

GROUP TRANSPORT IN ISOLATED AREAS



SOUTH WEST COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

February, 2009

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Disclaimer:

This Supplement is a synthesis of information from a range of sources, including discussions, believed to be reliable. Linda Margrie gives no warranty that the said base sources are correct and accepts no responsibility for any resultant errors contained herein or for decision and actions taken as a result and any damage incurred.

Introduction & Background

In 2008 South West Community Transport received Home and Community Care Funding from the Ministry of Transport to provide group transport giving priority to clients who were isolated.

On 27th May 2008 planning commenced for expenditure of \$145,000.00 non-recurrent and \$160,000.00 recurrent funding. Funding was allocated to purchase vehicles, provide group transport that ensured isolated areas were targeted, employ drivers and support staff.

It was decided to purchase two small transit vehicles to allow better coverage in the 5 Local Government Areas of Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool and Wollondilly. Due to the nature of isolated communities it was considered more appropriate to have 2 small vehicles that could be fully utilised in different areas at the same times rather than one larger vehicle with probable spare capacity being able to service only one area at any given time.

Vehicles were ordered and booked for modification with the expectation of delivery to South West Community Transport in late October 2008. A 20-hour booking position and 2 30-hour driver positions were advertised in September 2008 and filled.

In October 2008 a casual project worker was employed and initial investigations and discussions with stakeholders commenced to ascertain priority areas for service. Once this was achieved the project officer organised targeted community consultations to ensure that services provided under the funding are relevant to the local communities of Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool & Wollondilly.

This report details the processes undertaken to:

- Establish a definition of "isolated" in relation to this particular project
- Consult with Communities in Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool & Wollondilly Local Government Areas
- Recommendations

Thankyou to the following people for their input:

- Gaye Hardwick - Wollondilly Council Aged & Disability Worker
- Nicole Collins - Camden Council Aged & Disability Worker
- Angela Lonergan - Campbelltown Council Aged & Disability Worker
- Lyn Ifedioranma - Liverpool Council Aged & Disability Worker
- Yolanda Ecina - Fairfield Council Aged & Disability Worker
- Marlene Henry - Liverpool Council Social Planner
- Joe Luka - Busabout
- Ron Watson - Westbus
- Phillipa Vale - South West Sydney, Bankstown & Wingecarribee Travel Training Project

- The Community members who responded to the "phone-in" and/or attended the Community Consultations

Special thanks to Chris Moule from Picton Buslines and Dave Davies from Busways. The advantage of having interested local public transport providers involved in the consultations should not be underestimated. South West Community Transport is lucky to have strong local connections with Picton Buslines and Busways Camden. These two bus companies have a history of community consultation and innovation and the willingness to engage with Community Transport to find solutions to local problems. It is one of the aims of South West Community Transport to assist people to use public transport systems wherever and for as long as possible. Having bus providers present allowed the community to discuss their needs holistically and also allowed us as providers to strategically work together to address those needs.

In other areas this situation is unfortunately not duplicated often with the result of fragmentation of service and silos of transport providers with little interaction.

PART 1

Defining the Parameters of the Project

Isolated

Due to limited funding and the large geographic area covered by the service it was decided for the purpose of this project the target area would be identified as:

1. Any geographic area that did not have access to accessible public transport.

Even though the above target gives a framework for the project it is acknowledged that, particularly in Macarthur, many more isolated villages fall into the target area than could be serviced with the funding provided. Therefore consideration was also given to:

- Demographics of the HACC target group within the target area
- Socio economic factors
- Projects provided by other services and/or funding sources
- Demographics of HACC special needs groups
- Ability to provide service to the maximum number of clients
- Access to future public transport due to rapid development in some areas

Public Transport

For the purpose of the research section of this project "public transport" refers to any public transport available excluding school bus services. School bus services were excluded after discussions with bus operators as most of the services were not accessible and it was acknowledged that members of the HACC target group may consider these services inappropriate and noisy.

Occasional Service

After discussion with the public transport providers any area that had an "occasional" service was considered as having "no access" due to the spasmodic nature of the service.

Methodology

The Methods used to determine need and make appropriate recommendations included:

- Targeted interviews with Council Aged & Disability Workers
- Targeted interviews or telephone conversations with Bus Company Representatives
- Targeted interviews with South West Community Transport Staff
- Phone-in Surveys
- Face to Face Consultation

Issues raised by Council Workers, Bus Companies and South West Community Transport Staff were tried and tested through the phone in and face to face consultations. Only those issues that were supported by the phone in and/or community consultations have been recommended for implementation, however other suggestions made by any of the above that warrant further investigation, at a later date, have been included in the recommendations.

Initial Research

Initial research included meetings with Council's Aged & Disabilities Workers in Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool, & Wollondilly. These consultations provided valuable local information with the benefit of additional knowledge regarding population projections and the way communities were expected to change due to future growth.

The Project Officer also met with all interested Bus Operators to gather information regarding the public bus service provided in the areas, its regularity and accessibility to the HACC Target Group. Telephone conversations were undertaken with Bus Operators where meetings did not occur.

