



# **Ealing Community Transport**

**Annual Review  
2008/09**

**Making a difference to  
people's lives**

## 2008/09 Annual Review

2008/09 has been a difficult year for businesses across the world and to say that this was true for Ealing Community Transport would be an understatement. ECT has a colourful history throughout its 30 years of existence, but 2008/09, without a doubt was the most eventful and difficult year.

ECT had grown from a small local community transport business set up as an Industrial & Provident Society, an exempt charity, to one of the largest Social Enterprises in the UK dominated by its recycling and waste management activities with further diversification into community rail and health services in recent years.

ECT's passenger transport flourished with Ealing's Group Transport project becoming one of the largest in the country, its PlusBus model was extended to contracts in Milton Keynes and Cheshire, and ECT with its joint venture partner was awarded a contract to deliver transport for construction site workers at the Olympic Park.

However, ECT's diversified growth was financed through borrowing and uncontrolled losses within the rail business put a severe strain on resources within ECT. Our banking arrangements were with the RBS, so when they were under their own pressures, the bank withdrew its credit facilities in early 2008.

In June 2008, a white knight in the form of May Gurney bought out ECT's debt and recycling & engineering businesses. The rail business was eventually disposed in September 2008 and the health provision became independent. In March 2009, ECT ceased operating its sole bus service on behalf of Transport for London.

The integrated way that ECT was run means that it will take some considerable time before we can truly move on unencumbered and liabilities for some long term commitments will remain with us for a while. The "legacy" remaining has been an almost relentless deluge of a variety of issues which have been resolutely resolved one by one. In particular ECT has had to invest heavily into its accounting and financial management.

A more positive legacy has been the remaining award winning and highly respected community transport operation.

In June 2008, Anna Whitty was appointed Chief Executive (previously Passenger Operations Director with ECT Group). Anna and her team of highly respected, committed, and professional staff have been integral to the organisation's ability to move forward to its sustainable future.

The years of frugality and efficient ways of working whilst vying for attention from ECT Group at large, means that the new ECT has inherited a strong core business to move forward into the next phase of its existence.

The challenges are difficult in these extraordinary troubled financial times. From its previous position of benefiting from senior management and accounts team paid for by Group resources, let alone a Gift Aid donation from Recycling profits which subsidised Group Transport charges in Ealing for many years, ECT's community transport services have to now become self-sustaining.

There are considerable challenges ahead, not least ECT's governance. A well led organisation must have a governance structure fit for purpose. The existing trustees and senior management will be focusing on these important changes in 2009/10 as well as ensuring that the organisation delivers its objectives and is able to flourish in the future.

**John Willmington**  
**Chair**  
**Ealing Community Transport Committee**

**Anna Whitty**  
**Chief Executive**

**November 2009**

## Our vision

- ◆ To deliver high quality passenger transport to the communities we serve, to other organisations or to individuals who are unable to access public transport.
- ◆ To be a leading charity providing transport for the local community.
- ◆ To make a difference to people's lives, to enable independent living, to combat social isolation and loneliness.

## What is community transport

Community transport organisations provide safe, affordable and accessible transport solutions to their local communities. They help to develop and sustain communities and combat social exclusion. Community Transport is often seen as managing community resources. Vehicles are managed by transport professionals and made available to all community groups within a strict and highly regulated legal framework.

## Our charitable objectives

- ◆ To promote the provision of and access to transport facilities for people who have special need of such facilities because they are elderly, poor, disabled or infirm or by reason of financial hardship or social and economic circumstances, people with young children or those living in isolated areas where there are no adequate public transport facilities, or the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of such persons;
- ◆ To assist the charitable work of organisations and bodies engaged in the relief of those in need by reason of poverty, sickness or disability;
- ◆ To promote the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of such persons;
- ◆ The relief of those in need by reason of poverty, sickness or disability;
- ◆ Such other purposes as are currently recognised as exclusively charitable and any new charitable purposes which are similar to another charitable purpose.

## Our strategy for 2009/10

In light of the changes with ECT over the last 18 months, the ECT's Board has agreed the following strategic objectives for 2009/10:

### Financial sustainability

- ⇒ The ECT Group will be a financially sustainable business by March 2010.
- ⇒ Each operating division will be generating a positive contribution to overheads
- ⇒ The group as a whole will be generating a positive cashflow.

