV car running costs calculator (<https://www.racv.com.au/on-the-road/buying-a-car/car-running-costs.html>) estimates that it costs \$0.708 per kilometre to operate a medium size vehicle (not including driver payment).

We recommend that the Charlton Neighbourhood House – through the Neighbourhood House Network – prepare a submission to the Victoria Government outlining why the rate is unfair as it requires the community transport service to underwrite the discrepancy between the amount that is able to be claimed (\$0.20) and the true cost of the service (\$0.708) and to lobby for an increased reimbursement rate when a patient utilises a community transport service to attend specialist medical appointments.

7. Health Reform project

Seeking funding from Murray PHN/Department of Transport to undertake a project to synchronise specialist medical appointments for out-of-town appointments to achieve efficiencies (community car becomes more cost effective) and more residents are able to access the service as well as improvements to the VPTAS scheme.

8. NDIS opportunities

To access services as part of their NDIS package, disabled people often need access to community transport which can be funded as part of the NDIS package. Undertake the necessary steps and training to become a NDIS community transport provider to Charlton and district residents.

Access and Safety:

9. Advocate for a truck bypass to reduce the amount of heavy vehicle traffic in High Street

A truck bypass of High Street would make it safer for local residents, particularly the elderly, those with limited mobility, families, and children to move about the local community with less danger.

10. Lobby the Buloke Shire Council to link the Avoca River Walk to Charlton College

The Avoca River Walk currently connects the Charlton CBD to Charlton Park and the Charlton Weir. Extending this to connect with Charlton College would enable safe access for school students to attend the Sporting Complex for after school training without the need for parental transport.

11. Campaign for the installation of a pedestrian crossing in High Street

Similar to the crossing in the main street of Inglewood, this would allow the elderly, families and children to safely cross from one side of High Street to the other.

12. Become the first Gopher friendly (accessible) town in Australia

Petition for a better footpath network within the Charlton township, and access to public buildings and retail stores, to become Australia's first gopher friendly town.

Governance Documentation...

A key component of the Charlton Community Transport project was the creation of a suite of governing documents for the service that is shareable with existing and new programs.

These include:

Policies and Procedures

- Code of Conduct
- Commitment to Child Safety
- Motor Vehicle Use
- Volunteers
- Workplace Safety

Memorandums of Understanding

- Charlton College
- Start's Bus Lines

Manuals

- Volunteer Management Program
- Volunteer Driver Handbook
- Volunteer Tourist Guide Program

Checklist

- Establishing a Company Limited by Guarantee

NB. We are aware the Charlton Neighbourhood House has existing policies and procedures in place and has access to professional human resources and industrial relations resources through the Neighbourhood House network.

These templates are for use specifically with the Charlton Community Transport options outlined within this report.

We recommend:

All community transport policies and documents are reviewed every two years to ensure they are fit for purpose



CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

Purpose:

1. To ensure that staff, Committee members and volunteers of the Charlton Neighbourhood House act with integrity when representing and/or working with clients and one another.
2. To ensure that staff, Committee members and volunteers of the Charlton Neighbourhood House support the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children and observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children.
3. To ensure that the behaviours and attitudes reflect the overall principles and values of the Charlton Neighbourhood House.

Policy:

The Committee of Management, staff and volunteers of the Charlton Neighbourhood House have a legal and moral responsibility to manage the organisation in the best interests of the community it serves.

Committee, staff and volunteers will demonstrate professional ethical behaviour at all times – in their responsibilities to the organisation, in their professional relationships with each other, and in their professional service to the community – and will be required to adhere to this code of conduct.

Commitment to the Charlton Neighbourhood House and the community

This involves:

- Understanding and supporting the mission, vision and values
- Abiding by all policies and procedures
- Representing the Charlton Neighbourhood House in a positive way
- Working to the best of your ability

Personal integrity

This involves:

- Treating all persons with honesty, courtesy and respect
- Being responsible and accountable

- Maintaining confidentiality
- Taking responsibility for reporting any hazards and working safely
- Following up all complaints and grievances according to relevant procedures
- Obeying the law
- Disclosing and avoiding conflicts of interest
- Using CNH resources for the benefit of the CNH

Teamwork

This involves:

- Maintaining a shared purpose
- Appreciating individual difference
- Giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Solving problems collaboratively
- Supporting each other by encouraging personal growth
- Being available for training and support sessions e.g. staff meetings and informal and formal training

Support the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the Charlton Neighbourhood House Commitment to Child Safety at all times.
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including Aboriginal children, children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Centre Coordinator, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Centre Coordinator
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Commitment to Child Safety Policy

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance for child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently in line with our robust policies and procedures.

We rigorously comply with all legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child's safety.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers that comply with our legislative obligations, eg Working with Children's Checks.

Our organisations is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

The Centre will comply with any Legislative requirements to support Child Safety

If you believe that a child is at immediate risk of abuse, call 000.



MOTOR VEHICLE POLICY

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

Principle:

The care of the Charlton Neighbourhood House vehicle/s and the safety of occupants are of prime consideration.

Registration and Insurance

Current registration and insurance will be maintained on the community car vehicle/s.

Contingency plans for breakdown and accident

Plans should be in place in the event of breakdown or accident rendering the scheme's vehicle/s unable to be driven. These should cover alternative transport arrangements for the driver and any passengers and vehicle recovery. Drivers and clients should not be expected to meet costs in the event of the above emergencies. Some vehicle purchase or leasing arrangements include roadside assistance. However if it is not the case, membership of RACV is recommended. The organisation offers a full cover membership which should meet the above requirements.

Equipment Essentials

Each vehicle will have the following minimum equipment:

- fire extinguisher
- articles for car sickness
- Single use gloves
- Disposable face masks
- Tissues
- Cleaning cloths
- Hand sanitiser
- first aid box
- child restraint bolt
- maps of area
- Log book

It is desirable that the following equipment be available for use with the vehicle as required:-

- Service Directory
- combination baby capsule/child safety seat
- Umbrella
- Cargo barrier for station wagon

Garaging

The community car will be garaged at a location designated by the coordinator. The keys to the vehicle will be held by the coordinator or their nominee and can be collected, by the volunteer from them when the car is to be used.

Procedure for using vehicle:

Before each trip

- collect keys
- check all tyres, fuel, water, and window wash fluid
- record relevant details in log book

After each trip

- complete log book details
- report any difficulties, articles left in the vehicle or accidents to the coordinator

Log Book

A log book will be kept in each vehicle. For each trip the following information will be recorded:-

- date
- name of driver
- start time
- start kilometres
- finish time
- finish kilometres
- number of clients service to
- destination
- address (residential units only)

Fuel

Fuel is only to be obtained using the fuel card held in the vehicle.

Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the coordinator to ensure that vehicle service and maintenance are carried out regularly and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

The exterior and interior of vehicle/s are to be cleaned regularly.

Basic maintenance checks are to be carried out at least once per week. Items to be checked are:

- oil and water
- steering
- brakes
- tyres
- The fire extinguisher is to be checked once every 12 months and refilled as soon as possible if it is used.
- rear vision mirrors
- windscreen wipers
- lights

Traffic/Parking Infringements

Volunteer drivers will be responsible for any traffic/parking fines they incur while driving CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE vehicles. In certain circumstances a parking fine may be incurred because of delays outside the volunteer's control. If the volunteer believes there are special circumstances and they should not pay such a fine, they should take the matter up with the scheme management.

Breakdown

A vehicle should not be driven if there is a possibility of overheating or other damage. In the event of a breakdown, the volunteer should call the RACV. The volunteer needs to explain to the RACV if clients are on board, and request that they attend as soon as possible. The volunteer should then call the coordinator if it is necessary to make appropriate alternative arrangements for clients.

Accident

Any accidental or wilful damage to the vehicle must be immediately brought to the attention of the coordinator. In the event of an accident volunteers should:

- never admit liability or sign any papers – the schemes insurance company could reject the claim
- exchange names, addresses contact numbers with the drivers of any other vehicle/s, details of vehicle ownership, registration numbers, insurance companies
- note the time of accident, weather conditions, visibility and other details
- render any assistance necessary
- report to the coordinator and complete any necessary paperwork
- ensure that the accident is reported to the police within 24 hours In the event of an accident involving injury to any person the police must be contacted immediately.
- In the event of an accident rendering the vehicle unable to be driven, the driver should contact the coordinator.
- Any volunteer who is injured in a road accident whilst using a Community Transport Vehicle, will be covered by the agency for any excess on TAC insurance.
- Any client who is injured while a client in a CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE vehicle where the volunteer is at fault, will be covered by the scheme for any excess on TAC insurance.

Seating Capacity

Seating in the vehicle is legally limited according to the number of seat belts. Exceeding this limit may render insurance invalid.

Alcohol and Drugs

No alcohol is to be consumed by a volunteer prior to or while driving any CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE vehicle. Similarly no drugs should be taken which will have an effect on the ability of the volunteer to drive. This applied to both prescription and non-prescription drugs. Clients are not permitted to consume alcohol or take non-prescription drugs while in the vehicle. Volunteers are not expected to take responsibility for administering prescription drugs to clients.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE vehicles.

Eating and Drinking

Clients are asked to refrain from eating and drinking in Charlton Neighbourhood House vehicles. Consumption of food and drink may result in additional cleaning work for already busy volunteer drivers.

Hazardous Substances

Charlton Neighbourhood House vehicles may not carry hazardous substances.



CIVIC PARTICIPATION & VOLUNTEER POLICY

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

Introduction:

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is reliant on the participation of the community in both decision making roles and in supporting the daily work of the Centre.

Purpose of Policy: This policy is intended to ensure that volunteers working at the Charlton Neighbourhood House have work that is safe, significant, fulfilling, and appreciated and that community members are supported and encouraged to participate in decision-making within the Charlton Neighbourhood House.

Definitions:

Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.

Civic participation is the engagement of an individual in civil society, as defined as the nongovernment and not-for-profit groups and organisations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests of their members and others in society.

Scope:

This policy applies to all volunteers, Committee of Management and working group members of the Charlton Neighbourhood House.

Responsible Parties:

The Committee of Management and the Coordinator are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to.

Policy:

Volunteers have the right to:

- be respected and valued irrespective of the work done
- be informed about the organisation – policy, strategic direction, management and programs
- be provided with a clear description of their duties
- receive orientation and training as appropriate
- know to whom they are accountable
- have a safe and healthy work environment
- be covered by insurance
- have a role in planning for the Centre
- choose the work they undertake and negotiate hours of work
- be consulted on matters which directly affect them and their work
- be reimbursed for any authorised out of pocket costs incurred as part of their role

A volunteer has a responsibility to:

- carry out their work responsibly and ethically
- be reliable, enthusiastic and loyal
- respect confidentiality of all house staff and users
- be accountable
- ask for support when needed
- give a clear indication of the extent of their commitment, availability and skills
- give notice before changing the commitment or leaving the organisation
- value and support paid staff and other volunteers

Volunteers must abide by the policies of the Charlton Neighbourhood House and agree to the Code of Conduct.

A volunteer may be provided with a reference by the Coordinator or a member of the Committee of Management. This is not a right and requests will be considered on an individual basis.

Volunteer Disciplinary Procedure:

The CNH Committee of Management has a responsibility to ensure the well being of staff, volunteers and users when at the Centre. In the event of a volunteer behaving in a manner which is detrimental to the provision of good service, the following procedure may be used:

- a) The coordinator will speak with the person, privately, explaining the perceived problem and seeking to resolve the issue
- b) If the behaviour continues, a warning will be given in a formal manner and documented
- c) If the problem persists, the volunteer will be asked to leave, with a written explanation as to why the action has been taken
- d) Appeals may be taken up with the Committee of Management in line with the Grievance

Procedure specified in the Charlton Neighbourhood House Rules of Association.



WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

Introduction

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of all people who interact with the organisation and complying with its occupational health and safety obligations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure staff, Board members, and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities as employees/volunteers of Charlton Neighbourhood House and under associated legislation, and are committed to ensuring the health and well-being of staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

In fulfilling this responsibility, all members of Charlton Neighbourhood House have a duty to provide and maintain, so far as practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.

The purpose of this policy is to, as far as reasonably practicable:

1. prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
2. promote a safe and healthy workplace culture
3. provide a framework for consulting, collaborating and communicating with workers and health and safety representatives
4. consider workplace health and safety in project planning and work activities
5. allocate adequate resources to prevent health and safety risks and promote a safe and healthy workplace
6. ensure that workers understand their rights and responsibilities, and can identify and control risks in the workplace
7. drive continuous improvement in workplace health and safety.

Scope

This policy applies to the following, together referred to as '**workers**':

Employees	Directors	Officers	Contractors (including employees of contractors)	Volunteers	Suppliers	Consultants
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Definitions

In this policy, '**workplace**' means places where people work in connection with the Charlton Neighbourhood House, whether on-site or off-site, including work-related conferences, functions, client events, retreats and social events, and the Charlton Community Car.

'**Occupational violence**' refers to any incident where a person is physically attacked, abused, assaulted or threatened in the workplace.

Commitment to workplace health and safety

The Charlton Neighbourhood House aims to safeguard the rights of all people to work in an environment that is safe and does not pose risks to health.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to working in partnership with all workers to identify and address workplace health and safety issues. It encourages the formation of work groups and the appointment of health and safety representatives to represent employees on health and safety matters.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to continuously improving its workplace health and safety practices through the ongoing development of systems and processes to:

- identify, assess and control workplace hazards
- reduce the incidence and cost of occupational injury and illness
- provide a rehabilitation system for those affected by occupational injury/or illness.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to ensuring all workers are free from bullying and occupational violence in the workplace.

Workplace Health and Safety Committee and representatives

Where a Workplace Health and Safety Committee is required by legislation, or where the Manager/Board otherwise deems it necessary, the Charlton Neighbourhood House will establish a Workplace Health and Safety Committee in accordance with the applicable legislation.

Any Workplace Health and Safety Committee will meet at least bi-annually. An agenda will be circulated by the head of the committee before the meeting. A designated note-taker will take minutes of the meeting.

Where required by law, or deemed necessary, designated work groups shall each elect a workplace health and safety representative as their elected spokesperson. Representatives are encouraged to work with management to discuss workplace health and safety issues, and to work with management to improve health and safety standards.

Where the organisation is not required to establish a Workplace Health and Safety Committee, and does not otherwise establish such a committee, the Charlton Neighbourhood House may conduct regular health and safety forums.

Responsibilities

The **Manager and other staff** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- consult with workers about, and participate in, the Charlton Neighbourhood House's workplace health and safety program
- use risk identification, assessment and control principles to reach the Charlton Neighbourhood House's health and safety objectives

The **Workplace Health and Safety Coordinator** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- coordinate the identification, development, implementation and review of workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- assist supervisors/managers to identify, assess and select measures to control hazards and risks to health and safety
- assist supervisors/managers to monitor and evaluate hazard- and risk-control measures
- assist supervisors/managers to identify, develop and provide appropriate workplace health and safety-related information, instruction and training
- monitor and advise on legislative and technical changes relating to workplace health and safety
- monitor and provide regular reports to the MANAGER and the Finance & Audit Committee about the CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE's workplace health and safety performance
- help employees and health and safety representatives to follow policies and safe work procedures.
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate training/information on the policy and related procedures, and on their obligations under occupational health and safety laws.

Employees and volunteers will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- participate in workplace health and safety training, actions and activities and support the Charlton Neighbourhood House in its efforts to achieve its workplace health and safety and, where relevant, rehabilitation objectives
- follow lawful and reasonable workplace health and safety instructions from managers or supervisors
- report any serious incidents, accidents, injuries or hazards in the workplace to supervisors or designated representatives
- work in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others
- properly use and maintain safety equipment
- make sure visitors follow safety rules in the workplace.

Contractors of, visitors to and volunteers of the Charlton Neighbourhood House will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- follow lawful and reasonable workplace health and safety instructions from the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- report any serious incidents, accidents, injuries or hazards in the workplace to the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- assess risks to their health and safety arising from the provision of their services etc
- have control measures in place to address those risks, including complying with any relevant policies and practices.

The role of the **Workplace Health and Safety Committee** is to:

- assist in developing, monitoring and reviewing health and safety policies and procedures
- consider any proposed or actual changes to the workplace, policies, work practices or procedures which may affect the health and safety of workers
- promote the importance of health and safety among workers
- monitor the Charlton Neighbourhood House 's health and safety performance
- monitor the rehabilitation of injured workers
- assist in the resolution of health and safety disputes.

Breaches

The Charlton Neighbourhood House takes its health and safety obligations seriously.

Any breach of this policy or associated workplace health and safety procedures may result in disciplinary action, which may include counselling, dismissal, or cessation of the person's engagement with the Charlton Neighbourhood House.

First aid

A first aid kit is located in the office of the Charlton Neighbourhood House and in the community car

A number of Charlton Neighbourhood House staff are qualified first aid officers. For details, contact the coordinator.

Emergency contact

It is important that the Charlton Neighbourhood House has details of the person/s whom each employee/volunteer would wish to be notified in the event of any emergency at work. Details will be noted in each employee/volunteer's personnel file. Employees should notify the coordinator of any changes.

Workers' compensation & Rehabilitation

Any worker who is injured at work should report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible and consider whether to submit a worker's compensation claim.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is committed to facilitating the return to work of employees/volunteer as soon as practicable after a work-related incident or illness.

Early return to work should be a normal expectation in this process. Where appropriate, rehabilitation programs will be individually developed by the Charlton Neighbourhood House in consultation with the employee, supervisor, provider and any other relevant party.

Hazard reporting

Reporting hazards helps prevent accidents from occurring. Any worker who sees a hazard in their work area must report it to their line manager or safety representative immediately in line with the Workplace Health and Safety Procedures.

Review

The Charlton Neighbourhood House's Workplace Health and Safety Policy and Procedures will be reviewed at least every two years. The review will involve assessing the effectiveness of the policy and procedures by (among other things):

- reviewing overall health and safety performance
- ensuring continued compliance with the relevant legislation.

Dissemination of Policy

The Occupational Health and Safety Policy and related procedures shall be displayed in the workplace and all employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy through their supervisor. New employees will be provided with a copy of the policy as part of their induction.

Useful Information

For further information regarding Occupational Health and Safety, please refer to:

<http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au>

Legislation and industrial instruments

Workplace health and safety laws do not operate in isolation, and other laws also regulate the conduct of employees and other stakeholders in the workplace.

All officers, employees, contractors, suppliers and volunteers must observe and comply with all laws that relate to their engagement, including, but not limited to:

- Occupational health and safety laws that operate in each state and territory
- Workers' compensation legislation that operates in each state and territory
- Criminal laws, including recently introduced industrial manslaughter offences that operate in Victoria, NT, WA, Queensland and ACT at the time of writing (broadly, these offences expose individuals to significant penalties and possible incarceration for negligent conduct causing death in the workplace)
- Anti-discrimination laws (each Australian jurisdiction regulates discrimination on the basis of certain protected attributes including sex, race and age)
- Employment laws (including measures to address bullying at work under the Fair Work Act 2009).

This policy and associated procedures are not intended to override any industrial instrument, contract, award or legislation.

Procedure for the Community Car under the OH&S Policy

Vehicle Safety

- All vehicles will be appropriately maintained to ensure mechanical safety
- Volunteers will receive training to promote technical and defensive driving skills
- Volunteers will be assessed on their driving skills prior to driving clients of the community car
- Coordinators will ensure that work levels do not pressure or fatigue volunteers to the extent that this jeopardises the volunteers or client's safety
- Coordinators will ensure that volunteers are appropriately equipped to facilitate the performance of their work. e.g.: maps, run sheets, contact numbers.
-

Accident and injury

The coordinator will ensure that action plans are in place for immediate response at the time of any accident or injury. These action plans will include appropriate reporting mechanisms.

Health

The community car Coordinator will ensure that volunteers are informed about health risks that may be associated with their work, e.g.: Covid-19, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, C, etc. and encourage volunteers to take preventative measures, e.g.: vaccination, mask wearing, hand cleanliness



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Charlton College

Purpose:

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is offering a range of options to provide community transport for the residents of the Charlton Community. They currently have a car used for this purpose, but at times they will require additional vehicles to transport people to specific events or activities, including sport, recreation, social and health appointments.

Charlton College own a mini bus, and manage the driver education cars at the Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House will access the Charlton College Mini Bus and the vehicles at the CharTSEC in order to provide a range of options for community transport in Charlton and District.

This MoU outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party.

The Charlton College will:

- Allow the use of the College mini bus for transport of people other than students
- Allow the use of the CharTSEC vehicles for the transport of people in Charlton to medical appointments, and social activities and events, when they are not being used
- Liaise with the Charlton Neighbourhood House re bookings for the mini bus and CharTSEC vehicles
- Prepare and send an invoice to the CNH after each use of each vehicle

The Charlton Neighbourhood House will:

- Liaise with the Charlton College to book the mini bus and CharTSEC vehicles.
- Provide at least one weeks notice prior to booking the vehicles if possible
- Return the vehicles in a clean condition
- Complete the log book for each vehicle before and after each use
- Provide a driver to operate the vehicle who has completed the CNH Driver Induction program

Cost of Hire

The mini bus will be hired out at a cost of 50c per Km plus a booking fee of \$10.

The CharTSEC vehicles will be hired out at a cost of 50c/Km plus a booking fee of \$10.

The Manager of the CharTSEC will prepare the cars ready for use. (This takes time and the booking fee will contribute to the time required).

Review

This MoU and the costs will be reviewed annually by both the Charlton College and the Charlton Neighbourhood House

Signed:

Charlton College:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Charlton Neighbourhood House:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Start's Bus Lines

Purpose:

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is offering a range of options to provide community transport for the residents of the Charlton Community. They currently have a car used for this purpose, but at times they will require additional vehicles to transport people to specific events or activities, including sport, recreation, social and health appointments.

Starts Bus Lines have a transport company consisting of 3 x 21 seater buses, and a 45 seater coach. They provide the school bus run for Charlton College and a charter hire service. This service is used by community groups, businesses and private individuals to attend events throughout Victoria. As they provide the school bus service, the charter services are mainly offered outside of school hours.

In order to improve the provision of community transport services to the Charlton and District community, the Charlton Neighbourhood House and Starts Bus Lines will work together to provide a range of options for the local community.

This MoU outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Starts Bus Lines will:

- Liaise with the Charlton Neighbourhood House to develop at least 12 trips per year for local residents and visitors to points of interest in surrounding areas. These trips will be accessible either during school hours or outside of school hours, depending on the destination and interest
- Provide an up-to-date costing for each trip
- Provide an experienced driver for each trip
- Support the marketing of the service
- Provide the buses in a clean accessible condition
- Arrange insurance
- Liaise with the Charlton Neighbourhood House regarding bookings for the buses
- Hire of buses to transport Charlton residents to activities and events within the township
- Prepare and send an invoice to the Charlton Neighbourhood House after each trip

The Charlton Neighbourhood House will:

- Liaise with the Start's Bus Lines to develop the trips as mentioned above
- Market the tourism trips through a range of media
- Consider the use of Start's Bus Lines for transport of people to other activities and events
- Provide at least one weeks notice prior to booking the vehicles if possible

Cost of Hire

The cost of the services provided by each party will be negotiated.

Review

This MoU and the costs will be reviewed annually by both the Charlton Neighbourhood House and the Management of Starts Bus Lines.

Signed:**Start's Bus Lines**

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Charlton Neighbourhood House:

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____



Volunteer Management Program

Developed by Julie Slater & Ellen White
as part of the Charlton Community Transport Project

May 2021

What is Volunteer Management?

Volunteer management encompasses all of the steps a non-profit takes to recruit, track, engage, and retain volunteers. Through effective volunteer management, your organisation can build a more strategic, positive volunteer experience and cultivate long-term, mutually beneficial supporter relationships.

Elements of Successful Volunteer Management

Volunteer Recruitment: To build a successful volunteer program, you'll first need to find some volunteers to manage. Volunteer recruitment is an ongoing process that includes promoting your opportunities, creating and processing supporter sign-ups, and screening potential volunteers.

Volunteer Empowerment: Once you've secured your volunteers, you'll need to ensure that they're equipped and excited to step into their role at your organisation. Set your volunteers up to succeed—and they will!

Volunteer Communications: The non-profit volunteer relationship isn't a one-way street. To effectively engage volunteers, you'll need a communications plan that allows you to present important volunteer information as well as respond to volunteer feedback and questions.

Volunteer Recognition: Volunteer recognition should be a top priority within your volunteer management plan. Proper volunteer acknowledgement can take many forms, from simple thank-you notes after a shift to full-blown volunteer appreciation events. Whatever you choose to do, make sure you're consistently reminding your hardworking volunteers that you value their effort.