Staff of South West Community Transport were also consulted regarding their knowledge of service gaps and issues that had been raised either by clients themselves or that had become obvious to them through repetition.

The finding from this initial research is included in Part 2 of this Report.

Testing the Initial Research Findings

After initial research was conducted it was decided to conduct a "phone in" over two days to gauge interest and provide useful data to inform future decisions regarding face to face consultations. Areas were selected based on the information provided by initial research and grouped together to include the locales and/or villages of:

Consultation Area 1: Camden/Wollondilly LGA's - Ellis Lane, Grassmere, Razorback, and Cawdor

Consultation Area 2: Campbelltown/Wollondilly LGA's - Wedderburn, Appin, Wilton, Douglas Park and Menangle.

Consultation Area 3: Liverpool/Camden LGA's - Leppington and Catherine Fields

Consultation Area 4: Wollondilly LGA - The Oaks, Oakdale, Orangeville, Burraborang and Nattai

Consultation Area 5: Wollondilly LGA - Buxton, Couridjah, Lakesland, Mowbray Park, Barkers Lodge Rd and the back of Thirlmere.

Consultation Area 6: Wollondilly LGA - Pheasants Nest, Yanderra and Isolated parts of Bargo

The "phone in" was advertise by:

- Community service announcements on local radio the week prior to the phone in
- Inclusion in the Mayors section of the Bush Telegraph in Wollondilly
- Letter box drops in the targeted areas the weekend before the phone in
- Articles in the local newspapers (even though these papers were not delivered to the targeted areas we hoped that "word of mouth" would be effective through "town" people talking to "isolated" people)
- Flyers were distributed by Community Champions where possible
- Flyers were distributed with Meals on Wheels
- Flyers were put on all South West Community Transport Vehicles
- Drivers displayed flyers in any available community notice boards and other venues.

A bright, eye-catching postcard was designed for the "letter box drop" in the hope it would not get thrown out with "junk" mail. While the letterbox drop was expensive it was considered the most effective way to get to people living in isolated areas. Over 4000 cards were distributed.

The "phone in" was held on the 4th and 5th of November and the service took calls from 30 people regarding the needs of 48 people.

While responses were relatively low for the amount of cards distributed we must be aware that "isolated" areas by definition have low populations that cover large geographic areas and from these low populations the HACC Target group is relatively small. However those people in the HACC Target group in isolated areas have a high need for transport. For these reasons the project officer was happy with the response as it gave concrete evidence of the need in areas that had not had the benefit of specifically designed and targeted consultation in the past.

People who used the "phone in" were also sent information packages containing:

- General Information regarding South West Community Transport
- Specific Information regarding existing shopping services in their area
- Client Handbook explaining service processes and access
- South West Community Transport Magnet

The findings from the "phone in" for each consultation area are included in Part 2 of the report.

Community Consultations

From information gathered during initial research and supported by the "phone in" face to face community consultations were organised in:

1. Cawdor to cater to Consultation area 1 (Ellis Lane, Grassmere, Razorback, Cawdor)
2. Leppington to cater to Consultation area 3 (Leppington and Catherine Fields)
3. The Oaks to cater to Consultation area 4 (Orangeville, Nattai, Oakdale, The Oaks and Burragorang)
4. Tahmoor to cater to Consultation Areas 5 and 6 (Buxton, Couridjah, Lakesland, Mowbray Park, Barkers Lodge Rd, The back of Thirlmere, Pheasants Nest, Yanderra and Isolated parts of Bargo)

Note: No face to face consultation was held in Wedderburn due to the low response rate to the phone in. However future action for this area is suggested in the Recommendations of the report.

For each consultation invitations were sent to:

- All residents who contacted the "phone in"
- All relevant Local Council Aged & Disability Workers,
- All relevant HACC Services
- All relevant Bus Companies

Promotion of the consultations was through:

- Local Newspapers
- Spots on Community & Commercial Radio
- Flyers on Notice Boards etc

At each consultation the same Agenda was followed:

1. Introduction of Executive Officer of South West Community Transport
2. Explanation of the services already provided by Community Transport
3. The funding and parameters of the current project
4. Information regarding local public transport options

5. Discussion regarding unmet transport need for the HACC Target group who are isolated.

The Project and the Executive Officer also took the opportunity to remind stakeholders of the Travel Training project that can assist people to read timetables or accompany someone on Public Transport until they feel comfortable.

At each consultation the project officer explained the feedback mechanisms that would be used to keep stakeholders informed of the progress of the project. Stakeholders were guaranteed a copy of this report including its recommendations. South West Community Transport made a commitment to get any trial services up and running in the 1st quarter of 2009. The Project Officer asked those present if they would be happy to be contacted again to assist with the implementation of the project and "spreading the word". All stakeholders at all venues were happy for this to occur.

The consultations were also used to promote South West Community Transport's recently introduced "Transport Champions". Transport Champions are being recruited from the client group to promote the service within their area. It was felt that if services to isolated communities were going to be effective it would be necessary for local people to Champion the service and "get the word out".

