



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

During our 6th year of operations your Community Bus has continued to provide a vital service to the village. We managed a small increase in passenger journeys to 6047 (from 5980 last year) representing a total of more than 25.000 passenger miles thus saving thousands of car journeys to and from Wellow and providing the 'public benefit' which our status as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee obliges us to demonstrate.

We continued to provide our service to Wellow school children and their parents, including St. Greg's, Beechen Cliff, Hayesfield, and Prior Park College. There are up to 28 children using the bus each day. This represents a real benefit to 18 families who would otherwise have to use their own cars or hire taxis to take their children to and from schools in Bath.

Thanks to a generous grant from Wellow Parish Council we are able to offer free transport to older parishioners who hold a Diamond Bus Pass. It is important to stress that we are not just a 'school bus' and that there are seats available for commuters and shoppers on both morning and evening runs into Bath. Our single trip fares have remained unaltered since we began operations in 2010 and our season ticket prices remain very good value.

We continued to provide the option for parishioners and local groups to use the bus for their trips and functions. Prakriti is your contact for booking the bus for your group and she is also keen to hear your ideas for any special trips you would like us to organize.

We were delighted to receive the award of a brand new Peugeot Boxer 17 seater minibus from the Department for Transport's Community Transport Fund. This new vehicle enables us to increase our passenger capacity by an additional 2 seats from 14 to 16 and provides disabled access through the rear doors via a wheelchair ramp. Our previous vehicle was sold for £4,250 to Keynsham Dial-a-Ride and the financial aspects of these transactions will appear in the next accounting year 2016-17.

The maintenance of our minibus and the safety of our passengers is our highest priority and we have changed supplier of our statutory 10 week safety checks as well as the routine services and annual MOT check to the B&NES workshops at Locksbrook Road in Bath. We are especially grateful to Rob at Woody's in Wellow for providing emergency mechanical support, often free of charge.

Our Treasurer, Geoff will shortly summarise the accounts for the year, and I must congratulate him and all the committee on keeping costs tightly under control so that the deficit in cash terms was kept to the minimum. A special thank-you is due to Matt Small of Berkeley Hall Marshall who provides our statutory accounts free of charge for submission to Companies House, HMRC and the Charities Commission.

Our scheduled services were driven during the year mainly by our professional driver Paul Bancroft, with Stefan Chauveau providing important holiday and sickness cover. We are very happy to note that Paul has recovered from his operation and we are very grateful to Stefan for stepping in during October and November. Trish Talkowski has been much in demand to drive group bookings especially at weekends and our thanks go to all 3 for their driving skill, reliability and friendly treatment of our passengers.

We would like to thank all our volunteer drivers for being available to drive for village groups and to provide occasional cover for our professional drivers. All our drivers receive 3-yearly tests from B&NES driving instructors to ensure that their skills and knowledge are in good shape. This year we also intend to re-submit all our drivers' for DBS checks in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

I would like to express our gratitude to our sponsors and supporters B&NES, Bath Audi, Crisp Cowley, and Wellow Parish Council and to welcome our new sponsors Avon Steel, the Fox & Badger and the White Hart, Widcombe. Our financial structure depends upon the grants and sponsorships we receive and without these our community bus service could not continue.

My thanks go to the trustees and committee members who served during this year, to our Treasurer, Geoff; Christina who organizes the school season tickets; Prakriti who looks after Groups, and to Cath and Steph who ensure that our sponsorships and grants continue to provide much needed funds.

Finally we also thank our loyal passengers for patronising our Community Bus and hope very much that our service is appreciated. We welcome any comments or suggestions as to how we could further improve the quality of our services.

Mike Clarkson
Chairman
Wellow Community Bus Group

29.3.2017