



Next Twelve Steps: A strategy for Calne Community Area Transport Group

Matching Transport Provision to Local Needs

Proposal for discussion

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Executive Summary

Calne CAT's independent transport consultant, Peter Warman, has recommended a 12 Step course of action in order to meet the Group's objectives to review the provision of local transport services, identify any gaps and then recommend improvements which are reliable, accessible, safe and affordable. The 12 Steps are summarised below:

Step 1 Information point – The foundation step

Design the Calne CAT Web-site to explain the work of the Group and provide detailed advice on transport services within the local catchment area that are not currently included on any other transport website. Ensure this new web-site provides an easy index to all other relevant travel websites. Direct access to the web is unnecessary as long as everyone knows someone they can go to get web-access for them including Calne CAT agents. What is printed from the web-site can be tailored to meet the particular travel needs of the individual - 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Step 2 Provide information packs

Develop briefings for local agents and travel information.

Step 3 Building community networks

Build up local membership of Calne CAT, identify people who are willing to become Calne CAT agents for their street, neighbourhood or village.

Step 4 Distribution of publicity

House to house distribution of relevant public transport publicity for residents in the Calne CAT catchment area.

Step 5 Transport feedback

Identifying residents with unmet travel requirements, encourage an interest in using public transport, provide help to travellers who require assistance in planning a journey by public transport. Devise a simple means for passengers to report back their experiences of using local transport. The web-site is a means to publish a two-way flow of information about the quality of services on offer.

Step 6 Community transport advice and brokerage service

Establishment of a local transport advice and brokerage service for Calne CAT members – in effect a “community travel agent”. Use of the full range of online information services plus links with local operators, lift-schemes, etc. The Brokerage service is linked with the design of the Calne CAT website. (See Step One)

Step 7 Search for spare capacity

Examine the funding arrangements for all local authority and Health Authority transport services. Obtain the eligibility criteria for use of these services. Examine ways of making 'better' use of these services to meet other identified travel needs (from the Brokerage Service) in the Calne area at little extra cost.

Step 8 Community partnership

Explore the scope of extending the activities of community minibuses in Calne and work in partnership with other local voluntary groups that have common objectives to improve local transport services.

Step 9 Car sharing

Examine the scope for a formal lift arranging service through the successful www.liftshare.com (pick ups are from bus stops or other prearranged meeting points.)

Step 10 Taxis

Examine the demand for taxis and shared taxis services in the area. Explore the scope for a Taxicard Voucher Scheme perhaps allocated to households without a car.

Step 11 Travel hubs

Examine the scope for developing a network of travel hubs which provide the key meeting points in the area for connecting with transport services and obtaining travel information.

Step 12 Interactive information and booking

Equipping hub points with improved interactive information, booking and payment systems housed in a suitable building already provided for other types of public use in the community. This could form part of an area wide programme to upgrade passenger-waiting facilities.

Outcomes

These 12-Steps will ensure that Calne CAT has a process that can fulfil its aims in a sustainable way. Built into this process are the means for continuous monitoring of the quality of service and the means of direct feedback to the transport operators.

This activity is likely to assist all elected representatives to ensure that funds are targeted in ways that address key local transport issues.

Next Twelve Steps

Matching Transport Provision to Local Needs

General Approach

These initial ideas on a strategy for Calne CAT have been developed as part of a programme of general independent advice to help the organisation fulfil its stated aims of 'promoting a reliable, accessible, safe and affordable (local) transport network' through an 'understanding of transport needs' and by 'strengthening the voice of transport users'.

Purpose of this Report

This report outlines a suggested approach to fulfilling the purposes of Calne CAT. The individual elements are described as a series of steps for Calne CAT to take. As a voluntary organisation the timescale for completing the steps or indeed how far the Group progresses along this course will depend on funding and the extent to which members of the community become involved and acknowledge the benefits to be derived from taking these steps.

The approach recognises that the public is often unaware of what transport is available to use to meet their travel requirements. They will welcome authoritative advice. If a particular journey cannot be made by public transport it is important to assess the demand for this trip and how this can be met sustainably.

Finally to become an independent travel brokerage service, Calne CAT will need to be more aware of the range of transport services available in the local area and to suggest ways that the resources could better match local travel needs.