Recommendations

Information from all avenues of research and consultations has been combined to formulate the Recommendations for Future Action Section 3 of this report.

PART 2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA INVESTIGATIONS AND FINDINGS

Research for this project was undertaken using Local Government Areas as a broad guide. However, due to the nature and spread of the population in Macarthur and Liverpool/Fairfield, areas were grouped according to common geographic issues, which did not necessarily fall into LGA's. An example of this is Wedderburn (Campbelltown LGA) and Appin (Wollondilly LGA). People in these areas were included in the same group as historically the small pockets of geographically isolated areas in Campbelltown have similar issues to those pockets of isolated areas between Picton and Campbelltown.

Camden Local Government Area

Council Input

Meetings with the Aged & Disability Workers with Camden Council were extremely beneficial. Workers were keen to participate in the project and attend any consultations undertaken.

When discussing the characteristics of the area it became obvious that the following areas had high numbers of potential HACC clients and were transport isolated:

AREA	Over 65
Leppington, Rossmore & Catherine Fields (3 rd highest demo)	557
Grassmere, Cawdor, Ellis Lane (2 nd highest demo)	564
Cobbity, Oran Park	185

Further investigation showed that Leppington, Rossmore, Catherine Fields, Ellis Lane, Cawdor, Grassmere all had relatively low socio economic indicators while the areas of Cobbity and Oran Park were relatively "well off" with high car ownership.

Camden Aged & Disability workers also provided great deal of information regarding projects being undertaken by Rotary and other agencies that may welcome partnerships with South West Community Transport. This information was not relevant to this particular project however has been forwarded to the Executive Officer for future action.

Bus Company Input

Two Bus Companies cover the Camden Local Government Area. Busways and Busabout.

Busways were eager to meet to discuss the project and possible partnerships. After examination of timetables and routes currently in place with Busways the following areas were identified as having no access to accessible public transport:

- Ellis Lane
- Grassmere
- Cawdor
- Cobbity
- Oran Park
- Catherine Fields
- Rossmore

Busways did provide information that they have commenced discussions and planning for services to Cobbity/Oran Park due to major new developments occurring in that area.

A meeting did not occur with Busabout however their representative confirmed by phone that the following areas do not have access to any accessible public transport:

- Leppington and surrounds

Initial Observations

1. Leppington was also raised as an area of high need through discussions with Liverpool Council and Outer Liverpool Community Services (see Liverpool LGA Investigations)
2. Demographics/socio economic factors indicated further consultation may be useful in the areas of Leppington/Catherine Fields and Ellis Lane/Grassmere/Cawdor/Razorback (Razorback & Cawdor are in Wollondilly LGA however are on the Camden side of Razorback Mountain and were therefore included in the Ellis Lane Group)
3. Cobbity/Oran Park were areas that were growing quickly and as there were plans to introduce more public transport were excluded from further consultation.
4. It was felt that Grassmere residents were close to the Campbelltown services and for this reason were also excluded from further consultation.

Consultation Area 1: Ellis Lane, Grassmere, Razorback, and Cawdor

During the "phone in" 7 people contacted the service regarding the needs of 8 people. 3 people identified as being existing clients of the service.

The people that were not existing clients were concerned about "getting older" and needing the service in the future. All wished to support South West Community Transport endeavors to improve transport options in the area for older people.

Some suggestions raised included:

- A weekly shopping service to Narellan
- Getting to Macarthur Square in Campbelltown.

- A young mother also raised the issue of no school bus going down her street to service her two children and 7 others in the area; the nearest bus stop was 4 km away. (This input was referred to Busways who contacted the mother directly)

3 Service Information Packs were sent out as a result of the "phone in" and 6 people indicated that they would attend a consultation meeting.

A Community Consultation was held at Cawdor Uniting Church Hall and 4 residence from the area attended. While the number of participants were low they were extremely keen to work with the service and made several extremely helpful suggestions including:

- Avenues for promotion of existing services (these contacts were included in the consultation notes however are not reproduced in this report due to confidentiality considerations)
- Using the church newsletters to engage the community (as no local papers are delivered to the area)
- The need for transport to be provided to elderly people who wished to attend church functions.
- The need for transport for the "50's plus" group that uses the Church Hall on a monthly basis.

One resident agreed to be a Transport Champion for the area and assist in the promotion of any services that may be introduced.

Campbelltown Local Government Area

Council Input

Meetings with the Aged & Disability Worker with Campbelltown Council were extremely beneficial. The worker was keen to participate in the project and any consultations even though Campbelltown did not have many areas that were geographically isolated.

Wedderburn was one area that was considered geographically isolated. It was discovered through demographics held by Council that there were 62 people over the age of 65 living in the area. Workers also felt that Kentlyn may be transport isolated (though not geographically). Discussions were also had regarding Denham Court and North Ingleburn.