Types of Volunteer Involvement

Event Volunteering: Whether they're helping set up and pack-up your fundraising event or cleaning up the community on a day of service, event volunteers help your non-profit on a short-term, unskilled basis. They make sure your efforts go off without a hitch!

Skills-Based Volunteering: In need of some accounting, legal work, or PR assistance? Skills-based volunteers can help! These volunteers may help on a one-off basis, but they may also work with your non-profit throughout the duration of an ongoing project.

Long-Term Volunteering: Whether performing skilled or unskilled work, long-term volunteering refers to a committed, ongoing partnership with clear expectations set from the start. These are the type of volunteers that will be required for the Charlton Community Transport project.

Administrative Volunteering: From a friendly face at the reception desk to a data entry pro, your administrative volunteers show their devotion to your cause by supporting your non-profit staff in the office. These volunteers are likely regulars at your organisation, but they may not have a set commitment like an ongoing long-term volunteer.

Volunteer Committees: - Often needed in conjunction with fundraising events, volunteer committees work together to accomplish specific tasks for your non-profit. Each committee should have a volunteer leader as well as support from a designated member of your staff.

Volunteer Advocacy: - You might not think advocates for your non-profit fall into the "volunteer" role, but they do! Often the face of your mission, your advocates are out on the street raising

awareness (and money) for your cause. To promote your advocacy efforts, you'll need to provide supporters with the right resources so they can get the word out in the most effective ways.

Volunteer Recruitment

Defining the role of the volunteer

Once you have worked out your organisational needs you will need to write a position description for each volunteer role before you begin the process of recruitment. Creating meaningful role descriptions for all volunteer roles will help you and your organisation understand and better manage the volunteer throughout their involvement. Position descriptions should be reviewed on a regular basis.

A role description for volunteers should include the following:

- Role/Title
- Overview of the organisation (purpose, programs/services) and the program on which they will be working
- Approximate number of hours required per week
- Purpose
- Volunteer duties/responsibilities
- Skill/qualifications/knowledge required or desired
- Benefits to the volunteer
- Supervision/support that will be provided
- Background checks required (Police Check, Working with Children Check, etc.)



Charlton Neighbourhood House Volunteer Community Transport Drivers POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Charlton community transport project provides transport options to people within our community who are transport disadvantaged (not able to drive themselves or access public transport that meets their requirements).

It would not be possible to provide this important community service without our volunteer community transport drivers.

Coordinated by the Charlton Neighbourhood House, the program provides opportunities for local residents to:

- Attend specialist medical appointments in other towns, regional centres and Melbourne
- Take part in social events within the community, eg. attend moves at The Rex Theatre
- Have transport to key community events and activities, eg. Play Group, recreational sporting activities, and Senior Citizen meetings
- Travel to nearby towns for social connectivity, health and wellbeing purposes

Benefits to being a Volunteer Community Driver

Community transport is designed primarily to support vulnerable and transport disadvantaged members of the community to access services and participate in community life.

In the last 12 months, the Charlton Community Car made 126 trips to Bendigo, Melbourne, Wycheproof, Donald, Castlemaine, and St Arnaud enabling local residents to attend specialist medical appointments when other transport was not available.

With additional volunteer Community Car Drivers we hope to increase the service over the next 12 months to include more trips to specialist medical appointments, as well as a range of other opportunities for members of our community to participate events and activities which they may not otherwise be able to attend.

Approximate number of hours required per week: 3 – 10 depending on availability

Volunteer duties/responsibilities: Drive the Charlton community car to destinations within Charlton, neighbouring towns, Bendigo/other regional centres, and Melbourne

Skill/qualifications/knowledge required or desired: Current Victorian Drivers Licence

Supervision/support that will be provided All Community Drivers will receive support from the Charlton Community Transport Project Coordinator

Background checks required:

- Police Check
- Working with Children Check
- Medical Certificate
- Driving Record report

How to Apply: Contact the Charlton Community Transport Coordinator at the Neighbourhood House on 0473 759 456

Advertising for Volunteers

Once you have your role description you may want to advertise the role online or show it to volunteers. The catchier and more appealing your role is the more likely you will be to attract good quality volunteers.

Places to advertise volunteers include:

- Local newspapers, Community Newsletter and radio stations (media release)
- Social Media and Website
- Posters in shop windows
- Word of Mouth

Information Session

Some groups find it useful to require potential volunteers to attend an information session to learn more about the organisation before they can apply for a volunteer role. This can assist with setting expectations about the type of volunteer roles available and familiarise potential volunteers with what the organisation does.

The Information Session should include an overview of the organisation and the volunteer project, expectations of the volunteer and why volunteers are important to its operation and success.

Having a volunteer who is already a part of the program speak, is beneficial and an opportunity for potential volunteers to ask questions prior to making a commitment.

Interviews

Develop a list of questions so that each interview has a consistent format. These questions should focus on the skills needed for the volunteer role, to clarify expectations and organisational fit. We have provided a template for you as a suggestion of the type of questions you may like to ask here.

- Tell us about yourself
- What is the main reason you would like to become a volunteer community car driver?
- What do you know about the program?
- Have you seen a copy of the role description?
- What is your availability?
- Do you have any accessibility concerns or medical issues we need to be aware of that will impact on your capacity to perform the role?

Interview Record Sheet	
Questions	Responses
Family Name:	
Given Name:	
What do you prefer to be called?	
Date of Interview:	
Position applied for:	Community Car Driver
Name and position of interviewers:	1. 2.
Tell us about yourself:	
What is the main reason you would like to become a volunteer community car driver?	
Do you have Australian Residency or Citizenship status or a visa which permits you to volunteer in Australia?	
Have you seen a copy of the position description?	
What do you know about the program?	
What is your availability?	
Do you have any accessibility concerns or medical issues we need to be aware of that will impact on your capacity to perform the role?	
Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful
Reasons	

Police checks

It is important to note that unlike a WWCC, a Police Check does not involve an assessment by a government agency; It is only a list of offences at a point in time and the responsibility for assessing someone's suitability as a volunteer (based on the outcome of the police check) rests with individual organisations.

Some organisations need the list to help them assess a person's suitability for other kinds of work, e.g. an accountant or treasurer, where they would be looking for any fraud offences. It's important that you have a process at your organisation for making decisions around a person's suitability for a volunteer role based on their criminal history. If you are unsure of your organisation's process be sure to raise this with your board or committee or HR manager.

For more information about applying for a Police Check, go to Victoria Police or contact Crimcheck.

Working with Children Checks

Under the Working with Children Act 2005, if you are engaged in child-related work and not exempt, you must have a WWCC even if you have undergone a Police Check.

The WWCC is an ongoing assessment by the Department of Justice of a person's suitability to work with children, examining relevant serious sexual, physical and drug offences in a person's national criminal history and, where appropriate, their professional history.

The Department of Justice, State Government of Victoria [Working with Children Check website](https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/) (<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>) provides extensive information, including:

- How to apply for a Check
- Information about who requires a Check and who is exempt
- How much a Check will cost (free for volunteers)
- Updating requirements

Medical Certificate

A medical certificate is required for all volunteer drivers certifying they are fit to be a volunteer community car driver (the cost of this will be covered by the Charlton Neighbourhood House).

Driving Record Report (VicRoads)

A copy of a volunteer's driver history can be obtained from VicRoads which outlines the following:

- 5-year demerit point history and full driving record
- Complete driver history and full driving record
- Licence verification letter

Details on how to obtain a driving record report can be found on the [VicRoads website](https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/demerit-points-and-offences/check-driver-history) (<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/demerit-points-and-offences/check-driver-history>).

Health & Safety

Many volunteer organisations will engage both volunteers and paid employees. If you are a volunteer organisation with paid employees you are an “employer” for the purposes of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) (the Victorian OHS Act) This Act governs how you manage health and safety and respond to issues.

While some of your legal obligations under the Victorian OHS Act relate specifically to employees and will not apply to volunteers, treating your volunteers as if they were paid employees will demonstrate your commitment to their health, safety and wellbeing and it will also prevent duplication of the safety systems that you implement.

The duties will be in the detail

As an employer you will have a primary duty of care to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees, so far as reasonably practicable. You will also have a duty to ensure that other persons, including your volunteers, are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of your organisation’s business, so far as reasonably practicable.

Some of your other duties and responsibilities as an employer under the Victorian OHS Act include:

- involving employees in decision-making around health and safety through consultation on risk management and safety
- monitoring the health of employees and the conditions at the workplace
- notifying WorkSafe of certain incidents and preserving the site where an incident has occurred
- arranging for the representation of employees through the election of health and safety representatives
- complying with any non-disturbance, improvement or prohibition notices issued by WorkSafe.

If you are an employer, your volunteers will also have a duty not to recklessly engage in conduct that places or may place another person at your workplace in danger of serious injury.

Volunteer Insurance

It is critical that if your organisation involves volunteers, you have adequate insurance. Volunteers often fall between the gaps as they are not covered by an organisation’s insurance policies when they suffer injuries in their role unless the organisation holds specific insurance for this purpose – such as volunteer personal accident insurance. It is important to remember that:

Workers’ Compensation insurance is for employees only and does not cover volunteers (except in rare circumstances), and public liability insurance will usually cover injuries a volunteer causes to others (eg. clients, customers or other third parties) but may not cover injuries caused to volunteers.

Volunteer personal accident insurance will cover members and volunteers of a community organisation for expenses incurred in the event of accidental injury, disability or death which occurs while the volunteer is doing work for the community organisation. The insurance is usually (but not always) extended to include cover for loss of income if the volunteer is unable to work as a result of an injury sustained when volunteering for the community organisation.

Unlike Workers' Compensation for employees, it is not compulsory for a community organisation to take out personal accident insurance for volunteers. However, because volunteers are a central part of many not-for-profit community organisations, it is useful to ensure that both the organisation and the volunteers are protected in the event of an accident.

For your information, some common types of insurance products are listed below. Your organisation may have some or none of these. If you are unsure what insurance your organisation has, the first step is to check with your insurer or board, committee of management or HR manager.

- Volunteer personal accident insurance – generally covers volunteers for out of pocket medical expenses and loss of income
- Directors' and officers' liability insurance – volunteer committee members or directors
- Public liability insurance – covers injury etc to members of the public
- Professional indemnity insurance – covers experts or advisors
- Building and contents/occupiers/fraud insurance – covers property and assets
- Motor vehicle insurance – covers vehicles

Orientation and Induction

Proper orientation and induction for volunteers enables them to perform their role as required and ensures they understand their responsibilities and their rights within your organisation.

It is a crucial part of risk management for volunteer programs. It defines the expectations of the volunteer relationship on both sides and prepares the volunteer to perform their role.

If a volunteer acts against policy or regulation, the organisation may well be responsible because of a failure to properly induct, train or supervise. Potential performance issues and sources of conflict can be significantly reduced with a thorough orientation and induction.

It is important to cover different aspects of a volunteer's engagement with your organisation – the "big picture" stuff as well as the individual volunteer's role.

For example, orientation should include information on the organisation's history and philosophy, its purpose, mission and values, as well as an overview of organisational policies and regulatory requirements. Induction is more role specific, and will include an introduction to relevant staff, the physical environment, equipment and facilities, but it's also important to ensure that the volunteer understands how their role fits into the organisation and the services it provides.

Proper orientation for volunteers enables them to perform their role as required and ensures they understand their responsibilities and their rights within the organisation. It is a crucial part of risk management for volunteer programs.

Properly planned volunteer orientation will save your program or group time and resources. It defines the expectations of the volunteer relationship – on both sides – and equips the volunteer to do their job.

It is the organisation's responsibility to make sure volunteers have the necessary knowledge to perform their role and to navigate organisational policies and culture. If a volunteer acts against policy or regulation, the organisation may well be responsible because of a failure to properly induct, train or supervise. Potential performance issues and sources of conflict can be significantly reduced with a thorough orientation

1. Make a plan

Orientation can be formal: for example, a classroom training session for a group of volunteers. It can also be an informal one-on-one session with relevant staff members.

Whichever format you choose, make sure you have adequate time to cover both specific orientation to the role and a more general introduction to the concepts, policies and procedures that affect everyone in the organisation.

You also need a clear plan for what you want volunteers to learn through orientation. You should then check that they have taken on the information required by reviewing the session and asking them to sign relevant policies.

2. Role Orientation

Give an overview of the organisation's services that relate to the volunteer role. Make it clear what role volunteers play, what role staff and management play and the relationship between these roles. Give clear information about any training or orientation activities the volunteer will be involved in and why.

Describe relevant procedures for that volunteer – this is particularly important for roles that have specific legislative or regulatory requirements, such as committee or board members. Finally, introduce relevant staff, the physical environment, equipment and facilities.

Take the opportunity to promote the cause, mission and impact of your organisation. Some volunteer roles may not be the most glamorous jobs in the world but a volunteer knowing their contribution ultimately makes a difference can be a big motivator.

3. Make them aware

Ensure that your volunteers are made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to the role and to the organisation. This can reduce conflict within teams and provide a more supportive environment for the volunteer.

Provide volunteers with any relevant policies, such as reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, and explain it to them so they will understand and agree to a code of conduct and/or rights and responsibilities.

Policy must-haves: Your induction program will need to include an overview of organisational policies and regulatory requirements for matters common to most volunteer-involving organisations including:

- Motor Vehicle
- Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety
- Volunteer Policy
- Commitment to child safety (where applicable)

Orientation Kit for Volunteers

An orientation kit can make new volunteers feel welcome, as well as providing them with information and documents they need to perform their role. The kit should provide a clear description of the rights and responsibilities of the volunteer.

It could contain:

- a letter of welcome
- an overview of the organisation's history, philosophy, mission, clients, structure and funding base.
- a copy of the volunteer's position description
- a statement of the volunteer's rights and responsibilities
- a training schedule
- a copy of the organisation's volunteer policy (or details on where it's kept, if it's too large to include)
- reference to relevant procedures and policies and where to obtain them
- relevant forms (e.g. for reimbursement of expenses, attendance records, etc)
- emergency procedures
- a copy of the insurance schedule and instructions for reporting critical incidents, injuries or accidents
- information on upcoming important events, such as National Volunteer Week and International Volunteers Day.
- Clearly detail regulatory or legislative requirements, such as privacy or health and safety. Failure to ensure volunteers receive and understand such information could expose the organisation or the volunteer to liability. You should outline grievance procedures, with information on how the volunteer may raise concerns.

When inducting the volunteer it helps to describe staff culture and service culture (particularly if there are differences across the organisation in the support offered to clients, consumers, event attendees and so on).

Induction Session

An induction can be as formal or as informal as you would like to make it, as long as you are able to share the following information:

- Overview of organisation, purpose, services/programs and structure
- Overview of the Charlton Community Transport program – purpose and how it operates
- Role of the community transport drivers
- Road Safety
- Code of Conduct
- Policies and Procedures
- Workplace health and safety
- Forms – what forms they are and how and when they need to be completed
- Time for questions from the new volunteers

**Suggested induction session for new
Charlton Community Car Volunteer Drivers
[2 hours]**

Time Required	Activity
15 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
10 minutes	Overview of organisation, purpose, services/programs and structure
10 minutes	Overview of the Charlton Community Transport program – purpose and how it operates
15 minutes	Role of the community transport drivers
20 minutes	Road Safety
10 minutes	Code of Conduct
10 minutes	Policies and Procedures
10 minutes	Workplace health and safety
10 minutes	Forms – what forms they are and how and when they need to be completed
10 minutes	Time for questions from the new volunteers
As needed	Social time – morning tea/afternoon tea or lunch

Volunteer Agreement

All volunteers should complete a volunteer agreement prior to commencing in their role. Here is a sample volunteer agreement:

<p>This agreement is made between Charlton Neighbourhood House hereinafter referred to as “the organisation” and the individual named in the volunteer details section below, hereinafter referred to as “the volunteer”.</p>			
Volunteer Details:			
Full Name:			
Postal Address:			
Email Address:		Post Code:	
Mobile:			
Volunteer Position Title: Volunteer Community Car Driver			
Accountable to: Community Car Coordinator		Date of Commencement:	
Responsible for:	Volunteer Community Car Driver	Expected weekly time commitment:	
Availability:			
Roles & Duties:	As per the Position Description		
Code of Conduct:	As per the Charlton Neighbourhood House Code of Conduct		
Relevant Documents and Policies:	<p>Policies and Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • Commitment to Child Safety • Motor Vehicle Use • Volunteers • Workplace Safety <p>Volunteer Driver Handbook</p>		
Volunteer Benefits: Benefits the volunteer will receive:	<p>Community transport is designed primarily to support vulnerable and transport disadvantaged members of the community to access services and participate in community life.</p> <p>In the last 12 months, the Charlton Community Car made 126 trips to Bendigo, Melbourne, Wycheproof, Donald, Castlemaine, and St Arnaud enabling local residents to attend specialist medical appointments when other transport was not available.</p> <p>With additional volunteer Community Car Drivers we hope to increase the service over the next 12 months to include more trips to specialist medical appointments, as well as a range of other opportunities for members of our community to participate events and activities which they may not otherwise be able to attend.</p>		

	<p>All volunteers will receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Orientation pack, a formal induction, and training• Supervision, support and flexibility• Assistance to help you develop in your volunteering role with us and to be flexible in how we use your time while volunteering.• Adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy• Adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by us.• Support through any problems, grievances or difficulties which may be encountered while you volunteer with us• Access to independent dispute resolution where required
<p>Comments:</p> <p>To be completed by the volunteer at the end of the engagement to provide information to improve the voluntary position.</p>	
<p>Signed:</p>	<p>Volunteer</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Charlton Neighbourhood House</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

Training, Development & Ongoing Support

Providing ongoing training and support to volunteers is crucial. Ongoing training and support requirements may differ depending on the type of position and the responsibilities of the volunteer.

For Charlton Community Car Drivers an annual update on road safety rules is paramount, as is refreshers on workplace health & safety (including introductory first aid).

Responsible organisations ensure that their staff have access to appropriate training, and this should include volunteers. As well as orientation and training before they commence, you should plan for a volunteer's ongoing training and development's needs. Changes to the program or organisation may require volunteers to update their knowledge either through formal training or via newsletters, posters or briefings.

It is useful to monitor how volunteers are performing in their role and provide them with regular feedback, such as positive reinforcement and where improvements can be made. This can take the form of a regular structured discussion or something less formal; regardless of the approach, it provides the volunteer with an opportunity to have their say and to identify any additional support or training they might require, or to share any concerns they might have.

Acknowledgement and Recognition

Volunteers need to feel both valued and valuable, and to understand how their role contributes to the organisation's goals and mission. Volunteers who feel valued are more likely to be loyal to the organisation and to become long-term volunteers.

Acknowledgement and recognition of volunteers is therefore a crucial part of retaining volunteers and is most effective when there is a combination of ongoing, on-the-job (informal) recognition and larger (formal) recognition events.

The following provides examples of both – what you do will depend on the size of your organisation and the volunteer program, and the budget available. Many informal strategies are either no-cost or low-cost but are just as vital as larger events.

- Acknowledge volunteers at the beginning of their volunteer shift or roster - a simple hello and thanks for being here is enough
- Send welcome letters when volunteers are first recruited
- Provide volunteers with a guidebook outlining their rights and responsibilities and other appropriate information
- Provide adequate orientation and induction
- Give personal praise to volunteers while they are on the job
- Consider having blank cards printed with your organisation's logo on front, that you can personally handwrite for a number of different purposes (eg if the volunteer is unwell or undergoing medical treatment, or has been bereaved)
- List active volunteers on your organisation's notice board in a public show of thanks
- Develop a 'years of service' list of volunteers to display on your website
- Include volunteers in decisions that affect them - invite them to meetings/planning days
- Have a volunteer newsletter and invite volunteers to make contributions to the newsletter
- Set up a formal recognition program based on length of service and/or other criteria
- Acknowledge volunteer efforts at the AGM, presentation evenings etc.
- Nominate outstanding volunteers for community-based recognition awards (or even state or national awards)
- Ensure volunteer contribution is included and highlighted in your organisation's annual report
- Check that volunteers are included in your organisation's strategic plan
- Recognise your volunteers during National Volunteer Week
- Celebrate International Volunteers Day – December 5



Performance Management

Performance management is one of the more challenging tasks that you can face as a volunteer manager, but there are mechanisms that you can put in place which will help to make it a less stressful and emotional experience. A planned approach to handling disputes will lead to better resolutions and reduce the fallout for your organisation.

Establish a process

There is no legislation to guide you in managing volunteer issues or ending the volunteer's relationship with your organisation or to prevent you from unfairly dismissing a volunteer; however, it is best practice to follow the Principles of Natural Justice and manage it as carefully as you would for a paid staff member.

Tips for having a performance conversation with a volunteer

Sometimes a problem can be resolved by having an informal conversation with the volunteer and by using documents such as a code of conduct as a basis for the discussion. This will depend on what has taken place and the seriousness of the issue.

Occasionally an event will occur which is serious enough to warrant formal meeting with the volunteer(s) involved. In this instance, the volunteer(s) should be invited to a formal meeting and encouraged to bring a support person.

Dismissing a volunteer

Whenever a volunteer is dismissed, it is important not just to deal with the issue at hand, but to look at what took place leading up to the event and regard it as a learning opportunity (look for the root cause by performing a root cause analysis). This may help prevent similar occurrences in the future.



Volunteer Driver Operation Manual

Developed by Julie Slater & Ellen White
as part of the Charlton Community Transport Project

May 2021

Adapted from Bendigo Neighbourhood House Volunteer Driver Manual

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Charlton Community Car

In 2018 the Charlton community undertook a successful fundraising campaign to purchase a car to provide transport to senior residents attending specialist medical appointments in Bendigo and Melbourne.

The project currently operates under the auspice of the Charlton Forum, with the administration of this initially managed by Charlton College and more recently the new Charlton Neighbourhood House who will take on the auspice arrangements once fully established.

The transport service employs volunteer drivers to take clients to their appointments, which may be in Bendigo, Ballarat, Melbourne or other regional towns. This manual has been developed to ensure all volunteer drivers are aware of their role and responsibilities.

Driver Responsibility

It is imperative that drivers of the Charlton Neighbourhood House Community Car are:

- *a staff member* (paid OR voluntary) of Charlton Neighbourhood House
- *Have a current driver's licence appropriately licenced* (drivers are responsible for notifying Charlton Neighbourhood House if they are no longer legally licenced)
- have completed the driver application and the driver induction forms
- Have participated in the volunteer driver induction/training program
- not, under any circumstances, be under the influence of *illegal substances* or exceed their *legal alcohol limit* (as dictated by law and their licence)
- *no alcohol* is to be consumed inside the community car or whilst driving the Community Car
- *no smoking* permitted in the Community Car
- take regular and adequate *rest breaks* when driving for more than 2 hours – and should stop when they feeling tired or impaired
- display a high level of *professional conduct* when driving the Community Car
- compliant with traffic legislation including adhering to *speed limits* and be conscious of road safety by demonstrating sensible road safety habits
- not using a *mobile phone* unless connected through the cars blue tooth system
- *lock the car* when not in use
- stop immediately if involved in an *accident or incident*
- keep the Community Car *neat and tidy*, removing any rubbish after use

Before each trip, volunteer drivers of the community car will:

- collect keys
- check all tyres, fuel, water, and window wash fluid
- record relevant details in log book

After each trip, volunteer drivers of the community car will:

- complete log book details
- report any difficulties, articles left in the vehicle or accidents to the coordinator

Log Book

A log book will be kept in each vehicle. For each trip the following information will be recorded: -

- Date
- Name of driver
- Start time
- Start kilometres
- Finish time
- Finish kilometres
- Number of clients in car
- Destination
- Address of pick up

First Aid Kit

First aid kit is kept in the boot compartment of the car. It should not be removed from the car unless it is being used to help someone involved in an accident.

When contents from the first aid kit are used, please report this to the Community Car Coordinator so that they can be restocked.

Sanitiser Kits

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, each vehicle used by a volunteer driver will have a sanitiser kit consisting of:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| • Hand sanitiser | • Cloths |
| • Tissues | • Vomit bags |
| • Disposable face masks | • Rubbish bags |
| • Disinfectant | |

This kit can be stored in the boot, but the hand sanitiser must be accessible for the driver and passengers to use when they enter and leave the car.

Face masks must be worn in accordance with the advice provided by the Charlton Neighbourhood House or the Victorian Government.

Accidents

An accident must be reported to the community car Coordinator immediately.

In the case of an accident, as much information as possible should be collected including:

- Name, contact details, licence number and insurance details of the owner and driver of the other vehicle
- Details of the other car – registration number, colour, make and model
- A summary of the accident (where and when it happened, who was at fault)
- Photos of the accident
- Details of any witnesses

Accident / Incident forms are available from the Community Car coordinator.

An Incident Report Form must be completed and submitted to the Community Car Coordinator as soon as possible following all incidents / accidents.

