



# Impact **REPORT**



2024 - 2025



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**Data in this report is for the timeframe 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025 unless stated otherwise**

# NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR

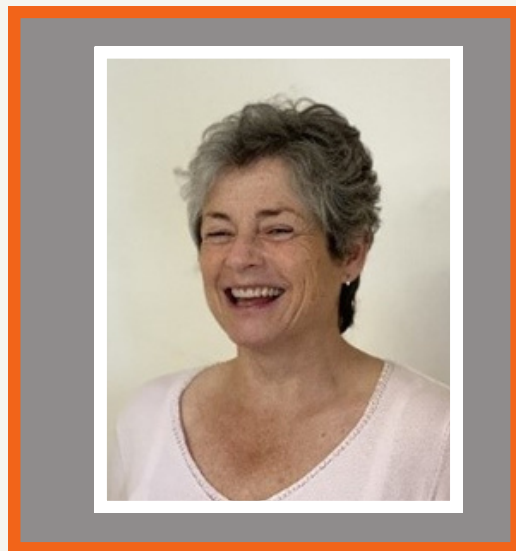
## Alison Richards

When I wrote the 'Note from our Chair' for last year's Impact Report, I was very concerned about whether we could raise enough money to replace our ageing fleet of minibuses. Whilst the Friendly Bus generates enough money to deliver the transport needed by our community day to day and week to week, finding the tens of thousands of pounds needed for new vehicles was an enormous challenge.

We made a heartfelt request. We asked for donations from everyone we could think of - our members, occasional passengers, the relatives of our clients, local residents and community organisations. The question remained however - would it be enough?

In a world where all the headlines seem to be gloomy and downbeat, the Friendly Bus in 2024/25 offers a good news story. The response to our plea was tremendous and support came from many sources. Today we are the proud owners of two new (to us) buses, with a third in the pipeline.

I am fond of a quotation but this year, it is the words of a song that seem to sum up what has happened and what the Friendly Bus is all about. The lyrics that I am thinking of are from the 1967 number by the Four Tops, 'Reach Out and I'll Be There'.



We reached out and you were there so, in addition to the gratitude I usually offer here to our staff and volunteers, a very, very big 'Thank You' to everyone who contributed.

We received countless donations from individuals; from tips on trips to sponsored abseiling to funds raised at birthday parties, funerals and carol singing. We are also incredibly grateful to those organisations whose significant gifts have been a massive boost, particularly The Wenlock Forester Trust, The Lady Forester Trust and the VINCI Foundation.

Your generosity means that the Friendly Bus can continue to reach out to the residents of Broseley and Much Wenlock and be there for those who need community transport, reducing loneliness and isolation and raising thousands of smiles.

What a difference a year makes!

*Alison*



# INTRODUCTION

*"The 2011 census showed that Shropshire has a higher percentage of over 65 year olds than the national average. Conversely the rate of under 25 year olds is lower than average."*  
(Shropshire Council)

## Our aims

We're a registered charity 'The Friendly Transport Service' (1131707), supporting our communities in Broseley, Much Wenlock, Shifnal and surrounding areas.

### Our aims are to help:

- reduce loneliness and isolation in our communities for those that are elderly, vulnerable, isolated or have disabilities by providing community transport; and
- support our communities by providing 'Good Neighbour help' such as the collection of prescriptions, shopping and library books, a befriending service and help staying safe in the home.

This enables people to retain their independence, autonomy and provides social opportunities and enrichment.

## Our services

- Regular minibus trips to local retail parks, supermarkets, home stores and markets.
- Community car journeys that prioritise getting people to their medical appointments.
- Social trips to tourist attractions, garden centres, seaside towns and places of interest.
- Transport to local social groups and fitness classes.
- Shopping, prescription and library book collections.
- Light bulb and smoke detector battery changes.
- Light gardening help such as mowing and pruning.
- Internal window cleaning.
- Regular phone calls or face-to-face visits from a matched volunteer to chat as part of our befriending service.

## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT...

...IT'S SO MUCH MORE THAN TAKING PEOPLE FROM A TO B.



# OUR COMMITTEE

CHAIR



**Alison Richards**

TREASURER



**Margaret Dutton**

CEO



**Marie Monk-Hawksworth**

SECRETARY



**Liz Mars**



**Barry Hansford**



**Dave Marriot**

TRUSTEES



**Heather Armstrong**

## OUR OFFICE TEAM



**Marie  
CEO**



**Caroline  
Transport &  
Ops Manager**



**Julie  
Ops manager**



**Laura  
Communications  
& Admin officer**



**Ian  
Admin Officer**

# School contracts

Providing school transport helps to support our other operations.

For the academic year September 2024 to July 2025 we are operating four contracts from Shropshire Council's Passenger Transport Group.



We transport mainstream rurally isolated children to and from Bridgnorth Endowed School, and also a Special Education Needs contract for Severndale Specialist Academy.



We have a wonderful team of drivers and passenger assistants who go above and beyond to support their passengers.

A huge thank you too for their volunteer driving for our core services.



**Roger**  
**Rural Route**



**Graham**  
**Rural Route**



**Joan**  
**Rural Route**



**Rob**  
**SEN Route**



**Helen**  
**SEN Route**

# COMMUNITY CAR JOURNEYS

## TOTAL

4,638  
(up 928  
from last  
year)

### At a Glance



Medical

3,630



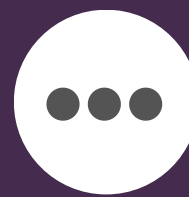
Exercise  
& Welfare

654



Good  
Neighbour

222



Other

132

### Top three journey types in each category



1,546

Hospital

822

Doctors

228

Dentist



366

Visit friends &  
family (care home,  
hospital etc)

200

Exercise

88

Mental  
wellbeing



122

Food  
delivery

30

Prescription  
collection

52

Personal care



34

Personal business  
(banking,  
solicitors etc)

78

Hairdressers

14

Funeral



Data collected  
from 1 March  
2024 to 29  
February  
2025

# MINIBUS JOURNEYS

# 1,488

Members that provided us with their feedback, all confirmed they felt **safe** on our trips and **supported** getting on/off the minibus.

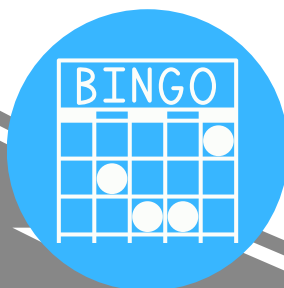


**401**  
Shopping trips



**468**  
Groups & school  
trip bookings

Feedback consistently showed the trips most favoured are to outdoor venues, in particular markets, the seaside and garden centres.

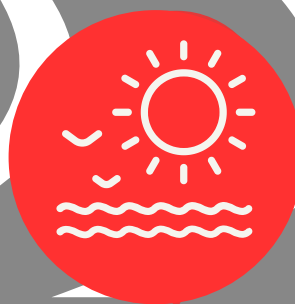


**290**  
Clubs & exercises  
classes

Most found the destinations accessible but seating at the venue for a rest remains a priority, which we'll continue to consider when planning future trips.

The feedback suggested some different choices of venues

We have put on different destinations such as stately homes and gardens and castles.



**113**  
Social trips

# 148

Less trips were completed this year due to the vehicles being off the road with breakdowns



# Some of the places we visited last year....

## SHOPPING

We take people to all the main supermarkets as well as Telford Town Centre, Meole Brace Retail Park, Wrekin Retail Park, Forge Retail Park, Broseley and Much Wenlock High Streets and various local markets.



