

PRESS RELEASE Fri 31st January, 2025, 1.00 p.m.

Closure of NORDCAT (North Dorset Community Accessible Transport) Charity

After 23 years of service to the rural community NORDCAT can no longer afford to function, its last day of operation being 14th February. A letter is on its way to all our passengers.

It is with very deep regret that the Board of NORDCAT have taken the decision to wind up the Sturminster Newton based charity forthwith. All options have been explored but without some means of subsidising the community transport it provides, predominantly to the isolated elderly across Dorset, the charity does not have sufficient funds to continue trading. Over the years the community transport was subsidised by the charity's education contracts but these have ceased. The possibilities of alternative support from grants or other income generation have been explored but the amount of subsidy required is unattainable in the present financial climate.

The remaining staff are being made redundant, financial obligations will be met and the office closed. It is hoped that any residual assets, if there are any, can be used to support the work being carried out by the Community Cars Scheme being operated by the Community Connections charity to support their lunch club transport, meals delivery service and the medical car service all of which NORDCAT has been supporting during the past 4 years (phone number for this will stay the same 01258 473154).

"We bitterly regret the abrupt withdrawal of this service which has been a social lifeline to so many over the years. People have become friends with our staff and other passengers. There are other charities out there operating similar services and hopefully they may be able to move into the void left by NORDCAT." Cllr Pauline Batstone, Chairman, NORDCAT.

Embargoed until 1.00 hours on Friday 31st January.

For further information contact:

Chairman Cllr Pauline Batstone, cllr.p.batstone@btinternet.com or 07757 373355

General Manager Helen Reed, helen@nordcat.org.uk 07900 261812

Pauline Batstone, Wednesday 31st January, 2025