Break-down

The Community Car has Roadside Assistance – please contact the service provider listed below for assistance.

RACV Roadside Assist: Telephone 13 11 11

Details of RACV membership are located in the glove box of the community car

After roadside assistance has been contacted, please contact the coordinator to advise of the issue and the location of where you have broken down.

Vehicle damage & Theft

Vehicle damage: Advise Community Car Coordinator if there is any damage to the car. Charlton Neighbourhood House will determine if damage needs to be repaired.

Stolen: If the Community Car is stolen this must be reported to the Police immediately and reported to the Community Car Coordinator as soon as possible.

Personal injury: If the driver or another person travelling in the Community Car is injured, call an Ambulance immediately.

Please complete an **Incident Report Form** as soon as possible and submit to the Community Car Coordinator if any of the above events occur.

Fuel

The fuel card that is kept in the community car must be used to purchase fuel. Drivers are responsible for ensuring the Community Car has sufficient fuel at all times. Drivers must provide receipts for fuel to Charlton Neighbourhood House Community Car Coordinator

Fuel card will be kept in the centre console of the Community Car (out of visual sight). Charlton Neighbourhood House will pay for fuel and all related costs (oil etc.) for the Community Car.

Infringements

Drivers are expected to obey all traffic regulations.

The person driving the Community Car at the time of the infringement will be responsible for paying issued infringements (including but not limited to parking fines, speeding fines and other offences).

Booking Procedure

All bookings for the Community Car are taken by the coordinator. Passengers/clients must make the booking, with as much lead in time as possible.

Passengers

The Charlton Community car can take up to 4 passengers.

Children travelling in the car must be in suitable car seat restraints.

Personal Belongings

Drivers should not leave personal belongings in the Community Car unattended.

Personal belongings are **not** covered under Charlton Neighbourhood House's vehicle insurance policy – all personal belongings remain the responsibility of the driver.

Cleaning

Whilst drivers are responsible for maintaining the everyday cleanliness of the car, Charlton Neighbourhood House is responsible for having the Community Car professionally cleaned on a regular basis.

Registration

Charlton Neighbourhood House is responsible for registering the car with VicRoads.

Road Tolls

The Community Car has CityLink which covers travel on Victorian toll roads.

Misconduct

The following actions (but not limited to) in the Charlton Community Car vehicles, will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct and disciplinary action and/or reimbursement of costs may be a consequence:

- Driving with a blood alcohol content above the legal limit
- Driving while under the influence of illegal substances
- Driving while disqualified or not correctly licenced
- Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury
- Failing to stop after a crash
- Demerit point suspension
- Any actions which warrant suspension of licence

Insurance

The Community Car is comprehensively insured through **RACV**.

Where an accident occurs, and the Charlton Neighbourhood House driver is deemed by the insurance company to be 'at fault', Charlton Neighbourhood House reserve the right to ask the driver to contribute to the cost of the excess, or in the case of the car not being covered by insurance, the cost of replacing / repairing the car.

Any such request for payment shall be determined by the Coordinator and Committee of Management.

NB: The Community Car will not be covered by the insurance policy if the driver is un-licenced, under the influence of illegal substances or is in excess of the legal alcohol limit.

Maintenance

Charlton Neighbourhood House will ensure the Community Car is regularly serviced according to the manufacturer's service guidelines.

Charlton Neighbourhood House will be responsible for all maintenance including tyres and windscreen.

Any maintenance issues should be reported to the Community Car Coordinator immediately.

Garaging

Charlton Neighbourhood House prefers that the Community Car is garaged in a secure location at night. The car is to be garaged at the Charlton Traffic Safety Education Centre (CharTSEC)

Complaints

All complaints relating to the Community Car must be forwarded to the coordinator and/or chairperson, this includes complaints relating to:

- Driver behaviour
- Vehicle condition

To make a complaint:

- Contact the Charlton Neighbourhood House Coordinator or Community Car Coordinator
- Submit a complaint in writing to the Coordinator or Charlton Neighbourhood House Chairperson

All complaints will be handled as per Charlton Neighbourhood House Complaints Policy

Important Contact Information

Charlton Neighbourhood House contact: 54912333

Community car coordinator: Deb Finlay 0473 759 456

RACV Roadside Assist: 13 11 11 • Membership Number: XXX

In an emergency call: 000

Driver Application Form

Name	
Address	
Mobile No.:	
Email address	

Driver acknowledgement:

Please read and complete the following:	Please tick
I am a staff member (paid or voluntary) of Charlton Neighbourhood House	
I have provided a copy of my valid licence to Charlton Neighbourhood House	
I have read the Charlton Neighbourhood House volunteer policy	
I have read and agree to the conditions outlined in the Community Car Operational Manual	
I will not drive the car whilst under the influence of illegal drugs or while over the legal alcohol limit	
I will not, nor will I allow other passengers to smoke or consume alcohol in the car	
I agree to take regular rest breaks when driving for more than 2 hours and will cease driving if I feel tired or impaired	
I will display a high level of professional conduct when driving	
I will comply with road laws and be conscious of road safety	
I will not use a mobile phone unless it is connected through blue tooth	
I will lock the car when not in use	
I understand I am responsible for my personal belongings and Charlton Neighbourhood House's recommendation that I do not leave my belongings in the car unattended	
I will report accidents, incidents or complaints to Charlton Neighbourhood House ASAP	
I agree to keep the Community Car neat and tidy and remove any rubbish	
I have been given instructions on how to operate the car	

Volunteer drivers will provide a medical certificate annually if more than 70 years of age stating his or her fitness to transport clients.

Volunteers will be reimbursed for the cost of providing the certificate, after Medicare benefits have been taken into account.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Office Use Only

Driver Application accepted by Coordinator(signed): _____

Drivers licence on file: (____) Police Check on file: (____)

Working with children's check completed: (____)

Community Car induction completed on (date): _____

Driver – Car Orientation

Item	Covered
Keyless Entry	
Handbrake location	
Seat adjustments	
Stop/start	
Adjusting rear view mirrors	
Lights (automatic)	
Windscreen wipers (automatic)	
Connecting to <i>Bluetooth</i> (if required for longer trips)	
Navigation	
Opening back tailgate	
Locking the car	
Location of <i>car manual</i>	
Location of <i>first aid kit and hand sanitisation kit</i>	
Location of <i>fuel card</i>	
Changing lane warning	
Parking assist	

I agree that I have been shown how to operate this vehicle, including the above listed features.

Driver name: _____

Driver Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coordinator signature: _____ Date: _____

Accident / Incident Report

Date of Incident	
Name of Person reporting incident	

Incident Details:

Location of Incident	
Name of person/s involved	
Name of witnesses	
Details of incident	
Outcome	

Name of person completing report: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit this report to the Community Car Coordinator as soon as possible

Passenger List

A list of passengers will be provided to the driver for each trip. This list will include the following details:

Name	Pick up time	Pick up details	Drop off details	Emergency contact details	Comments e.g., include walking frame etc
e.g., Janie Warne	8am	25 Charlton Way, Charlton Tel 0404 0404040	Dr Osteo, 40 Bendigo Way, Bendigo Tel: 54443334	Shane Warne Tel 0404 040401	Walk client to the entrance of the doctors' rooms



Volunteer Tourism Guide

Recruitment, Induction & Training

(Option Three)

Developed by Julie Slater & Ellen White
as part of the Charlton Community Transport Project

May 2021

What does a Tourist Guide do?

Tour guides accompany groups of visitors to tourist attractions, whether on day trips or longer visits, and give them information and insights that help them make the most of the experience.

Potential tour guides should be fit and healthy with lots of energy and confidence, be able to work effectively without supervision, possess a calm 'customer focused' manner, and have excellent interpersonal skills.

'The tour guide is the most important factor in creating a travel experience you'll either rave about or an experience that will soon be forgotten.'

– Diana, Just Wanderlust Blog

Recruitment of Volunteer Tourist Guides

As with any other volunteer position, the first step is to develop a position description of what you are looking for. This should include:

- Role/Title
- Overview of the organisation (purpose, programs/services) and the program on which they will be working
- Approximate number of hours required per week
- Purpose
- Volunteer duties/responsibilities
- Skill/qualifications/knowledge required or desired
- Benefits to the volunteer
- Supervision/support that will be provided
- Background checks required (Police Check, Working with Children Check, etc.)

Charlton Neighbourhood House

Volunteer Tourist Guides

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Charlton Neighbourhood House is seeking volunteers to become tourist guides to show visitors to the region all of Charlton's (and the districts) hidden treasures.

Volunteer guides will need to either know the region or well, or be willing to learn about all of the tourist attractions, culture heritage, history, and natural wonders that make up this part of Victoria and then be willing to share this knowledge - with passion - to tourists visiting our region.

We know that the tour guide is the most important factor in creating a travel experience that visitors will either rave about or an experience that will soon be forgotten, and we want visitors to the Charlton to region to rave!

Benefits to being a Volunteer Tourist Guide

There are many benefits to becoming a volunteer tourist guide:

- Learn more about the history, heritage, natural attractions and tourism ventures that operate within the Charlton District
- Share this information with visitors to the region, leaving a last impression on what a fantastic place Charlton is
- Meet people, and share in their holiday adventures
- Help stimulate the local tourism economy through this new venture

Approximate number of hours required per week:	3 – 6 depending on availability
Volunteer duties/responsibilities:	Guide a group of visitors to the Charlton district around, sharing with them your knowledge of, and passion for, the Charlton region
Skill/qualifications/knowledge required or desired:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit and healthy with lots of energy and confidence, • Able to work effectively without supervision, • Possess a calm 'customer focused' manner, and • have excellent interpersonal skills
Supervision/support that will be provided	All Volunteer Tourist Guides will receive an extensive induction, training and ongoing support from the Charlton Neighbourhood House staff.
Background checks required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Check • Working with Children Check
How to Apply:	Contact the Charlton Community Transport Coordinator at the Neighbourhood House on 0473 759 456

Advertising for Volunteers

Once you have your role description you may want to advertise the role online or show it to volunteers. The catchier and more appealing your role is the more likely you will be to attract good quality volunteers.

Places to advertise volunteers include:

- Local newspapers, Community Newsletter and radio stations (media release)
- School newsletter
- Social Media and Website
- Posters in shop windows
- Word of Mouth

Information Session

Some groups find it useful to require potential volunteers to attend an information session to learn more about the organisation before they can apply for a volunteer role. This can assist with setting expectations about the type of volunteer roles available and familiarise potential volunteers with what the organisation does.

The Information Session should include an overview of the organisation and the volunteer project, expectations of the volunteer and why volunteers are important to its operation and success.

Having a volunteer who is already a part of the program speak, is beneficial and an opportunity for potential volunteers to ask questions prior to making a commitment.

Interviews

Develop a list of questions so that each interview has a consistent format. These questions should focus on the skills needed for the volunteer role, to clarify expectations and organisational fit. We have provided a template for you as a suggestion of the type of questions you may like to ask here.

- Tell us about yourself
- What is the main reason you would like to become a volunteer tourist guide?
- How well do you know the Charlton region?
- Have you seen a copy of the role description?
- What is your availability?
- Do you have any accessibility concerns or medical issues we need to be aware of that will impact on your capacity to perform the role?

Interview Record Sheet	
Questions	Responses
Family Name:	
Given Name:	
What do you prefer to be called?	
Date of Interview:	
Position applied for:	Volunteer Tourist Guide
Name and position of interviewers:	1. 2.
Tell us about yourself:	
What is the main reason you would like to become a volunteer community tourist guide?	
Do you have Australian Residency or Citizenship status or a visa which permits you to volunteer in Australia?	
Have you seen a copy of the position description?	
How well do you know the Charlton region?	
What is your availability?	
Do you have any accessibility concerns or medical issues we need to be aware of that will impact on your capacity to perform the role?	
Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful
Reasons	

Orientation and Induction

In addition to the orientation and induction procedures outlined in the Volunteer Management Program Manual, the following activities should be undertaken as part of the orientation and induction for volunteer tourist guides:

- Customer Service training on how to build rapport with tourists including:
 1. Be friendly: using warm smiles, keeping eye contact or shaking hands firmly are good examples of good rapport building techniques.
 2. Identify what guests want and need: find out visitor expectations from the tour and their holiday experience.
 3. Share stories and interesting information: openly talk to tourists and give them interesting stories about the destination, especially those related to their interests.
 4. Inform of services: tell tourists your available services in the destination such as accommodation, dining, and things to see and do drinks.
 5. Always smile and offer assistance: this show friendliness and caring to guests
 6. Resolve complaints quickly and in full: never ignore inquiries from tourists. Be patient and listen to tourists when they make complaints, try to understand the root of the problem and deal with them completely.
- A familiarisation tour of the Charlton district with an experienced guides (historian, tourism operators, naturalists, etc.) highlighting all there is to know about the community including fun, quirky facts that make tours memorable for participants.
- Brainstorming session on possible tours within the region
- Storytelling session – how to develop a story that is authentic and natural for you to deliver that is memorable to others



Suggested induction session for Volunteer Tourist Guides – 5.5 hours (in addition to 2-hour Volunteer Induction session). NB. This could potentially be funded through Learn Local as it has employment outcomes	
Time Required	Activity
15 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
10 minutes	Overview of organisation, purpose, services/programs and structure
15 minutes	Overview of the tourism venture – purpose and how it will operate
15 minutes	Role of the Volunteer Tourist Guides
45 minutes	Customer Service training
60 minutes	Storytelling session
120 minutes	Familiarisation Tour
30 minutes	Brainstorming session on possible tour destinations and themes
20 minutes	Time for questions from the new volunteers
As needed	Social time – morning tea/afternoon tea/lunch

Training, Development & Ongoing Support

Providing ongoing training and support to volunteers is crucial.

For Volunteer Tourist Guides, familiarisation with any new tourism provider (eating place, destination, attraction) is important so they are up-to-date and in a position to answer any questions from visitors taking part in their tour.

In addition, an annual familiarisation session for guides to come together and share stories, questions they have been asked and to discuss ideas on ways to improve the tour experiences should be built into the program.



Setting up a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) Checklist

Created May 2021 as part of the Charlton Integrated Community Transport Project

A company limited by guarantee (CLG) is a type of incorporated legal structure that may be suitable for some not-for-profit organisations.

The process of setting up a CLG is set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) (**Corporations Act**). The Corporations Act also sets out what your organisation must do to keep its status as a CLG.

The government body responsible for regulating the incorporation and operation of CLGs is the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (**ASIC**).

A CLG that meets the requirements of the *Charity Act 2013* (Cth) can seek registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (**ACNC**). The ACNC is the Commonwealth charity regulator responsible for the registration and oversight of registered charities in Australia. The ACNC decides whether an organisation is eligible to be registered as a charity. A registered charity is able to access certain tax concessions.

A registered charity must comply with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits*

Commission Act 2012 (Cth) (**ACNC Act**) and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* (Cth) (**ACNC Regulations**). These requirements apply in substitution for certain requirements under the Corporations Act to reduce the regulatory burden on registered charities.

What is a CLG?

A CLG is a type of incorporated legal structure that may be suitable for some not-for-profit organisations.

An important feature of a CLG is that its members have **limited liability**. The members agree in writing to contribute a nominal amount (known as a 'guarantee' and usually \$10 – \$100) to the assets of the company

in the event that the company is wound up and is unable to pay its debts and other liabilities. If the company is wound up, the liability of a member is limited to the nominal amount that the member has guaranteed.

Registration of a CLG creates a legal entity separate from its members. This is an advantage because – as a CLG – the company has the ability to act under the company name rather than the name of an individual member. The CLG can hold property, employ staff, enter into contracts and can sue and be sued.

The registration of a CLG is recognised Australia-wide and a CLG is entitled to operate throughout Australia. This is different to other types of legal entities, for example, incorporated associations which are registered and operate under the laws of a particular state or territory.

What laws apply to CLGs?

CLGs are registered under the Corporations Act. They are a type of public company and they have to comply with the laws in the Corporations Act that apply to public companies.

Unfortunately, the Corporations Act is a complex piece of legislation and the provisions that apply to CLGs are scattered throughout the Corporations Act and the *Corporations Regulations 2001* (Cth).

A CLG that is registered as a charity with the ACNC must comply with the requirements of both the ACNC and ASIC, although some of the more complicated ASIC requirements no longer apply when the CLG becomes a registered charity.

The ACNC then becomes the responsible regulator for most of the reporting obligations of registered charities. The reduction in reporting obligations to ASIC is intended to reduce the regulatory burden on registered charities.

CLGs often have a constitution (a document which sets out the rules governing the internal affairs of the organisation). A constitution governs the relationships between a CLG, its members and its directors. However, the Corporations Act also includes some provisions (known as 'replaceable rules') which can be used to govern a company in the absence of its own constitution.

If your CLG wants to register as a charity it will need certain provisions in its constitution (for example, regarding its not-for-profit nature and use of funds), so it can't use the replaceable rules alone. For more information go to Not-for-profit Law's page on [registering as a charity](#).

A CLG must include the words 'Limited' or 'Ltd' after its name, unless it is registered as a charity with the ACNC and has a constitution that:

- prohibits the CLG from paying fees to its directors, and
- requires its directors to approve all other payments made to a director

When a CLG is first registered as a company with ASIC, it will not yet be registered as a charity. Therefore, the word Limited must be included in the legal name of the company. However, once it is registered as a charity, it can omit the word Limited whenever it uses its name.

Some companies might also go to the trouble of formally changing the legal name by passing a special resolution and notifying ASIC, but this is not strictly necessary (and does incur a fee).

Adapted from a Justice Connect information sheet

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Setting up a CLG



Checklist to establish a Public Company Limited by Guarantee

Overview

This checklist sets out the steps to set up ('incorporate') a public company limited by guarantee.

A company limited by guarantee is a company formed on the principle of having the liability of its members limited to the respective amounts the members undertake to contribute to the property of the company if it is wound up. Each member agrees to contribute a specific amount (usually a nominal sum of \$10-\$100) if the company is wound up and there is a shortfall of assets to pay creditors. This guarantee continues while the member remains a member and, if the current members cannot satisfy the shortfall, for one year after ceasing to be a member (but only for debts incurred up to the time when membership ceased).

Depending on the category of Not-For-Profit company, the company may be required to meet statutory financial reporting requirements involving the preparation of an annual financial report and a directors' report, audit of the annual financial report, lodging the audited reports with ASIC and laying them before the AGM.

The government body responsible for regulating companies limited by guarantee is the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

Checklist to establish a Public Company Limited by Guarantee

No.	Item	Action	Comments
1.	Check availability of name of Company	Search ASIC Register – Business Names Search IP Australia Trade Mark Register <i>Seek further legal advice, if required.</i>	Check to confirm whether your proposed name is identical or similar to another name already registered. There are certain words and phrases that are restricted (Corporations Act s147).
2.	"Limited" in proposed name	Decide whether the name of the company will include the word "Limited"	A limited public company must have the word "Limited" at the end of its name unless its constitution: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• requires the company to pursue charitable purposes only and to apply its income promoting those purpose, and• prohibits the company making distributions to its members and paying fees to its directors, and• requires the directors to approve all other payments the company make to directors (ss 150 or 151 Corporations Act).



No.	Item	Action	Comments
3.	Reservation of proposed name of Company	ASIC Form 410 + prescribed fee	The initial reservation is for 2 months. This may be extended for 2 further periods of 2 months by lodging another ASIC Form 410 before the previous reservation expires. The second extension usually requires a reason for the delay to be given.
4.	Constitution	Decide how the company will be internally governed. Draft proposed Constitution <i>Seek legal assistance in drafting constitution.</i>	The internal governance may operate under the replaceable rules, its own constitution or a combination of both. A table of the basic rules for internally managing a company is set out in s141 Corporations Act.
5.	Consents of proposed officers of Company	Obtain written consents to act and personal details of initial directors and secretaries (Corporations Act ss201D, 204C and 205B). <i>Seek legal assistance in drafting consent forms, if required.</i>	The consent usually includes disclosures of interest in accordance with Corporations Act Div2, part 2D.) The company must have a minimum of 3 directors, one of who must reside in Australia (s201A Corporations Act). There must be at least one secretary resident in Australia (s204A Corporations Act). Keep a record of the consents – you do not need to lodge the consents with the registration application but will need keep with company's records.
6.	Members	Identify the initial member/s	A limited public company must have at least one member.
7.	Adopt Constitution	Initial member/s sign the Constitution	Each member agrees to the provisions of the constitution and to pay the amount undertaken to contribute to the property of the company if it is wound up. Keep a record of the agreements – you do not need to lodge the agreements with the registration application but will need keep with company's records.
8.	Office address	Identify address of registered office and principal place of business (ss142-146 Corporations Act).	The address must be in Australia.



No.	Item	Action	Comments
9.	Occupier's consent (if required)	Obtain occupier's written consent if the company will not occupy the premises at the registered office (s143 Corporations Act).	
10.	TCC and DGR	Seek pre-endorsement advice if the company is to be a TCC and/or DGR.	It may be appropriate to apply to the ATO for pre-endorsement advice that the company will be eligible for endorsement as a TCC when incorporate. This may be done by application in a letter with a copy of the proposed constitution sent to: Australian Taxation Office Non-profit Centre PO Box 300 Penrith NSW 2740
11.	Exemptions and concessions	Seek advice in principle.	
12.	Incorporation	After receiving pre-endorsement approvals in principle, apply for incorporation, ASIC Form 201 + prescribed fee. A copy of the company's constitution must be lodged with the form.	The form may be lodged directly with ASIC or mailed to: Australian Securities and Investments Commission PO Box 4000 Gippsland Mail Centre Vic 3841
13.	Section 150 company	Apply to ASIC for approval to be a section 150 company by lodging an ASIC Form 432.	
14.	Registration	After receipt of application ASIC will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• give the company an Australian Company Name (ACN)• register the company;• issue a Certificate of Registration.	Within 2 days of registration ASIC will issue an 8 digit number associated with the company's ACN (known as the 'corporate key'). The corporate key is used to register and view the company records, lodge forms and receive annual statements online.



No.	Item	Action	Comments
15.	Special purpose company	If applicable, check box on ASIC Form 201 to indicate 'special purpose company', alternatively apply to ASIC by lodging an ASIC Form 484B.	
16.	Auditor	Obtain written consent of auditor.	The directors of the company must appoint an auditor within 1 month after the day the company is registered, unless the company in general meeting appoints an auditor. The auditor appointed by the directors holds office until the first AGM (s327A Corporations Act).
17.	Company name	The Company's name must be displayed prominently at every place at which the company carries on business that is open to the public.	
18.	First directors' meeting to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • table incorporation documentation • open bank accounts • appoint auditor • apply for ABN • decide financial year (s323D Corporations Act) 	Convene meeting in accordance with company's constitution. <i>Seek legal assistance on drafting minutes of first directors meeting, if required.</i>	
19.	ABN and tax endorsements	Apply for ABN and other TCC and DGR endorsements. ABN application form – ATO On receipt of relevant application forms from ATO, apply for endorsement as a TCC and DGR. Lodge form with copies of Constitution and pre-endorsement advice letter.	



No.	Item	Action	Comments
20.	Bank accounts	Open bank accounts as per directors' resolution	
21.	Insurance policies	Take out relevant insurance policies	
22.	Company records and register	Maintain a register of members. Keep a record of all directors' and members; meeting minutes and resolutions	
23.	First AGM	Convene and hold the first AGM in accordance with company's constitution and Corporations Act.	The first AGM must be held within 18 months after registration and thereafter at least once in each calendar year and within 5 months after the end of its financial year (s250N Corporations Act).

The information contained in this checklist is intended as a guide only, and is not legal advice. If you or your organisation has a specific legal issue, please seek legal advice before making a decision about what to do.

Appendices

1. Charlton Community Transport Project Plan
2. Charlton Community Transport Environmental Scan
3. Charlton Community Transport Community Consultation Report
4. Presentation of findings
5. Project Evaluation



Charlton Community Transport Listening Posts

Charlton Neighbourhood House (Rex Theatre)
Friday 5 March & Friday 12 March
between 10 am & 12 noon

Charlton Community Transport Project



Imagine a community transport service that will help residents go where they want when they want – both young and old, families and friends, those with mobility issues, and those who can't drive.



Imagine opportunities to attend events locally and across the region, go shopping in town, attend local and specialist medical appointments, take in a movie at the Rex, or just a fun night out without the hassle of driving.



Imagine a Charlton filled with designated walking and cycling tracks linking key town icons – the town centre, the river front, and sporting facilities that can be accessed by all, whether you are on foot, a bike, or a gopher.



The Charlton Neighbourhood House is developing an integrated Community Transport Plan that has the potential to achieve all of this and more, **but we need your input and ideas.**



Charlton Neighbourhood House
The heart of our community

Charlton Community Transport Project Plan



About the Project:

The Charlton Community Transport project aims to develop a sustainable transport model that caters for the needs of the whole Charlton community.