## SOCIAL TRIPS

Garden Centres, RAF Cosford Museum, Ludlow, Cuan Wildlife Rescue, Barmouth seaside, Llandudno seaside, Broseley Scarecrow Festival Tour, Attingham Park - Christmas decorated mansion, Broseley Lights Tour, Carboot sales at Priory Hall in Much Wenlock (in aid of Friendly Bus), Attingham Park grounds.



# About our members

81%

of service users said Friendly Bus enhances their wellbeing.

1,213

**Passengers on our system** (minibus & community car users). This is up **46** from last year

84

**New members** (have never been a Friendly Bus member before). This is down 5 from last year



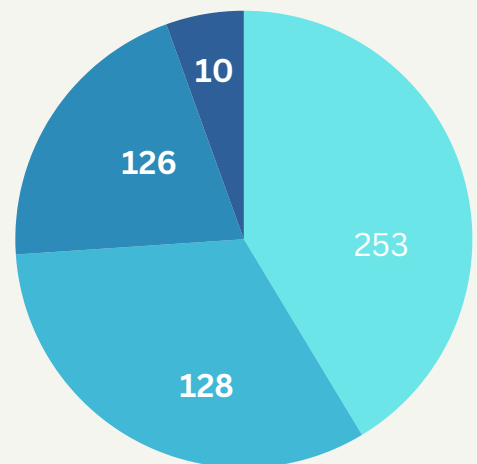
**95%** told us they wouldn't be able to receive the same level of support without us, or that they would struggle.



Nobody rated our services negatively. **98.5%** rated our services as **Good** or **Very Good**. 1.5% rated them as **OK**.

## MOBILITY AIDS

- Walking stick
- Walker/rollator
- Wheelchair/scooter
- Other (eg blind, needs assistance)



## Members that don't use our services told us...

*"We don't currently use you but want to support you because you're a vital service to older people who don't drive."*

*"We don't need to use your services just yet...we just like to know you're there in case we do."*



# Keeping in touch...



**10,400\***  
phone calls &  
office visitors

\*does not include emails



**3,590**  
newsletters sent  
to members



**801**  
Facebook  
followers

## Some of the Groups **we supported last year....**



Lady Forester Day Centre for  
outings, lunch clubs and weekly  
entertainment



Befrienders at  
Victoria Hall



Military Wives Voice Choir



Befrienders - companionship, support and coffee  
mornings





SHIFNAL  
SHROPSHIRE

In September 2022 we began managing the Shifnal Shuttle, in partnership with Shifnal Town Council.



# Shifnal Shuttle

In the two and a half years we have been actively running the Shifnal Shuttle, it has been growing steadily. We now have 70 Members, the majority of whom live in Shifnal and only a handful live in remote areas such as Sheriffhales.

We have listened to what our passengers want and have varied destinations for shopping and socially active trips and due to a surge in demand for our Tuesday shopping trip we have introduced a fair booking policy and added more shopping trips.

We had the minibus adapted to include a new fold down side step to make it easier for our passengers to get on an off. The shuttle is available to anyone without access to transport in Shifnal and surrounding areas. The service is still relatively new but continues to grow by number of members and volunteers.



Every Tuesday the service goes to Telford (retail parks, shopping centre, supermarkets etc). Every other Friday the service goes to Shifnal High Street and on alternating weeks we vary the destination to places such as Newport, Wellington Market, Madeley, garden centres and to the seaside in the summer.



**75**  
**Members**



**9**  
**Groups**



**11**  
**Volunteers**



**269**  
**(1,638**  
**passenger trips)**



**218**  
**followers**

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

"WITHOUT THEM, WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO WHAT WE DO"

"I Just love volunteering. It helps to keep me busy, otherwise I start to get lonely. I love meeting the members and chatting to them and I can see what a difference it makes to have my support when they're feeling anxious on our way to an appointment."

Community car driver

**17,684 hours** given by our volunteers over the year - that's **340 hours each week!**



## Our volunteers

Without them, we wouldn't be able to do what we do.

93 Volunteers in total



Some of our volunteers also help at events to raise awareness of us and fundraise.

