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PROJECT

REPORT

Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub

April 2025

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Terms and Conditions

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Executive Summary

The Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub project aimed to address rural transportation challenges in Buxton and Hope Valley by promoting sustainable and shared mobility solutions. The project involved developing digital hubs to connect residents with shared transport options, including lift-sharing, car clubs, and EV charging.

Key Learnings:

- Community-led initiatives are crucial: The project highlighted the effectiveness of community-led initiatives, such as the S33 Car Sharing Club and informal lift-sharing groups, in driving shared mobility. These initiatives demonstrated strong community engagement and ownership.
- Informal networks are important**:** Informal networks like WhatsApp groups play a significant role in facilitating shared mobility in rural areas, emphasising the need to integrate and support these networks.
- User-centric design is essential: The development process underscored the importance of user-centred design, gathering community feedback to shape the digital hub's features and user experience.
- Low-tech solutions are valued: Users often prefer simpler, more familiar solutions over complex technological platforms, especially when first engaging with a service.
- Trust is important: Building trust and fostering community connections are crucial for the success of shared mobility initiatives.

Key Challenges:

The project encountered several challenges, detailed in the table below:

Challenge	Description
User Adoption & Engagement	Achieving widespread user adoption and sustained engagement with the digital hubs proved difficult.
Digital Hub Focus	There was a tendency to overemphasise the digital hub itself, rather than focusing on promoting broader shared transport solutions.
Technology vs. Practicality	Community interest was more focused on the practical aspects of shared mobility (e.g., safety, convenience, cost) than on the digital hub's functionality.
Diverse User Needs	The digital platform had some difficulties providing tailored solutions that addressed the diverse needs of the users
Resource & Provider Stability	The project faced limitations in resources and the stability of service providers, which impacted service delivery. For example, the Enterprise Car Club ceased operations during the project.

Successes:

The project achieved successes in the following areas:

Success Area	Description
Community Engagement	The project successfully employed a comprehensive community engagement strategy, gathering valuable insights into community needs and preferences. HVCA effectively engaged with communities, identified local networks, and promoted the project.

Stakeholder Collaboration	Collaboration with local partners, service providers, and community groups was effective in promoting the project and gathering feedback.
User-Centred Development	The project used a user-centred design methodology, incorporating community feedback to improve the digital hub.
Promotion of Sustainable Options	The project promoted alternative sustainable mobility options and sought to raise awareness of shared mobility benefits. The digital hubs aimed to offer residents a centralised hub for accessing various shared transport services.

The Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub project underscores the potential of community-led initiatives and the importance of integrating formal and informal tools to promote shared mobility in rural areas. Future initiatives should prioritise a community-led approach, build trust, and focus on delivering practical, user-friendly solutions.

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Cenex

Cenex was established as the UK's Centre of Excellence for Low Carbon and Fuel Cell technologies in 2005.

Today, Cenex focuses on low emission transport & associated energy infrastructure and operates as an independent, not-for-profit research technology organisation (RTO) and consultancy, specialising in the project delivery, innovation support and market development.

We also organise Cenex-LCV, the UK's premier low carbon vehicle event, to showcase the latest technology and innovation in the industry.

Our independence ensures impartial, trustworthy advice, and, as a not-for-profit, we are driven by the outcomes that are right for you, your industry and your environment, not by the work which pays the most or favours one technology.

Finally, as trusted advisors with expert knowledge, we are the go-to source of guidance and support for public and private sector organisations along their transition to a zero-carbon future and will always provide you with the insights and solutions that reduce pollution, increase efficiency and lower costs.

To find out more about us and the work that we do, visit our website:

www.cenex.co.uk

1.2 Introduction to the Project

The Midlands Connect (MC) Future of Rural Mobility scheme addresses the challenge of transportation in rural areas, particularly those with high car dependency and limited public transport options.

In response to this challenge, the Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub project was designed to promote sustainable and shared mobility solutions in Buxton and Hope Valley. This initiative leverages digital technology to facilitate peer-to-peer sharing of vehicles and charging points.