The project will have a particular focus on shortfalls for youth and non-eligible users under the current model.

In 2018 the Charlton community undertook a successful fundraising campaign to purchase a car to provide transport to senior residents attending specialist medical appointments in Bendigo and Melbourne.

The project operates under the auspice of the Charlton Forum, with the administration of this initially managed by Charlton College and more recently the new Charlton Neighbourhood House who will take on the auspice arrangements once fully established.

In addition to the Charlton Community car, ChartSEC has five vehicles that may be available for community transport services, and the Buloke Loddon L2P program a further 2 vehicles. There is also an UBER driver living and working in the Charlton community and a locally owned and operated Bus Service.

The Charlton Neighbourhood House has identified that the community car is potentially not meeting all of the needs of the community and has therefore sought funding through the Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program to determine where the gaps in service delivery may lie and how these might be addressed.

Areas for consideration include:

- Health & Wellbeing – transport to local GP, rehabilitation and other health service providers
- Community connectivity – transport for local shopping, especially pharmacy and supermarkets
- Social Inclusion – transport to events, parties, movies, children's play dates and coffee dates
- Youth – transport for work placements, school-based apprenticeships, job interviews, sporting events, and incorporation into the L2P program
- CALD – transport for driving lessons

This will be achieved by:

- Gathering knowledge and modelling from various community transport programs
- Consulting with the Charlton community on additional needs for local transport
- Collating data from appropriate government sources
- Scoping a sustainable community transport model

Project Steering Committee

The project is being overseen by a Project Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Charlton Neighbourhood House (Kaylene Cossar, Chair), Charlton Forum (Garry Larmour), North Central LLEN (Jane Hosking), Buloke Shire Council (Mark Remnant) and the Department of Transport (Bryan McEwan).

A Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee has been developed and is attached in Appendix One.

Project Outcomes:

1. Development of a local transport service model which meets the needs of the Charlton community. It is anticipated this may also become a model for other rural communities to consider, so needs to be adaptable;
2. Creation of a suite of governing documents for the service that is shareable with existing and new programs;
3. Presentation of project findings to the Buloke Community Transport Network; and
4. Provide a report outlining any Policy changes (e.g. VPTAS process) required to support integrated community transport models

Project Methodology:



Activity	Estimated time to complete	Completed by
The first step is to explore the landscape by undertaking an environmental scan and interviews with key people, as well as literature review to identify what is happening within the community transport space – locally, regionally, nationally, and globally - that could inform the Charlton Community Transport project.	24 hours	2 February 2021
Our second step is to consult with the Charlton community and other key stakeholders to identify needs, interests and opportunities to better service the Charlton community in terms of local transport options.	50 hours	2 March 2021
It is then that we start to create (step three) – the most exciting stage of the project - as we shape the ideas, solutions, and recommendations with, and for, the Charlton community to consider in relation to community transport.	46 hours	30 March 2021
Step Four will see a presentation of draft ideas and materials to the Charlton Community Transport Project Steering Committee and then more broadly to the Charlton community for their input on the following:		

Activity	Estimated time to complete	Completed by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a local transport service model which meets the needs of the Charlton community. Creation of a suite of governing documents for the service that is shareable with existing and new programs. Provision of a report outlining any Policy changes (e.g. VPTAS process) required to support integrated community transport models 	20 hours	30 March 2021
Step five takes into account feedback to the draft ideas and materials, finalising these ready for implementation by the Charlton Community Transport Steering Committee	18 hours	19 April 2021
<p>The final step (Step Six) is to evaluate whether or not the project outcomes have been achieved (see proposed activities below).</p> <p>At this point a presentation will also be made to the Buloke Community Transport Network presenting the project findings and how these may be adaptable to their needs.</p>	16 hours	11 May 2021
<p>Attendance at Project Steering Committee Meetings and project administration:</p> <p>Proposed meeting dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuesday 1 December 2020 Tuesday 2 February 2021 Tuesday 2 March 2021 Tuesday 30 March 2021 Tuesday 19 April 2021 Tuesday 11 May 2021 	6 hours	Ongoing
<p>Total cost (180 hours @\$60 per hour)*</p> <p>Travel and other expenses*</p>	<p>\$10,800.00</p> <p>\$250.00</p>	* These figures exclude GST

Timeline:

Activity	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	April 2021	May 2021
Explore (environmental scan)							
Consultation							
Create							
Present drafts							
Finalise materials							
Evaluation							

Consultation Plan:

In a Covid “normal” environment where personal and group contact is an option, we will undertake the following as part of Step Two (as outlined in the Project Methodology above):

- Focus Groups with providers and potential users/user groups and their families/carers, also potential users currently relying on families for their transport needs, and volunteer drivers
- Morning Tea Listening Posts at the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- Conversations with Bryan McEwan – what is happening more broadly in the community transport space, Steering Committee Members (Garry, Mark, Kaylene, Jane/Mary-Ann), Win Scott – Mallee Regional Partnerships, other Buloke Community Transport Programs, the Inglewood and Wedderburn community transport initiatives, and RANCH.
- Attendance at group meeting/events where possible, e.g. Probus, Lions, Oasis, CWA, Senior Citizens, Rotary, Play Group, Charlton Forum, Charlton College, Youth Group, FLO program, Council presentation, etc.
- Communication with Church communities, doctor’s surgery, and the Council aged and disability team
- Current and future SWL students and also those transitioning to work
- Information in the Charlton Community Newsletter, North Central News, and Buloke Times
- On-line Survey for community members and Charlton College students to complete

It is hoped that the VET Community Services students at the North Central Trade Training Centre will be able to assist with this STEP as part of their studies (TBC).

Evaluation

To determine whether the project has met its objectives and produced the outcomes required, the following activities will be undertaken:

- Reflection session with the Project Steering Committee – have we met the conditions of the MOU and the core objectives of the project (facilitated session by Consultant)
- Evaluation survey to consultation participants about the model to obtain feedback
- Focus group sessions with current volunteer drivers
- Community meetings/listening post to get feedback on the proposed model
- A Celebration event to formally launch the proposed local transport service model and suite of governing documents.

APPENDIX ONE

Charlton Community Transport Program Management Group Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Project Management Group

The Program Management Group (PMG) provides strategic leadership and oversight of the Charlton Community Transport. The PMG adopts a co-design approach to ensure that, a sustainable community transport model that caters for the needs of the whole Charlton community is considered, directly inform the development, implementation and evaluation of the project.

The Project Management Group is accountable for:

- Adopting a co-design approach across the life of the program.
- Building trust and collaboration between key partners and stakeholders.
- Endorsing program reports from the Charlton Community Transport Project Manager.
- Monitoring and managing risks to the program.
- Oversighting and endorsing any marketing and / or communication products developed for the program.
- Oversighting the development of the program evaluation framework.
- Providing leadership around advocacy and systems responses to program learnings i.e. gaps in community transport for Charlton residents.

Membership

This Program Management Group encompasses representatives from Charlton Neighbourhood House, North Central LLEN, Charlton Community Car Committee, Department of Transport Regional Transport Planning Loddon Mallee and Buloke Shire Council.

Project Management Group members:

- Jane Hosking - Executive Officer, North Central LLEN
- Bryan McEwan Senior Transport Planner, Department of Transport (Loddon Mallee)
- Garry Larmour, Secretary, Charlton Community Car Committee
- Mark Remnant, Manager Community Services, Buloke Shire Council
- Kaylene Cossar, President, Charlton Neighbourhood House

Reporting

The Charlton Community Transport Project Manager will report to the CCT Management Group, and the Charlton Neighbourhood House will report to Department of Transport Regional Transport Planning Loddon Mallee and will be responsible the overall project management and employment.

Committee Format

Chair -Kaylene Cossar

Deputy Chair -Jane Hosking or alternate LLEN representative

Secretariat – Deb Finlay or Kaylene Cossar

Meeting Frequency and Location First Tuesday of every month @ The Rex Candy Bar.

Meeting Quorum

A minimum of 50% of members must be present. If the quorum is not met, meetings are to be re-scheduled. It is important that meetings are scheduled in advance and all members commit to attending meetings.

A proxy can stand in for members, however, if a proxy attends for a member on more than two consecutive occasions membership may be reviewed.

Decision Making

Decisions made by consensus. However, if agreement cannot be reached then each member will have one vote. If the result is a split decision, the Chair will have the casting vote.

Urgent decisions between meetings will be progressed by email via the Chair. If members do not respond within a given timeline, it will be deemed that they are supportive of the recommendation.

Disputes / Grievances

Program Management Group members are responsible to address issues by negotiation.

Other NIL



Charlton Community Transport Project

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Transport Disadvantage

Transport disadvantage occurs when local transport options make it difficult for people to access services, activities, education, employment and community networks. This can lead to social and economic exclusion and can affect the well being of individuals and communities. Transport disadvantage is more common for people in outer metropolitan, regional and rural areas where public transport services are limited, and for people who have low mobility due to age, disability, health issues or economic circumstances.

Community transport can play an important role in overcoming transport disadvantage. It consists mainly of services offered by councils and not-for-profit community organisations using cars, minibuses, brokered taxis, or a combination of these, to fill gaps in public and private transport. Typically, clients are the elderly, disabled or those otherwise unable to access public and private transport. (*Victorian Auditor-General's Report Local Community Transport Services: the Transport Connections program*).

The following criteria are used to define people as being transport disadvantaged:

Mobility Criteria

- People whose physical health status renders them with a permanent mobility disability that leaves them unable to use conventional transport systems. This includes the frail elderly, younger people with disabilities and their carers.
- People whose physical health status renders them with a temporary mobility disability that leaves them unable to use conventional transport systems.
- People who are socially isolated due to diagnosed mental illness, behaviour difficulties and delayed development.

Isolation Criteria

- People who live in towns of less than 500 people that do not have access to conventional transport systems.
- People who need to access community facilities and resources, which are not available within the hours when conventional public transport operates.

Age Based Criteria

- Pre-school aged children travelling with an adult who experience problems in accessing conventional transport systems.
- Young people up to the age of 18 years who need to travel more than 1.6 km to community facilities and resources, which are not available within the hours when conventional public transport operates.

Taken from "IN SEARCH OF AN EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR THE TRANSPORT DISADVANTAGED", Helen C. Battellino

What is Community Transport?

In 2008, the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) undertook a Community Transport Snapshot Project which defined as community transport to be:

- ***not-for-profit***
- ***flexible***
- ***able to adapt to the level of service required by passengers on the day of travel***
- ***passenger focused***

In addition, community transport was defined as transport that is designed primarily to support vulnerable and transport disadvantaged members of the community to access services and participate in community life.

While the Community Transport Snapshot Project (2008) acknowledged that community transport is of benefit to a range of people, it emphasised the particular relevance it has to people who:

- live in areas where public transport and taxi services are unviable due to low population density/isolation
- require door-to-door transport but are unable to afford taxis (i.e. travel frequently or long distances)
- have dementia or cognitive impairments
- speak a language other than English
- have extremely low disposable income
- have complex disabilities, especially barriers to communication or behavioural issues
- are very frail and require physical assistance
- require supported transport to access public transport services (e.g. transport to and from stations and bus stops, especially in rural areas)
- would typically use public transport but are temporarily unable to do so (due to illness or temporary disability) and are unable to afford taxis



Young People and Transport

THE NATIONAL YOUTH AFFAIRS RESEARCH SCHEME (NYARS) undertook a research project in 2005 to look at ways to improve access to transport for young people in rural and regional Australia.

Whilst, the research was undertaken 15 years ago, many of the same issues are still prevalent for young people today. Lack of access to transport can be a major problem for young people in rural and regional areas. Inaccessibility to public transport means greater reliance on private vehicles and for young people continued dependence on the family and friends for access to education, employment, training, recreation and social activities. Without transport, access to activities is limited and economic and social opportunities can be restricted.

The figure below (taken from the report) explains the relationship between transport and young people in a rural setting, whilst the table at the right (also from the report) shows the results of consultation with young people on the issues and problems associated with different types of transport options for rural young people.

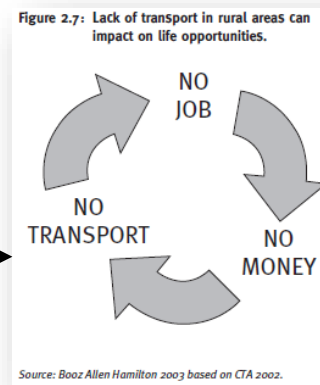
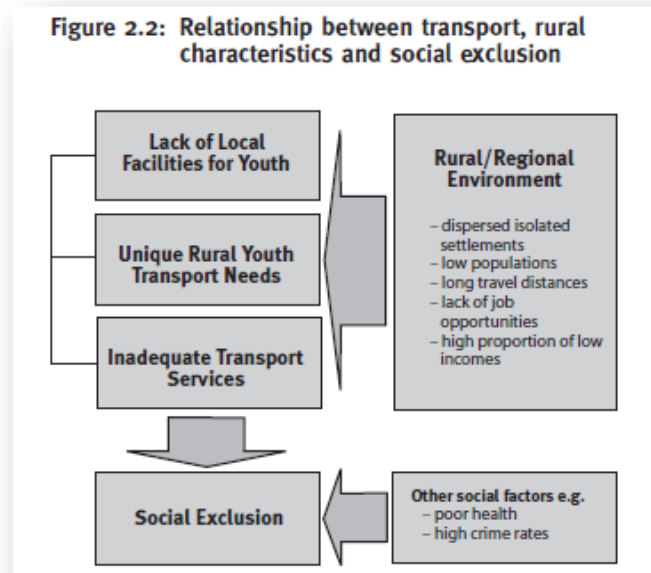
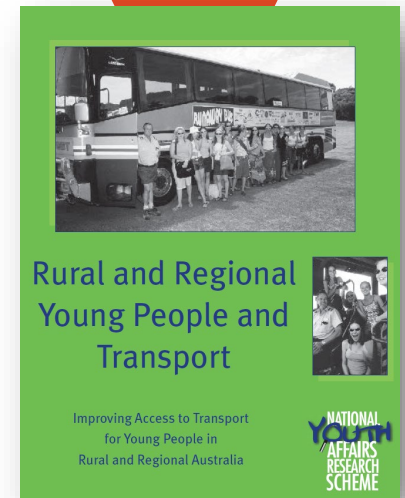


Table 2.7: Young people in rural and regional Australia – transport issues and problems

Transport mode	Comment	Frequency of comment
Public transport	No public transport, lack of public transport.	86
	Poor public transport area coverage/areas not covered.	48
	No night or early morning services, poor service span.	39
	Fare too high to use for young people.	36
	Services too irregular, low service frequency.	28
	Lack of weekend services.	17
	Concession fares not available.	8
	Unreliable buses.	8
	Poor interchange coordination between buses.	7
	Indirect long travel time by bus.	4
Public transport cont.	Public transport not accessible to disabled persons.	4
	No access to available school bus.	3
	Unsafe to travel by bus.	3
	No access to bus since it is for Aboriginal travellers.	1
	Buses run at difficult times.	1
	Poor quality public transport.	1
	Poor awareness of bus services.	1
Car (driver/lift)	Very dependent on parents/others to get around via lifts.	31
	Insurance/petrol costs too high for young drivers.	6
	Need to rely on hitchhiking, this is unreliable and can be dangerous/unsafe.	5
	Very long car travel distances for parents – takes too much of their time.	4
	Low car ownership.	3
	People drink and drive since there is no other option.	1
Taxi	Taxi too expensive.	10
	Taxi difficult to get/cannot get.	4
Walk	Need to walk long-distances.	5
Bike	No bike paths.	2
Community transport	No access to community transport.	4

Young People and Transport

Also from the NYARS research project on Rural and Regional Young people and Transport, the table below on the left gives a good overview of the typical activities undertaken by young people, whilst the table on the right shows the impacts of transport problems on young people in rural and regional Australia.

Table 2.1: Typical activities undertaken by young people

Age group	Typical activities
Pre-school years	Play-school, informal play with other children, birthday parties.
Early primary years	School, play with other children outside school, visits to places of interest, parties.
Upper primary	School, informal play, more formalised sporting activities, uniformed organisations, visits of a more educational nature, hobbies and interests, first sleepover, parties.
Lower secondary (pre-teens)	School, after-school activities, sports (school teams or local teams), outdoor recreational activities other than team games, uniformed organisations, youth clubs, visiting friends made at school (new friends made at comprehensive school may well be in another village many miles on the other side of town), first paid employment (legally from age 12), longer residential activities with peer group, disco, youth club.
Upper secondary (mid-teens)	School, after-school activities, more serious sport, following own interests in outdoor activities, some general youth organisations or clubs still retaining appeal, more specialised organisations in line with their own interests, staying over with friends, a greater range of part-time employment, more serious partying.
16 plus	Further education in a less formal institution than school, apprenticeship, some in first full-time employment, able to ride a moped or drive a tractor on the road, serious partying, clubbing, dating, holidays without parents, full membership of sports/activity clubs/groups.
18 plus	Higher education/university, part-time and holiday employment to support this, more in full-time employment, pubbing, clubbing, more dating and marriage, whole range of activities/interests/entertainments.

Source: Booz Allen Hamilton (2003) adapted from CTA (2002).

Table 2.8: Impacts of transport problems on young people in rural and regional Australia

Comment	Frequency of comment
Restrict education and employment opportunities ⁵ .	93
Restricted social opportunities.	90
Restricted service (e.g. medical) opportunities.	52
Isolation, insularity.	52
Car dependency, reliance on others, no independence.	32
Stress/dismay.	28
Early age drinking/mischief.	25
Car purchase results in debt problems.	13
Arrive late to work, school or appointment.	13
Unsafe behaviours e.g. hitchhiking.	11
Drink drive.	9
Unlicensed driving.	8
Unsafe walking long-distances.	7
Strain on accommodation near education and employment centres.	6
Poor drive skills/driver fatigue – accidents.	6
People leave township.	4



Rural and Regional
Young People and
Transport

Improving Access to Transport
for Young People in
Rural and Regional Australia



NATIONAL
AFFAIRS
RESEARCH
SCHEME

Young People and Transport

The NYARS research project on Rural and Regional Young people and Transport also included case studies on community transport projects providing transport for young people in rural and regional areas, however many of these are either no longer in existence or operate in a modified capacity.

This information is still useful when considering potential options for the Integrated Charlton Community Transport model.

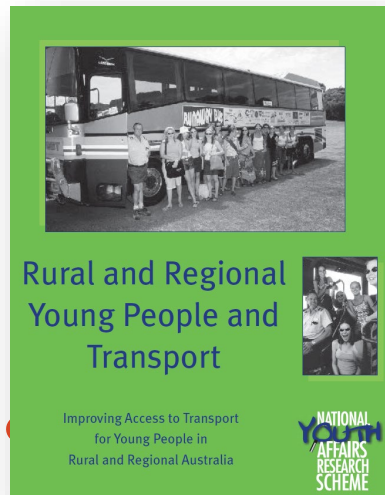


Table 3.2: Selected community transport projects providing transport for young people in rural and regional Australia

Project	Funding	Service types	Trip types
New South Wales			
BAT Bus (Byron Area Travel Bus)	NSW Ministry of Transport – AAS Community Fundraising Small income from charging low fares	On-demand service, self-drive buses and vans, chartered buses, volunteers cars, hire taxis, brokerage of community buses – depends on size of group	Social activities and recreation
Hawkesbury Community Transport Service	Ministry of Transport – AAS	Cab-charge system Community buses provide door-to-door service after discos. Buses are hired to community organisations on weekends Driver training schemes (in future) Pool of family drivers give lifts to other children	Social and recreational activities
Youth on Wheels Inc	NSW Ministry of Transport and sponsored by Northern Rivers Community Transport	Brokerage of buses from operators and self-drive vehicle depending on needs. Demand responsive service.	Social, sporting, or recreational
Victoria			
Wimmera VeT Bus	Vic. Department of Education and Training, School Focused Youth Service, Local Learning and Employment Network, Regional Youth Committee, schools and shires	Two fixed bus routes on a daily basis	Attend VeT courses
Victorian Youth Access Bus Initiative	Initially from the Department of Education and Training	Initiative allows students to access spare seats on free school buses	Education and training programs
West Australia			
Runaway Bus	Corporate sponsorship, South West Coach Lines, South West regional development commission, shires	Provides a fixed route and timetable bus service One trip each way a day, \$5 fare	Taking young people (13-17 years) to the beach

Table 3.1: Transport Services available in rural and regional areas

Transport type	Operator/regulation	Service features
Scheduled public transport		
Regional centre bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly run by private operators Some jurisdictions subsidise service levels/fares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally low frequency (hourly services) Typically services are based around school bus services i.e. buses used for school bus runs are then used for general services in the middle of the day Rare to have services in the evening and weekend Typical to find parts of areas not covered by services
Inter-regional bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by private operators Mix of commercial (long-distance) and subsidised services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically a few trips a week Not for local travel Fares are generally high (commercial) Some services timed to make connections with rail to major centres hence timing can be during the night
Regional "Village to town" bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by private operators Mix of commercial (long-distance) and subsidised services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually a few trips a week Not for local travel Fares medium to high
Regional rail services (including inter-State rail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All run by State-based rail authorities Services levels and fares subsidised by government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of several services a day to occasional services in remote areas Rarely for local travel Service timings often fit long-distance travel to a major city i.e. very early a.m.
Regional air services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private airlines Some subsidies provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very long-distance services Frequency ranges from a few services a day to a few a week Not for local travel
School bus services		
School bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by private operators Funded by State/Territory Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of fare paying and free services. Free services for longer distance children Some subsidies provided to encourage parent drop off and pick up to buses Single weekday a.m. in trip and single p.m. return home Sometimes bus trip times can be long Mainly for child school access – rarely available for wider community use
Special school bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by private operators with government funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special services to enable access by disabled children living in regional areas to urban schools
Taxi services		
Taxi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run by private companies Some subsidies available fares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided in regional centres. Little/no services in rural and remoter areas Special subsidies for groups including disabled persons available in some areas Booking times can include long waits in most areas
Community transport Services		
Community transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large mix of service types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranges from organised services to self-help groups Includes health and community services run by State and local government groups

Taxis and Commercial Passenger Vehicles

- Vehicles that are used to provide a Commercial Vehicle Passenger (CVP) service must be registered with Commercial Vehicles Passengers Victoria (CPVV)
- Taxis are CPVs that are not booked or can be hailed in the street
- Booked CPVs are taxis, rideshare vehicles, hire cars and wedding cars etc)
- All drivers of a CPV must be accredited. This requires an application to CPVV, a medical, an application and annual fee, and a Vic driver's license
- Booking Service Providers may own one or more registered CPVs, which can then be driven by Bailee drivers (usually a registered small business owner who drives the car, does not own it, and shares a percentage of the takings.
- More information is found at www.cpv.vic.gov.au



Traveller's Aid <https://www.travellersaid.org.au/>

Enabling Everyday Journeys

Travellers Aid provides support, advice and assistance to the travelling public including people with special requirements or experiencing travel emergencies.

[Learn more...](#)



Connection Assistance

Use our free Connection Assistance service at Southern Cross Station and Seymour Station.



Mobility Equipment Hire

Hire electric scooters, manual wheelchairs, prams, walking canes & frames, crutches and more.



Luggage Storage

Securely store luggage at Flinders Street Station in our lounge on the main concourse near the escalators between platforms 9 and 10.



Companion Service

Trained volunteer companions to accompany you to and from essential appointments and services.

