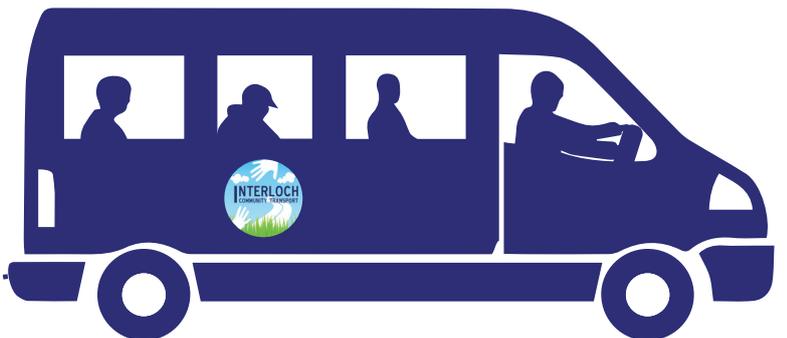


# Interloch Community Transport

We enable older residents and those facing challenging circumstances to stay connected to their local communities. We do this through the provision of flexible, affordable, compassionate Community Transport.



...compassion.....care.....connection.....community.....

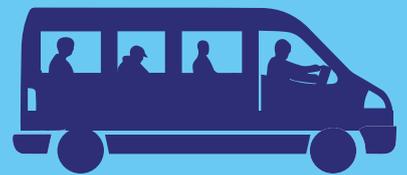
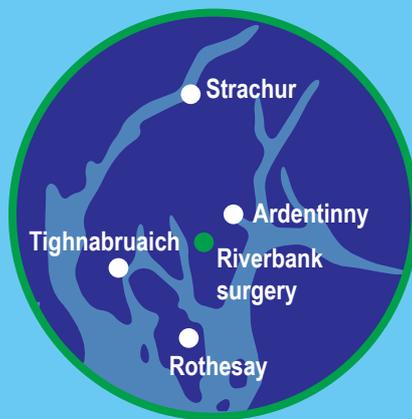


# Interloch Community Transport

From our base in Riverbank surgery on the shores of Holy Loch we transport passengers across Cowal and Bute.



## Our area



**A fleet of fully accessible vehicles and a highly professional team of drivers, staff and volunteers**

## Our focus

Interloch Transport provides effective community transport to vulnerable residents living in Cowal and Bute, Argyll.

We are a vital link to older people living across this stunning but remote and rural area.



## Our history

Interloch Transport was established in 2006. We are a registered charity set up to address the rising need for accessible door to door transport in the rural Cowal and Bute area of Argyll.

Initially focussing on linking isolated residents to public transport routes, Interloch Transport has grown and adapted in response to local need. As people remain in their homes for longer into retirement, they can easily end up being isolated, struggling to get to the shops, to socialise or to attend healthcare appointments.

Fourteen years on, we provide an extended range of services that help our elderly, disabled and vulnerable service users live well and independently.

From our base at the Riverbank doctor's surgery in Kilmun, our experienced and highly professional drivers operate a fleet of fully accessible vehicles. Our staff and trained volunteers support 450 service users, with additional 200 people needing our assistance during COVID 19. In 2019/20 Interloch Transport completed 18,162 journeys.

# Our impacts



**18,162**  
Journeys  
completed



**115,000**  
Miles  
travelled



**450**  
service users  
helped



**200**  
additional people  
supported during  
COVID 19

## Getting around in Argyll

Rooted in the community, Interloch has the local knowledge, flexibility and experience to keep people connected

**Years of austerity and budget cuts have put pressures on service everywhere, but rural Argyll faces particular challenges**

Residents and visitors love this part of Argyll for its tranquillity and its beautiful scenery of lochs and glens, but our area's rural nature greatly increases the need for accessible transport. Our communities are very spread out, and journeys often include long distances, challenging topography and even ferry crossings.

**Our public transport network works hard but is very limited in many areas and is rarely door to door**

Argyll has a rapidly ageing population. As people remain in their homes for longer into retirement, they can easily end up being isolated, struggling to get to the shops, to socialise or to attend healthcare appointments. Community transport is vital to help people stay in their local community, close to their family and friends.

**Limited transport services effect the access people have to health care**

Centralisation of NHS services places further pressure on rural communities: residents must often now travel huge distances to attend medical appointments. Limited budgets mean alternatives such as the Patient Transport Service must apply strict medical criteria - meaning many people miss out.

# Our Services

Interloch provides a range of practical, cost-effective services that bridge the gap between transport and care in our rural communities. Our services are designed to meet the needs of mainly elderly clients with moderate to high levels of physical disability. Support is also given to clients whose mental health impacts on their ability to leave the house or take public transport.