The design and implementation of the digital hub revealed key challenges in achieving widespread adoption of these solutions in the target rural communities. These hurdles, which this report will address, include the complexities of user engagement with the digital hubs, the challenges in establishing community charging hubs, and the need for a more nuanced understanding of rural transport behaviours, behaviours, including the role of informal networks like WhatsApp groups, and a shift from a digital hub-centric approach to a broader focus on promoting shared transport solutions.

This report evaluates the Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub project an initiative undertaken to address the challenges of transportation in rural areas. The project involved the development and launch of digital hubs in Buxton and Hope Valley (https://hopemovingtogether.co.uk/) and (https://buxtonmovingtogether.co.uk/). These digital hubs serve as central platforms to connect residents, visitors and local businesses and promote various shared transport options including lift-sharing, car clubs, and shared domestic EV chargers.

The project established user-friendly online digital hubs (buxtonmovingtogether.co.uk and hopemovingtogether.co.uk) that provide access to a range of shared transport options designed to promote and facilitate shared and sustainable mobility options within the Hope Valley and Buxton communities. The digital hubs are designed to offer residents a centralised hub for accessing various shared transport services, including:

- Car clubs (Enterprise Car Club which stopped operations during the project lifetime),
- Ride-sharing services (KINTO),
- Shared electric vehicle charging (Co-charger),
- Peer-to-peer car sharing (HiyaCar)

Additionally, the digital hubs were designed to promote alternative sustainable mobility options by encouraging the use of walking, cycling, and public transport. By collecting user information through an online form, the platforms aim to personalise recommendations and ensure the services recommended meet the specific needs and preferences of the target audience in Buxton and Hope Valley.

To ensure successful project implementation and secure community buy-in, Derbyshire County Council appointed Hope Valley Climate Action (HVCA) as the Community Engagement Consultant. The community engagement officer facilitated a community-led approach, enabling residents in Buxton and Hope Valley to experiment with and explore shared transport options. This approach aimed to give residents greater control over their transportation needs and reduce their reliance on private car ownership, as well as acknowledging the importance of grass roots solutions and informal transport solutions in rural areas.

The project defined a set of key objectives to address the transportation challenges in Hope Valley and Buxton. These include:

- **Developing a user-friendly digital hub:** To provide a platform for residents to easily access shared mobility services, including car sharing, lift-sharing, and EV charging.
- **Engaging with communities:** To actively collaborate with local communities to understand their transportation needs and preferences, and to co-create solutions that address their specific challenges.

- **Promoting shared mobility options:** To raise awareness of shared mobility options and encourage community members to adopt sustainable transportation behaviours.

1.1 Project evaluation methodology

This project employed a robust mixed methods approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub in achieving its key objectives: reducing reliance on private car usage, promoting sustainable transport, and enhancing community engagement. This approach integrated a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to gain an understanding of community needs, platform usage, and the impact of shared mobility initiatives.

- Quantitative data analysis: Analysed data on platform usage, user registrations trends.
- Case study analysis: To identify best practices and understand how local communities drove successful shared mobility solutions.

This multi-faceted approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the project's impact, user behaviour, and the effectiveness of different engagement strategies.