Community Transport Associations

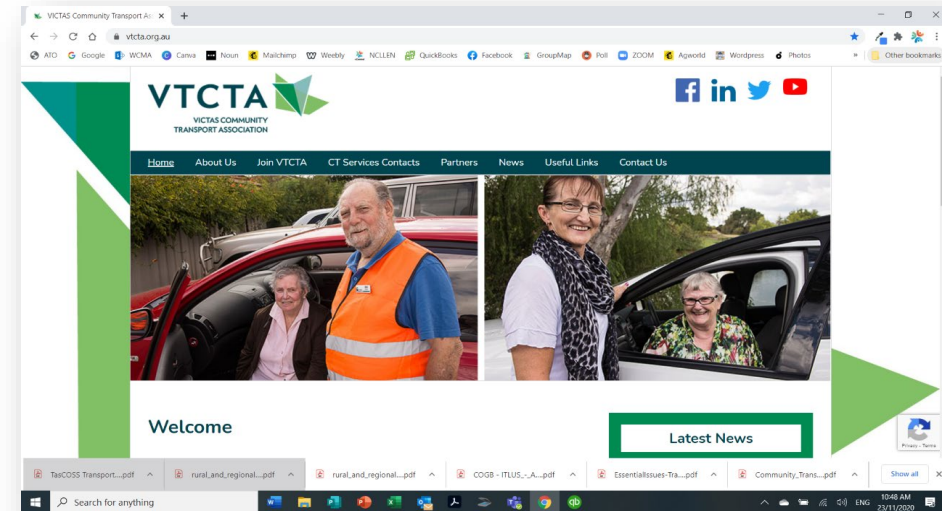
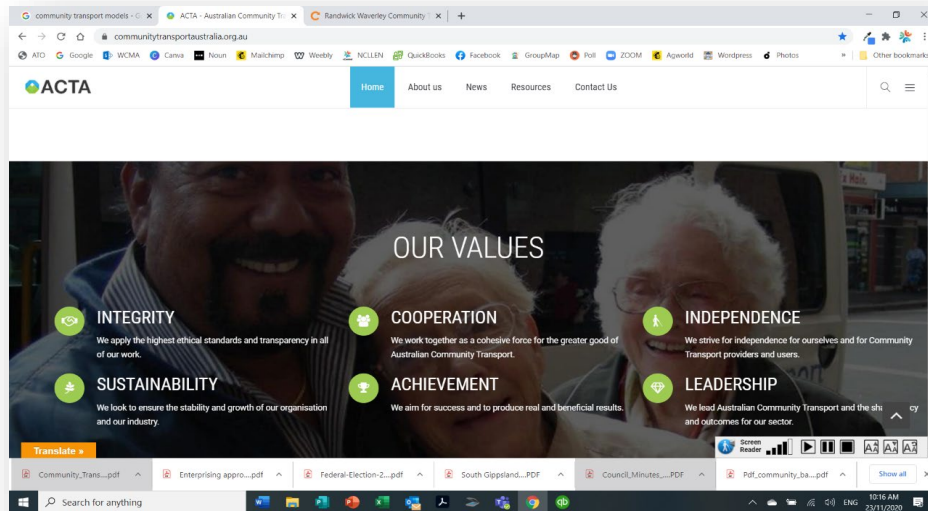
There is both a national community transport association and state bodies.

The [Australian Community Transport Association \(ACTA\)](#) was founded in February 2011 comprising representatives from QLD, NSW & Victoria with a view to providing a national voice for community transport sector on a national level.

The [VICTAS Community Transport Association \(VICTA\)](#) is the peak body representing community transport providers in the States of Victoria and Tasmania. They advocate on behalf of community transport providers across Victoria and Tasmania, highlighting the importance of their role, and the function of community transport, in developing more socially inclusive communities in Victoria and Tasmania.

They also seek to influence transport policy and contribute to public awareness of the importance of access to transport for all people in the community.

VICTAS supports its members through providing timely information, education and advice, and working in collaboration to improve the quality of community transport and to achieve standards of excellence in the sector.



Neighbourhood House Community Transport Toolbox

The RANCH (Regional Association of Neighbourhood and Community Houses) Network has undertaken a two phase project to address transport disadvantage within its network of 29 Neighbourhood and Community Houses.

In early 2016, the RANCH worked with staff from the Loddon Mallee Integrated Cancer Services to undertake a gap analysis of community transport at NHs in the Loddon Mallee Region; a review of five successful Neighbourhood House transport programs to identify the factors that make them successful; the development of a toolkit to assist other Neighbourhood Houses establish or enhance their transport programs; and funding (\$5000 each) for three Neighbourhood Houses in the region to either establish or enhance transport programs for cancer and other patients using the toolkit.

[Click here](#) to view the Neighbourhood House Community Transport Project Report (January 2018).

The second stage of the Neighbourhood House Community Transport Project (NHCTP) involved a collaborative, action research approach to the development of four Neighbourhood House community transport models that have the potential for sustainability.

[Click here](#) for the NHCTP-Towards Sustainable Models report (July 2019)

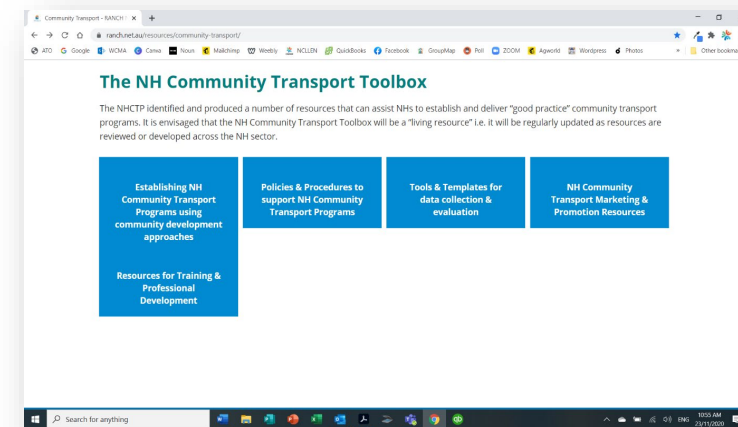
The Toolbox

The NHCTP identified and produced a number of resources that can assist Neighbourhood Houses to establish and deliver “good practice” community transport programs. It is envisaged that the NHCTTB will be a “living resource” i.e. it will be regularly updated as resources are reviewed or developed across the Neighbourhood House sector.

Components include:

- Establishing Neighbourhood House Community Transport Programs using community development approaches
- Policies & Procedures to support Neighbourhood House Community Transport Programs
- Tools & Templates for data collection & evaluation
- Neighbourhood House Community Transport Marketing & Promotion Resources
- Resources for Training & Professional Development

[Click here](#) to access the Toolbox.



Specialist Services that have links to transport disadvantage

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

www.ndis.gov.au

The NDIS funds a range of supports and services which may include education, employment, social participation, independence, living arrangements and health and wellbeing.

These supports will help participants to:

- increase their independence
- increase community and workplace participation, and
- develop their capacity to actively take part in the community.

The types of support may include

- transport to enable participation in community, social, economic and daily life activities

There are approximately 107 NDIS participants in Charlton. Participants work with a provider to develop a care plan suited to them. The NDIS provider for the Buloke Shire is [Interreach](#).

Department of Justice (DoJ)

While there are a range of support services available for people who may need to attend court, transport to the court is not specifically mentioned.

People in rural areas who do not have their own transport, access to public transport, or family/friends support may have difficulty attending court.

Lawyers are often located in larger towns, and accessing legal support may also be difficult for some people.

An expanded service to allow the transport of people to attend court hearings would be useful. However, there are currently no subsidies available for this type of service, so it would have to be on full cost recovery.

Latest crime statistics show that Family Violence incidents are increasing in Buloke. Women and children who need to leave often have no transport. The community car could be used to support families in this situation



Health and community transport

Murray Primary Health Network (Murray PHN)

Murray PHN is a part of the national network of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia. They work closely with the primary health system to identify opportunities to improve health outcomes in the community, through better coordination and support of health services and by commissioning new services to address the health needs of the population, helping patients to receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

Charlton is within the Murray PHN, although people can access health care wherever they wish.

A recent Health Navigators survey found that 86% of people thought that assistance should be provided to help with organising transport for health appointments

One of the roles of the Murray PHN is to redevelop models of care to ensure people have the right care at the right time.

More information at <https://www.murrayphn.org.au/>





Health and community transport

Local health Services

A number of Health Services exist in the North Central Region that provide a range of specialist medical appointments to people in Charlton and throughout Buloke.

These services include: GPs, Allied Health, Aged Care, Primary Health Care, Specialist Care

They are delivered at:

- Medical Centres,
- Community Health Centres,
- Public and Private Hospitals and
- Private Rooms throughout the region, including Bendigo, Swan Hill, Castlemaine, Echuca and Ballarat

Some services are providing appointments using telehealth, but depending on the type of service, this is not always available or appropriate

Some specialist doctors provide services at multiple locations.

This complexity all adds to the need for a flexible local community transport program with a variety of options.



**Volunteer Transport – Connecting
Loddon Mallee Communities to
Bendigo Health
Literature review
June 2020**

Health and community transport

In 2020 the DoT provided funding to Bendigo Health to explore and describe the role that volunteer transport provides in connecting Loddon Mallee communities to the Bendigo Hospital and to identify opportunities to enhance access and better inform communities across the region on ways to access Bendigo Health services.

The Literature review, undertaken as part of the project, identified that connecting Loddon Mallee communities to Bendigo Health was limited predominantly to those with their own means of transport, or with access to a community car service such as the Charlton community car.

It found that those with limited mobility were particularly transport disadvantaged and there was a need to address this through any identified solutions.

A copy of the full report is available from JLS Consulting.

Charlton Profile

- There are 1,050 people in Charlton
- 30.5% of the population of Charlton are aged 65+
- At the date of the last Census, 0% used public transport to travel to work, with 65% driving a car or were a passenger
- 38.3% of households were lone person dwellings
- 34.5% of occupied private dwellings had one registered motor vehicle garaged or parked at their address, 34.1% had two registered motor vehicles and 18.5% had three or more registered motor vehicles.
- 5.5% of private dwellings have no registered motor vehicle
- 5.8% of people aged over 65 have no registered motor vehicle
- 3.6% of people had difficulty or were not able to travel to places they needed to go to
- 10.2% receive disability support pension
- There are 107 NDIS participants
- 41.2% of the adult populations are insufficiently active
- 35.7% of adults saw a medical specialist

Charlton Community transport

CharTSEC

Five Toyota Corolla vehicles are used, three automatic and two manual.

Pre-Driver education is predominantly for school students, but there have been suggestions about broadening the scope during quieter periods to provide services to migrants, older drivers who require a licence review, and driver safety education programs for people with mobility aids.

The CharTSEC cars are sometimes used to fill the demand for the Community Car, when they are not being used.

Charlton College Mini-Bus

The minibus is used to transport students to activities and events inside and outside of school hours. There is a cost of hire, with driver needing to be over 25 years of age. Currently the minibus is used predominantly to take the under 16s cricket team to away games.

TAC L2P Program

This program has two vehicles, which are used to allow Learner drivers to practice driving in all sorts of conditions while clocking up their required driving hours. The program is managed by the Charlton College and NCLEN, and uses volunteer drivers. It is delivered flexibly across the Charlton and wider communities.

Start's Bus Line

The private bus company has 3 x 21 seater buses and a 46 seater coach. Starts is contracted by DET to provide school buses. It also holds an urban school bus contract to provide a town service on a cost recovery basis.

Starts also provides Charter services for private and community groups outside of school hours or within school hours.

They also support many community groups by reducing fees to take them to fund raising activities etc

Their trained drivers are local. They also service their vehicles locally.

They trialled a town bus service in 2007, but it was not well supported so they discontinued it.



Community Car

Charlton Forum, in conjunction with the Charlton Neighbourhood House, offers a community transport option with volunteer drivers to assist local residents attending non-urgent medical appointments.

The service travels to the following locations:

- Bendigo,
- Ballarat,
- Kerang,
- Maryborough,
- St Arnaud,
- Wycheproof.
- Boort,
- Donald,
- Horsham,
- Melbourne,
- Swan Hill, and

The service is offered on a fee-for-service basis and must be booked in advance through the Neighbourhood House either in person or by phoning 5491 2333.

If the trip is over 100 kilometres, staff will help you complete a VPTAS form which will allow you to obtain reimbursement for some, or all, of the trip.

Buloke Shire



BIRCHIP

"Birchip Cares" Community Car provides non-urgent medical transport to local residents who have no other means to attend specialist appointments.

A referral from a doctor is required, and bookings are made via the Birchip P-12 School.

Experienced volunteer drivers will transport patients to their appointments and fees are charged in alignment with the VPTAS rebate scheme so customers are not out of pocket.

Birchip Community Bus - The Birchip Forum provides a 12-seater bus for use by local groups and organisations. It costs \$0.80 per kilometre to hire (including fuel) and is available seven days a week.

SEA LAKE

Sea Lake Community Car - The Sea Lake Neighbourhood House together with the Mallee Track Health and Community Service provide access to volunteer transport options for local residents and in surrounding districts to attend non-urgent medical appointments.

The cost is \$0.22 km and if the distance is over 200 km there is an additional \$15 charge.



DONALD

The Donald Community Centre provides a vehicle to transport local residents to non-urgent medical appointments and to attend social inclusion events.

The cost is \$10 within the Donald township, and for other travel a \$20 booking fee applies as well as \$0.30 per kilometre travel which includes an experienced volunteer driver.

Donald Community Bus - an 18-seat self-drive community bus is available to hire for excursions and outings. One seat can be removed to accommodate a wheelchair and the bus is fitted with a wheelchair lifter.

There is no hire fee (donations are welcome towards maintenance and upkeep) and all users are asked to refuel before returning the bus. The driver must have an articulated licence. It is not available during the day on Wednesday and Friday.



WYCHEPROOF

The Wycheproof Community Resource Centre (WCRC) operates a community car for residents of Wycheproof, Nullawil and surrounding districts.

Volunteer drivers are available to transport aged and disability service users to non-urgent medical appointments across Victoria on a fee for service basis (\$0.21 per kilometre).

The vehicle can seat five people plus a wheelchair.

Loddon Mallee region

GANNAWARRA SHIRE

Gannawarra Non-Emergency Transport Service (GNETS) assists residents requiring travel to medical appointments in Echuca, Bendigo, Shepparton and Swan Hill. It does not travel to Melbourne.

Volunteer drivers pick you up from home, drive you to your appointment, and return you home again when you are finished. Eligibility is limited to clients who are frail, aged, suffering from a chronic illness, have a disability and cannot use public transport.



Quambatook Community Bus - The Quambatook Community Resource Centre operates a 12-seater community bus service (with disability access) to Kerang each Monday. Cost is \$5 return.



Cohuna Community Bus - The 16-seater bus is available for hire/drive by individuals, groups and organisations. Eligibility for this bus is limited to frail aged and/or people with a disability. Cost is \$20 for 1/2 day and \$40 full day. Any travel over 10 kilometres is charged at an additional \$0.60 per kilometre.

Bus Stop Recycle Shop Community Transport Service - The community transport service owns an 11-seater (or 9 seat plus 2 wheelchairs) bus and a modified Caddy (5 people plus a wheelchair) for use by Gannawarra Shire residents/community groups.

The vehicles can be self-driven or members of the Op-shop group may be available to drive (some will volunteer, some will charge). Drivers must be over the age of 25 and under 80 and have held their licence for 3 years.

Caddy hire in Gannawarra Shire and to Barham is \$20, hire fee outside this area is \$60 plus fuel. Bus hire is \$60 plus fuel (+\$30 cleaning bond). Overnight options (maximum of 2) available within Victoria.



Swan Hill Rural City Council - Swan Hill Neighbourhood operates a community car to transport older people and people with disabilities to non-urgent medical appointments on a fee-for-service basis

Loddon Shire Council - The Inglewood Community Bus is for use by Inglewood and district community groups and not-for-profit organisations. Priority is given to people with disabilities and transport disadvantaged senior citizens. Hire is \$60 per day or \$10 per hour for shorter trips plus fuel.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council - Community Driven is a volunteer run program helping people in community members access predominantly medical appointments and is a joint initiative of the Lancefield and Romsey Neighbourhood Houses. It helps people get to their medical appointments in locations such as Melbourne, Bendigo, Sunbury and of course between Lancefield and Romsey.

Loddon Mallee region

Campaspe Shire Council provides a Community Transport Service, available to assist frail older people and people with disabilities who are unable to get to medical appointments using public transport or other transport options. Trained volunteer drivers can take you to your appointment using a Council owned vehicle. As there is no government funding for this service, it is dependent on driver and vehicle availability. It is available only to eligible people and a fee is charged.

- **Gigarre** offers a community car program to transport local residents (and those living in nearby Stanhope) with a priority given to those attending medical appointments in nearby regional centres and in Melbourne, charging users a nominal fee. The service is underpinned by a community nursery with profits used to replace the car every three years.
- The **Rushworth Community Transport Service** provides social support and access to medical and associated medical procedures that are not available within the town precinct but in larger towns in the surrounding area (Bendigo, Echuca and Shepparton). It does not provide a direct service to Melbourne but will provide transport to the nearest train station for the client to access appointments in Melbourne. For My Aged Care clients there is a small fee attached to the service. For HACC clients the service is free.

They have also recently received funding to commence a community taxi service (September 2020) and are in the consultation phase to identify what will suit potential customers.

Mount Alexander Shire Council

- **Maldon Neighbourhood Centre Inc.** offers a local flexible door to door community transport service for residents to go shopping, the station, GP and hospital appointments, the library, visit friends, go swimming, to the movies, the hairdressers, etc in an 11-seater bus. It meets the Airport Bus and V/Line trains and provides flexible bus services between Maldon, Baringhup, Castlemaine, Chewton, Wesley Hill, Barkers Creek, Campbells Creek, and includes trips to Kangaroo Flat and Maryborough on a weekly timetable. Cost is \$5 per day per user.

City of Greater Bendigo

- **RFDS Victoria has partnered with Heathcote Health** to provide a community transport service for the Heathcote region. With the support of the Heathcote and District Community Bank and a team of volunteer drivers, the Community Transport service offers free transport for eligible community members to access their health appointments and Planned Activity Groups. To be eligible to use the service clients must: Have a pension card, concession card or DVA card, Live within 30km of Heathcote, Be accessing a health appointment or Planned Activity Group.



Rural and regional Victoria

A number of community across rural and regional Victoria offer community transport services, again predominantly to service elderly, frail and disabled residents attend non-urgent medical appointments.

Some other models include:

- **Whittlesea community transport service** can assist with journeys to medical appointments, essential community, welfare and professional services, social support or health group activities, essential food shopping, and to visit friends and relatives at health or care facilities
- **Wimmera Community Transport network:** In 2015 a proposal was put together for a framework for a centrally coordinated Wimmera Community transport service to reduce transport access barriers and support a broader, long-term vision of a truly connected Wimmera in which more residents can choose to stay living in their homes for longer.



Wimmera VET Bus

The Wimmera Mallee Southern Mallee VET Cluster coordinates with regional public transport services to enable students from rural areas to travel to Horsham to undertake vocational education studies.

The Framework aimed to provide a centralized service to meet the needs of residents living in Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City Council, and West Wimmera Shire and included a group door-to-door transport, a travel companion service, and individual transport for discharged hospital patients.

This service is managed by the [Centre of Participation](#) and aims to help people overcome transport limitations so they can still access essential services, maintain social connections, access educational opportunities and help people get out and about.

Peninsula Transport Assist

Incorporated is a Deductible Gift Receipt (DGR) and Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and was established in 2013.



Its mission is to promote and provide affordable and accessible transport and support options for the transport disadvantaged throughout Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.

PTA provides volunteer assisted transport and community bus hire services delivered through an innovative vehicle and volunteering sharing service model including:

Community bus hire service and register – individuals and community organisation can hire buses directly from PTA or through their vehicle registry.

The registry works by enabling community groups to share each other's vehicles on a cost recovery basis. Organisations can receive an income by hiring their buses to other community groups out on days when they're not being used.

PTA takes care of all the booking arrangements, provides additional accident insurance cover, invoices borrowers and pays the lending organisation a bus hire fee.

Volunteer ridesharing service – volunteers use their own cars to provide mobility assistance to older customers who need help getting to medical appointments, shops and community services as well as to health and leisure activities.

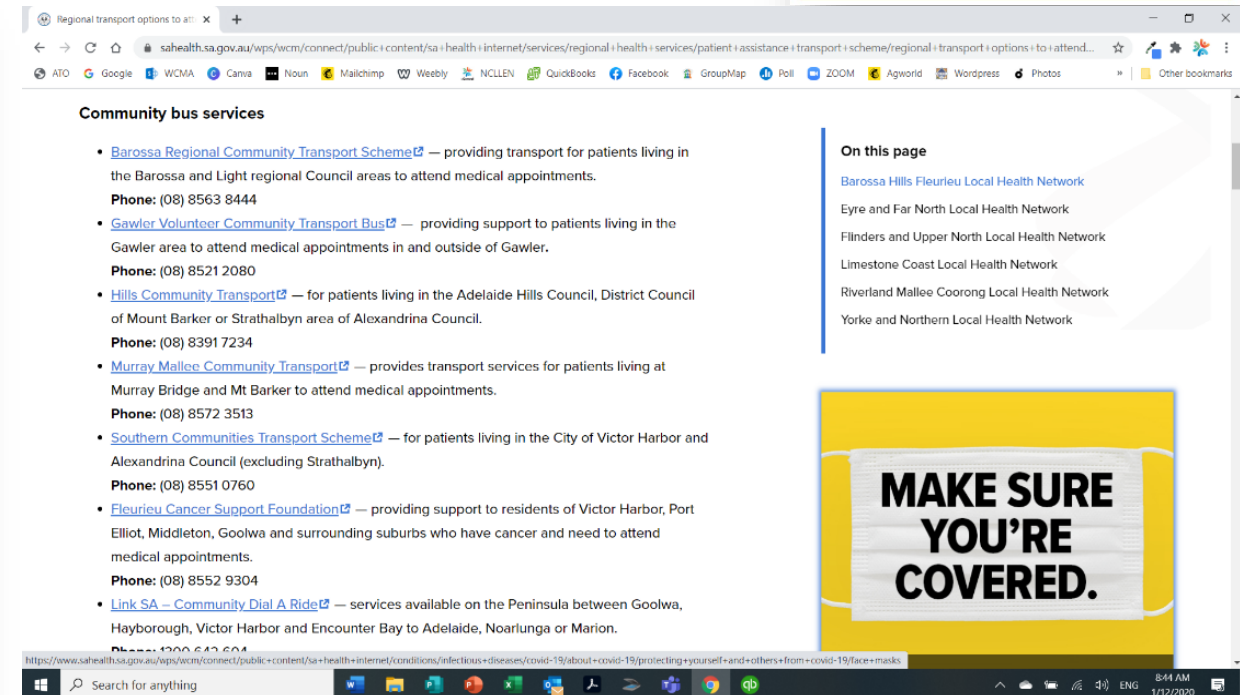
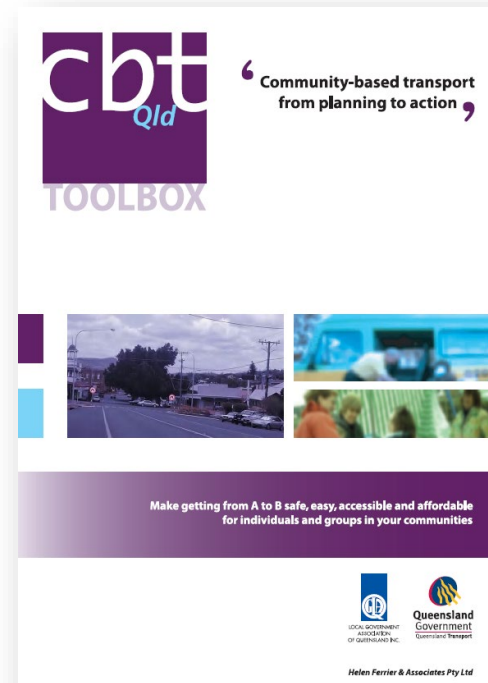
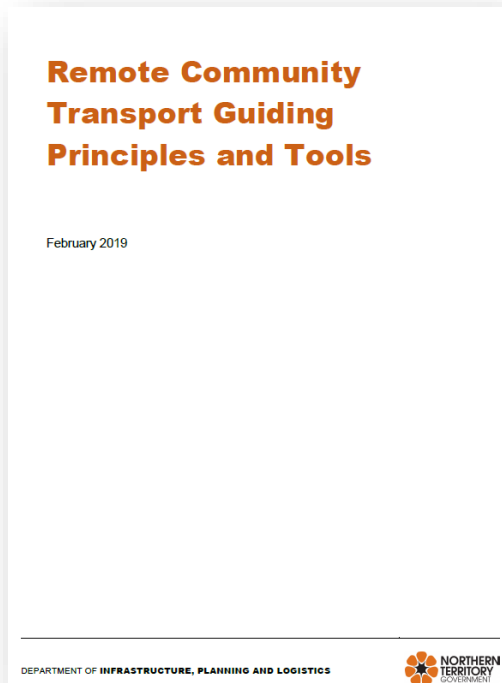
Volunteer bus drivers – volunteers are available for community groups to use as bus drivers. They can drive for one off bus trips, or for regular community services.

Rural New South Wales

Many regional New South Wales Councils operate some form of community transport program, predominantly to enable elder, frail, or disabled residents to attend non-urgent medical appointments with some also offer services NDIS, and for social connectivity purposes.

These are funded through the NSW Department of Transport as well as receiving federal HACC funding.

Other Australian States



United Kingdom

Barnet Community Transport was established in 2002 in North London. Its key aim is to help people realise their potential by providing affordable, safe, accessible and reliable community transport to the London Borough of Barnet and its surrounding areas. It has also recently added the objective of being a resource for young people (aged up to 30) to access support, assistance and programs of educational, physical and other activities. It is a registered charity and also has private company limited by guarantee status. It operates a fleet of 14 vehicles, including three specially adapted mobile youth facility vehicles.

