

Initial Outcome Proposal to the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board – FY2022/23 (Stage 1 Proposal)

1. Name of Project/activity that will deliver the outcome(s)

Katch Demand Responsive Transport Pilot

2. Key outcome(s)

This 12-month pilot will:

- Provide a new demand responsive transport (DRT) service for residents and visitors in Framlingham, Wickham Market, Campsea Ashe, Snape and surrounding Areas. The service will operate Monday to Friday from 07.30 to 18.30, Saturdays from 10:00 to 18.30, and bank holidays 10:00 to 18:00 commencing Tuesday 11 April 2023 for 12 months.
- Increase usage to a minimum of 35 adult return passenger per day from Framlingham to Campsea Ashe by the end of the 12 months which should provide long term financial viability of the service.
- Provide additional value (non-financial) to the community, with measurable outcomes against agreed targets (i.e. children into education, people into work, access to services etc.)
- Gather learnings about successful operation of a mobile application (app) which is complementary to the DRT service.
- Provide data and intelligence to support ESC and SCC in the development of new and improved DRT rural transport services, trialling the viability of initiatives such as single occupancy premium fares, peak and off-peak fares, and timed pickups alongside flexible booking periods.

3. How has the need been identified?

Regional context. Transport East report that:

- Two-thirds of our rural communities live in a 'transport desert', areas without an alternative transport to private vehicles. Car reliance means rural residents have higher transport costs than urban dwellers and experience greater fuel poverty.
- It is harder for rural residents to access education, training and employment by means other than car – leading to lower incomes, health inequalities and educational outcomes.
- Around half of the carbon emissions in the Transport East area are generated by non-urban areas, our regional emissions at 42% are well above the national average of 28%.
- A disproportionately high number of people in the region are over 65, creating challenges around isolation and poor access to healthcare.

County context. Suffolk County Council carried out extensive transport survey and data collection/analysis in 2020 which identified the need for better transport connection between the

towns of Framlingham, Wickham Market and surrounding areas, and the railway station at Campsea Ashe.

East Suffolk Context: Transport East Rural Access Survey – in East Suffolk, no parish scored access to buses as ‘very good’ - access to rail services is valued where it exists.

The East Suffolk Community Partnership Transport and Travel (ESCPT&T) Task Group have conducted extensive research identifying transport needs and opportunities across East Suffolk. It found that demand responsive Transport (DRT) services could be a solution to rural transport issues and social isolation. Services are currently under-utilised and there is a real opportunity to expand the customer base of community transport.

Local context: Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages CP, and Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages CP have both identified Transport & Access to Service as a priority issue for their areas.

Framlingham Town Council supported a local transport survey in 2020, the population at that time being 9 518. There was evidence of need for connections to Wickham Market and the rail station at Campsea Ashe.

Following an initial pilot scheme in the area under the same name, lessons learned have been shared between relevant parties and a new, lower cost operating model has been established which is able to build on the areas of success from the original pilot. These include a dynamic grant allowance incentivising higher passenger numbers, and utilisation of available mini-bus rolling stock, rather than leasing new vehicles.

4. Who will benefit from the outcomes?

Residents living in and around Framlingham, Wickham Market, Campsea Ashe and Snape, in particular those who:

- Do not have access to a car and need/want to access services and leisure activities.
- Require transport to and from the railway station to connect to an onward journey.
- Need to travel to school, college, training or employment.

Indirectly, the wider East Suffolk population will benefit from the learnings this pilot scheme will provide to other DRT services in the district.

5. How will the outcomes(s) be sustained after the funding period (if appropriate)?

There is a genuine matter of urgency (as we had short notice that Katch was going to be closed and so limited time to plan for it). Therefore, an exemption from usual procurement rules for this service has been obtained and will only be a temporary measure for 12 months.

Information gathered indicates that there is not a commercial market left in the area. A commercial operator would not be in a position to consider running a service for the amount we could pay. We are therefore working with CATS (Coastal Accessible Transport Service), the community transport provider operating in the area of the new route to test a new financially sustainable service model prior to a tender process will be carried out.