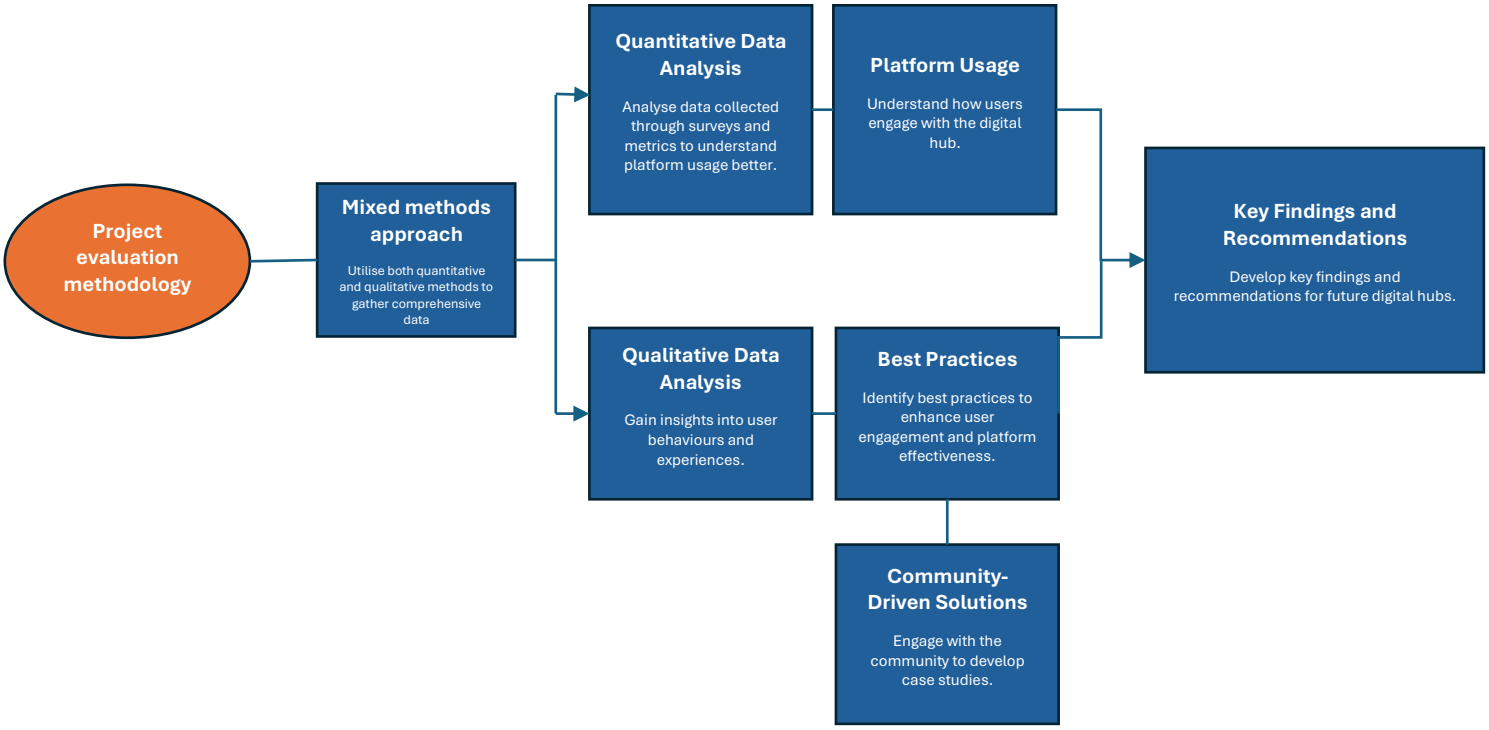

Figure 1 Project methodology

2 Digital Hub development

The Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub's development followed an iterative, user-centred design process. This approach sought to create a platform tailored to the specific needs of the Buxton and Hope Valley communities.

Throughout the development phase, community feedback, primarily gathered through online surveys and direct engagement, played a crucial role in shaping the digital hub's features and user experience. While improvements were implemented based on this feedback, the project also identified areas where further refinement is necessary to fully realise the hub's potential as a tool for promoting sustainable mobility in Buxton and Hope Valley.