65+

25%

of people living in Argyll and Bute are aged 65+, the national Scottish average being 19% (National Records of Scotland, 2017).



80%

of members require additional assistance when using the service.

84

The average age of our members is 84



5-10%

of members are wheelchair users

## Coronavirus response

We have been well-placed to respond rapidly to the Coronavirus pandemic. With most of our members shielding at home, we immediately scaled up our existing shopping and prescription delivery services, putting in place additional hygiene measures and introducing a secure cashless system.

Thanks to the efforts of our dedicated staff and volunteers, we have been able to offer this support to an additional 200 people over and above our usual service users.

We continue to support essential journeys such as vital medical appointments, and as the situation evolves, we are committed to providing flexible support where it is most needed.

“

**Interloch Transport are providing a critical, popular, well respected service in Cowal and Bute which the Council/HSCP could not match in terms of staffing/ vehicles or finance”**

Argyll & Bute Council Service Review (2018)

# We help all our members

Our priority is to help people with their medical needs, access local services and maintain an active social life. All the basics that a young able-bodied person takes for granted.

## 1 Medical

GP, Hospital, dental and optician appointments

## 2 Access to Services

Bank, chemist, Post Office

## 3 Social

Lunch clubs, activities, social engagements

**Priority level**

**As the needs of our members increase, often as people age, the amount of support we offer increases to match.**

### **Door to Door**

Unlike public transport we provide a door to door service allowing people to do leave their homes and do anything a more able-bodied person would do.

### **Extra assistance**

Many need extra support. This could be from help on and off the vehicle or carrying shopping to being escorted round the supermarket

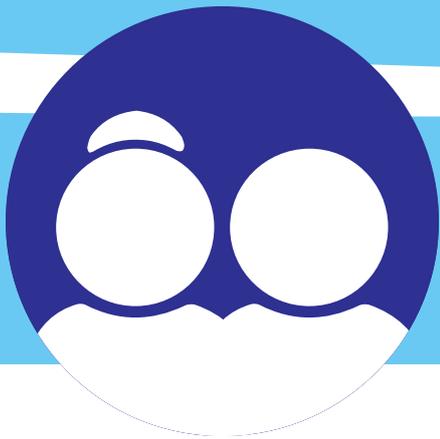
### **Accessibility**

If someone needs further support still and are now using a wheelchair, it's not a problem, all of our vehicles are fully wheelchair accessible.

### **Delivery services**

If one of our members finds themselves unable to travel, we still have you covered. We will deliver your food, medicine and essentials to your door.

# Meet our members



## Rena and Ron

**“ I can't praise them enough, they've been marvellous.”**

Rena (83) and Ron (88) retired to Argyll after living in Eaglesham. They live on the outskirts of Dunoon and have used Interloch for the last 6 years, after Ron developed eye problems. He needed to attend appointments at Inverclyde hospital – a car and ferry journey away – but the Patient Transport Service were unable to offer assistance as his visual condition didn't meet their medical criteria. “I used to drive over; then I had to wait several hours in the hospital after treatment until it was safe to drive home” says Ron.

As his condition worsened and appointments grew more frequent, Ron's doctor suggested he try Interloch. “I can't praise them enough” Ron says. “They've been marvellous. They allow Rena to come along as a carer, and they will either wait with us at the hospital or come back for us later.”

Ron is now registered partially sighted and has given up driving. As his health deteriorated, he and Rena came to use the service frequently for local doctor's appointments and social engagements, praising the “truly door to door service” and helpful staff. They also use it for regular assisted shopping trips. “We consider ourselves pretty independent” says Ron; “I can do the shopping ok, but my eyesight means I can't read the list in the shop. If I went by myself I'd come home without half the items!” Interloch staff also help Ron load and unload the shopping.

This March, as coronavirus restrictions came in, Ron mentioned the relief of knowing Interloch's staff personally; he was confident they would be able to put measures in place quickly. “Ken and Cat have been protecting us. They rang to say “no more trips to the supermarket for you I'm afraid”. Instead, they have been collecting and delivering our shopping every Monday. They have also said that if we run out and are desperate, they can sort something, and they drop off our prescriptions”.

Ron and Rena remain upbeat but recognise that they are likely to need the service for the foreseeable future if they are to retain their independence. “Without Interloch, we would be in a care home right now. I've no doubt about that at all” says Rena.

# Dorothy



Dorothy (89) lives alone in a bungalow, 10 miles out of town. "I couldn't possibly move to a care home. It would drive me crazy! I love it here, it suits me so well", she says. A daily morning visit from a carer and regular support from Interloch allow Dorothy to say in her own home.