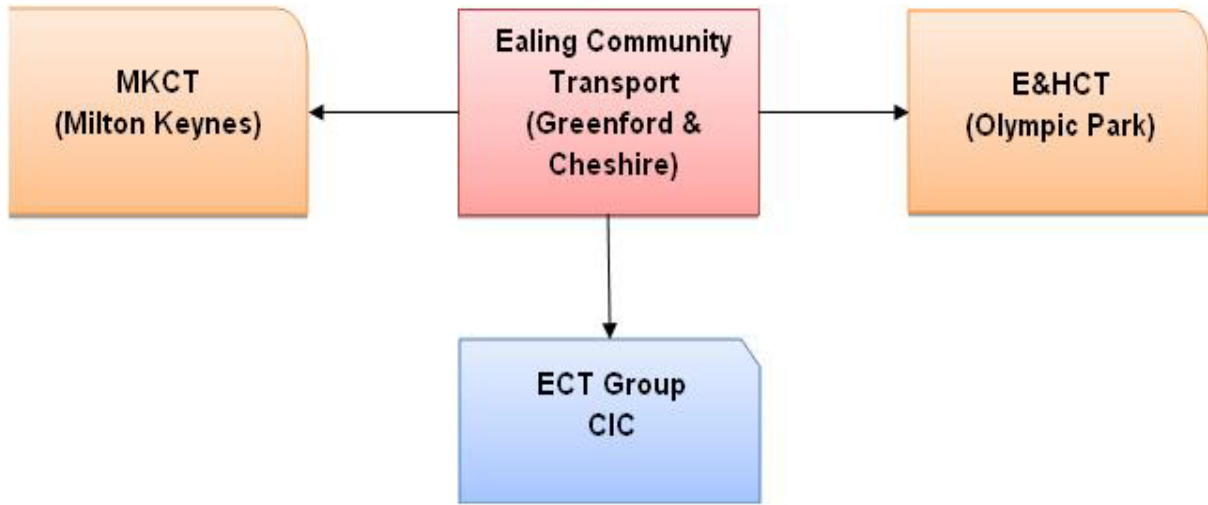
### Consolidation

- ⇒ The new ECT Group will have the best-performing aspects of the old company under its full ownership.
- ⇒ The integrated management system will be fully tailored to the new company and all related systems will be fully operational.
- ⇒ ECT will have succeeded in retaining Investors in People status and extended it to the entire company.