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Volunteer activity	Hours
Community car drivers	9660
Social trips	5952
Group bookings	2072
Newsletter team	198
Befrienders	1,116



# Some of our volunteers **last year....**



## **Thank you for all that you do!**





# Keeping our fleet on the road



**KDZ** 16 Seater Peugeot



**BCE** 15 Seater Mercedes



**OBC** 11 Seater Peugeot



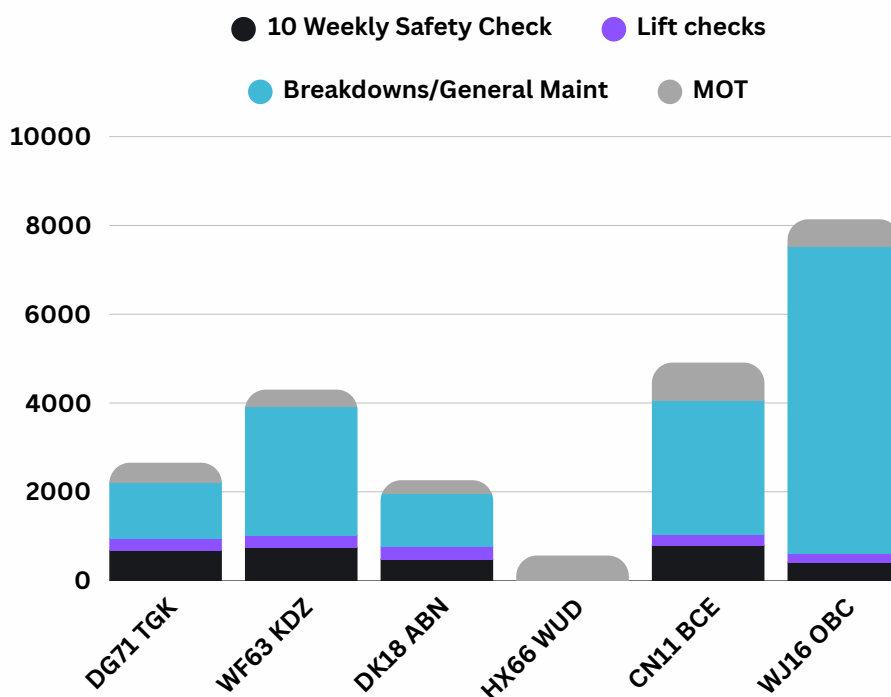
**TGK** 8 Seater Peugeot



**WUD** 7 Seater Ford Galaxy



**ABN** 16 Seater Peugeot  
(Shifnal Shuttle)



## VEHICLE MAINTENANCE COSTS

### Totals spent

- £3094: safety checks
- £1275: Lift checks
- £15312: Breakdowns & general maintenance
- £3150: MOTs

**Total cost to keep all vehicles on the road: £22,462\*** This is **DOUBLE** the average yearly cost

\*Excluding road tax and insurance

# MINIBUS DRIVER AWARENESS TRAINING



## STANDARD

8 Trainees



## ACCESSIBLE

8 Trainees



As a registered training agent for the Community Transport Association's (CTA) MiDAS Scheme, we're able to train our volunteers in-house.

This saves us money and also enables us to generate a small amount of income by providing training for other community transport organisations and local taxi companies.