Dorothy normally uses Interloch for shopping trips. "I've had two broken hips within two years. After the first one, my daughter convinced me stop driving". The bus journey to town wasn't manageable with bags of shopping, and at £23 a time, taxi trips were prohibitively expensive. After her second hip operation Dorothy says things were much harder and she couldn't do anything herself at first. "I depend on Interloch a lot. I honestly couldn't do without it. The drivers are all so kind".

As she got back to health, the minibus also allowed her to attend a local indoor bowling group and the Scottish Villagers' group, which alternates between local village halls.

Self-isolating during the Coronavirus pandemic has obviously made things harder. Dorothy's family all live abroad and while she has good friends nearby, many are in a similar position to her and can't help with tasks like shopping. "My friend's daughter has been very kind about getting bits and pieces for me, but she is already shopping for others and her own family".

Interloch staff now bring her shopping from the Co-op on a weekly basis. She places her orders in advance by email or phone and mentioned that the staff will let her know if items are unavailable. They will use their initiative to source alternatives and will also pick up other items she needs such as stamps from the Post Office and prescriptions.

"I could not fault them" says Dorothy. "They are absolutely wonderful. The driver brings my shopping into the kitchen for me. I'm not sure how I could manage without them. I don't think there's anyone who needs it more than me".

**“  
I honestly  
couldn't do  
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kind.”**



## Bill

**“ It is not easy looking after my sister who has dementia. You try your best, but no one helps me. Interloch is a godsend.”**

Bill has lived locally for over 20 years. He has had a number of medical problems over this time, including two recent hip replacements and an operation involving a blood clot on the brain. Due to his poor mobility, Bill finds it impossible to get in and out of normal vehicles. Making it to a doctor's appointment or going to the shops is a major undertaking. To add to this, he acts as an unpaid carer for his sister Ann, who has advanced dementia. "It is not easy looking after my sister who has dementia. You try your best, but no one helps me. Interloch is a godsend. I can get in and out of their vehicles and so can my sister".

Bill (76) and Ann (80) use the service to get to doctor's and hospital appointments and to go shopping each week. He phones in to the office where our operations team know his background and his needs; Bill knows the drivers who come out and the drivers are familiar with Bill's support needs. The service is flexible around his needs and those of his sister if she chooses to travel. Bill describes Interloch as "someone to lean on" both for physical help and moral support, saying that he and others "would rely a lot more on Social Services without them".

Sometimes we all face challenges that just come out of the blue and Bill is no exception. "In 2016 my house burned down and no-one offered any help". Interloch was there to support Bill through this period, liaising with two social work contacts. Bill was moved to temporary accommodation, supported throughout and once lengthy repairs had concluded, he was helped to move back home again. Bill's needs can be complex and varied, and Interloch provides a friendly flexible service that works around him in order to make sure he can overcome life's challenges.

Bill and Ann are currently shielding so an Interloch driver brings their shopping out twice a week. Among the essential items are magazines for Ann, which Bill feels keep her mentally active: "the magazines are really important for her brain. You can only get them on a Wednesday, so we really appreciate the driver bringing them". He describes Interloch as staff as "good as gold". They are reliable – a very good, purposeful service. If it wasn't there I would miss them, I really would".

# George

## a new user of Interloch's services during the Coronavirus pandemic



George (73) and his partner (81) live in a rural Argyll village. Keen sailors, they were attracted to the area by the scenery and access to the coast. For the last 18 years they have travelled between Argyll and Glasgow, where they ran a business, but since retiring have settled here full time. Both live active and independent lives, but underlying health conditions mean that they were advised to shield from March 2020.

Keen to avoid the risks associated with supermarket shopping, George contacted Interloch and driver Gary began bringing their food shopping on a regular basis. George really appreciates the service, praising the good service and helpful staff. "We really like Gary, the usual driver, and it's really good that you can contact the staff at any time. None of my friends in Glasgow gets anything like this" he says. "We just love it."

George hopes he will be able to keep using Interloch's services. "Otherwise we will have to go and do the shopping ourselves and I'm not keen to do that until there's a vaccine. We're not going anywhere 'til then. I've had leukaemia in the past so I have a low immune system, so I just can't".

“None of my friends in Glasgow gets anything like this”

“

**All locality groups recognise that transport underpins all the HSPC strategic aims and in particular is pivotal in reducing loneliness, supporting access to care, discharge from hospital and support for carers.**

Argyll Integrated Care Fund (2016/17)





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Registered Charity Index No. SC 037541

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