Cuckmere Community Bus was established in 1976 in East Sussex with the aim of providing reliable and accessible transport to residents in the Cuckmere Valley region. It is a registered charity and also has private company limited by guarantee status. It operates eight 16-seater fully accessible low floor minibuses that deliver on 25 local bus service routes seven days a week.

The Friendly Bus was originally set up in 1999 in order to bridge the gap caused by the limited commercial and public transport available in the rural towns of Broseley and Much Wenlock, in Shropshire. It is a registered charity and also has private company limited by guarantee status. It operates a small fleet of four buses of differing sizes and has also expanded to offer a community car scheme and has recently introduced a 'car club' scheme.

Tavistock Country Bus was established in 1981 in Devon and is a registered charity. Its key purpose is to extend mobility and independence to those who do not have access to local public or commercial transport or a car. It has a focused delivery model consisting of a single bus operating a core service to the town centre three days a week, with a supplementary service offered to outside of Tavistock.

- What works: Successful community transport (June 2017), Power to Change

power to change | business in community hands

Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd




Location	East Sussex
Founded	1976
Legal structure	Registered charity and private company limited by guarantee without share capital
Description of services	Provision of reliable and accessible transport in the Cuckmere Valley region, particularly to those with mobility issues
Key assets	Eight 16-seater low floor minibuses
Employees	No employees
Volunteers	Around 70 part-time
Most important skill set(s) to successfully running the business	Driving skills
Biggest obstacle to success	Finding the right skills to run the business
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local authority- High street bank- Third sector funding body- A sector body
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The business prides itself in being professional in how drivers how they drive, by adhering to the same safety regulations as and through the reliability of its timetabled services- The business has a £180,000 contingency reserve for the next it aims to buy high quality vehicles as they require lower maintenance- Business growth is limited by the availability of volunteer drivers

What works: Successful community housing
Power to Change Research Institute Report No. 6

power to change | business in community hands

Barnet Community Transport




Location	Barnet, North London
Founded	2002
Legal structure	Registered charity and private limited company by guarantee without share capital use of 'limited' exemption
Description of services	Provides affordable, safe, accessible and reliable transport in Barnet and its surrounding areas. Also has an objective of supporting young people
Key assets	12 minibuses and three specially adapted mobile youth service vehicles
Employees	Three full-time, 12 part-time
Volunteers	Five part-time
Most important skill set(s) to successfully running the business	Financial management skills
Biggest obstacle to success	Regulation restricting business activity
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local authority- Third sector funding provider- A sector body
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- In response to the loss of key grant funding the business innovated its "Ballooning Base" youth programme- The business works closely with the local police, which led to joined-up community development work when delivering its youth programme- The business has a rigorous recruitment process, training drivers to deliver services personally and safely. It offers the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme training, known as MDAS, and uses daily safety logs

What works: Successful community housing
Power to Change Research Institute Report No. 6

power to change | business in community hands

Tavistock Country Bus




Location	Devon
Founded	1981
Legal structure	Registered charity
Description of services	To operate bus services for the benefit of the residents
Key assets	One bus
Employees	No employees
Volunteers	13 full-time (nine are drivers), four part-time
Biggest obstacle to success	Other providers in the area competing with the business
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Authority- Third Sector funding provider- A sector body
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gradual introduction of technology to help delivery, including an electronic ticketing machine to better monitor passengers using concessionary passes- Events are held so that volunteers can meet each other, and email communications have been set up so that drivers can connect- Low-demand routes have been cross-subsidised by high-demand routes. This is in order to meet the social objectives of the business

What works: Successful community housing
Power to Change Research Institute Report No. 6

power to change | business in community hands

Transport Service (The Friendly Bus)



Location	Shropshire
Founded	1999
Legal structure	Registered as private company limited by guarantee without share capital use of 'limited' exemption in 2003. Registered as a charity in 2009
Description of services	A bus service to extend "equality of movement" to local people, such as the rural, isolated, the elderly and the disabled
Key assets	Four buses of varying sizes and two cars
Employees	Seven part-time
Volunteers	60 part-time
Most important skill set(s) to successfully running the business	People skills and financial management
Biggest obstacle to success	Finding the right skills to running the business
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local authority- A sector body
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Income has been diversified to provide pupil transport for the local authority- There is a strong focus on customer satisfaction. This includes door-to-door drop offs and being flexible wherever possible- As part of community engagement, a small group of volunteers, including some passengers, organise regular coffee mornings and a monthly tombola to raise funds

What works: Successful community housing
Power to Change Research Institute Report No. 6

America

The Community Transport Association of America believe that mobility is a basic human right and that passengers have access to safe, reliable and affordable transportation, regardless of age, ability, geography or income. They provide broad ranging advocacy, policy development, training and even have a grants program.



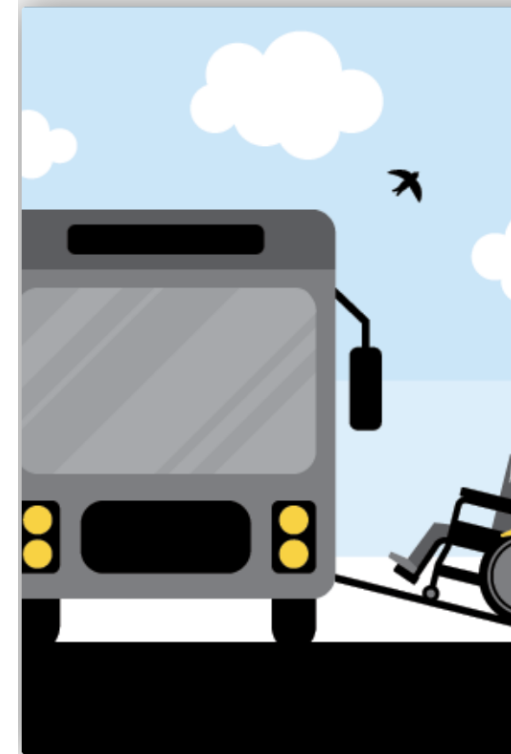
About ▾ Events ▾ Membership ▾ Resources ▾ Training ▾ CT Reader ELA ▾ SUN ▾



OUR MISSION

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and its members believe that mobility is a basic human right. From work and education to life-sustaining health care and human services programs to shopping and visiting with family and friends, mobility directly impacts quality of life.

CTAA members are in the business of moving people – efficiently and cost-effectively. CTAA staff, board and state/tribal delegates are dedicated to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of age, ability, geography or income, have access to safe, affordable and reliable transportation. Our priority is our members and the communities and passengers they serve.



CTAA Projects

Below are examples of the Association's work directly in communities in developing innovative social service program transportation solutions, all using the human-centered design process. This list will be updated as additional projects are completed:

Working with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, CTAA led the development and launch of a health care transportation service in two rural counties. The transportation providers of the service are two local social service agencies whose vehicles sit unused for significant parts of the day. The goal was to leveraging this latent capacity into a program for health workers to be able to request and organize trips for their patients. Using a software solution, staff at two regional hospitals directly request rides for patients; those rides are fed automatically into the transportation provider's portal, which then schedules the rides. After nearly a year of operation, this innovative approach has improved overall patient success.

Interested in learning more about this project? Contact Andrew Carpenter at carpenter@ctaa.org or 202-415-9688.

The project examined lack of transit services to rural areas and non-rural areas, as well as the high cost of transportation services. The initiative's recommended solutions were the development of a more inclusive website, a call center with capacity to schedule rides and communicate with drivers, and greater engagement of transportation providers with their riders.

[Download the Project Summary Here](#)



A Bürgerbus is a public transport service which uses unpaid volunteers for most or all tasks, in particular for driving the vehicles. A Bürgerbus makes use of local resources and knowledge and close collaboration with other local stakeholders. The vehicles used are minibuses or large passenger cars.

Public transport service

The Bürgerbus is part of the public transport system. Its existence is published, it is accessible to the general public, it carries different passengers who do not (need to) know each other in one vehicle, it charges the same fares to all passengers, and it operates according to a pre-defined schedule. Not all of these conditions are necessarily adhered to in all cases, however. In particular, services may operate as demand-responsive, hence requiring pre-booking. In the more recent past, there have been a growing number of services that explicitly cater for specific groups. Nevertheless, the Bürgerbus has to be distinguished from special, “closed-door” transport tailored to a certain group’s needs (such as school buses, patients’ and disabled persons’ transport).

Most services operate on weekdays during daytime hours, with the number of trips and temporal coverage depending on the type of demand, but also available manpower. The most common arrangement is a service in the morning between about 8am and 1pm. “Bigger” services run also in the afternoon, smaller only on certain days of the week.

Senior citizens are in fact the by far dominating demographic group, with the share of children, commuters, homeworkers and tourists being more or less marginal. But this also depends on the service concept and the general framework conditions: commuters often cannot be carried due to late start of the service, and journeys to and from school usually require larger capacities and are thus provided by traditional buses.

Service Models

1. Bürgerbus

- fixed-route minibus service
- licensed
- for general public

2. Bürgerrufauto

- demand-responsive service
- for general public

3. Sozialer Bürgerfahrdienst

- service for specific purposes and/or passenger groups
- pre-booking required
- often with additional assistance

4. Pkw-Bürgerfahrdienst

- lift-giving with private cars
- often philanthropic focus

Some initial conclusions...

- There are very few community transport models operating in rural and regional Australia that move beyond providing access to non-urgent medical treatment for people who are aged, frail, or have a disability.
- In some areas, community transport providers have extended their services to include social connectivity, however most are still limited to people who are elderly, frail or disabled.
- There is very little provided for young people, and able-bodied adults who do not have a licence or access to reliable public transport.
- The majority of community transport programs are funded through government grants and subsidies (e.g. VPTAS), with only a very few operating these on a social enterprise (Girgarre) or commercial basis (Peninsula Transport Assist).
- The largest barriers to operation are small population bases within large geographic regions making it difficult to make services commercially viable without grants, donations and/or ongoing subsidies.
- The UK has some successful models that have elements that could be considered as part of the Charlton Community Transport project.
- Charitable status can help ensure the financial viability of a community transport service
- As part of our consultation process and development of the integrated Charlton Community Transport Model we will be exploring a range of models and funding options to ensure that the model(s) recommended are sustainable in the long term.



Next Steps...Consultation Plan

Focus Groups (5-12) with:

- Volunteer Drivers
- Current service users
- Buloke Community Car Group
- Charlton College Students
- SWL/VET students (last 2 years) and their parents
- Charlton Youth Group Members
- FLO students

Poster (with QR code for more information) available at these locations:

- Charlton Neighbourhood House
- Doctor's surgery, Hospital
- The Boyz Café, Vale of Avoca
- Supermarket, Pharmacy, Newsagents
- NCLLEN, Post Office
- Church Communities
- Library
- Brochures via maildrop

Presentation to Buloke Shire Councillors

Meetings with/Presentations to Community Service Organisations including:

- Probus (2nd Friday @10 am)
- Lions (1st Wed – dinner, 3rd Wed – bus)
- Oasis (2nd Monday)
- CWA (3rd Monday)
- Senior Citizens
- Rotary (1st and 3rd Thursday)
- Play Group (Monday 9.30 am)
- Charlton Forum (3rd Tuesday)
- Carer's Support Group

Articles in the

- Charlton Community Newsletter
- North Central News
- Buloke Times
- Charlton College Newsletter
- St Joseph's Newsletter

Morning Tea Listening Posts each Friday morning at the Charlton Neighbourhood House – Friday 19 February and Friday 26 February

Conversations with:

- All Charlton Transport Project Steering Committee Members
- Kelvin Baird (Charlton College)
- Win Scott (Mallee Regional Partnerships)
- Mary-Ann Sait/Peter Aurisch (North Central LLEN)
- Buloke Shire Council key personnel – Rose Harris/Wayne O'Toole
- East Wimmera Health Service – Community Director

Online survey via Survey Monkey promoted via newspapers, social media, school newsletters, and posters



Charlton Community Transport Project

CONSULTATION PROCESS



Imagine a community transport service that will help residents go where they want when they want – both young and old, families and friends, those with mobility issues, and those who can't drive.



Imagine opportunities to attend events locally and across the region, go shopping in town, attend local and specialist medical appointments, take in a movie at the Rex, or just a fun night out without the hassle of driving.



Imagine a Charlton filled with designated walking and cycling tracks linking key town icons – the town centre, the river front, and sporting facilities that can be accessed by all, whether you are on foot, a bike, or a gopher.



The Charlton Neighbourhood House is developing an integrated Community Transport Plan that has the potential to achieve all of this and more, **but we need your input and ideas.**



Presentation Slides

Charlton Community Transport Project

What it might look like...



Imagine opportunities to attend events locally and across the region, go shopping in town, attend local and specialist medical appointments, take in a movie at the Rex, or just a fun night out without the hassle of driving.



Imagine a Charlton filled with designated walking and cycling tracks linking key town icons – the town centre, the river front, and sporting facilities that can be accessed by all, whether you are on foot, a bike, or a gopher.



We need you tell us what is important to you, what it could look like, and how it could be funded to make sure it is sustainable

What is the project?



Charlton Neighbourhood House has received funding to develop an integrated community transport plan

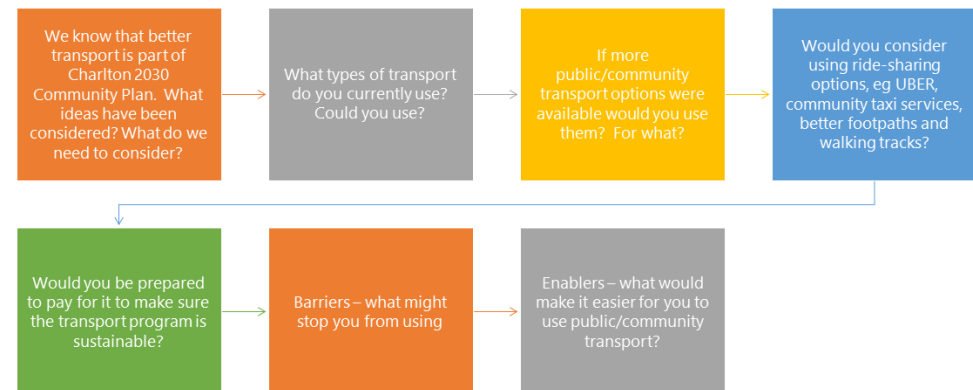


The Community Car is a part of this plan – but it will be much more comprehensive than this.



Imagine a community transport service that will help residents go where they want when they want – both young and old, families and friends, those with mobility issues, and those who can't drive.

What we need to know...



Who we have consulted with...

- Two listening posts at the Charlton Neighbourhood House
- Charlton Neighbourhood House (Kaylene Cossar)
- Charlton Community Car Project (Gary Larmour & Deb Finlay)
- Buloke Shire Council (Wayne O'Toole and Rose Harris)
- Charlton College (Kelvin Baird, VCE Class)
- North Central LLEN (Mary-Ann Sait)
- CharTSEC (John Harley)
- Rex Theatre, Hayden McKinnon
- Mallee Regional Partnership (Win Scott)
- Start's Bus Lines (Jamie Start)
- Charlton Forum - Member presentation, Carolyn Olive interview
- Charlton Rotary Club (Member presentation)
- Charlton Playgroup (Member presentation)
- East Wimmera Health Service Planned Activities Group (Member Presentation)
- Bendigo Health (Anna Feiss)
- Hayden McKinnon (Rex Theatre)
- Survey – 103 responses



What we heard...

- People are not used to having community transport options so would take some time to adjust if they were introduced – don't miss what you don't have!
- Opportunity to recruit new residents to town as volunteer drivers, more female drivers for the community car
- E-Bikes as a business opportunity?
- Transport for families to attend Playgroup who are transport disadvantaged
- Community Car meeting health care needs, what about social connectivity?
- Connecting people to other communities in Buloke Shire and nearby would be good – mini-bus
- Cost could be a barrier, especially for those who are transport disadvantaged
- Safety Crossing in main street a priority/Truck By-Pass
- Walking tracks linking school to recreation reserve/Charlton Weir Pool would increase opportunities for people to safely move around the community and improve health and wellbeing

Listening Posts

- Whatever the transport looks like, the timetable needs to be consistent
- Package deals such as transport, meal and movie tickets could be a good incentive
- Including rural pick-ups in any package deals would be a great idea
- Continue the walking track to the weir, and beautify what is currently there. Would be a great attraction for tourists as well as locals
- Young people are reliant on parents or other adults to take them to school, work/work experience, sporting activities, etc.
- Some people require specialist support to get into and out of cars or other vehicles, so any transport would need to consider this
- Would be good to have a taxi from the bus stop to home
- Have concession fares for pensioners etc
- Community car knowledge around the community is increasing
- Community gopher/wheelchair/walking frame for hire?
- Bicycle renovations, then sell/hire (social enterprise to raise funds?)
- Most footpaths and roads are ok for walking
- Role of volunteers: how are they recruited? How are new residents recruited?
- L2P model is good, providing flexibility, volunteers and training; could be applied to other aspects of community transport



Community Group Presentations

- V/Line bus is often empty so would public transport be viable?
- Be great to have an intertown bus service, eg. one to Boort
- E-Bikes are popular especially with travellers, so an upgrade to roads and paths would be beneficial. Could be a good social enterprise lending them out
- Bicycles: bike paths are needed away from highways and busy roads
- Need better signage to show people where the walking paths and bike tracks are
- Need to have a vision for the whole town
- Guidelines for the community car are quite strict
- Need to attract younger volunteers and also volunteers to service the car etc
- Could have a mini bus (enthusiastic support for this)
- Many people don't want to get in the car and drive
- Require better promotion of the community car
- Some women are not comfortable being driven by someone they don't know or don't like (or male) Are there any female drivers in the community car?
- If gophers were available for hire, how would it be accessed?



Charlton Forum Presentation

- Presentation using slides and handouts then general discussion provided the following points:
- Mini bus/car on a user pays
- Not a volunteer service
- Pushbikes/scooters/skateboards should be able to go to go from school to rec reserve
- Crossing to be included in the streetscape is a step out at the IGA
 - Have been advised that they cannot have a traffic light crossing and don't want one like Inglewood's
 - Need a truck route around town
- Need a vehicle to get people around
- Also need to ensure footpaths are good enough for gophers/prams/bikes etc
- Needs to be safe at night too (lights?)
- Elderly need support for shopping etc
 - Don't always want to rely on others
 - Provide independence in hot/cold/wet weather
- Willingness to pay
- Would a taxi or rideshare service be viable?
- Starts buses donates the cost of the bus with a volunteer driver to the Charlton Museum group to go to Donald to Bingo fundraiser about 5 times a year.
Picks up some people and others collected at the Travellers Rest

Interview with Carolyn Olive, Charlton Forum

Carolyn Olive is the Secretary of the Charlton Forum, President of the Historical Society, author and compiler of the Charlton newsletter. The Forum is responsible for the development and implementation of the Charlton Community Plan. They have many projects on the go in partnership with a number of other organisations in town. The Neighbourhood House mainly does the community focused projects while the forum focusses on infrastructure and council related projects.

The Traveller's Rest is a sub committee of the Forum. Gary Wood, one of the school bus drivers also manages the Traveller's Rest . Charlton Tourism is also a sub committee of the Forum

The Forum auspices the community car: They manage the financials, and did form the original working group. However, many of them are no longer members. Movement of the car to NH has been discussed- needs a motion at the Forum to make that official. Would be good to do that starting from July 1st 2021

Carolyn offers tours around Charlton a few times per year, from a historical society perspective. These tours last approximately 2 hours, and visit the museum and gallery. Tour participants pay to go into museum and purchase own lunch etc. Mainly Probus groups

Tourism:

the Forum sub committee attends Buloke Tourism meetings and collaborates where possible

- MV Tours now come once a month to the Charlton Museum
- See brochures with great ideas of where to go and what to do in Charlton
- When train comes through and stops in Charlton, will be trying to attract people off the train
- Would like sculptures and a wildlife reserve
- Need better walking track from old platform to Traveller's Rest and Recreation Reserve and riverbank etc
- Would like a new civic centre to replace the senior citizens building and shire offices, with a tourist information centre included

Whole of Charlton should be treated like a retirement village and be gopher friendly, with services and entertainment for people who cannot travel

Mt Dooboobetic may not be accessible for walking frames/gophers/bikes all year round

Lions Park is at the top of Currie St. it is looked after by the Lions Club and has a picnic table etc. another destination often overlooked

Tourism trails between towns eg Mountain trails: Mt Wycheproof, Mt Jeffcott, Mt Dooboobetic etc accessible for walking, driving etc

Charlton Rotary Club Presentation

Presentation using slides and handouts then general discussion provided the following points:

- VLine bus is empty, therefore question the viability of the service
- What are the stats for VLine since COVID-19?
- Concern for everyone
- Be great to have an intertown bus eg one to Boort
- E-Bikes:
 - cost of purchase by Community/neighbourhood house
 - Infrastructure already exists (roads/paths)
 - Caravanners already have them with them
 - Could hire them out if enough critical mass to make a profit
- Bicycles: bike paths are needed away from highways and busy roads
- Need better signage to show people where the walking paths and bike tracks are
- Need to have a vision for the whole town
- Guidelines for the community car are quite strict
- Need to attract younger volunteers and also volunteers to service the car etc
- Could have a mini bus (enthusiastic support for this)
- Many people don't want to get in the car and drive
- Require better promotion of the community car
- Some women are not comfortable being driven by someone they don't know or don't like (or male) Are there any female drivers in the community car?

If gophers were available for hire, how would it be accessed?

Charlton Play Group Presentation

Meet with Charlton Playgroup members in the park to discuss the Charlton community transport project on 4 March.

- Parents were very interested in the project and hoped that it would generate some positive outcomes for the Charlton community
- Safety was a big factor, particularly crossing the main street and there was interest in a proper crossing being installed so people could safely walk from one side of the road to the other
- Parents could also see a need for a service to assist people who were transport disadvantaged access community programs and services such as Playgroup, citing an example where some families are unable to attend as they do not have transport (or cannot afford the petrol) to get there. Unfortunately other parents are unable to assist as their vehicle is usually has too many car seats and large items such as prams to make this possible
- Social opportunities were also seen as a need for the parents spoken too to enable them to remain socially connected within the community



Traffic lights in the main street of Charlton (similar to Inglewood on the left) would make crossing the main street safer for local residents



Focus Groups

- Charlton College VCE Class
 - Transport to youth events outside of Charlton
 - Bendigo service during school holidays
- Planned Activity Group at EWHS (Charlton Campus)
 - Road crossing safety is an issue
 - Footpaths suitable for gophers and use of walking frames
 - Accessibility of vehicles for people who are not so able bodied
- North Central LLEN
 - Transport assistance to help young people with work experience, training and apprenticeships beneficial

Interviews: Kaylene Cossar

Kaylene is currently the Chair of the Charlton Neighbourhood House, a member of the Community Car Project Steering Committee, member of the Charlton Forum, a member of the Charlton College Council and on the Buloke Loddon TAC L2P Program Steering Committee.

As the Chair of the Charlton Integrated Transport Project Steering Committee, the Consultants met with Kaylene on a number of occasions before and during the project both in-person and via ZOOM.

Her main points are:

- With so many different community transport vehicles operating within the Charlton township for different purposes, the potential to create an innovative community transport service is at our fingertips.
- Anecdotally, town and rural residents would like a taxi type service to help them remain socially connected to the community, therefore opportunities to explore other uses for the community car and other forms of transport in Charlton
- We need a community transport program to access services that are not available locally. Health screening services are sometimes available in other nearby towns eg Breastscreens in Birchip, so CNH is exploring the use of a mini bus to take a group of women to Birchip to access this service rather than patients having to find their own transport.
- Kaylene is very keen on a social enterprise model and is currently undertaking a course to gain skills and knowledge to assist with the design and implementation of these to provide employment and volunteering opportunities within the local community.
- More volunteers are required for the community car. As a Neighbourhood House, the CNH can better manage volunteer recruitment, training and management etc if they were to become more than just the administration and booking service.
- Charlton youth are extremely transport disadvantaged – if they do not have friends or family, their options are limited to the distance they can walk/ride/scoot.
- Tourism is a growing industry for the Buloke Shire and Charlton is well placed to take advantage of this. We need to provide opportunities for visitors and tourists to the town to stay longer, to boost economy. Making it easier for people to get around is paramount to this. e.g walking tracks to explore the town and surrounds, tour guides to provide information, trips to nearby places

Interviews: Charlton Community Car Project

Garry Larmour and Deb Finlay

The Charlton Community Car project was established in 2018 after a fundraising effort by the community. The car is governed by a steering group under the auspices of the Charlton Forum. Garry Larmour manages the finances and reporting to the Forum. Deb Finlay manages the bookings and operational activities for the car project. She is employed by the Charlton Neighbourhood House to do this.

