

Keynsham and District Dial a Ride Funding.

Bleddyn Phillips

There is a perception that Keynsham and District dial a ride is an urban based charity which covers Keynsham and Saltford. In actual fact the "DISTRICT" covers a large rural area which stretches from Compton Dando to Marksbury, Timsbury, Publow, Pensford, Whitchurch village (within BNES boundary) Saltford, Corston, Newton Saint Loe as well as Keynsham itself.

Looking at a map of BNES, it is evident that we cater for a large rural area within BNES; it could be argued that it is the largest. We have proof of active membership in all rural villages we serve.

Currently we have over 1200 members, provide a service between 8am and 6pm, (to align with surgery times) 5 days a week; with additional trips at weekends when there is demand and a monthly pub lunch on Sunday. This service is provided by 1 manager, 1 administrator, 3 paid drivers and 7 volunteers. All our vehicles, except one are between 12 and 16 years old and as you would expect, incur increasing maintenance costs year on year to comply with maintenance and statutory regulations. As a result, providing this level of service is becoming unsustainable.

As can be seen in Appendix 2 funding application Table 1 Keynsham and District receives an average of £2.93 per passenger while Midsomer Norton Radstock receives £6.32, has less than half the members and provides a more limited service.

Therefore I respectfully request that the transport committee and those of you who represent the constituents of the rural areas covered by Keynsham and District dial a ride, review the apparent inequitable distribution of subsidy (which I understand is based on historical information) and is certainly not relevant to the current services being provided today.

Given the Dept of Health and Social Care Act 2012, I am encouraged that the role community transport can play in the well being agenda, has been recognised by BNES. Using the Department of Health cost of social care programme Keynsham and District returns £15.36 for every £1 invested by BNES. However that is something for future development.

The question before you this evening is that the in-balance of funding needs to be addressed here and now. An approach towards a more level playing field would be a good start.