



# Travellers Tales

The Newsletter of sedcat - Community Transport

Winter 2020



## We Kept Calm and Carried On

**A**t this time we always reflect back on what has been happening throughout the year and how this affects our service users and the charity. This has been a year of profound changes worldwide and in our local communities and we've all had to learn new ways of reaching out and connecting whilst trying to keep people safe and contain the virus. We've seen the power of community unleashed and we're proud to say that we've been a part of this resource; our 'Hospital Hop' was able to provide an essential transport service to get people safely in and out of hospital during the very worst times and our volunteers and staff shopped and dropped off provisions to members and others who were struggling to get help.

Lockdown came at the end of March and the services had to be suspended but we were working from home to keep things running and to help the community when it was most needed. A very challenging time for all of us which of course is not over yet!

Community funders rallied round to support groups to remain financially viable and we were able to apply for some funds to cover shortfalls in our generated income as you'll appreciate that a lot of our costs have to be met from charges and fundraising which came to a halt. We're immensely grateful for all the messages of support received from many of you which shows us that you value and benefit from what we offer at **sedcat**.

Since June we've been gradually returning services with protective hygiene and social distancing measures in place (see inside for details). The staff and volunteers are now back at the Castlepoint office part time during weekdays and we've had to make a number of changes to comply with new rules to keep everyone safe. *Please see inside for changes to services.*

The BAT bus is up and running again for shopping and 'trips out' – local trips which are 'accessible' and offer 'social distancing'. We aim to get everyone who wants and needs to out as often as possible as many of our service users live alone and are missing contact with others. Connection to the community and with others gives people control and changes lives whilst improving health and well-being; something which is really important to us at **sedcat**. We appreciate that not everyone is able to return at the moment but we very much look forward to welcoming you back as soon as you feel able. Thank you once again to everyone for their support and our very best wishes to you all.

**Happy Xmas and best wishes for the New Year.**

*\* Please note that some of the photos in this newsletter were taken pre outbreak of COVID-19* 

## We have a new look and Website

During the lockdown in March, we had the opportunity (thanks to a donation from one of our own Trustees) to improve the look and functionality of our website.

Andy and Julie Saunders from OMNIsector Ltd worked tirelessly to redesign and improve the site and we were delighted with the result which gives us new options to reach people and promote the work of the charity. If you haven't already – take a look around the site at;

[www.sedcat.org.uk](http://www.sedcat.org.uk).

Andy and Julie are now helping us to evaluate our services as we want to communicate the stories behind the data and interpret the value of all we do. Thank you to everyone who has completed our brief evaluation survey either by phone or post. We are still collecting responses so it's not too late to return surveys to us.



## Community Cars – Helping you get to essential appointments

We are still able to arrange a volunteer driver for essential journeys and this may be a GP visit, hairdressing appointment, a health clinic etc. Please give as much notice as possible as unfortunately we have lost several of our drivers who are still 'shielding'. We try to match you with an available driver living reasonably close to keep costs down as passengers pay for mileage at £0.60p per mile. **Call us on 01202 309433** – 10.00am until 2.00pm weekdays if you need help to get to a health related appointment.

Volunteer drivers are always needed in all areas and mileage expenses are paid. **Please call us on 01202 534027 if you can help.**



## Getting out and about with the BAT bus

It's been a worrying time for many over the last few months and the priority has been 'keeping people safe' which we wholeheartedly endorse. We've taken many steps to make sure that passengers can travel safely in our vehicles as we're committed to getting people out whenever it is possible.

We've recently purchased an industrial 'Zapptizer' (currently being used on many public transport vehicles) which is helping to keep the vehicles 'sanitised' throughout the day and we've stepped up our cleaning regime so that 'touch points' are regularly cleaned with virocidal products. Drivers will wear protective masks and very basic PPE to assist people on and off the buses. We ask that all passengers wear a mask and those people that can't for a medical reason, to let us know before travelling. We carry a few extra 'disposable' masks which passenger can be given for a £1.00 donation.

We're no longer able to carry larger groups of people or to let passengers sit together (unless they live in the same household) and a number of seats have been removed to comply with social distancing rules. This does mean that it is not always possible to get everyone on to the same vehicle so we ask that you bear with us on this as it is a changing situation. We want to get you all out so when we can we will run additional buses which may vary from normal operating times.

Travelling on the BAT bus serves a social purpose for a great many of our passengers and we want to continue to offer social trips where people can escape their own 4 walls, chat to others over a 'cuppa' or a lunch and feel connected again. We've put together a list of short trips out (to reduce travelling time) and currently these include local garden centres and pubs which can offer the necessary social distancing. Our current list – up to end of December can be viewed on our website and we are always happy to post a list to you if you contact us on **01202 534027**. The list which takes us into 2021 is enclosed. Don't forget, if you have any suggestions for new places to visit (locally), then do let us know.





## Telephone Friendship Groups – a chance to chat to others from home

Launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> August and led by PramaLife in collaboration with other groups including **sedcat**, this provides an opportunity for people who may be feeling a bit isolated at the moment to chat to others and gain peer support. Groups of up to six people will be brought together in the hour long calls for chats of a general nature, perhaps replacing the face to face groups and clubs that existed before Covid-19. The calls will be free to the participants (assuming there are no special conditions from their own telephone service provider). Of course, donations to help continue the project are always welcomed. For further information contact:

Sue Warr - [sue.warr@pramacare.co.uk](mailto:sue.warr@pramacare.co.uk)

Telephone: 07867 354588

Keith Gubbins - [keith.gubbins@pramalife.org](mailto:keith.gubbins@pramalife.org)

Telephone: 07752 597334

## Community funding

Unfortunately the pandemic has meant that we've lost a fair amount of funds that we need to run services throughout the year. We've been able to apply to community funders to keep the charity sustainable and we'd like to thank the following who have supported **sedcat** through the crisis and beyond to March 2021.