Interview with Garry Larmour:

- There is some room to expand **the car project**. Car only used to take people to specialist medical appointments
- Community car not always available. We use the drive education cars when they are available. Pay a per Km rate
- Losing money/just covering costs. No booking fees paid to CNH or by the passengers. 20c/Km is the VPTAS reimbursement for trips over 100Km. Some people cannot afford the upfront payment.
- Be good to have more than one person per trip. Some days there is duplication of need, other days nothing. More women going on the trips than men
- 13 drivers. Only five drive in Melbourne. 3 female drivers. Mostly older people who volunteer to drive. Recruit volunteer drivers through adverts in paper and word of mouth
- Coping with health trips. Expanding on this could be an issue if a pick-up service for example was introduced to go to events or activities
- Long term succession plan to transition control of car to Neighbourhood House. Windfarm grant to replace car. Completed 90,000Km in less than 3 years.
- Mobility aids can be carried in the boot of the car. Some aids are available for hire through the Lions Club
- Town service may not be critical as many elderly people are happy to drive within Charlton but don't want to drive out of town. Supermarket will deliver groceries if necessary
- People will car pool to go to café culture etc However, there was no inquiry for this service when offered through the community car

Interview with Deb Finlay:

As the current coordinator of the Community Car, Deb was a wealth of information about the service and its current shortcomings. She was particularly concerned about

- The decreasing number of volunteer community car drivers available and the age of many of the drivers (some are over 75 years of age). There are currently 13 drivers, of which only five will drive to Melbourne.
- Majority of passengers are female and there are only 3 female volunteer drivers
- The lack of availability of some drivers due to other commitments making it difficult to find volunteers to transport patients on certain days
- The Charlton Neighbourhood House currently receives \$15 per booking (for completed trips only) which does not cover the cost of administering the service
- Deb is currently employed for 4 hours per week, but works many more in a voluntary capacity to make sure the service functions well
- Current travel charges:
 - Bendigo - \$64.80 (VPTAS rebate \$45.36)
 - Melbourne - \$156.60 (VPTAS rebate \$109.62)
 - Castlemaine - \$82.50 (VPTAS rebate \$57.75)
 - Donald - \$27.00 (no VPTAS rebate)
 - Wycheproof - \$19.20 (no VPTAS rebate)



Interviews: Buloke Shire Council

**Wayne O'Toole, Director Works and Technical Services & Rose Harris, Director of Community Development.
Mark Remnant, Community Development Officer not available**

- The Buloke Shire Council is a supporter of local community transport projects. From 2016 to 2020, they championed the development of local transport solutions through the Mallee Local Transport Group. This partnership included the Southern Mallee PCP, State Government Departments and representatives from Gannawarra, Buloke, Swan Hill and Mildura.
- They supported the development of local community transport information flyers in Charlton, Donald, Birchip, Wycheproof and Sea Lake, and ran a forum for the community car and other transport providers to explore community transport into the future.
- They have been very supportive of the community car projects in each town, and were happy to have input into the consultation for this project.
- Transport is an emerging theme in most of the community plans being developed for Buloke 2030. The community are raising issues such as
 - the timing of VLINE buses, and their connection with trains at Bendigo or Ballarat,
 - the need for inter town buses to support people to visit their spouses who may be in an aged care hostel, and they have no licence or vehicle
 - Parents who wish to attend playgroup in another place, who cannot car pool because of child seat restraints etc
 - Young people raise the need for public transport and lowering of driving age so they can have some independence and not have to rely on parents or friends taking them everywhere
 - The Shire are also keen on active transport ie having walking tracks and footpaths that are accessible by everyone, and that connect all areas within a town, for example in Charlton, connecting the riverfront, town centre, the weir Sporting complex, Charlton College and the Cemetery with the town centre. Currently there is a safety concern for gophers, crossing safety and finding availability.
 - The riverfront in Charlton is a major asset, and is currently undergoing a revamp in some areas. An extension of the Rotary Walking Track has been discussed, and a Cultural Heritage Management Plan would be required for the works to take place. This is not insurmountable, but does complicate the project for the Shire and community.
 - Crossovers (from road to footpath) and entry into some private businesses is difficult due to the height of the pavement or steps into buildings. Fixing this issue is not easy, or inexpensive, and there is a need to consider legislation when drawing up plans to retrofit inaccessible buildings to make them accessible.
 - Maps of walking tracks for use by locals are being developed through the tourism group.
 - A Taxi service could be a lifeline
 - New ways of working could impact transport use, as more people work from home on some days, thereby reducing the requirement of public transport
 - Meals on wheels clients in Charlton are now the biggest run. Delivered by private car

Interviews: Kelvin Baird, Charlton College

- All Charlton SEC Drivers have taxi licences
- Paid as trainers
- Not all students have parents who can take them to SWL etc
- School has an 11-seater bus
 - Loaned out to people who are connected to the college eg cricket club with students playing
 - Cost of hire is fuel or 50c/Km
 - Self drive
 - Minimal use
- 4 chartSEC cars and 2 L2P cars
 - To use outside of school hours would require a decision of school council
 - Have permission to sue them if community car is in demand
 - Last part of term 4 is usually no use
 - Social connectivity/cover costs/fee for service
 - \$2,200 per person for training in CharTSEC drivers
 - SWL placement issues and FLO kids
 - Could sue the school minibus to take students to other town activities eg Debs, AGMs etc
 - Link transport to training/education/employment

Interviews: CharTSEC – John Harley

- Cars are comprehensively insured therefore can be used on the road
- Made available as a community service to NH if they need them as long as they are not needed by schools
- Term 1 is the best time to do this
- Limited availability in terms 2, 3 and 4
- NH Volunteers drive them charge 20c/Km which JUST covers the cost (not the replacement cost)
- Would consider the use of the cars for other trips but would be impractical as JH has to make the cars ready for each trip (15 mins per car)
- 10 instructors on the books but it is the managers job to prepare the cars (as a voluntary service to the NH)
- Not all drivers are resident in Charlton and all would have to be asked if they would like to be volunteers if needed
- Chartsec pays for initial training, drivers are responsible for ongoing costs/licence
 - They receive the Certificate IV in driving instruction, which is issued by the taxi directorate
 - They are NOT taxi drivers
- Cost of registration as a UBER driver may be prohibitive
- Don't want to take people out of town to shop due to impact on local businesses
- Reliance on volunteers or parents to ensure VET or FLO students get to where they need to go
- Should extend the walking track from the pool to the weir through the Rec Reserve
- Footpaths could be improved
- Crossing over Calder Highway required (traffic lights)



Interviews: Mallee Regional Partnerships

Win Scott

- The Mallee Regional Partnership engages with communities throughout the Mildura, Swan Hill, Gannawarra and Buloke Shires, and takes their priorities to the State Government. Priorities do change over time, and not all initiatives are funded. However, one of the priorities is to connect communities with equitable access to services. One of the ways that this group does this is to advocate for public transport service improvements for the North West of Victoria.
- In 2018 and 2019, the Mallee Regional Partnership supported the Mallee Local Transport Forum to research the transport options available for communities throughout the region, and subsequently to develop flyers to promote what transport options are available for local communities throughout the region. This research also underpinned the development of several community car projects across the region.
- As the Chair of the Regional Partnership and a Charlton Resident, Win Scott provided some insight into this project. The most recent focus for the Partnership is on rail infrastructure improvements, particularly around freight but also on passenger trains. However, they also acknowledge that public and community transport will continue to be a priority for many communities.
- Membership of Regional Partnerships are being currently renewed and there will be follow up community consultations. This will be a good time to advocate for better transport options and support then. It is also a good idea to build strong relationships with the Buloke Shire Council around this topic, and advocacy is stronger when it comes from a range of sources, especially if it is backed up with evidence.
- Win is also a member of the ACFE Board and suggested that a Learn Local in Charlton would be a good asset which could assist with volunteer training.

Interview: Starts Bus Lines (Jamie Start)

Ran a town service twice a day (about 2020?).

- Marketed and promoted but gave up as it was never used. Had an automatic step to assist people to get on and off easily. Could get a walker and a push chair on. Gold coin donation. Promoted through a postcard sized flier
 - People don't want a timetable: transport may need to be on demand/responsive but could still be for more than 1 person
 - Could be a service for a specific reason eg going to a hydrotherapy pool (maybe once a week or fortnight)
 - Had a Charlton banner on the back of the bus to give it a community feel/ownership. Tried to fit into and cater for the community needs
- Starts bus lines is currently used by community as a charter, using Starts driver/s
 - Insurance is not an issue for the company as it provides a driver
 - Used regularly by garden club, OASIS, for weddings etc. Open to any ideas
 - Don't have a bus specifically for charters. Use the school buses, so most charter work is done during evenings or weekends.
 - Have a 45 seat, 3 x 21 seats and 1 x 20 seat buses in current fleet. One of the 21 seaters is always available
- School buses can be used during school hours
- Schools use the buses to go to athletic carnivals, swimming, camps etc
- Need to justify all the buses in the fleet
- Ross, one of the accredited drivers, services the fleet
- The buses are trackable so people can see where the bus is at anytime
- Would consider working with anyone/ any organisation in the community on projects that are worthwhile and viable
- There is little difference in running costs between a 12-seater bus and a car. Except that a mini bus can take more people for the same cost
- All drivers have a WWC Check and police check and medicals etc and are properly accredited

Starts provide a town service for school students. This is a non-subsidised individual contract for each bus through the Country Regional Bus Service. Been going for about 17 years.

- Charge parents on a per term or annual basis
- Could charge other users per term too
- Some parents would prefer to pay as you go
- Well used service up the hill. The downtown one is not viable, but they still provide it
- Would consider having user pays on the school bus runs
- If non-students were allowed in how would they deal with doubtful characters (low risk, but still a risk)
- Could be a range of payments to support lower income families
- Cannot charge on country bus runs unviable or low number country bus runs cause an issue
- Looks like good numbers for all country bus services in Charlton for the next few years
- Would like to weave the service into the fabric of the community
- Bus replacements are built into the school bus contracts.
 - Replacements must be new buses
 - Future replacements may be EV
 - Replaced 2 buses last year. Next is due in 2024
 - Buses could last 18/20 years

Interview: Hayden McKinnon, Rex Theatre

- The Rex shows current films on Tuesday and Saturday nights from 8pm, and on Sundays at 2pm. The busiest times are Sunday and Tuesday. There are currently no plans to open on other nights. They also have an annual Film Festival. The theatre is used for events other than films, including plays and music performances. It is often used by community groups to stage fund raising events, and earlier this year was the venue for a local wedding, and the Deb Ball.
- The Rex theatre is community owned and operated, and is willing to consider any proposals for the use of the theatre outside of their regular film screenings. Package deals such as transport, meal and a movie deal, would be considered by the Rex Management.
- The Rex does not currently have a booking system for movies and can't pre-purchase tickets. With the COVID capacity rules lifted they are currently able to sit 370 people and to date have never sold more than 260 tickets in one session.
- There are no official statistics available for the places visitors to the Rex come from, but anecdotally, residents from each of the surrounding towns regularly go to the movies, and often enjoy a meal beforehand.
- The theatre has a lift, so people are able to enter the Rex, but don't have facilities for toilets.
- Management would be happy for the Rex to be included in town tours, if they were organised by the CNH



Interviews: Mary-Ann Sait, North Central LLEN

- Young people are very transport disadvantaged – totally reliant on friends and family
- A better community transport program could assist with education and training and transport to work placements, and employment (traineeships, apprenticeships, etc) within the wider community
- More opportunities for young Charlton people to connect with the wider youth community would be beneficial to broaden networks and improve social connectivity
- Access to youth focussed events and activities would be fantastic

Case Study...Inglewood Neighbourhood House



Inglewood Community House started their community transport project in 2011 with a 2nd hand bus purchased with funds from the local Community Bank branch. The bus has a wheelchair hoist.

The main purpose of the bus was to transport young people with a disability to their service provider in Bendigo or surrounds and return, and other people can book the bus if there are enough spaces available. Bus is available for weekend hire.

A replacement bus was purchased in 2017, again with funds from the local Community Bank branch. The new bus has now completed 210,000Km

Drivers are not accredited but do have safety training. Volunteer drivers must have a Police and WWC check.

The service has taken a major hit due to COVID-19. Many of the services that the disability clients attended are no longer delivering their services, or clients are no longer eligible to receive those services and other community members do not seem interested in using the service. Weekend hire has also dropped off but may improve.

The service would not be viable without volunteers and the many hours spent by Neighbourhood House staff managing the service. If they cannot partner with another local service eg Inglewood Health, they may have to cease the service on June 30 this year.

Case Study...Maldon Neighbourhood Centre

The Maldon Neighbourhood Centre have an 11 seater (including driver) community bus, that they were given and so built their business model around the bus. They provide three different services:

1. Community Transport Service

This is a local flexible door to door community transport service. This service can be used to do whatever the transport is required for. Cost is \$5 per trip (bookings are essential). Passengers are picked up at home, and returned to their home. Drivers of the community transport bus are volunteers. They have a position description and have to participate in training etc

2. Day Tours

These are in house charter tours provided by the Neighbourhood Centre to 'local' places e.g. wineries, op shops, art tours etc. These in house charters are driven by accredited drivers with passengers meeting at the Neighbourhood Centre. Costs vary between \$15 and \$25.

3. Private Charters

These are two tiered: Self drive: 11 seats plus driver, who must have a standard drivers licence; or with an accredited driver (additional cost).



DAY TOURS 2021

HOP ON BOARD AND TAKE TO THE OPEN ROAD ON THE COMMUNITY BUS

Thursday 8 April	Art Lovers (Ballarat) \$20
Thursday 28 April	Wine appreciation \$25
Friday 21 May	Out of Town Walk (Crusoe Reservoir) \$7
Wednesday 26 May	Op shops & secondhand \$20
Thursday 15 July	Art Lovers (Bendigo) \$20
Wednesday 18 Aug.	Crafters and Makers \$20
Wednesday 25 Aug.	Wine appreciation \$25

ALL WELCOME!

Bookings and enquiries

Maldon Neighbourhood Centre
54752093 or info@maldonnc.org.au

Baringhup-Maldon
Community Bus



Survey Summary

- 103 surveys were completed during the consultation phase. In Summary:
- 21% of responders were aged under 18, 15.53% were aged between 19 and 50, 32.04% were aged between 50 and 70, and 32.04% aged over 70. Females responded more than males and almost 74% live within the town boundary.
- Almost as many people use a vehicle for transport as those who walk
- Over 50% of people would use community/public transport to attend social events. Less than 30% would use a service to attend local medical appointments or for local shopping. About 34% would sue a service to attend specialist medical appointments in other places.
- The majority of people would sue walking tracks around town if they were accessible
- Over 50% of people thinks it is important to have community transport options available in Charlton, with young people, the elderly and disabled requiring the most support
- A mini bus had most support as the preferred transport option at 55.34% with the community car being the next preferred option.
- While Bendigo was a favoured destination (this is where many specialist medical appointments are), transport within Charlton and other areas of Buloke, plus Melbourne were also high on the list
- Over 55% of people were highly likely or likely to use the service, on a weekly or less often basis
- Affordability and availability were the main barriers to using the service, but the majority of respondents would be willing to pay
- Final comments ranged from identifying the need for better footpaths in town for walkers, prams and gophers, people's needs changing as they age, safety crossing roads in town (Calder Highway), suggestions about package deals, and picking up rural people, and a community education/marketing plan being required to promote the service and encourage people to use it.

Community Transport in Charlton

Tell us a bit about yourself

How Old are You:

☐ 18-25 ☐ 56-65
☐ 26-35 ☐ 66-75
☐ 36-45 ☐ 76-85
☐ 46-55 ☐ 85+

Where do you live?

☐ Charlton town boundary
☐ Within 10 kilometres of Charlton
☐ Within 25 kilometres of Charlton
☐ Further away

What is your Gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Non-binary

Do you have a current driver's licence?

☐ Car ☐ Bus
☐ Motorbike ☐
☐ Truck ☐ Other

What is your Ability/Accessibility Level (please tick those that apply)

☐ Special needs, eg. Wheelchair
☐ Gopher user
☐ Limited Mobility (cannot walk long distances without assistance)
☐ Able bodied

Your Transport Usage

What types of transport do you currently use?

☐ Own Vehicle ☐ Cycling
☐ Walking ☐ Gopher
☐ Motorbike ☐ Friends and Family vehicles
☐ Charlton Community Car
☐ V-LINE Bus ☐ V-LINE Train
☐ Other?

What would you like to be able to use public transport for IF IT WAS AVAILABLE (ie, not your own vehicle)?

☐ Local shopping - supermarket, pharmacy, etc
☐ Local Medical appointments
☐ Specialist Medical appointments
☐ School, Education or Training (eg. Neighbourhood House, VET, SWL, TAFE)
☐ Work ☐ Volunteering
☐ Visiting family and friends
☐ Local Sport (recreational/competition)
☐ Movies at the Rialto/Local Night out
☐ Local social events in Charlton and surrounding towns (including youth)
☐ Events in Bendigo/other regional centres

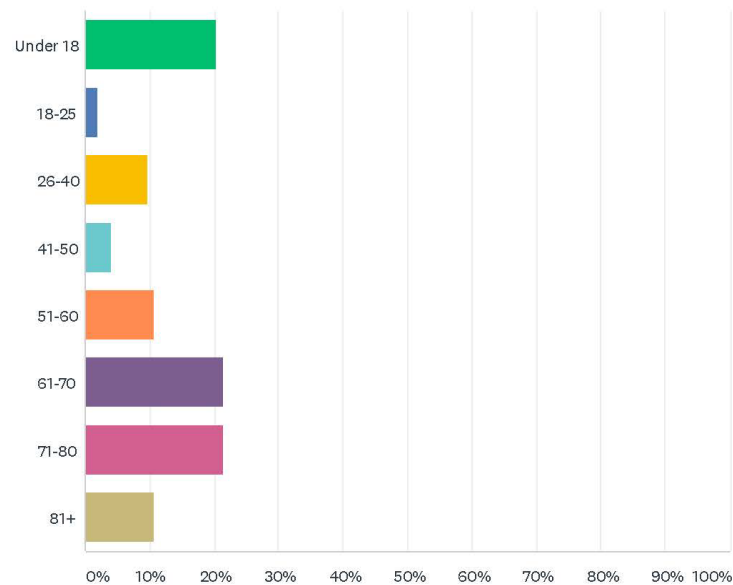
If Charlton were to have a series of designated walking/cycling tracks would you access these for:

☐ Recreation
☐ Access to town centre
☐ Riverfront
☐ Sporting facilities

Survey Results

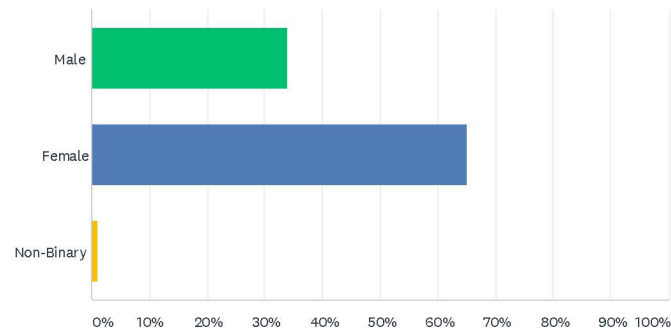
Q1 How old are you?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



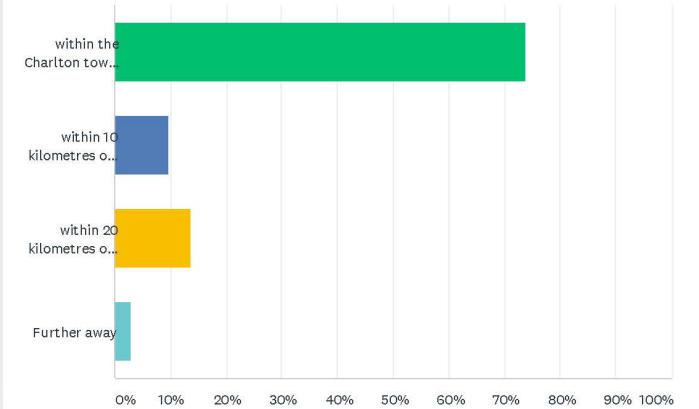
Q2 What is your Gender

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



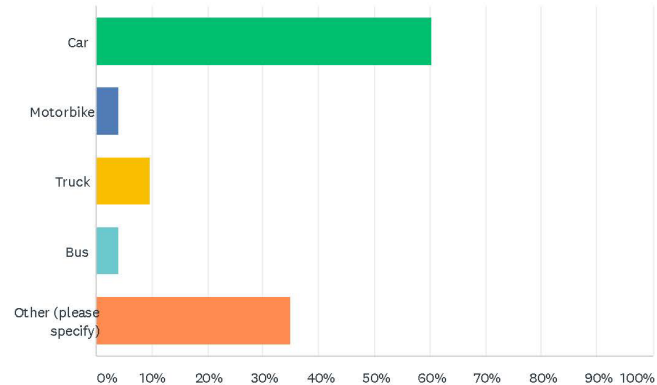
Q3 Where do you live?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q4 Do you have a driver's licence?

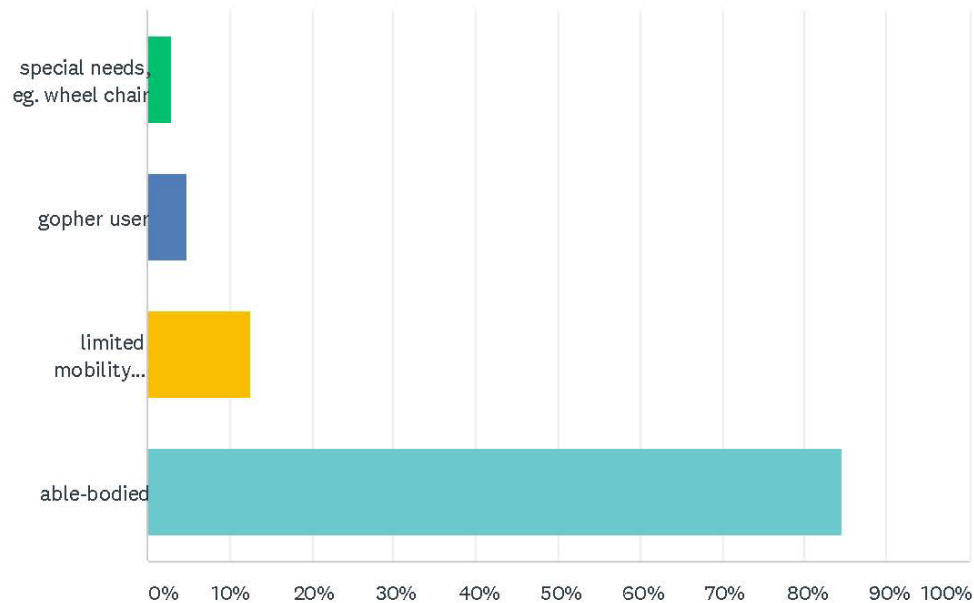
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

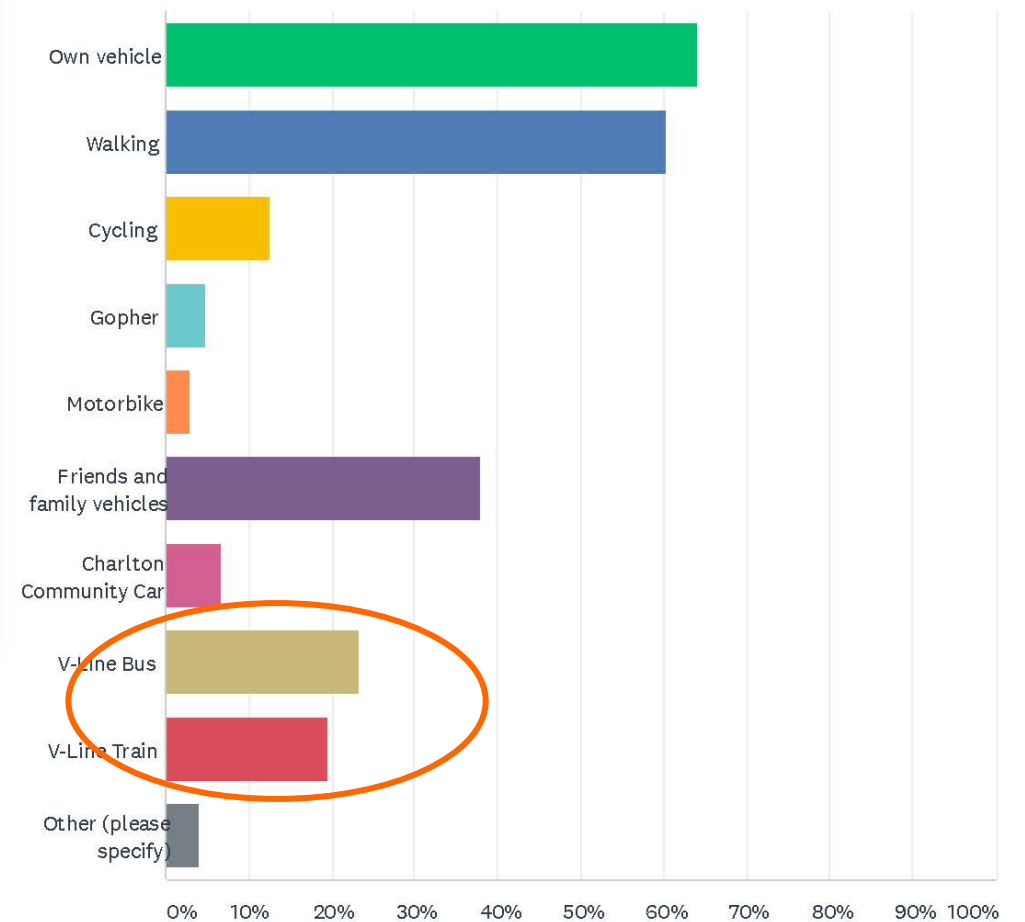
Q5 What is your ability/accessibility level (please tick all that apply)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q6 What types of transport do you currently use?