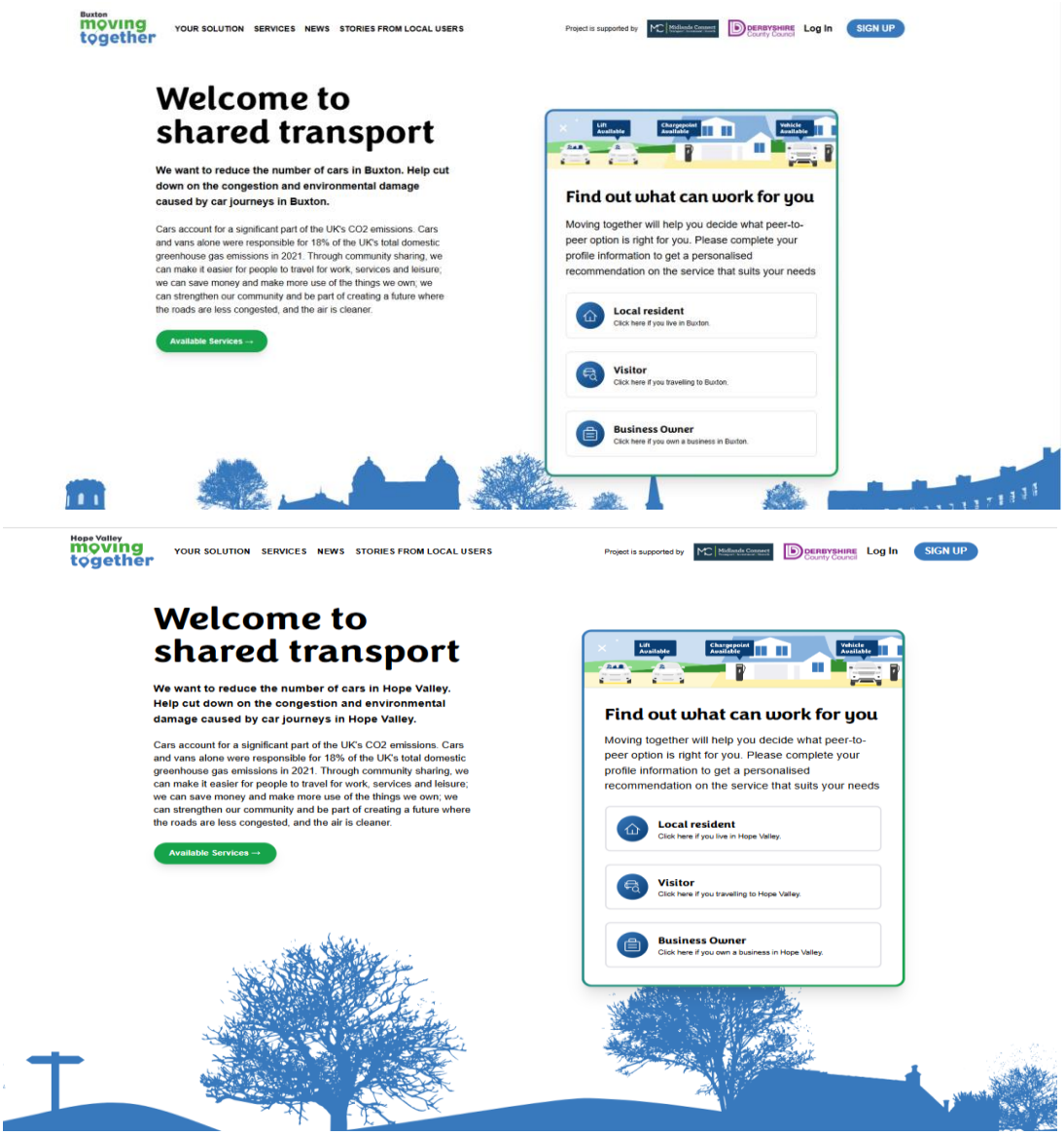

Figure 2Buxton and Hope Valley Digital Hubs

The Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub's development and testing prioritised a user-centred design methodology. This approach aimed to align the platform with the target audience's specific needs and preferences, integrating feedback gathered from community engagement activities throughout the design and development phases. This iterative process sought to ensure the platform effectively addressed user requirements.

