NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025

Autumn is here – and so is our latest newsletter! As the seasons change, we're excited to keep you informed and connected. Inside, you'll find updates on what we've been up to, practical tips for using our service, and a look ahead at events and celebrations happening in the months to come.

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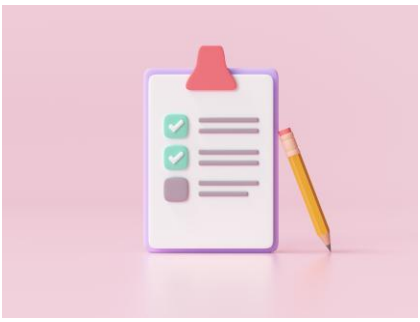
North Herts & Stevenage
Community Transport Service
Booking/Enquiry Line, open Monday to Friday, 10am - 2pm
Tel: 01462 689402
Email: transport@nhcvs.org.uk

Team members, Jon - Manager, Melanie – Coordinator, Opal – Office Volunteer - Mondays & Heather, Office Volunteer -Fridays (Not pictured)

Statistics

from 1 April to 31 August 2025

Journeys	Miles	New Clients
1890	47,954	141



Social & Leisure Survey

We are exploring the possibility of offering a community transport car service for social and leisure journeys. Your input will help us understand local demand and shape the service to better suit your needs.

For your opportunity to cast your thoughts, please visit and complete the short survey (Click on the link below):

NHCVS Community Transport Social & Leisure Survey 2025

Looking Ahead: Autumn & Winter Events!

The Community Transport Team has a busy schedule this autumn and winter, with plenty of exciting events on the horizon. Here's a glimpse of what's coming up:

- **North Herts & Stevenage CVS Annual General Meeting** – We will reflect on the past year and look forward to the next.
- **Stevenage International Day of Older People 2025 –1st October** at the Art & Leisure Centre.
- **Community Transport Week - 13 –17 October**, we'll be highlighting the importance of accessible, inclusive transport for all.
- **Local Talks & Presentations** – We'll be visiting many community groups and centres across the area to raise awareness and strengthen local connections.
- **Volunteers' Christmas Party** – A festive celebration to thank our incredible volunteer drivers for their dedication and support throughout the year.

Meet the Volunteer Driver

Mick has been a dedicated volunteer driver for 12 years, including the past 9 years with the North Herts & Stevenage Community Transport Service. His commitment and support have been truly invaluable to our work. He writes,

I first became involved with community transport during my recovery from a stroke. I was unable to return to my previous job but still wanted to work, although at a much slower pace. Becoming a voluntary driver enabled me to rejoin the working environment and do two things I used to really enjoy (prior to my stroke): meeting new people and driving.

I'm very glad to say that I still enjoy driving and meeting people. Being a voluntary driver has boosted my confidence and allowed me to feel part of society again. I enjoy the sense of helping others and being valued as part of society.

There are many things I have learned from this role, especially in being organised, using a sat nav, and figuring out how to occupy myself while waiting for people. But perhaps the most surprising thing I've discovered is that, despite having a stroke at age 49, I am lucky compared to many people.

CVS North Herts & Stevenage

Vote for Us!

We're excited to share that **North Herts & Stevenage Centre for Voluntary Service (NH&SCVS)** – the charity that Community Transport is delivered through – has been shortlisted in the *Hitchin Community Charity Vote*. They're joined by two brilliant local organisations, St Mary's Preservation Trust and Feed Up Warm Up.

Hitchin is home to so many incredible causes and people doing good every day. We love that this vote shines a light on that wider impact and celebrates the voluntary sector as a whole.

For those who may not know, Community Transport is just one of many organisations operated under the NH&SCVS umbrella, other services include *GoVolHerts, Reach Out, Breakaway Play Scheme, Staying Connected*. As well as backing these vital services for local people, the team work behind the scenes to strengthen hundreds of other charities and community groups across Hitchin, North Herts and Stevenage – enabling them to grow, connect with volunteers, and amplify their impact. Learn more at nhcvs.org.uk.

That's why a vote for NH&SCVS is, in many ways, a vote for the whole sector. While we'd be thrilled if you chose to support our parent charity, we also celebrate the amazing work of the other charities nominated.

The poll opens today - Wednesday 10th September - in the *We Love Hitchin* Facebook group and runs until 1st October. If you'd like to get involved, please do cast your vote here – and feel free to share with your own networks.

Age-Friendly Hertfordshire

Join us in creating an age-friendly community

North Herts & Stevenage CVS along with Age UK Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council have produced a report highlighting the barriers residents aged 55 and over currently face. See below.

