

Burghfield & Mortimer Handybus

(Registered Charity Number 1170252)

Annual Report 2025/26

REMIT

We are a long-established local organisation run entirely by volunteers. We provide community transport for elderly and less able residents from several villages in West Berkshire, many who have no access to, or are unable to manage, public transport. We operate two 12-seater minibuses that have been specially adapted for easy access and wheelchair use. We operate regular weekly trips to local supermarkets providing a door-to-door service with volunteer escorts to assist passengers on and off the minibuses and with their shopping. In addition, we provide transport for our elderly residents to several local Social Clubs and to Hospital or Health Care appointments.

OPERATION

Operating as a volunteer run, not for profit Charity, we ask our passengers for a notional fee per trip to cover our operating overheads. Other funding comes from Grants (West Berkshire Council, local Parish Councils, Dept. of Transport) and donations from other local supporters.

By providing our transport services we give many elderly members of the community access to shopping for themselves which gives them a level of independence, often providing respite for their families and neighbours. Transporting them to local Social Clubs enables them to be part of a wider social community and without doubt improves their social welfare. For a few passengers we are providing specialist (wheelchair) transport to regular Hospital and Health Care appointments.

THE YEAR

This past year saw the Handybus service provide transport for close to 3,000 passenger journeys spread over 500 individual trips. Each week we provide at least five shopping trips to local Supermarkets and transport to 3 to 4 different Social Clubs. In addition, some of the more popular trips this past year have included to local garden centres, day trips to the seaside and transport to local musical concerts.

Being a not-for-profit charity, we are dependent on local volunteers providing all the services to keep us going. Recruiting and maintaining volunteers proved to be successful again this year and we are fortunate to have a core of 20 - 25 active volunteers all who freely offer their time and efforts to ensure the service can continue.

FINANCE

See accounts.

The Charity is dependent on its funding from grants, donations and contributions from the passengers we carry. Once again West Berkshire Council provided us with a generous Community Transport Grant. We were able to claim the Department of Transport Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) and received a grant from one of our local Parish Councils. These grants plus the notional fares we collected from passengers meant that our receipts increased by 15% from last year. However, we were faced with some major repair expenses on one of our minibuses. In addition, we did take the decision to spend some money on complete refurbishment, mechanical and bodywork, on our second minibus to ensure its reliability in the future. We also incurred additional Insurance costs on a third minibus which we had purchased during the year. Overall, these costs led to a deficit of £4.5k in our operating finances in the year. These additional costs were “one offs” pertaining to this year only and were covered by a reduction in our Reserves, which remain healthy at £66k.

During the year we had the opportunity to purchase a secondhand minibus from a similar organisation so the Trustees decided to replace this for the minibus which was becoming unreliable and incurring the additional costs (see above). This old minibus will be traded in later this year, for at least its book value.

FUTURE

With the continued financial support from West Berkshire Council in the form of a Community Transport Grant, with the current demand for passenger services and the goodwill of our volunteers, the outlook, both financial and operationally, is encouraging for the future.

Burghfield and Mortimer Handybus are extremely grateful to all its funders, supporters and volunteers without whom we would not be able to continue with providing this service. We thank you all and hope that you will continue this valuable support into the coming year.

P.I. CHURCH
Chairman of Trustees
October 2026