At the Calne CAT 2002 AGM an introductory presentation was given by the Public Transport Consultant, Peter Warman, to explain what factors influence the provision of public transport in rural areas and how the private car has dominated rural communities over at least 40 years. Any response to address these trends must be capable of providing transport services that can meet this diverse pattern of journeys.

Twelve Steps to develop the future of Calne CAT

Step 1 Design the Calne CAT Web-site to explain the work of the Group and provide detailed advice on transport services within the local catchment area that are not currently included on any other transport website.

The Calne CAT web site should provide an index of all important public transport information sites and links such as Transport Direct, Traveline, NFBU-complaints procedure, National Rail, etc. The web site should explain the approach being taken to improve transport services and information. It will outline how local volunteers can help and the training that is provided. Unique to this website is comprehensive and up-to-date local travel information, including relevant information on Wigglybus.

The web site will be developed by a combination of local knowledge with professional advice on design and content.

(Note: The suggestion of a web site as a foundation step to this plan may seem a little strange. Whilst over 50% of the population have access to the Internet, there are many people who depend on public transport who do not. However, well designed publicity and information can be distributed and printed off very easily from a web site by friends, neighbours or relatives as well as Calne CAT agents. Therefore, direct access to the web is unnecessary as long as everyone knows someone with web-access. What is printed can be tailored to the particular travel needs of the individual. This can be done 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Out of date timetables can become a thing of the past.

Step 2 Develop training resources and find local agents

From the membership of Calne CAT, the proposal is to identify volunteers who can become local transport agents to have an active role in furthering the aims of Calne CAT. Towards this end, the following material must be developed:

- Produce 'core briefing session material' for local agents
- Develop 'Best practice guides' for local agents
- Define 'Ideal' profiles for local volunteer agents

When producing written material, it is important to use it in a pilot project to test its relevance and effectiveness before finalising the content for more widespread use. All agents will be encouraged to provide feedback to ensure briefing material and best practice procedures can be improved and kept up-to-date.

Step 3 Through the build-up of the local membership of Calne CAT, identify people who are willing to become Calne CAT “agents” for their street, neighbourhood or village.

These agents will be encouraged and briefed to play an active role in keeping their local community informed about local public transport services and to monitor the quality of these services ('mystery shopper' surveys, etc.) and any associated infrastructure (bus shelters, stops, roadside information displays, etc.).

Each agent will have a defined number of households to serve. The ideal number of households to serve will have to be determined by experience, but, as a starting point, it should be of the order of fifty households per agent. The intention is to build up the coverage of the Calne Community Area over a period of, say, two years and possibly link with other community and voluntary associations with an interest in better services to the local community.

To cover the Calne area would require of the order of 150 to 180 agents. This will be less if individuals cover more households than 50, but if volunteers are willing to get involved they should not be overworked by taking too much on.

Agents should be people who have good interpersonal skills and enjoy making contacts with local residents. They must respect confidences and follow the guidelines as set out by the Market Research Society when conducting household travel surveys. Their role is to distribute relevant publicity on local transport services. When residents request more specific trip information agents will endeavour to use the resources of Calne CAT to recommend the possible options.

Step 4 House to house distribution of relevant public transport publicity for the Calne CAT catchment area.

Any distribution of public transport information would have to be with the cooperation of Wiltshire County Council and local bus operators who publish and finance the supply of this publicity. Examples of current publicity include the Calne Area timetable booklet, public transport route map for Wiltshire and a copy of the latest Calne CAT newsletter with additional information printed on relevant websites, local transport operators including taxis and community transport services operating in the Calne catchment area.

Distribution of publicity would depend on whether a local agent had been found for a given area. During the first year there must

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be an active recruitment and training programme to increase the number of Calne CAT agents. Special briefing packs (See Step 2) will be developed for agents to ensure they have all the required material to do their work on behalf of Calne CAT.

Such material is probably best produced and kept up-to-date on the proposed Calne CAT web-site. For agents without access to the web, local contacts would have to be found for them to have web access so they can print off the relevant pages.

Step 5 Identifying specific households with unmet travel requirements or interest in using public transport and where the traveller requires assistance in planning their journey. Having helped such households in making journeys, set up a simple means to report back the experience of these travellers using public transport services in the area. Useful results and travel hints can be published on the web site for others to benefit from.