Feedback, from an online form as well as in person consultations helped informed the platform's design evolution. The form identified key areas for enhancement, prompting the project team to implement several iterative improvements to the hub, including:

- **Visual design:** The platform's visual design was refined to enhance its aesthetic appeal and improve user experience. This included:
    - Enhancing the prominence of the Buxton and Hope Valley branding.
    - Optimising the colour scheme and typography for improved readability and accessibility.
    - Streamlining the layout and organisation of information to improve navigation and user flow.
- **Clarity and functionality:** The "Why Shared Mobility?" section was revised to provide clearer and more concise information about the benefits of shared mobility and how it can benefit the local community. The user interface was simplified by streamlining the user journey, removing unnecessary elements, and providing more intuitive navigation. Clearer instructions and guidance were also provided to assist users in navigating and utilizing the platform.
- **Technical improvements:** A thorough review identified and addressed several technical issues, including:
    - Fixing broken links within the banner of links to partner services.
    - Ensuring all links on the platform are functional and accurately direct users to their intended destinations.

These iterative improvements, driven by user feedback, significantly improved the user experience of the Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub platform.

- **Data collection and analysis:** Data on user registrations and usage patterns were collected and analysed to gauge the platform's impact. This includes information on user interactions with the platform, such as enquiries submitted through the online forms and requests for assistance. This data provides valuable insights into user needs, challenges, and areas for improvement.

By analysing the user data from the JotForm survey, the project team identified areas of high user interest, addressed any technical issues or usability challenges, and refined the platform to better meet the needs of the target audience.

This data-driven approach ensured that the platform remained responsive to user needs and continued to effectively promote sustainable transportation options within the communities.

However, the project has revealed areas for improvement. Notably, the platform does not provide sufficient information to guide users from awareness to service adoption, and the recommendation tool's functionality requires more sophistication to meet user needs. Despite the iterative development process, these limitations necessitate further refinement to ensure the platform effectively meets user needs. An additional area for improvement is the recognition and inclusion for low-tech and informal solutions, a preference that was strongly emphasised in the community engagement.

Continuous Improvement

The project employed a user-centric approach, gathering insights from residents throughout the development process. Cenex and HVCA made continual improvements to the digital hub to continue to establish trust and community buy in. Regular feedback and evaluation allowed for ongoing improvement of the platform and services

Key considerations

The project evaluation has identified key areas for refinement. Specifically, the platform requires enhanced resources to facilitate user progression from initial awareness to service adoption, addressing the current disconnect between information and direct service engagement.

The recommendation tool's functionality requires sophisticated personalisation capabilities. Direct integration with service providers will streamline the user journey, making it easier to access services and improve user adoption.

Despite the iterative development methodology, these limitations indicate that further refinement, particularly in service integration and user interface design, is essential to ensure the platform fully achieves its intended objectives and meets user expectations.

- **Community Review:**
  - The platform was presented to community members at various events and workshops, including public meetings and focus groups.
  - Feedback was gathered through online surveys and direct interactions with users.
  - Community members were encouraged to test the platform and provide feedback on its usability, functionality, and visual appeal. This valuable feedback was then used to inform subsequent iterations of the platform design and development
- **Project Team Review:**
  - The project team conducted regular reviews of the platform, focusing on user experience, data privacy, and security.
  - Iterative testing and refinement were carried out to address any issues and improve the overall user experience.

2.1 Project implementation methodology

Project implementation methodologies include community engagement strategies led by HVCA, such as stakeholder collaboration, workshops, and data collection.

HVCA, with the support of Buxton Town Team, was commissioned to provide the necessary community engagement to support the project and promote the uptake of the solutions offered through the online platform. HVCA’s expertise in promoting sustainable travel through its "Travelling Light" initiative, which focuses on transforming travel habits by collaborating with communities to develop local solutions for car dependency reduction, offered a valuable foundation for the project.

HVCA's in-depth understanding of the local context provided crucial insights, although further development of their community engagement strategies was necessary to maximise project impact The Community consultant (HVCA) key role involved

2.1.1 Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

A key aspect of the project evaluation methodology focused on gathering and analysing qualitative data related to community engagement. A key motivating factor for this project is ensuring that the diverse interests of stakeholders are included. The stakeholder insight was valuable in both the development of the digital hub and to ensure that the hub provides shared solutions that would cover their needs. making it easier for people to choose walking, cycling, and public transport.