For video/audio, please visit

https://youtube.com/watch?v=0zzF6cttScY

AGE FRIENDLY HERTFORDSHIRE RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

What Hertfordshire Residents Aged 55+ Told Us About 8 Areas Of Everyday Life

YOU TOLD US

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Lack of access to toilets, limited seating, and safety concerns are barriers to getting out and about

Transportation

Transport services are unreliable and difficult to use. Poor information and inadequate waiting areas are areas of concern

Communication & Information

Digital access does not equal confidence. People need clear communication in different formats

Social Participation

People want to feel safe, be welcomed and join in, but health, transport, confidence and time are barriers for many

Respect and Social Inclusion

Many people feel overlooked due to a lack of visibility, respect, and representation

Community and Health Services

People are using services but are facing barriers like long waits, digital-only systems, unclear signposting and limited face-to-face support

Civic Participation & Employment

There is a missed potential for people to work and volunteer, especially among younger older adults

Housing

People's independence is being impacted by concerns about heating the home and not being able to find housing information

Your feedback will inform the Age Friendly Hertfordshire Strategy, Priorities & Actions which will be shaped by organisations and residents

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YOU TOLD US

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Lack of access to toilets, limited seating, and safety concerns are barriers to getting out and about

> Access to public toilets is the most important priority to prevent isolation. Plus adequate signage and enough public seating

Transportation

Transport services are unreliable and difficult to use. Poor information and inadequate waiting areas are areas of concern

> People in my area will struggle with access to shopping, health centres etc as result of poor public transport

Communication & Information

Digital access does not equal confidence. People need clear communication in different formats

> Being confident – Having someone to show you the basics of how to use technology

Social Participation

People want to feel safe, be welcomed and join in, but health, transport, confidence and time are barriers for many

> At 57 I am working full time, it would be great to have spaces where I can go locally after work and weekends to connect with others!!!

Respect and Social Inclusion

Many people feel overlooked due to a lack of visibility, respect, and representation

> For people not to make assumptions and assume you can't do anything

Community and Health Services

People are using services but are facing barriers like long waits, digital-only systems, unclear signposting and limited face-to-face support

> All services working together – Top down, bottom up & Singing from the same hymn sheet

Civic Participation & Employment

There is a missed potential for people to work and volunteer, especially among younger older adults

> Age is a huge barrier to employers. I changed jobs at 59 due to circumstances and found it extremely difficult to get a job

Housing

People's independence is being impacted by concerns about heating the home and not being able to find housing information

> ...to be able to afford to maintain and run the home that I have spent the last 30 years building

Your feedback will inform the Age Friendly Hertfordshire Strategy, Priorities & Actions which will be shaped by organisations and residents

Booking Tips: Making Your Journey Easier

We know how important it is to make booking your trip as easy as possible. Here are a few tips to ensure your next trip goes smoothly:

- **Book Early**: To secure your booking, we recommend booking at least 10 days in advance. This helps us ensure the availability of a volunteer driver. Please do not book with the volunteers directly.
- **Know Your Pickup Details**: When booking, make sure to specify your destination, appointment time and any special instructions (e.g., if you need assistance or have mobility aids).
- **Out of Area?** We are, unfortunately, unable to register anyone outside of Hertfordshire County, please call the team and we be happy to signpost you to the most appropriate services.
- **Please do leave a message!** We will respond to all messages left within our opening hours (10a.m until 2p.m Monday to Friday).

Useful links

Please find a list of useful resources, information and links to other services that may interest you.

Community Transport Hertfordshire is an online resource designed to help you find local community transport services across Hertfordshire County.
https://www.communitytransportherts.org/

Primary Care Mental Health update

September 2025

NHS Hertfordshire Talking Therapies

We're delighted to announce that our **Talk for Your Health: Emotional Support for Long Term Conditions (LTC)** campaign will be returning on Monday, 6th October, running for 8 weeks. For 2025, the campaign will focus on **Type 2 Diabetes**. Living with a long term physical health condition, such as Type 2 Diabetes, can significantly impact emotional wellbeing. By parti cipating in this campaign, you can play a pivotal role in improving the wellbeing of those living with long term conditions in our community . For more information about the campaign, available resources, and how to get involved, please visit: www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk/talk-for-your-health

NEW Seasonal Self-Care webinar

This uplifting *NEW* liv e and interactive 'Seasonal Self - Care' webinar, focuses on boosting wellbeing during the autumn and winter months. We'll explore why mood can dip during this time of year, share practical CBT -based tools, self -care strategies, plus simple mindfulness techniques to boost wellbeing, while also highlighting the support available through our service. It is perfect for anyone wanting to feel more grounded, confident, and supported during the darker months. We encourage you to share this opportunity with anyone w ho may benefit. Click here to find out more information.

Information videos We have a dedicated ' Information Videos' section on our website, featuring a collection of short, easy -to-follow information videos designed to help those accessing our service feel confident and supported throughout their journey. Topics include: who we are, how to get the mo st out of group therapy, joining sessions on Microsoft Teams, basic and advanced Microsoft Teams troubleshooting, what to expect at your first appointment, and why we ask about risk and safety.

Living well with persistent pain
This webinar introduces the relationship between physical and mental health and provides self-help tools that can help with pain management and emotional wellbeing.