After further investigation and discussions it was noted that:

- Denham Court residents have a very high socio economic status and relatively low potential HACC Target population.
- North Ingleburn while it did have a potential HACC Target population was not geographically isolated
- Kentlyn did have a high HACC Target Group population however it was felt that this was due to the presence of the Russian Nursing Home and Retirement Village in Kentlyn which provided its own transport. Several residents of the retirement village also already utilise the service.

The Council Aged & Disability Worker also provided a great deal of other useful information including:

- Contacts for Council has Seniors Issues Committee for future consultations
- Contacts for Wedderburn consultations should they prove necessary
- Difficulties experienced by seniors due to the recent changes in public bus timetables. Council has noted that while about 25% of the buses are wheelchair accessible there are only a few routes where accessibility is guaranteed (Busways were advised of this issue and they promptly contacted Council to organise further discussions)
- Council Bus to Forest Lawn Cemetery is well patronized and demand is growing. The bus is full every month with people on a waiting list. Council interested in partnerships that could help the service grow. (Information passed onto Executive Officer to continue discussions)

Bus Company Input

Two bus companies also cover Campbelltown. Busways and Busabout.

After meeting with Busways the following areas were identified as having no access to accessible public transport:

- Menangle Park (does have access to rail)
- Wedderburn

Busways does provide a service to Kentlyn although vehicles are not guaranteed to be accessible. Busways is aware that the Russian Village provides transport to its residents.

A meeting with Busabout could not be arranged however after investigations conducted by Phillipa Vale, Travel Trainer with South West Community Transport, it was decided that no areas covered by Busabout could be considered geographically isolated.

Initial Observations

1. For the purpose of this project Wedderburn was considered appropriate for further investigation (also that Wedderburn could be linked with Appin in Wollondilly LGA)
1. Kentlyn was not considered a high priority for consultation
2. Nth Ingleburn & Denham court were not considered for further consultation

Consultation Area 2: Wedderburn, Appin, Wilton, Douglas Park and Menangle.

While Appin, Wilton, Douglas Park and Menangle are in Wollondilly LGA they were included in this consultation area for the following reasons:

- All areas use Campbelltown as their major shopping destination
- Transport could be quickly provided linking these areas.

During the "phone in" no phone calls were received from Appin, Douglas Park or Wilton. 1 call came from Menangle however this call was linked into the Cawdor consultation due to geographic considerations.

3 people contacted the service from Wedderburn regarding the needs of 4 people.

- 1 person (not HACC Target) complained that there was no public transport on weekends
- 1 carer made general enquiries regarding South West Community Transport on behalf of her parents
- 1 younger person with a disability indicated that she would use a fortnightly accessible service to Campbelltown shops should one be provided between 11.30 and 5pm.

2 service Information Packs were sent out as a result of the "phone in", 1 person indicated that they would come to a consultation meeting if arranged and a carer also asked to be kept up to date with developments.

It was decided not to conduct a face to face consultation in the Wedderburn/Appin area due to the relatively low interest shown through the phone, however recommendations for future action have been included in the Recommendations section of this report.

Fairfield Local Government Area

Council Input

The Aged & Disability Worker with Fairfield Council was unavailable at the arranged meeting time however other Council staff were very helpful. After discussions Horsley Park was the only area of the Shire Council staff felt could be isolated.

AREA	Over 65
Horsley Park (total pop 1811)	246

Language Spoken at Home	
Italian	315
Maltese	177
Assyrian	76
Khmer	55
Cantonese	16

Other input from the Aged & Disability Worker included:

- Even though Italian population higher in Horsley Park - Council worker indicated that the community had strong networks and linkages into the existing community, as many are long term immigrants that speak English English.
- There is a growing aging Maltese population in Horsley Park. There is a Maltese Seniors Group that may need assistance with transport.
- Council worker considered Maltese Community priority for this project

Bus Company Input

After telephone discussion with Westbus the following area was confirmed as having no guaranteed access to any accessible public transport (however it is likely that one accessible service per day would run to the centre of the suburb):

- Horsley Park.

Initial Observations

Ageing Maltese population in Horsley Park may be appropriate consultation group

Further Investigations

It was decided not to conduct a letter box drop in Horsley Park as there appeared to be a specific target group to be consulted. It was decided that this group should be contacted individually to arrange a meeting.

The contact for the Maltese Seniors Group was away for an extended period over the Christmas Season and at the time of writing this report had only just been contacted. The contact has agreed to discuss the issue of transport when the group meets in two weeks and contact us if they would like to discuss transport issues with the service.

Liverpool Local Government Area

Very little information was gleaned from a meeting with the Aged & Disability Worker with Liverpool Council although she did say that she thought the Leppington Area was isolated and to speak to Outer Liverpool Community Services who would know more.

The project officer was also referred to the Council's Social planner to source demographics for the area. The Social Planner was extremely helpful and the following relevant demographics were sourced:

AREA	Over 65
Leppington (total pop 1892)	310

Language Spoken at Home	
Italian	197
Cantonese	164
Arabic	80
Serbian	50
Maltese	44

After telephone discussions with Outer Liverpool Community Services it was confirmed that the Leppington area was isolated and had recently experienced major reductions in public bus services and changes were causing extreme difficulty for some elderly residents.