The role of the local agent is an 'enabler' and 'go between.' It is important that the flow of information is a two-way process. This ensures that the planned transport services can be monitored and matched with reality - good or bad. Encourage people to join Calne CAT as members. A strong membership will bring commitment. Information gathered can be used by the Calne CAT Committee to present to the local transport authority as evidence for particular services, improvements or changes.

Step 6 Establishment of a local transport advice and brokerage service for Calne CAT members. Use the full range of online information services plus links with local operators, lift-schemes, etc. The Brokerage service is linked with the design of the Calne CAT website. (See Step One)

Thought will be given to how Calne CAT members can have access to the brokerage service. At the moment the best analogy would be as a community travel agent for travel within or out of the Calne area. However, the extent to which the service could be more than 'just advice' would need exploring further. To make it commercially viable would require membership fees and/or some means of commission from 'bookings,' either from the transport operators or from the County Council.

Step 7 Examine the funding arrangements for all local authority and Health Authority transport services. Obtain the eligibility criteria for use of these services. Examine ways of

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making 'better' use of these services to meet other identified travel needs (from the Brokerage Service) in the Calne area at little extra cost.

Set up an inventory of all known local contract services. Ensure Calne CAT members are aware who is qualified to use one of these services. Provide printed advice via the web site on this. Where appropriate, make suggestions to the Transport Authorities where an under-used contract service could widen its scope to meet other local travel needs. For instance dropping people off at shops en route to hospital.

Step 8 Explore the scope of extending the activities of community minibuses in Calne and work in partnership for mutual benefit.

Step 9 Examine the scope to set up a formal lift arranging service through www.liftshare.com (pick ups are from bus stops or other prearranged meeting points.)

The lift sharing arrangements would be exclusive to Calne CAT members, but may require the involvement of the Wiltshire CC, other local organisations and possibly local employers as part of an industrial estate's travel plan.

Step 10 Examine the demand for taxis and shared taxis services in the area. Explore the scope for shared taxi schemes or means to subsidize taxi use where it proves to be the most cost effective means of meeting basic travel needs. Examine the scope for a Taxicard Voucher Scheme These vouchers could be allocated to all households without a car. Encourage the local authority to increase the number of taxi licenses, if the demand for services can justify this.

Any such proposals will need to be discussed and agreed with North Wiltshire District Council

Step 11 Examine the scope for developing a network of travel hubs, which provide the key meeting points in the area for connecting with transport services and obtaining transport information.

These hubs take account of the existing networks of footpaths, cycleways, and local roads and how these serve key activity points. Existing bus stops will be taken into account but not all stops will qualify as travel hubs. These hubs will have the look

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and function as a mini terminal. These would not be isolated outposts, but located near a supermarket, garage, shop or pub. The argument for creating travel hubs is to promise the traveller that by going to these hubs, all the necessary information and transport services can be on hand to meet their requirements within a defined standard of service. Usually hubs will be located near bus routes, but where the routes or service timing are not suitable for a given journey, other types of responsive transport can serve the hub. These could include: Wigglybus, taxis, shared taxis and car sharing etc.

Eventually, the intention is to have a network of hubs to serve most of the households in the Calne CAT area. Except for isolated dwellings and remote hamlets, it is hoped to have hubs within walking and easy cycling distances of each neighbourhood and/or community.

Local knowledge together with an accessibility analysis using a Geographic Information System is an appropriate means to identify the distribution and location of hub points.

Step 12 Equipping hub points with improved interactive information, booking and payment systems. These would form part of a programme of upgrading all waiting facilities for passengers. Where possible waiting facilities would be incorporated in a suitable building already provided for other types of public use in the community (see Step 11 above).

What do we do next?

The final version of the report will be presented to the AGM on 24th October 2003. It will be for the membership of Calne CAT to decide if they wish to adopt this 12 Step Approach as an effective means to meet the objectives of the Group.

If the approach is adopted then the Transport Consultant can provide further guidance on the work required to implement each of the above Steps. For each step, it is recommended that the following range of information should be compiled:

- **Summary of Tasks associated with each step**
- **Capital and revenue expenditure involved undertaking this step**
- **Any professional involvement required in completing these tasks**
- **Dependency on other steps being completed**
- **Timescale for completion within the programme**
- **Supporting statements in Local Transport Policy documents**
- **Other relevant national reports and reference material**