The National Lottery, **#CommunitiesCan** have shown their support by helping to cover the on-going costs of our smaller shopping and social trip groups needed to socially distance passengers. **The Valentine Trust** – supporting our Hospital Hop this year, **Dorset Community Foundation** – Covid response and recovery funds, **Talbot Village Trust** – Covid response funds, **Charities Aid Foundation – Co-op Local Community Fund** - Connecting people and places We'd also like to thank **Castlepoint Shopping Park** and **The Sovereign Centre** for their continued support for our services.

## Together We Can – BCP council

The Together We Can help line is available for anyone in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole who does not have a support network and needs help.

## #TogetherWeCan



The helpline is open Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm.  
Tel: 0300 123 7052 or visit:

[www.bpcouncil.gov.uk/togetherwecan](http://www.bpcouncil.gov.uk/togetherwecan)

Residents who would like to offer their time and help are urged to register with the council's partner, Community Action Network [www.can100.org/volunteering-opportunities](http://www.can100.org/volunteering-opportunities) or email [togetherwecan@can100.org](mailto:togetherwecan@can100.org) or call 01202 466130. **sedcat** are part of the community resilience team helping to deliver food parcels to vulnerable residents who need help.

## Hospital Hop – hoping to 'hop' into Poole

Following re-organisation of local health services, our service is trying to adapt to demand for transport to Poole hospital. The Hospital Hop is great because it can offer that extra assistance to older and disabled people that is not affordable or available elsewhere. Whilst we can get members to Bournemouth & Christchurch hospitals we are not yet able to offer transport widely to Poole hospital although we've been able to get a few people to Poole during lockdown periods. It is becoming clear that we need to expand this very helpful service and offer it to more people in the BCP area.



We're running a survey for **Poole residents** which is on our website [www.sedcat.org.uk](http://www.sedcat.org.uk) or go straight to the survey via the QR code. This will help us gather evidence to develop the service in the future. Pass it on to friends and family living in Poole.

## Festive Food from Crumbs



For those not aware of the work that Crumbs do, they provide great meals for you to enjoy with family and friends. Every meal you purchase helps trainees in meeting their goals of living

independently and gaining employment.

This year they are offering festive **Xmas** boxes containing fresh luxury sandwiches, turkey, smoked salmon, brie & cranberry, sausage roll, slice of Xmas cake, scone with clotted cream and jam and gingerbread cookie for £7.50, or a **vegan** selection.

They also offer a frozen weekly menu for 5 or 7 days from £17.50 - £25.00 with favourites; cottage pie, spaghetti bol, chicken hotpot, roast dinner etc. for collection or free delivery in the BH area.

For more information about what this fabulous group do, please visit their website [www.crumbsathome.org.uk](http://www.crumbsathome.org.uk) or phone 01202 519320.

## We are COVID - Safe

We are committed to providing a controlled, hygienic environment for the safety and well-being of staff, volunteers and clients.

1. Anyone with Coronavirus symptoms must not come into the Unit
2. Anyone entering the unit should wear a mask. If you are exempt from wearing a mask due to a medical condition, please advise staff when you book.
3. Equipment should be pre booked so we can provide contact tracing for everyone and reduce the number of people queuing outside of the unit. Payment will be taken by phone at time of booking.
4. 2 metre social distancing is maintained at all times and clients are not able to enter the 'restricted' staff zone.
5. We actively keep cleaning the interior touch points to minimise transmission of the virus with virucidal cleaners and all equipment is thoroughly cleaned once returned. Equipment is be rotated so that scooters are 'rested' in between use.

More information and full safety guidelines can be found on our website at [www.sedcat.org.uk](http://www.sedcat.org.uk)



## Xmas and New Year Travel Schedule

In view of the difficult circumstances and current government recommendations we have taken the decision to close over the Xmas and New Year period to protect the health of workers and service users. We hope to see as many of you as possible back in January 2021 and beyond. Have a very happy and safe holiday.

### Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December

Last BAT bus shopping – Zone A until 4<sup>th</sup> Jan

### Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

Last BAT bus shopping – Zone B until 5<sup>th</sup> Jan

### Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December

Hospital Hop – service running

### Community cars & Hospital Hop

booking lines closed from 2.00pm until Mon 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 21

### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December

BAT bus bookings taken for Monday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan –Zone A

Hospital Hop – service closes at 2.00pm

Shopmobility – 10.00am – 2.00pm

### 25<sup>th</sup> Dec – 1<sup>st</sup> Jan

**All services closed**

### Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan

Shopmobility 10 - 3.00pm

### Monday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan

All transport services resume and booking lines open

BAT bus bookings taken for Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 21

*Just a reminder that* - Shopmobility at Castlepoint is now open from 10.00am until 3.00pm Mondays to Saturdays. You can still find us in Aisle 11 (next to the car wash) in the blue ground floor car park. *In view of the changing Covid situation it is recommended that you check the latest opening hours on our website at [www.sedcat.org.uk](http://www.sedcat.org.uk). We are trying to keep everyone as safe as possible and we ask that people follow our 10 point guidance when you use the service. Thank you*