Item:
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HITRANS
THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Report to Partnership Board 6th November 2026

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Demand Responsive Transport App – Moove Flexi / m.connect

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides members with an update on the Demand Responsive Transport App currently being deployed by HITRANS to help support the operation, booking and marketing of non-scheduled transport services across the Highlands and Islands.

BACKGROUND

In December 2021, HITRANS awarded Liftango an initial three-year contract to deploy a DRT platform consisting of a user application, operators platform and a driver platform. The deployment of this system enables:

- Provides a single point where passengers will be able to book a number of different non-scheduled transport services through the one app.
- Provides both the passenger and operator with the information on the vehicles position and individual journeys in real-time with passengers informed if their service has been delayed.
- Enable services to be more efficiently deployed especially where there is more than one vehicle involved in providing a service.

PROGRESS UPDATE

The contract with Liftango has been extended until December 2027. HITRANS has begun reviewing procurement options to ensure continuity of service is provided beyond this date.

A summary of the services currently utilising the app and work to date within each Local Authority is summarised below:

<u>Highland</u>

Garve & District Development Company
As part of the Connecting Communities Transport Project, the Garve and District Development Company has acquired a CT service operated with a 9-seater vehicle. Since launch within the Moove-Flexi app last year, the operation has continued to hold steady numbers, and HITRANS, with support from Liftango, has worked on improvements to allow various booking improvements to support the nature of the services Garve requires, including private booking and fare types. Please see Appendix 1 for passenger data.

HITRANS has been working with Highland Council to identify additional services to join the Moove-Flexi platform. In November, we will be hosting workshops to allow operators to get a first-hand view of what the service will offer them. Tutorials and educational content have been created to help encourage potential new operators. HITRANS has also spoken at various community transport-related events within the Highlands to promote the adoption of the Moove-Flexi app.

Moray

Moray Council utilises the Lifango DRT app utilising the HITRANS contract but operating under the m.connect brand. They operate 14 vehicles across Moray Council area using a zone-based fare structure. Since fully launching in 2023 m.connect usage has been increasing steadily with positive feedback. m.connect has been expanding its operations with the roll-out of additional fixed route services. m.connect has also been part of £2 Bus Fare Cap which has supported an increase in fare paying users of the service. Please see Appendix 1 for passenger numbers.

Argyll and Bute

West Coast Motors have successfully integrated with our Liftango system with services utilising the platform since May 2025. Their services are branded as WestGo and cover the Dunoon and Campbeltown areas. After a successful launch last year WestGo continues to see strong passenger numbers, and the operator has been very responsive in feeding back to both HITRANS and Liftango. Next steps will be to see if the success of the services on offer can be expanded, as the results show there is room for growth. Please see appendix 1 for passenger total data.

Orkney

The Isle of Hoy Development Trust Shuttle service successfully launched their service within the Moove-Flexi app in April 2026. Utilising three new vehicles they have been showing positive passenger numbers and the operator have found the experience of working with Liftango very positive. Please see appendix 1 for passenger numbers. A link to video feedback HITRANS received from the operator can be found on the HITRANS Moove-Flexi programme page at the following link. Moove Flexi/DRT

The South Ronaldsay service has been up and running since March 2025 and continues to be used at a steady rate. HITRANS and Liftango have been proactive in supporting the operator with any issues that have arisen and will continue to be there to support efforts to make the service run more smoothly.

The services on North Ronaldsay and Shapinsay are still in the process of being set up, and HITRANS will continue to offer support as they prepare to launch the service on the platform. The service on Sandy is currently unavailable because of personal issues with the operator, but everything is set up for them to return.

Western Isles

Previous discussions with the Council identified a number of services that could benefit from the deployment of the app; however, further conversations with the local authority and transport operators are needed to bring the services onto the system. The expansion of similar services within Orkney and Argyll and Bute will be used as a platform to demonstrate and encourage its uptake.

App Uptake

Both Moove-Flexi and m.connect have seen a steady transition from passengers using traditional methods of booking towards using the app services. Please see Appendix A for the comparison from 2025 to 2026.