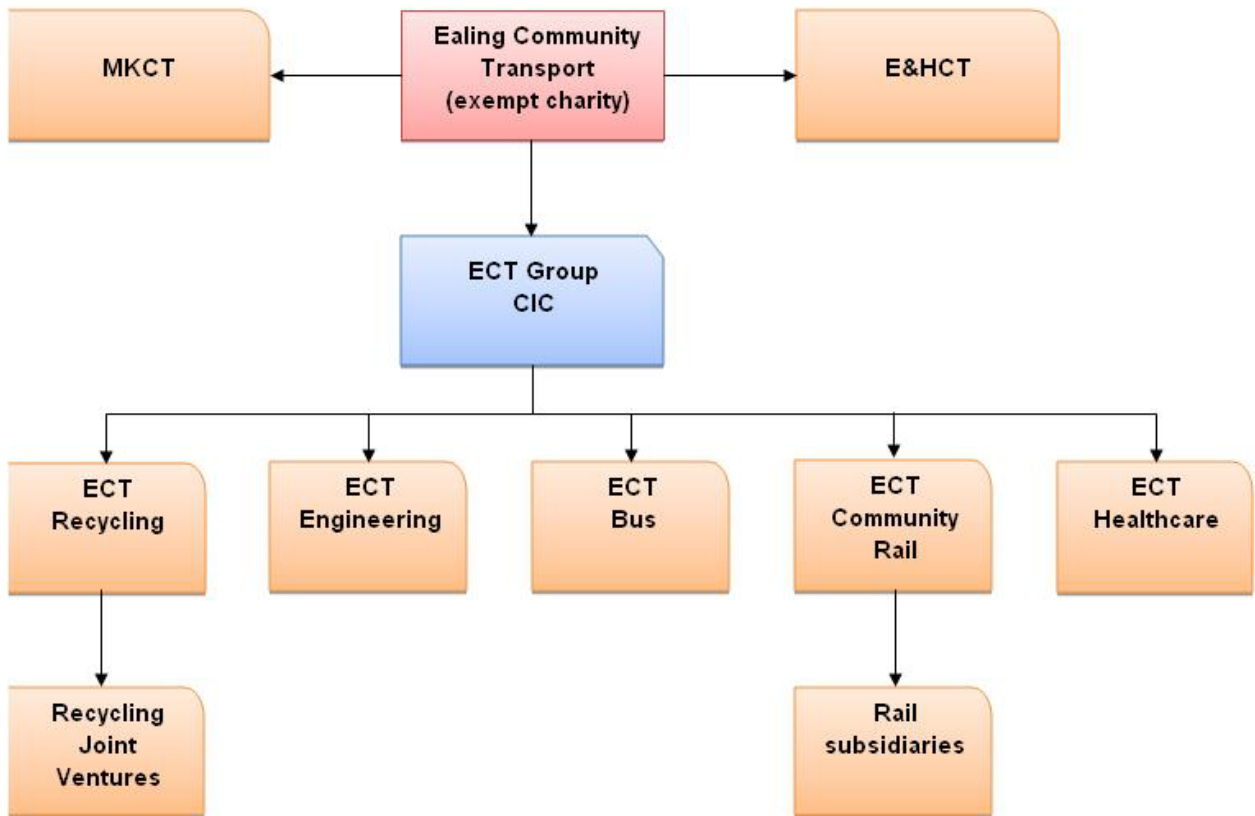
### Development

- ⇒ The ECT Group will build on its strengths and flourish as a leading passenger transport charity.
- ⇒ Every operating division will have demonstrated progress against a clear 3-5 year plan including objectives for growth and budgets under the ownership of the General Manager.
- ⇒ ECT will have a new board, with appropriate skills and experience and with a constructive working relationship with the Chief Executive and senior management.
- ⇒ ECT will have a clear, costed plan for expanding existing operating centres, growing into new areas and development of new services.

# ECT operations post 2008



# ECT operations pre 2008



## Our services

### Greenford

- ◆ **Group Transport** – provision of minibus with either volunteer or professional driver for local community and voluntary group at affordable rates.
- ◆ **PlusBus** – door to door transport for individuals who find it difficult to use public transport, specifically Sure Start and Willow Tree PlusBuses.
- ◆ **Home-to-School transport** on behalf of LB Ealing and LB Hounslow
- ◆ **Provision of bus and driver** for London Dial a Ride services
- ◆ **Driver Training Services**
- ◆ **Ad-hoc transport contracts**

### W. Cheshire & Chester

- ◆ **PlusBus** – door to door transport for individuals who find it difficult to use public transport.
- ◆ **Home-to-School transport** on behalf of West Cheshire and Chester Council

### Milton Keynes

- ◆ **PlusBus** – door to door transport for individuals who find it difficult to use public transport.
- ◆ **Day trips** – organised trips including destinations such as Peak District, Stratford-on-Avon, St Albans etc.
- ◆ **Group Transport** – provision of minibus with driver for local community and voluntary group at affordable rates.
- ◆ **Health Connect** – a pilot transport service for individuals to get to healthcare appointments
- ◆ **Lunch club transport** – under an Agreement with Age Concern Milton Keynes
- ◆ **Other specific transport contracts**

### E&HCT

- **Bus services** for construction workers at the Olympic Park
- **Organised tours** of Olympic Park
- **VIP transport**
- **Other ad-hoc transport provision**

## Our beneficiaries

ECT staff are very caring, helpful & reliable

"Good value - enables our group to get out & about". (*member group in Ealing*)

"ECT makes clients feel at ease, from the moment of being a member; the friendliness of the staff goes beyond the call of duty" (*member group in Ealing*)

"The people working for ECT are the ones who make ECT special. They are very caring, helpful and reliable" (*member group in Ealing*)

"Personal and caring service, designed to help the individual" (*member group in Ealing*)

"Thank you very much for organising the transport for our club's outing. The arrangements went like clockwork and contributed greatly to a most enjoyable outing. Please pass on our grateful appreciation and thanks to your driver who could not have been more considerate and friendly." (*member group in Ealing*)

"We are truly grateful for your contribution to the event and look forward to working with you again next year" (*member group in Ealing*)