## Income & savings

£675

Savings - driver training

£405

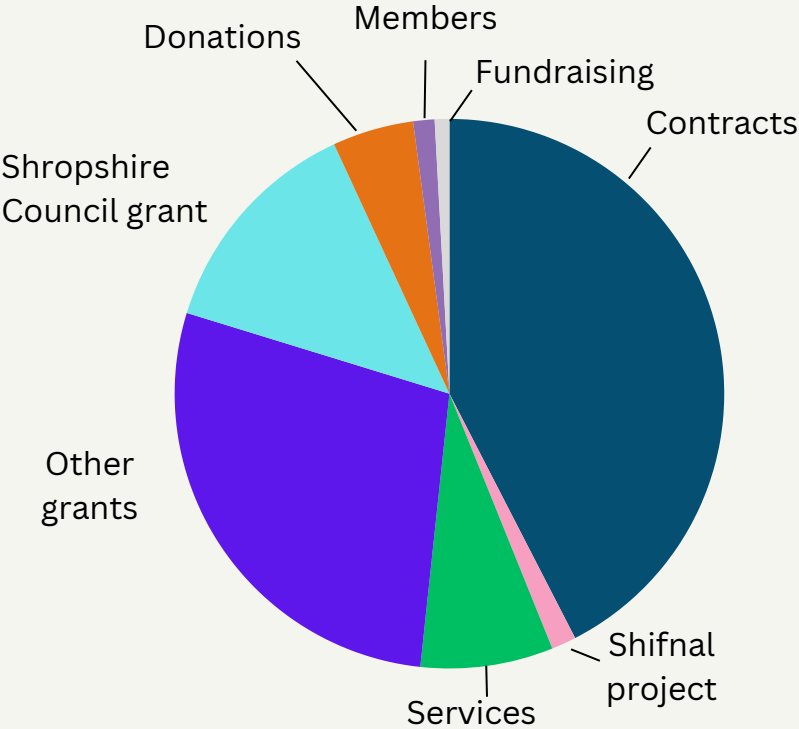
Wheelchair training income

£470

MiDAS standard/refresher

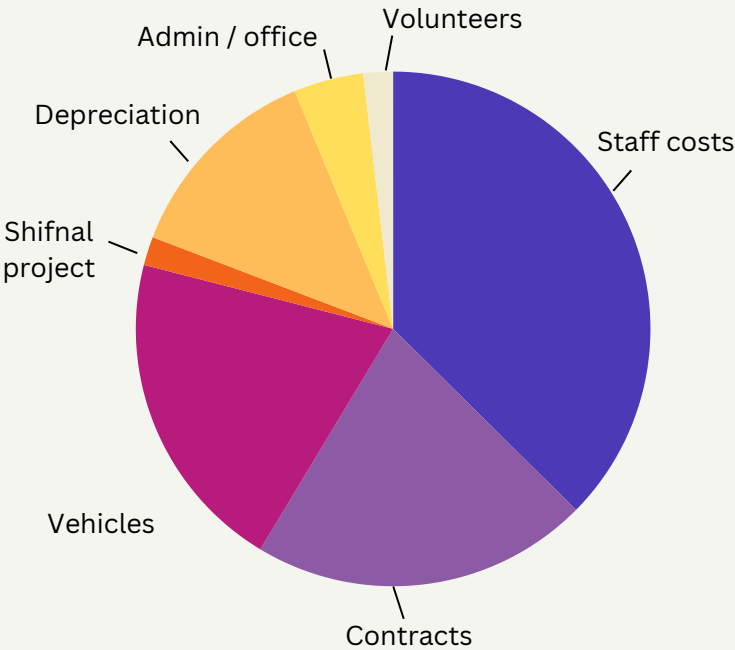
# INCOME & EXPENDITURE

The new trend which emerged in 2023 has continued, with members requesting donations in lieu of birthday gifts or holding a birthday raffle at their party. This continues to boost our donations pot - thank you to everyone who has chosen to do this for us!



## INCOME

The majority of our income comes from the home to school contracts we're awarded from Shropshire Council. However, it's becoming increasingly harder to manage these and the social value of our services is not being taken into consideration by Shropshire Council when assessing the bids.



## EXPENDITURE

As with most organisations, our biggest cost is for staff. However without our dedicated and fully trained team we could not support our users as we do.

## GRANTS

**A HUGE total of £148,609 this year!**  
Made up of £27,000 for the Shifnal Project, the standard Shropshire Council Grant and other key grants shown below...