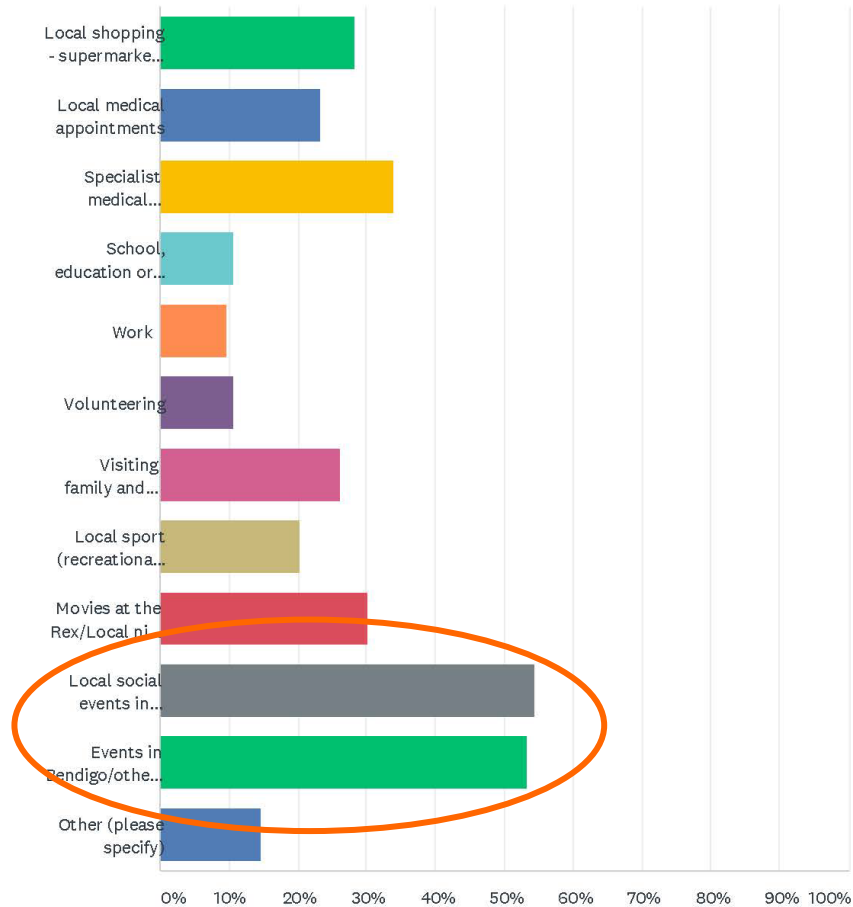
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

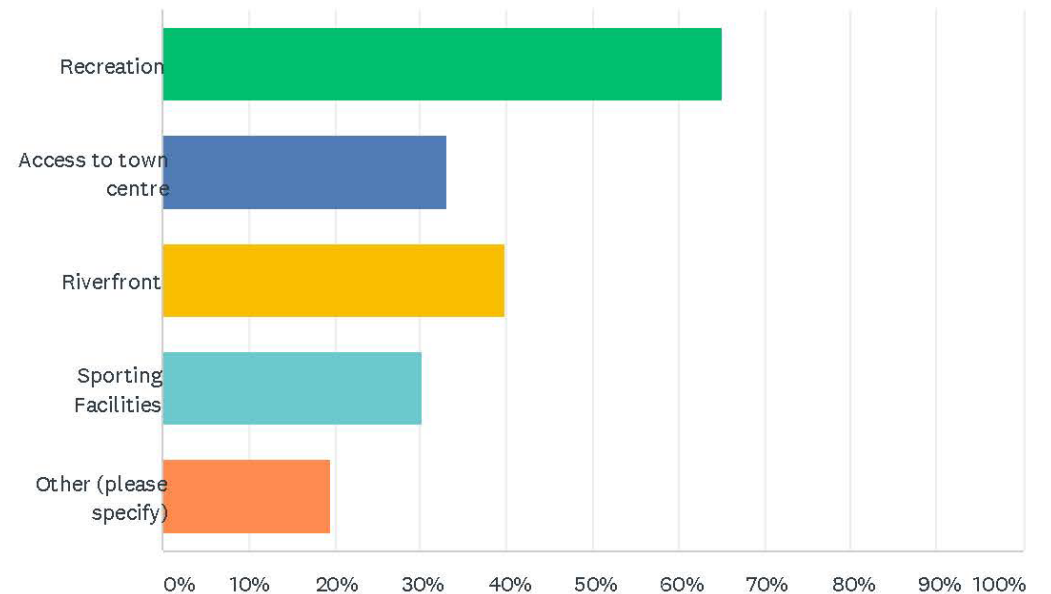
Q7 What would you like to be able to use public transport for IF IT WAS AVAILABLE? (ie. not your own vehicle)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q8 If Charlton were to have a series of designated walking/cycling/gopher tracks would you access these for:

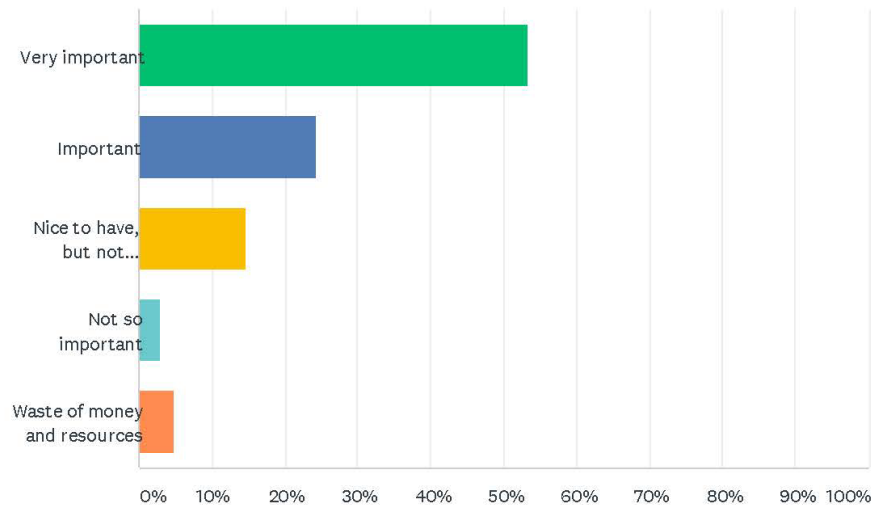
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

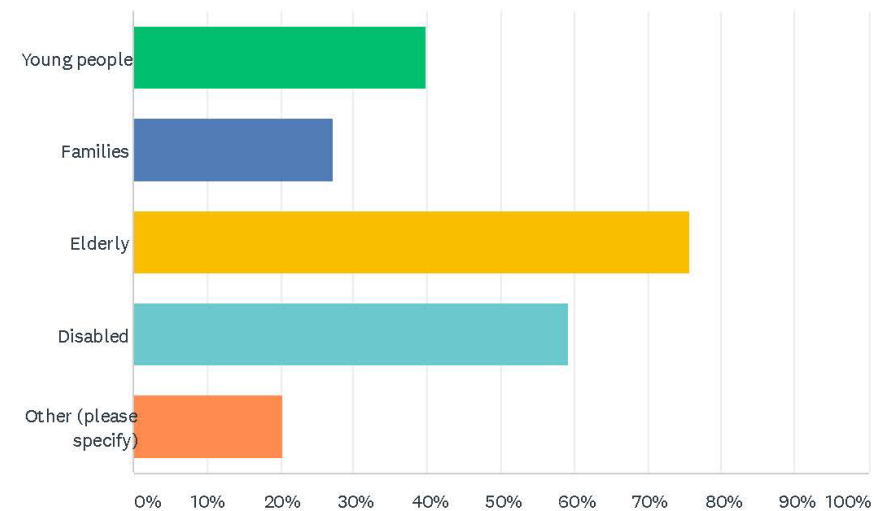
Q9 How important do you think it is to have community transport options available in Charlton?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q10 What sectors of the community do you think most need community transport support?

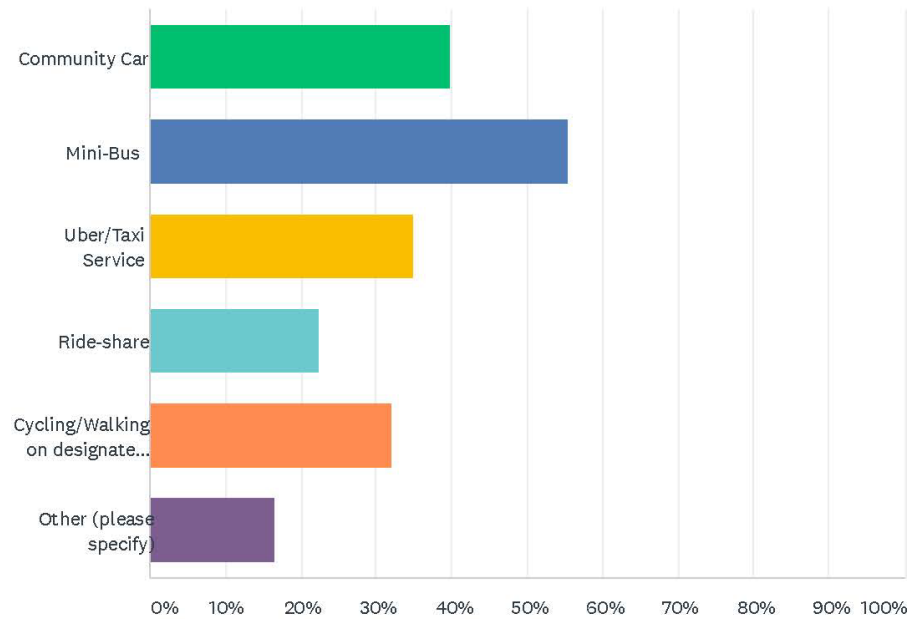
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

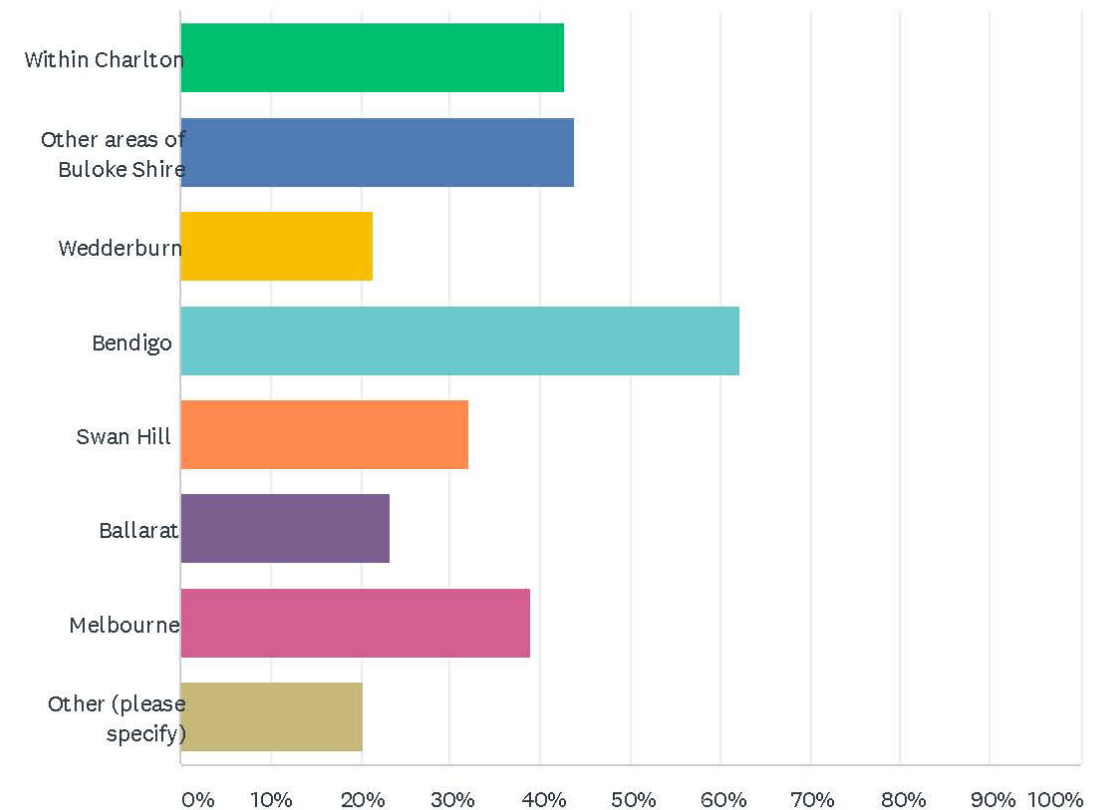
Q11 What types of community transport options would you consider using?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q12 Where would you like to be able to go?

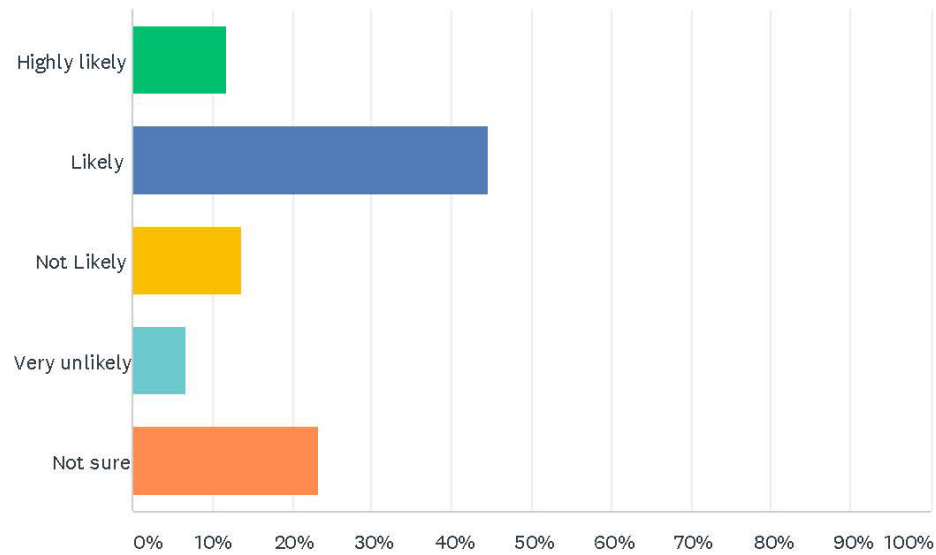
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

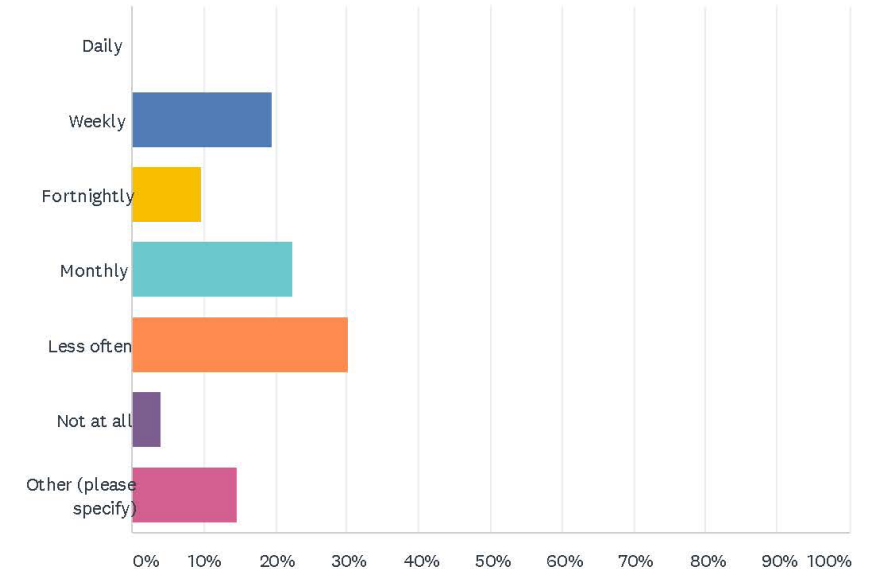
Q13 How likely would you be to use community transport if it was available in Charlton?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q14 If there was a local Charlton community transport service, would you use it?

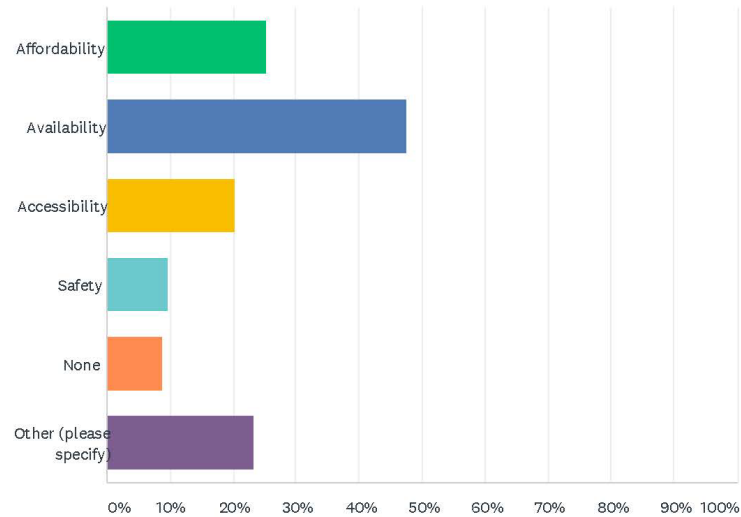
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Survey Results

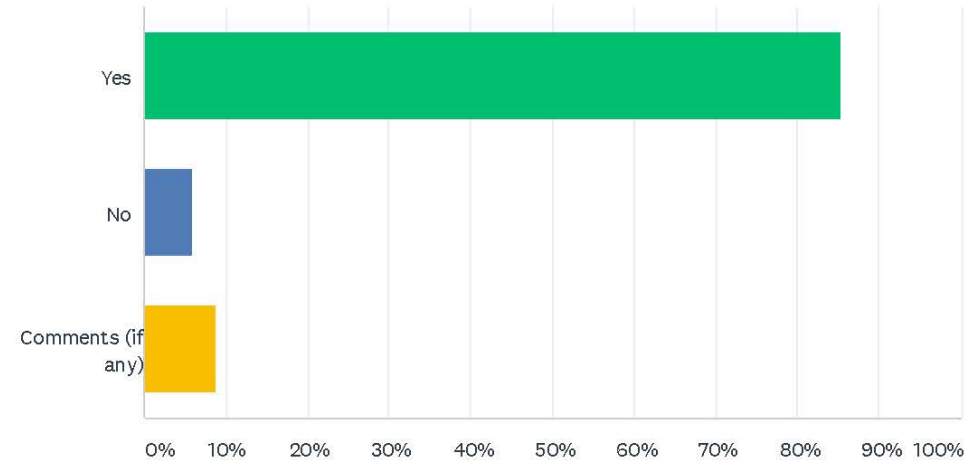
Q15 What barriers would prevent you from using community transport if it was available?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Q16 Would you be willing to pay to use a community transport service if it were available (at similar costs to public transport)?

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



Early Thinking

Public Private Partnership?

OR

Social Enterprise Model?

SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY, HEALTH & WELLBEING FOCUS

- Day Tours within the region (up to 1 hr including travel, lunch, entry fees, etc.)
- Youth Day trips during school holidays, eg. The Zone in Bendigo, Ten Pin Bowling in Kerang, Canoeing at Lake Boort, etc.
- Door to Door Meal, Movie/Event, transport packages in conjunction with The Rex and local eateries
- Day trips to AFL matches and other major events in Melbourne, e.g. Musicals and Theatre
- Tours to major art exhibitions in Swan Hill, Bendigo, Ballarat and Melbourne
- Transport service to regional events, e.g. Wycheproof Races, Wimmera Field Days, Cuisine in the Crop

Next Steps

- Prepare Charlton Community Transport Options Paper with a range of viable possibilities for consideration by the Steering Committee taking into account demographics, accessibility mobility, safety, health and wellbeing
- Creation of a suite of governing documents for the service that is shareable with existing and new programs
- Presentation to other Buloke Transport Groups of findings from the project (once project complete).
- Document outlining Policy changes (e.g. VPTAS process) required to support integrated community transport models (if required)

Charlton Integrated Transport Plan created



Charlton Neighbourhood House
The heart of our community

Charlton Community Transport Project

RECOMMENDATIONS

OPTION ONE: Status Quo

No significant changes to current service, however we recommend:

- 1 Transfer of ownership and management of Community Car to Charlton Neighbourhood House
- 2 Introduction of a non-refundable booking fee of \$10 per trip (hardship causes can apply) to help service viability
- 3 Development of a structured volunteer management program to support community car drivers

OPTION TWO: Social Enterprise

- 1 Expand community car usage to include community connectivity transport options
- 2 Develop a network of community transport providers along the Calder & Sunraysia Highways to achieve efficiencies and more service opportunities
- 3 Utilise Charlton College mini-bus to provide additional services for the local community
- 4 Create opportunities for youth transport services, eg. school holiday program, training and work transport
- 5 Develop a community transport program that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS
- 6 Include transport to attend court hearings in Bendigo, Melbourne and other regional centres where no alternative is available as part of the community car remit
- 7 Develop a ride share program to support demand on services at peak times or outside normal hours
- 8 Explore opportunities to transport people to train stations to link to Melbourne Trains
- 9 Explore the use of an "app" to manage the community transport program

OPTION THREE: Public Private Partnership

1

Enter into a formal partnership (MOU) with Start's Bus Lines to develop a tourism venture to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors

2

Regular monthly tours for visitors to the Charlton district with trained volunteer guides that know the region well

3

Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids

4

Establish a range of day tours which encourage local residents to explore their region and beyond

5

Provide short tours of the Charlton township (walking and mini-bus options) highlighting points of significance

OPTION FOUR: Community Transport Company

- 1 Creation of an independent community transport company (Company Limited by Guarantee)
- 2 Transfer ownership and management of the community car to the new independent community transport company
- 3 Become a registered NDIS community transport provider that supports disabled people to access services funded through the NDIS
- 4 Purchase a mini-bus to use for community transport services
- 5 Develop a range of day tour options for both local residents and visitors to the region
- 6 Establish a charter hire service to subsidise running expenses for other elements of the business
- 7 Commercial passenger vehicle (Uber Style) or Taxi Service
- 8 Transport equipment for hire - Ebikes, Gophers, Wheelchairs, Mobility Aids

Future Actions for better community transport

Service improvement

1. Implementation of a structured Volunteer Management Program (VMP) for community transport drivers
2. Learn Local Accreditation
3. TAC Community Safety Grants

Sector Reform

1. Prepare a submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry
2. Submission to VPTAS scheme regarding reimbursement ratesHealth Reform project
3. NDIS opportunities

Access and Safety:

1. Advocate for a truck bypass to reduce the amount of heavy vehicle traffic in High Street
2. Lobby the Buloke Shire Council to link the Avoca River Walk to Charlton College
3. Campaign for the installation of a pedestrian crossing in High Street
4. Become the first Gopher friendly (accessible) town in Australia

Appendix Five - Project Evaluation

To determine whether the project has met its objectives and produced the outcomes required, the following activities will need to be undertaken once the Report has been formally adopted:

- Reflection session with the Project Steering Committee – have we met the conditions of the MOU and the core objectives of the project (facilitated session by Consultant)
- Evaluation survey to consultation participants about the model to obtain feedback
- Focus group sessions with current volunteer drivers
- Community meetings/listening post to get feedback on the proposed model
- A Celebration event to formally launch the proposed local transport service model and suite of governing documents.