"Please accept a very big "THANK YOU" for ensuring that our housebound patients were able to access our Elderly Care Day event. Thanks to you and your staff, it was a great success and those who wished to attend had the opportunity to have a health/medication review and have their flu jab. Patients were also able to have their feet tended to and enjoy a chat over a cup of tea and a cake. It was lovely for the staff to have an opportunity to meet the patients they rarely see and be able to pamper them a little." (*local surgery in Ealing*)

"Please pass on our special thanks to the driver, who did a magnificent job single-handed. He was called upon to act 'over and above the call of duty' (*ad-hoc contract*)

I have nothing but praise

"What can I say! You are providing a wonderful service. I can always rely on my lift on Tuesday afternoons to our dance club" (*Cheshire PlusBus member*)

"Congratulations to staff of PlusBus for your first year achievements and delightful newsletter. Thanks also to our usual driver who has shown at all times courteous and consideration to members" (*Cheshire PlusBus member*)

"I'd like to state that the Plus Bus service is an absolute excellent one! Especially your drivers really care and are amongst the best I have experienced since being confined to a wheelchair" (*MK PlusBus member*)

No ECT = no outings

"Just a little note to say how much I enjoyed visiting the Peak District and seeing the animals at Whipsnade Zoo" (*MK PlusBus member*)

"Your assistance for the meetings of our Club in 2009 has been superb. Our thanks to all the drivers who have been so helpful." (*MK Group Transport*)

## Our achievements in numbers - ECT's impact in 2008/09

### Greenford

**275** Group Transport member groups

**5465** Group Transport vehicle trips

**109,300** Group Transport passenger trips

**180,077** Group Transport miles

**1580** MiDAS drivers trained (since start of MiDAS programme)

**325** Active volunteer drivers

**33%** Group Transport trips with professional driver

**5945** Willow Tree PlusBus trips

**3368** Sure Start PlusBus trips

**46** Minibuses

### E&HCT

**11,600** Construction worker trips per day (as at Nov 09)

**20** Bus stops on Olympic Park

**5000** Visitors per month requiring transport (including HM Queen)

**27** Vehicles (including bendy buses)

### Milton Keynes

**3026** Total members of all services

**1138** PlusBus regular users

**103,216** PlusBus booked trips

**20%** PlusBus trips by wheelchair or scooter users

**366,677** Miles

**25** day trip passengers per month

**325** Active volunteer drivers

**98%** satisfaction rate at either "excellent" or "good"

**15** Minibuses

### W. Cheshire & Chester

**1357** PlusBus members

**34,427** PlusBus booked trips

**151,514** PlusBus miles

**5** Minibuses

## Our organisation (as at Nov 09)

### Staff numbers

69 - Greenford  
12 - Cheshire  
41 - Milton Keynes  
38 - Olympic Park

### ECT Committee

John Willmington  
Allison Rockley  
Gary Grant  
Carl Johnson  
Jim Winning  
James Long  
Graeme Crawford

### ECT Group Board

John Willmington  
Allison Rockley  
Rhian Aubrey-Martin  
Stephen Emanuel  
Anna Whitty (exec)  
Mahua Nandi (exec)

### Special Thanks

Peter Child and  
Stephen Emanuel  
Robin Staunton, TLT solicitors  
Andrea Nicholls, Salans solicitors  
Howard Kennedy  
BWB solicitors  
James Cousins, Cousin West surveyors  
Twisted Fish IT consultants  
John Ferguson, Database consultant  
Buzzacott auditors  
David Mountford, Heath Lambert insurers  
Trapeze software

### Management

Anna Whitty, Chief Executive  
Mahua Nandi, Finance & Corporate Director  
Toby Parsons, General Manager MK  
Ben Saunders, General Manager Cheshire  
Malgosia Rumun, Financial Accountant  
Kay Ali, Development Manager  
Indy Purewal, Operations Manager Greenford  
Diane Morgan, Operations Manager Greenford  
Wiktor Lipiecki, Assistant Manager MK

### Partners

London Borough Ealing  
London Borough Hounslow  
Milton Keynes Council  
Cheshire West & Chester Council  
Olympic Delivery Authority  
Transport for London  
Hackney Community Transport  
Age Concern Milton Keynes  
Community Transport Association  
Sure Start Northolt  
Ealing CVS  
May Gurney  
TAS partnership  
Richard Armitage Transport Consultancy  
Sam Sullivan, Sparkloop Design  
Epitype Branding Group  
Keith Emmitt Photography  
Euromotive conversions  
UV Modular  
Dawsons Rentals  
Challengers