£50,000

Wenlock Forester Trust

£23,475

Inclusive Communities Fund

£2,000

Millichope - to support the delivery of our service

£700

Vinci UK Foundation (Freyssinet)

£15000

Bus Services Improvement Plan via Shropshire Council

# Income & Expenditure Accounts

1 March 2024 to 29 February 2025

Income		2025 (£)	2024 (£)
Grants	Shropshire Council	47,932	11,931
	Other Grants	97,725	4,074
	Other income	8,551	9,059
Services	Shropshire Community Cars	9,222	5,613
	Friendly Bus Fares	169,333	160,556
	Subscriptions	4,505	4,055
	Donations to Service	17,151	8,282
Other	Fundraising	3,092	2,035
	Bank Interest	1,361	1,144
Total Incoming Resources		358,872	206,749

Expenditure		2025 (£)	2024 (£)
Staff costs	Employment Wages, Tax, NI, payroll	168,228	139,091
Expenses	Shropshire Community Cars	4,914	4,944
	Volunteer costs	309	1,408
Vehicles	Running costs	55,748	59,077
	Vehicle Hire for new contract	7,122	11,024
Shifnal	Car hire	4,039	361
Office	Rent, Rates, utilities, Insurance	4,667	4,786
	Repairs and Maintenance	799	1,663
	Fixtures and fittings		242 250
	Printing Postage and stationery	4,421	4,121
Admin	Telephone and internet	1,978	4,365
	Catering and room hire	1,052	986 120
	Fees and subscriptions	720	1,035
	Accountancy fees	1,208	768
	Fundraising expenses	225	130
	General expenses		
	Other	2,902	112
	Depreciation	35,447	16,810
Total Outgoing Resources		293,779	251,391
Difference between income and expenditure		65,093	(44,643)
Total funds brought forward		103,681	148,324
Total funds carried forward		168,774	103,681
Current assets		113,041	86,300

A copy of the financial statements for the year ended 1st March 2025, as prepared by our accountants for Companies House is available upon request. The accounts presented above are a simplified version of these accounts which highlight information likely to be of interest to members.



# OUR SOCIAL IMPACT

*"Social Value refers to the wider financial and nonfinancial value created by an organisation through its day to day activities in terms of the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital created and the environment."*

Local Government Association

**£1,633,370 is our total social value**

£1,500,000

Environmental

£1,200,000

Health

£900,000

Social

£600,000

£300,000

Economic

£0

**Total social value**

Some of our key impacts	Value £
Avoided social care cost from a reduction in loneliness	£29,636
Value of impact on life satisfaction from a reduction in loneliness	£215,593
Increased social interaction	£25,022
Value of the change in cost to passengers of using CT services instead of alternative transport mode	£525,373
Value of reduction in cost for group travel due to access to lower cost minibus hire services	£39,015
Economic value of volunteering for your CT organisation	£248,568
Value of wellbeing impact from volunteering for your CT organisation	£79,894

# HELP US BUY A BUS!

[www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus)

**Our fundraising campaign to buy a bus or two, launched in May 2024.**

Our current fleet of vehicles have driven over 40,000 journeys! Due to their age they often needed repairs. This meant we let our members down when our vehicles broke down and were off the road.

## UPDATE

**SO FAR, you have helped us replace our two oldest buses!**

A HUGE thank you to all donations, large and small. Every single penny has counted and means we can now focus on reliably delivering our services.



Cheque presentation from Much Wenlock Foresters Trust to buy our new to us Treka bus



Our new to us 16 seater minibus with a ramp. Paid for by your generous donations and help from the Vinci Foundation (pictured presenting the cheque to us)



**Thank you to everyone who has donated and supported us - together we'll get there!**

# HELP US BUY A BUS!

[www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus)

So many of you have been incredibly generous ✨



Shirley braved a sponsored Abseil for us!



