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PRESS RELEASE

Cuckmere Community Bus awarded Power to Change grant

Local bus company, Cuckmere Community Bus (CCB), has been awarded a grant from Power to Change, the independent charitable trust endowed with £150 million from the Big Lottery Fund to support and develop community business. The £75,000 grant will enable CCB to replace one of its older vehicles which in turn will help reduce growing maintenance costs. The new vehicle will allow CCB to continue to provide a reliable service to all its customers in the villages and towns around the Cuckmere Valley area.

“We’re delighted that Power to Change has awarded us a grant which will help our community business deliver even more services for local people” said Philip Ayers, Managing Director. “It will help us continue to serve our customers and make the future more secure allowing us to grow by filling gaps in the transport market as they appear.”

Cuckmere Bus celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. It was formed in 1976 to meet the growing demand for local community bus services. It is run by over 60 volunteers, including 50 drivers, and its buses carry over 100,000 passengers over 100,000 miles each year on 24 different routes and private hire. To involve the community the company carries out customer surveys and operates a Stakeholder Board made up of representatives from the 12 local town and parish councils in the area. They meet quarterly to discuss the company’s forward views, operations, asset management, finance, and drivers’ issues - a very focused community organisation.

“We believe putting business in community hands transforms places” said David Chater, Head of Community Business Funds at Power to Change. “This £75,000 grant will help Cuckmere Bus become less grant-dependent and provide much needed services for local people.”

The new bus is already on order. Once delivered it will receive the CCB standard livery of Green and Cream before joining the fleet and meeting its passengers.

ENDS

Notes for Editors continued over...



CUCKMERE BUSES is the trading name for **Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd.**
Winners of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service

Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd. is a Charity and a Company registered in England and Wales.
Charity Registration Number: 1120494 Company Registration Number: 6032000.
Registered Office: The Old Rectory, Litlington, POLEGATE, East Sussex, BN26 5RB. VAT Reg. No. 351.1070.06



Chairman: Mrs Beryl Smith Managing Director: Mr Philip Ayers Secretary: Mrs Susan de Angeli



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Note for editors:

a) About Cuckmere Community Bus

- Cuckmere Buses, the trading name for Cuckmere Community Bus (CCB), is an independent charity run entirely by trained volunteers. It was launched in 1976 to supplement existing bus services and provide bus links for village residents to their nearest towns throughout the Cuckmere Valley area. 2016 is the CCB's 40th anniversary year.
- Based in Berwick, East Sussex, CCB have around 55 volunteer drivers and 10 additional volunteers who run its fleet of eight low-floor mini buses, providing an important link with shops, doctors' surgeries and social facilities for those who do not live on a main bus route, as well as operating leisure services through the South Downs National Park.
- Timetabled bus services are operated 7 days a week, 363 days a year, including New Year's Day and Bank Holidays, but not Christmas Day and Boxing Day. They also operate Private Hire and Special Event services.
- CCB is a busy voluntary organisation and always needs new volunteers. They attend the Hailsham Farmers Market every second Saturday morning of each month, where potential drivers can try driving a bus and talk to an existing volunteer.
- Cuckmere Community Bus was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for volunteer groups, which is awarded for outstanding work undertaken in their local communities.
- Cuckmere Community Bus has also been awarded the Community Transport Association's prestigious Quality Mark confirming that they are operating within the relevant legislation and best practice within the voluntary sector.

For further information on this Media Release, please contact:

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b) About Power to Change

Power to Change is an independent charitable trust endowed with £150 million from the Big Lottery Fund to grow community business in England. Over ten years, we will provide funding and support to help build many more successful and sustainable local community businesses across England. For more information please contact:

Mark Gordon on 020 3857 7290 or mark.gordon@thepowertochange.org.uk

Follow Power to Change on Twitter at @peoplesbiz and visit www.thepowertochange.org.uk for the latest community business news.

c) About the Big Lottery Fund

- The Big Lottery Fund supports the aspirations of people who want to make life better for their communities across the UK. We are responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by the National Lottery and invest over £650 million a year in projects big and small in health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- Since June 2004 we have awarded over £8 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people. Every year we fund 13,000 small local projects tackling big social problems like poor mental health and homelessness.
- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, £34 billion has been raised and more than 450,000 grants awarded.

d) About community business

- A community business is a business set up and led by the local community that helps tackle problems in that area. It uses its profits to make the local area a better place to live, work and visit. Examples include communities coming together to save local shops from closure; to set up a community hub to provide a place for people to meet; or developing a community led housing project to help regenerate local areas.
- There are more than 5,000 community businesses in England, and the sector has grown 9% since 2015.



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