Bus Company Input

Unfortunately only a telephone discussion was had with Busabout however it was confirmed that Leppington did not have access to any accessible public transport:

Initial Observations

It may be appropriate to conduct further consultations in the Leppington/Catherine Fields

Consultation Area 3: Liverpool/Camden LGA's - Leppington and Catherine Fields

During the "phone in" 10 people contacted the service to speak about the needs of 19 older people in Leppington. 3 people contacted the service to speak about the needs of 5 people in Catherine Fields.

The calls from the Leppington area were all in direct response to recent Busabout changes to bus routes. People were angry and upset about the changes and many told stories of walking between half and 3 kilometres to get to a bus stop. Most of the people who phoned were in the HACC target age group, some over 80 years of age, however they had been independently accessing public transport until the recent change.

While South West Community Transport may be able to assist these people it seems contrary to the philosophy of HACC to absorb people into "the system" who have the ability to utilise public transport if given the opportunity. It has also realised that Community Transport would not be able to provide the level of freedom of travel the people experienced when using public transport.

11 Service Information Packs were sent out as a result of the "phone in" and 14 people indicated they would attend a consultation meeting. Mathew from Cumberland Newspapers also contacted the "phone in" and spoke about issues raised with them regarding the situation. Mathew also indicated an interest in coming to a meeting.

Note: Due to the high number of people expressing dissatisfaction with recent public bus changes it was decided to invite a Ministry of Transport Representative to the consultation. As with other areas a written invitation was also sent to Council Aged & Disability Workers and Busabout requesting their attendance.

A community consultation was held at the Leppington Hall and 15 residents attended, together with a representative from Cumberland Newspapers, a representative from Ministry of Transport, Camden Council Aged & Disability Workers, representative from Outer Liverpool Community Services. It was unfortunate that no representation was received from Liverpool Council or Busabout (however it was noted after the consultation that Busabout had contacted the service on the day to put in their apologies and to make the comment "that they did not feel they could assist")

While the standard Agenda detailed earlier in this report was followed it was obvious that people in attendance wished to discuss their dissatisfaction with public transport with the Ministry Representative. The Ministry noted issues raised in detail. Although these issues do not relate directly to the Isolated Group Transport project they will impact upon the need for Community Transport in the area should no solution be found to the issues raised by the residents. For this reason a summary of the issues raised is presented:

- People were angry at the lack of response they had when they made complaints to the Bus Company.
- MOT explained that no person should have to walk over 400 metres to a bus stop during the day
- Residents sited instances of having to walk up to 3 km.
- MOT also explained consultation were advertised in the local papers
- Residents advised local papers are not delivered in the area
- MOT also advised that there had been a letter box drop
- Residents denied this occurred.
- Concern also raised that high non-English speaking community could not have participated
- Elderly people spoke about walking great distances with heavy shopping with no footpaths, on hot days and/or when it's raining, in areas where snakes are common.

- One woman walking 3 km with a heart condition and after 4 hip operations.
- People angry that until the route changes they were able to independently travel on public transport.
- Buses don't go close to Liverpool Hospital anymore
- One gentleman raised the issue that if you caught the Busabout bus to Narellan you had 2 minutes to get to the Busways bus before it departed for Camden. Otherwise you had to wait an hour for the next one.

Ministry of Transport explained that they could not promise any changes to the existing situation, however, they wanted to know if changes could be made what would fix the problem for residents.

- 1) Groups wanted their old services back the way they were.
- 2) Failing the above a bus that would do a loop picking up in Eastwood road, George's Road, Phillip Street, Heath Road, Byron Road & Joseph Street around 9am and go to Liverpool shops & hospital to return about 1pm every Tuesday and Thursday
- 3) Get Busways to change the departure time of their Camden Service from Narellan to allow sufficient time for those on the Busabout service to connect. (note South West contacted Busways and they have spoken to the gentleman concerned and organised a solution to the problem)

Ministry of Transport committed to discussing the issues, and any solutions that may be able to be implemented with Busabout. Ministry of Transport took list of contacts from the meeting to enable them to feedback results of discussions.

Issues raised relevant to South West Community Transport and/or Isolated Transport Project

- Several people from Culturally & Linguistically Diverse backgrounds in the HACCC Target group wished to discuss services. Avenues for promotion of existing services were suggested. (these contact were included in the consultation notes however are not reproduced in this report due to confidentiality considerations)

Wollondilly Local Government Area

Council Input

Wollondilly Council Aged & Disability Worker was extremely helpful and keen to participate in and promote any further consultations through the Bush Telegraph, The Seniors Transport Working Party and other avenues

Two existing groups were identified that did not have access to transport:

1. A group of people living in the old nurses quarters at Courijah many of whom attend Queen Victoria Day Care
2. A group of older people from Appin complain that while they can get to Campbelltown the bus doesn't run to Rosemeadow Community Health or Macarthur Square