Many of you have donated from personal occasions and also in memory of loved ones



Some of you have organised fundraising events



Thank you to everyone who has donated and supported us - together we'll get there!



# HELP US BUY A BUS!

[www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/thefriendlybus)

WELLINGTON (TELFORD) BRASS BAND

## CONCERT

MUSIC FROM THE MOVIES

**Friday 27 June (7:30pm), £10 ticket**

All Saints' Church, Broseley TF12 5DA

You can still help with donations, sponsored or fundraising events and come along to our Concert!



Tickets can be purchased from The Friendly Bus office, Evermore, Broseley Social Club, Wenlock Smoothie or online Eventbrite - see our website for more details

[www.friendlybus.co.uk](http://www.friendlybus.co.uk)

THANK  
YOU

...to everyone who has donated and supported us - together we'll get there!

# Key points from 2024-2025 and looking ahead to 2026...

Writing this report has made me so proud of what we do. The huge support we have received for our fundraising campaign has been humbling.

This year has seen demand for our services continue to grow. In order to help meet this growing demand of lonely and isolated people we have been able to increase our number of community car journeys.

Friendly Bus has continued our track record of addressing both the causes and consequences of loneliness and isolation playing a leading role in tackling the social and economic costs.

**Our Social Value** has been calculated using the new toolkit produced by ECT charity in partnership with the Community Transport Association (CTA). **This year it is calculated at £1.6million.**

We have continued to work closely with the CTA, assisting in data collections and workshops to develop the above mentioned social value toolkit.



Marie Monk-Hawksworth, CEO

In addition to this, I have been asked on a number of occasions to present at online events and also meet with other organisations to provide insight and advice on Consortium working.

We need to continuously maintain and develop good working relationships with other voluntary and community sector organisations, both locally and nationally. This helps us share best practice. It is also vital to connect with Shropshire Council as our main funder through a small grant and the home to school contracts we provide to support our core services.

As the Chief Executive Officer, I sit on the Board of Shropshire's Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly and I'm the current Chair of the Shropshire Community Transport Consortium.

Friendly Bus will also continue to work with other voluntary and community sector organisations in the county to develop strong relationships and joined up working with each other and statutory services.



# Looking ahead to 2024-2025.....

## Our 'HELP US BUY A BUS' campaign!

In order to safely and effectively deliver our services we highlighted in last year's report, the need to replace at least 2 of our ageing minibuses.

This report highlights the increasing demand for our services but also the increasing costs needed to keep the vehicles on the road. The maintenance remained at double the annual average this year too. Even more worrying is that this report shows a reduction in the number of minibus journeys due to the time some of them were off the road with breakdowns and other maintenance issues.

**BUT through the generosity of our Members and supporters, we have been able to replace 2 minibuses and are well on the way to replace our third ageing vehicle.**

**We have already seen an increase in journeys, reduction in staff time to manage the maintenance issues, increased morale in our volunteer drivers and some very happy passengers!**

Our main focus for 2025-26 will remain on helping as many people as possible access the essential services they need, as well as helping them live happy, healthy independent lives filled with fun and laughter.

An important element to achieve this is recruiting new volunteers to meet the increased demand for our services.

We are in need of more mini-bus drivers and will be launching a recruitment campaign soon.

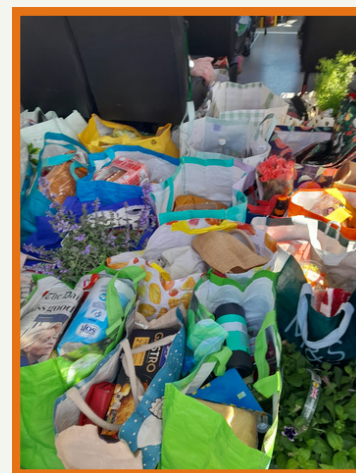
*Marie*







# We've had a blast!







**The Friendly Transport Service (Shropshire)** is a Company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales No. 4770291.

Reg. Charity No. 1131707

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