Promotion of Moove Flexi

HITRANS have been working with the Community Transport Association to identify opportunities to promote the app to prospective community transport operators within the region. Data and feedback from operators currently using the system will continue to be shared with CTA members to encourage participation. WestGo have promotional material they have been using to promote their new service, and we have incorporated that within the Moove Flexi app. HITRANS has been working with the Liftango team to improve the overall User Interface of the app to improve customers' experience using materials such as images and FAQ's provided by the DRT operators on the Orkney Isles. Similar work is being progressed for other local authority areas.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – Local bus services support a number of RTS priorities relating the Public Transport and access to employment, education, healthcare and social inclusion.

Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS report on the Rural Bus Service Support and Funding (March 2021) sets out the variety of challenges facing local bus services not just in the Highlands and Islands but across rural Scotland. One of the actions it identified was the 'Investigation of the potential for more regional collaboration on Public Transport and DRT management and operations.'

Financial

Impact – Neutral

Comment – HITRANS has been secured to support the app until December 2027. HITRANS is currently working with partner Local Authorities to ensure funding for the app is identified to enable the extension or replacement of the current contract beyond December 2027.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Local Bus services help improve access to many of the most vulnerable groups within the area and also provide what can be described as a lifeline service to those communities where the local bus service is the only form of public transport available.

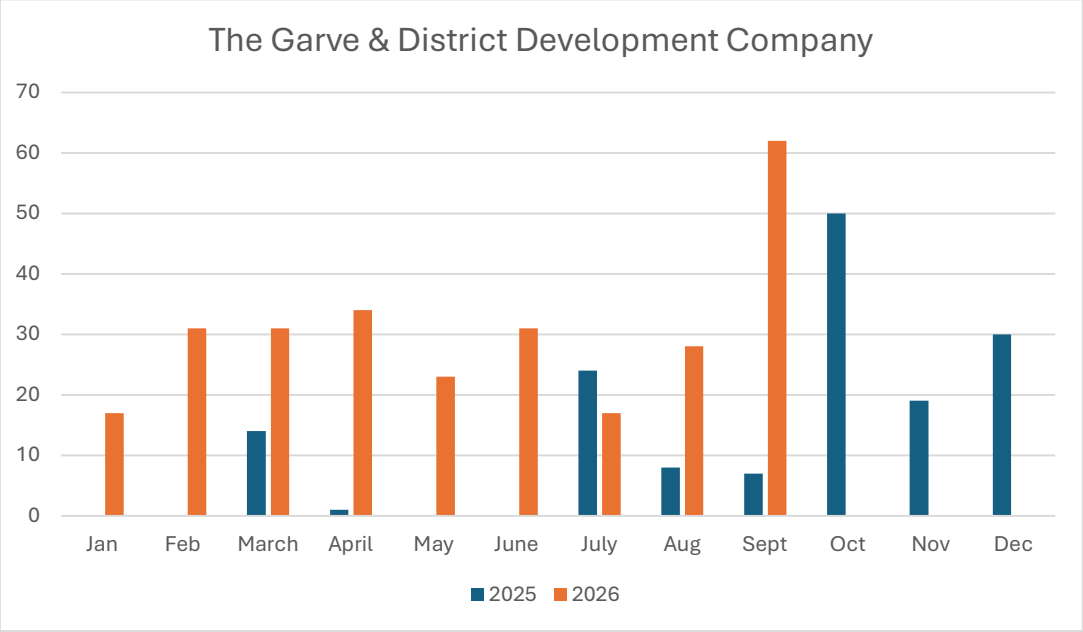
RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