Other input from the Aged & Disability Worker included:

- Council has a large Seniors group which has a sub committee dedicated to transport issues - this sub committee would be an excellent consultation group
- Support for the idea of Transport Champions in Wollondilly as a way to promote service
- The idea of "come and try days" with champions on the buses to talk to people
- Contacts for Orangeville and The Oaks (these contact were included in the consultation notes however are not reproduced in this report due to confidentiality considerations)

Through meetings with the Aged & Disability Worker at Wollondilly Council the following demographics were identified for the above mentioned areas:

AREA	Approx 60-69	Approx 70-84	Approx 85 and Over
Douglas Park, Wilton, Pheasants Nest	280	145	20
Buxton, Thirlmere, Couridjah & Lakesland,	420	310	80
Razorback included in Camden Pk, Menangle, Mt Hunter & Surrounds	275	140	10
The Oaks, Oakdale, Belimba Park	395	180	35

Bus Company Input

Picton Buslines provided a great deal of information. The following areas were identified as having no access to any public transport:

- Pheasants Nest
- Lakesland
- Douglas Park
- Barkers Lodge Road/Nangaren
- Courijah

Due to the large number of accessible vehicles (approx. 90%) owned by Picton Buslines areas within Picton Buslines designated area have at least some access to accessible public transport

Busways also cover some parts of the Wollondilly Shire and after meeting with their representative the following areas were identified as having no access to any public transport:

- Mowbray Park,
- Nattai
- Oakdale
- Razorback
- Menangle (no access to Camden with Busways, however does have access to Campbelltown & Picton through Picton Buslines and a rail link)

The Oaks & Mt. Hunter were identified as having a regular service however it is not accessible.

Initial Observations

- After further investigation by the Aged & Disability worker it was discovered that the Couridjah group was not HACC Target Group however that it may still be appropriate to include the area with Buxton consultations.
- It may be appropriate to link Appin, Wilton, Douglas Park, Menangle with Wedderburn Consultations (see Campbelltown Local Government Area)
- There were no indications from Council regarding transport need in Lakesland, Pheasants Nest, Mowbray Park, and Nangarin.

Consultation Area 4: The Oaks, Oakdale, Orangeville, Burragorang and Nattai

During the "phone in" the needs of 5 people were raised with 2 people being existing clients of the service. No calls were received from Oakdale, Orangeville, Burragorang or Nattai.

While not a lot of people contacted the service it was obvious that there was a very good network operating in the Oaks which would benefit information dissemination.

Suggestions made were as follows:

- The general feeling from residents contacting the service that while there was some public transport people had to change buses often to get anywhere.
- A weekly shopping bus to Camden/Macarthur Square.
- Contacts were given for The Oaks Women's Group and other locals to promote any consultation meetings in the area.

2 Service Information Packs were sent out as a result of the "phone in" and 6 people indicated that they would come to a meeting.

A consultation was held at the Oaks and 5 residents were in attendance

The Standard Agenda was followed and due to the presence of Busways many public transport issues were addressed including:

- That anyone can catch the school buses and if a paying customer a child will give up their seat.
- 42 Accessible buses will be purchased in 2009.
- Some people may be Eligible for the Isolated Location Allowance
- Happy for people to ring Busways and talk about the timetable, let them know if they want to catch the bus and where and Busways will have the driver look out for them
- Busways said that they thought by law if someone needs an accessible bus and the Bus Company cannot provide it they have to pay another form of transport (eg wheelchair taxi) to pick up the person and transport them to the nearest bus stop where an accessible vehicle can be caught. (this would need to be confirmed)
- Busways asked people who needed an accessible service to ring the depot and they will ensure that an accessible vehicle is used on the run that day
- In rural areas all public buses can be hailed and they must stop (as long as it is safe), for peace of mind people may want to ring the depot and let them know they will be waiting to hail the bus
- In metro areas no one is meant to be more than 400 metres from a bus stop during the day and 800 metres at night.
- No service to Bents Basin Road Wallacia - this service is provided by Westbus so Busways could not provide any information.
- Timetables are confusing for people - Busways requested people to ring the depot and timetables will be explained, also Phillipa from the Travel Training Project can assist.

Suggestions made with relevance to South West Community Transport and/or Isolated Transport Project included:

- Residents were not aware of the current shopping service to Tahmoor each fortnight. Ideas were discussed regarding the amount of shopping people have with no access to home delivery, it was thought that if people used the service a trailer to carry shopping may be able to be bought.
- Residents were also not aware of the quarterly shopping bus to Macarthur Square.
- Information was provided regarding appropriate way to promote the above services and contacts given. (these contact were included in the consultation notes however are not reproduced in this report due to confidentiality considerations)