Suffolk County Council have produced an end of service report for the original Katch pilot which has been useful in shaping the redesign of this new pilot. There are some fundamental differences that are aimed at long term sustainability as long as enough passengers use it.

To be sustainable on the proposed price, Katch needs to have 35 adult return passenger per day from Framlingham to Campsea Ashe (£7.25 return fare).

Additional, non-financial benefit targets will be set and measured to understand the true value that these services provide.

6. Brief description of the project / activity that will deliver the outcome(s).

Develop a new demand responsive transport service to serve residents living in the Wickham Market, Framlingham, Campsea Ash and Snape area. This is in response to the announcement just before Christmas of the closure of the previous Katch taxi bus service which operated in the same area.

East Suffolk Council are working with Coastal Accessible Transport Service (CATS), the local community transport operator to develop an on-demand minibus service that can be booked either by phone or via a new mobile app. Initially the service will run for 12 months with the intention to extend the contract if enough people are using the service.

The service can provide end to end journeys, within the defined operating area, where no alternative transport is available, or to onward transport links.

The booking and scheduling of the service will be conducted by the operator via traditional means or via the app purchased for this purpose by East Suffolk Council.

The service will be provided at £253 per day which includes driver salaries, driver training and any maintenance costs for the vehicle. The vehicle is an 11-seater (10 + 1 upfront which means they can always take a wheelchair)

Suffolk County Council have provided the artwork for the livery (to which we will add East Suffolk Council and Community Partnership logos) and any existing artwork than can simply be amended to save time and money.

Marketing plan has been drawn up. Targeting based on the previous service demographics. CATS can accept Endeavour Card (25% discount) to attract young people (16-19).

Suffolk County Council officers are providing the technical support we need to develop something new. East Suffolk Council have provided a Project Manager. Programme Management has to date been provided by EDF. The Transport and Travel Task Group are overseeing the project as part of the overall Transport and travel Program.

Start and End Dates: Start April 2023 – End March 2024

7. Who is involved?

Who is involved in developing this outcome proposal?

Who will deliver the project/activity?

Name of East Suffolk Community Partnerships Board Member supporting the project:

Norman Brooks

East Suffolk Council will be responsible for the service contract and have employed a Project Manager.

Suffolk County Council have agreed a MoU with East Suffolk Council and are providing technical and practical support to support delivery of a new Katch service.

EDF have been providing Programme Management for the Transport and travel Programme.

	CATS will deliver the service under contract with East Suffolk Council
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8. Give information about match funding here:

Source of match funding:	Funding confirmed?	Amount (£)
Technical support from SCC Transport Team	Yes	Value to be calculated
Programme management support from Sizewell C	Yes	Value to be calculated
Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages Community Partnership i) driver recruitment and training ii) initiatives to incentivise people to use the service for the first time	No	3,200.00 5,324.28

Total project / activity cost (Excluding cost of staff time that will be covered by ESC/EDF/SCC)	98,524.28
Total of confirmed match funding	8,524.28
Total amount of Strategic funding required: £60,000 FY 2022-23 (agreed in principle by CP Board 8.12.22) £30,000 FY 2021-22 (underspend from app development budget of £50,000 agreed by CP Board 6.09.21)	90,000.00

9. Identify where the Community Partnership Board Strategic Budget will be spent:

Description of activity or item (by who and by when where appropriate)	Cost (£)
12-month contract with CATS to deliver the service	80,000.00
Budget for ESC to deliver the Marketing Plan	10,000.00
Total	90,000.00

10. How will the project / activity be monitored, and outcomes reported (including project risks)?

The CP Board Transport and Travel Task Group will oversee the project as part of the overall Transport and travel Programme in the following way.

A Service Level Agreement has been drawn up with CATS for the delivery of the Katch Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service and will be subject to quarterly review to ensure that the following information is recorded daily and provided to East Suffolk Council in quarterly monitoring returns:

- total single and return journeys performed
- multiple occupancy journeys
- the fares charged
- demographic information about passengers
- highlight of popular and less used routes
- any issue indicating lack of viability and reasons for it (seasonal trends, etc)

Community Partnership Board Member Declaration:

I confirm that I support this proposal:
Name: Norman Brooks
Date: 6.3.2023