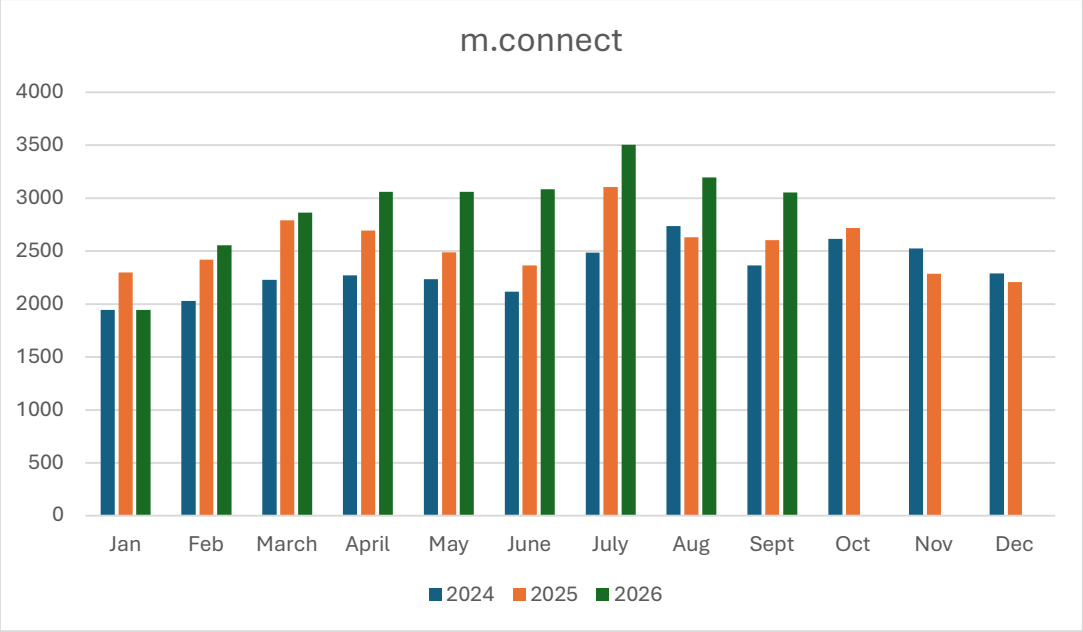
1. Note the report

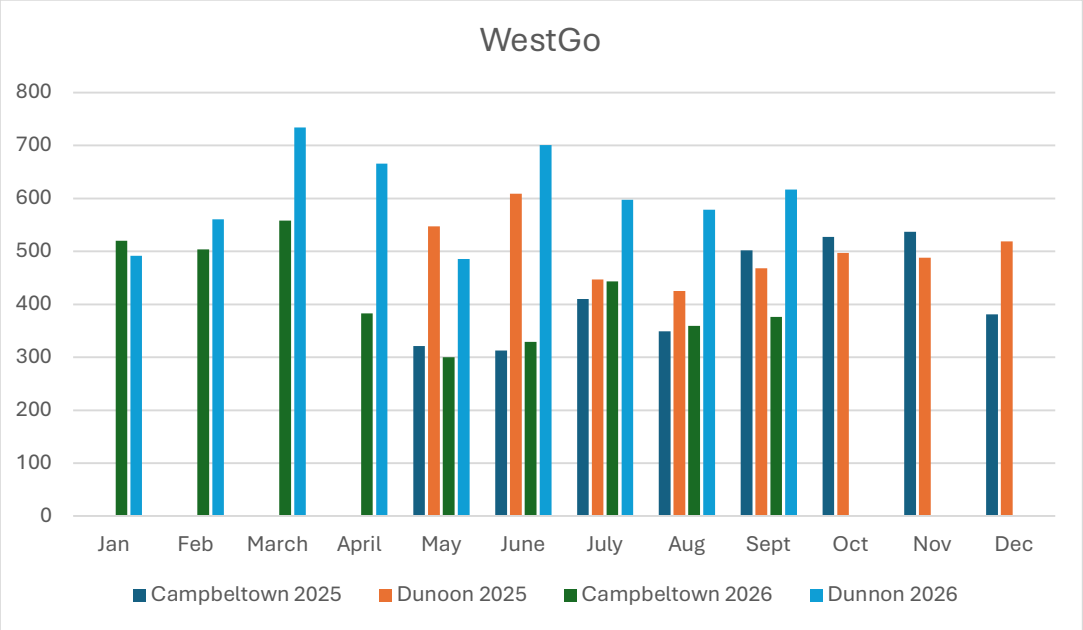
Report by:	Robert Wilson
Designation:	Transport Integration Manager
Date:	26/10/2026