- No Local Paper to many areas. Promotion strategies were discussed including using Good Transport stories in Newspapers and also send them in flyers with MOW, Mobile Library, Vinnies at the Oaks and Wollondilly Senior Friendship group to get to those areas that don't get papers
- Bingo at Oakdale Workers is on a Friday at Lunch Time and Thursday night transport may be needed by elderly people to attend this event
- Linkage buses may be an idea for Nattai area - bring people from Nattai into meet the Busways bus at the Oaks and Oakdale
- Harrington Park has an over 55's group which is very difficult to get transport to. Executive Officer arranged to guest speak for this group (these contact were included in the consultation notes however are not reproduced in this report due to confidentiality considerations)
- Not Thursdays - no service should be planned for Thursdays as Women's group is busy that day
- Transport to the Wollondilly Leisure Centre from the Oaks or Oakdale

Note issue re Wollondilly Leisure Centre came from a written response received from one resident, as she was unable to attend the consultation. Various issues were raised in the letter; point 10 was relevant to this project. (Other issues were passed onto the Executive Officer, Travel Training Project & Busways to address)

Two members of the group agreed to become Transport Champions and promote and use any services developed

Consultation Area 5: Buxton, Couridjah, Lakesland, Mowbray Park, Barkers Lodge Rd and the back of Thirlmere.

During the "phone in" the needs of 9 people were raised regarding Buxton/Couridjah with 4 people being existing clients of the service. No calls were received from Lakesland, Thirlmere, Mowbray Park or Barkers Lodge Road.

Issues raised included:

- inability to get a bus directly to Tahmoor,
- Visiting a club or Bowral occasionally.

Some people who were not HACC target group called indicating they would utilise any spare capacity on service vehicles should a service be established in the area.

2 Service Information Packs were sent out as a result of the "phone in" and 8 people indicated that they would come to a consultation meeting.

Consultation Area 6: Pheasants Nest, Yanderra and Isolated parts of Bargo

Only 1 person rang from Bargo and they were an existing client. This person would like to be able to:

- visit Macarthur Square or Bowral sometimes and she indicated she would like to come to a consultation meeting.

Note: After consultations a resident contacted the project worker from Bargo expressing a need for a small vehicle to provide transport from Bargo to the Picton Leisure Centre. A short time after this the person advised that even though the clients did not require support at the pool the Picton Neighbour Aid would be providing the transport to the group.

Consultation Area 4 and 5 were amalgamated for the face to face consultation held at Tahmoor and 5 residents attended. One of these people was representing the Wollondilly Council Seniors Transport Working Group.

Picton Buslines discussed their services and as participants raised issues during the day Picton Buslines representatives were extremely helpful and informative regarding their existing services and how people could link in to increase their independence. Many public transport issues were addressed including:

- Flagging down school buses - some participants were not aware they could travel on the school buses
- Monday Macarthur Square trips - people from Buxton could catch the 8.50 a.m. bus to Picton and then go onto Macarthur Square.
- Regional Excursion Daily Tickets will be introduced for pensioners from 1st January. The ticket is \$2.50 for travel in rural areas. This means that someone could get on a bus at Picton, go to Bowral, change buses and go to Nowra and return in the same day and it would only cost \$2.50. Unfortunately because Picton is on the boundary between Rural and Metro if someone were to catch a bus in Bargo to Picton they would pay \$2.50 then if they chose to travel to Campbelltown they would have to spend another \$2.50 for the metro pension excursion ticket. Once at Campbelltown they could go onto the city for the same \$2.50 and return. Then when they got back to Picton they would use their rural \$2.50 ticket from the morning to get back to Bargo. So the cost for the day from Bargo to the city would be \$5.00.
- Picton Buslines representatives explained that it was very important for people to understand that they would have to pay twice when going from rural to metro.
- Buses from Buxton to Tahmoor - there is a bus 11.50 from Buxton that goes straight to Tahmoor and returns at 2.30pm
- Picton Buslines reminded people that if they wished to try the public service for the first time can use the Travel Training Project with South West Community

Transport to assist them with timetables and even to travel with them for the first couple of times.

- Timetables are confusing - Picton Buslines offered to send timetables to all present and follow it up with a phone call to explain the timetables to them. Phillipa from the Travel Training Project can also do this.

Suggestions made with relevance to South West Community Transport and/or Isolated Transport Project included:

- Linkage buses with South West Community Transport- the service could running linkage buses assist access to the public transport system for people living in isolated areas to facilitate access to the Picton Buslines Macarthur Square service.
- A Buxton resident mentioned that there were 4 or 5 elderly people that couldn't get from their homes in Buxton to the Bus Stop.
- A Lakesland resident suggested her scooter could go on SWCT bus at Lakesland and then they could link her in with Picton Coaches to go to Macarthur Square so she could rail connect to Sydney.
- Other links could be done from rural isolated areas where the big buses can't go. Pickup hubs could include the Estonian Village, Tahmoor, Bargo, Picton or Redbank to go onto Macarthur Square, Narellan or other destinations with Picton Buslines.
- Links could also be made with the CitiRail Bus to Mittagong.
- A Cinema Package to the new cinema in Narellan could be a way of getting people to travel to Narellan using the linkage services.

All in attendance agreed the word of mouth is the best way to get people using the service. Community Transport and Picton Buslines both mentioned that they would be happy to have some people travel for free just to get people using the services.

Promotion ideas for the linkage services included:

- One resident offered to join as a transport champion and try out the services so she could promote them.
- The representative from the Wollondilly Council Seniors Transport working group also offered to promote the services.
- People felt that if the services could utilise simple area specific timetables on local notice boards would also be important.

- Using the churches and local hairdressers to promote the service would also be worth considering.
- People supported SWCT and Picton Buslines approaching the local newspapers to run a series of "how to" articles about getting from rural areas to town.
- A resident present offered to put posters up in Buxton
- Speak at the Bargo retirement village

Those present also raised the issue that residents of the Estonian village could not get from their Units to the front of the Complex to catch the bus. Executive Officer agreed to speak to village management about this issue.

PART 3 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Consultation Area 1: Camden/Wollondilly LGA's - Ellis Lane, Grassmere, Razorback, and Cawdor

1. To contact the organiser of the over 50's group run from the Cawdor Uniting church to discuss the transport needs of the group.
2. South West Community Transport undertake to promote services in the Ellis Lane, Cawdor, Razorback, Grassmere areas through the contacts mentioned in the Consultation notes for this area
3. South West Community Transport to investigate partnerships with Camden Rotary

Consultation Area 2: Campbelltown/Wollondilly LGA's - Wedderburn, Appin, Wilton, Douglas Park and Menangle.

4. Dependent upon the outcome of suggested trials in other areas and available resources it may be appropriate for contact to be made with Wedderburn Community champion and Wollondilly Council for a contact in Appin and conduct further investigations into feasibility of a consultation in that area.
5. South West Community Transport to investigate partnerships with Campbelltown Council around the Forest Lawn service provided by Council.

Fairfield Local Government Area

6. Dependent upon the feedback from Maltese Group in Fairfield hold consultation meeting with that group to develop a model of transport that may assist people that are in the HACC Target group attend functions held.

Consultation Area 3: Liverpool/Camden LGA's - Leppington and Catherine Fields

7. South West Community Transport follows up Ministry of Transport discussions with Busabout regarding the issues raised at the Leppington consultation. Depending upon the outcome of those discussions South West Community Transport to either:
 - promote the initiatives of Busabout and Ministry of Transport, or if no initiatives are introduced.
 - Hold further discussions with residents to develop a model of service that may cater to the needs of the HACC Target living in Leppington area
8. South West Community Transport contact individuals interested in service in the Leppington area as detailed in the Consultation notes

9. South West Community Transport undertake to promote services in Leppington the contacts mentioned in the Consultation notes for this area

Consultation Area 4: Wollondilly LGA - The Oaks, Oakdale, Orangeville, Burragorang and Nattai

10. South West Community Transport undertake to promote services in The Oaks and surrounding areas through the contacts mentioned in the Consultation notes for this area
11. Contact Oakdale Workers Club and investigate transport needs for elderly wishing to attend Bingo with view to trialing service
12. Implement, in consultation with Transport Champions, linkage bus from Nattai to meet the Busways public bus services at the Oaks and Oakdale.
13. Executive Office to organise to Guest speak at the Harrington Park over 55's group.
14. Implement, in consultation with Transport Champions, a service from the Oaks and Oakdale to Picton Pool (Wollondilly Leisure Centre)

**Consultation Area 5: Wollondilly LGA - Buxton, Couridjah, Lakesland, Mowbray Park, Barkers Lodge Rd and the back of Thirlmere and;
Consultation Area 6: Wollondilly LGA - Pheasants Nest, Yanderra and Isolated parts of Bargo**

15. South West Community Transport investigate Picton Leisure Centre service being developed by Picton Neighbour Aid to ascertain which service would be more appropriate to cater to the clients needs. Clarification between South West Community Transport and Picton Neighbour Aid regarding each services role in transport provision may prove beneficial and ensure the most effective use of resources. Investigation to include possibility of also providing this service with linkages to service proposed from the Oaks and Oakdale.
16. South West Community Transport trial partnerships with Picton Buslines providing linkage services from south Wollondilly to their Macarthur Square and Narellan services. South West Community Transport and Picton Buslines approach the new cinema at Narellan to organise a "Cinema deal" that could be promoted and encourage use of the Narellan linkage service.
17. Should linkage trials in 16 be successful further planning could include linkage services to the CitiRail Mittagong service.
18. South West Community Transport undertakes to promote services in the South Wollondilly area through the contacts mentioned in the Consultation notes for this area.

19. South West Community Transport and Picton Buslines work together to produce simple "how to" posters for use in isolated areas of Wollondilly regarding public transport and linkage options for each area
20. South West Community Transport and Picton Buslines work together to provide a range of "good news transport stories" to local newspapers and community radio.

Other Recommendations

21. South West Community Transport provides applications, training and support to Community members willing to become Transport Champions in consultation areas 1, 4 and 5.
22. South West Community Transport involves Transport Champions in planning and implementation of any trial services.