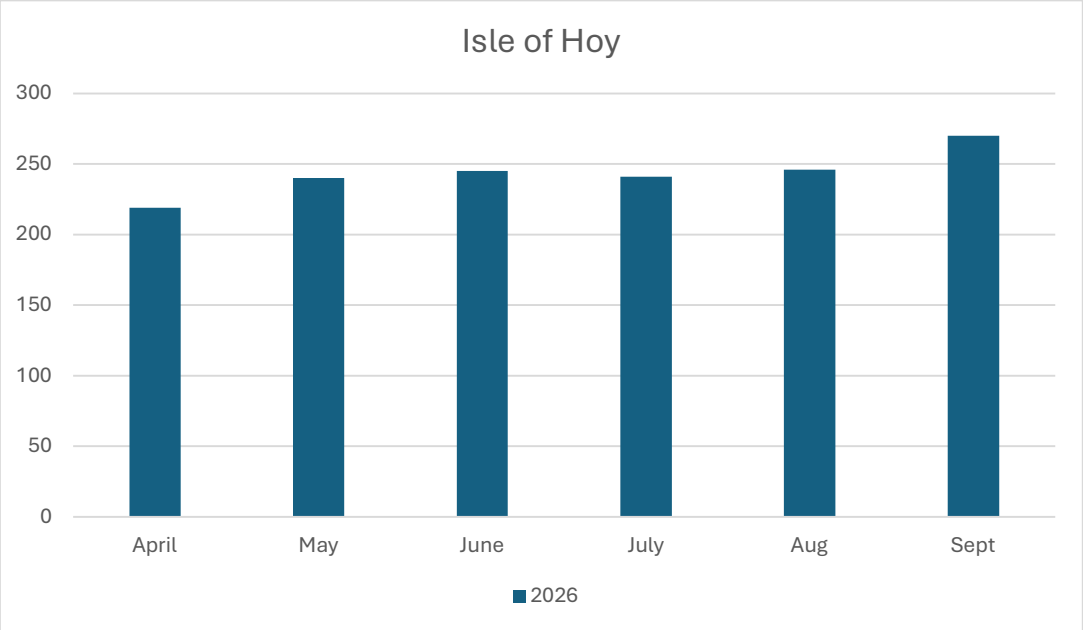
APPENDIX 1 – MOOVE FLEXI PASSENGER TOTALS 2026

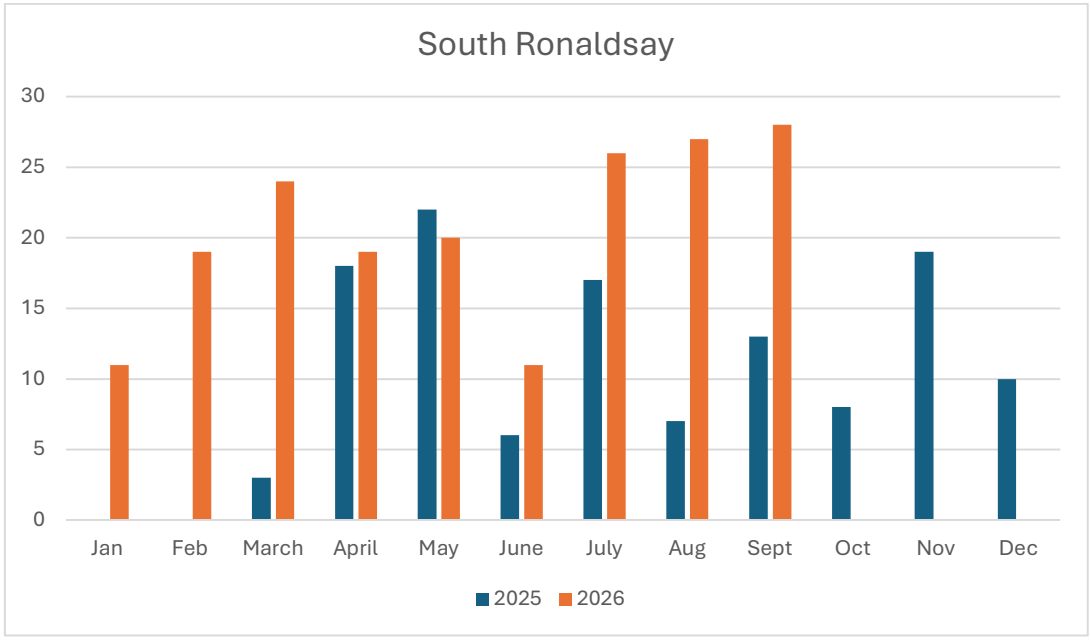


- Please note between May-June 2025 work was being done with Liftango to support the development of Garve's services so no data is available




WestGo
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
Jan
Feb
March
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Campbeltown 2025
Dunoon 2025
Campbeltown 2026
Dunnon 2026


Isle of Hoy
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
2026



App Usage Uptake 2025 – 2026