The project involved a comprehensive engagement strategy to gather insights into community needs, preferences, and barriers to shared mobility. This included online surveys and in-person engagement to gather community feedback, conducting case studies to evaluate existing initiatives, collecting and analysing data to inform development, implementing targeted marketing and outreach, providing user support, and advocating for the project's benefits.

Online surveys:	• Commonplace Platform: A broad survey was conducted to gauge general attitudes towards shared mobility, including lift-sharing, car-sharing, and EV charging. • Travelling Light Website: A more targeted survey was used to gather specific feedback on the project's initiatives and website.
In-person engagement	• Public Events: Feedback was collected from attendees at various events, including community conversations, fetes, and presentations. • Interviews and workshops: Interviews and workshops were conducted with key stakeholders, such as community leaders, local businesses, and residents for case study research and to gain a better understanding of their needs and challenges. Some surveys were also done in person.
Case study research:	• Informal Initiatives: Case studies were conducted on informal lift-sharing groups, such as the Grindleford WhatsApp group, to understand their impact and potential for scaling. • Formal Initiatives: Case studies were also conducted on formal initiatives, such as the S33 car-sharing club and the Anglers Rest community EV charging facility, to evaluate their effectiveness and lessons learned. • Facilitation: Leading workshops and knowledge-sharing sessions to ensure community buy in of the digital hub and shared transport.
Data collection and analysis:	• Gathering data on community needs, preferences, and existing shared mobility initiatives. • Tracking engagement activities, including event attendance, social media reach, and user feedback. • Identifying user groups and their specific needs.
Marketing & outreach	• Developing case studies for shared tavel. • Directing people and businesses to the platform and from there they can start using some of the services, such as lift share or chargepoint sharing. • Developing and implementing curated marketing to raise awareness of the digital hub and its services.

	• Utilising various channels, including social media, local media, and community events.
Supporting users	• Providing guidance and support to individuals who are interested in shared travel and need support with setting up local community based solutions. • Addressing user concerns and answering questions.
Advocacy and publicity	• Promoting the project's successes and benefits to a wider audience.

Successful community engagement included:

	Successful engagement
Events	The best events were those where: • Quality conversations with the right people • User feedback was obtained and points were developed in a way that more remote connections could not have achieved • Groups of people were able to discuss topics, learn from each other and start to develop solutions • There was a captive audience, often composed of target segments or active participants
Partners	• Collaboration with partners such as Buxton Town Team, Transition Buxton and Parish Councils helped identify local networks and connections, provided insight into local views, and promoted messages to a wider audience from trusted voices.
Service providers	• There were good working relationships between HVCA and service providers, who were responsive to feedback. Regular contact was maintained, and operators provided bespoke publicity materials and their sign-up process was informed by user feedback.
Learning from existing WhatsApp based lift sharing groups	• The lowest level of technology that did the job. Increased functionality may be needed as groups grow, depending on the amount of messaging. • Word of mouth was the best way to recruit people, although there are benefits in additional publicity, for example using local social media or posters. • For wider groups, it was beneficial to have the occasional social event so people can get to know each other before sharing. • Establishing a set of basic rules can be useful in order to set expectations and manage behaviours. A small amount of administration is necessary. • Publicising case studies would effectively raise awareness of the lift-sharing technique and encourage the formation of new groups. Sharing these case studies directly with community group leaders and committees would empower them to promote the establishment of informal lift-sharing groups and assist in participant recruitment.

Through these engagement methods the Digital Mobility Hub project was designed to be deeply rooted in the needs and preferences of the communities of Buxton and Hope Valley. This approach aimed to develop a platform and suite of services that would effectively address their unique transportation challenges.

However, the project evaluation suggests that there may have been an overemphasis on the digital hub itself, rather than on the broader shared transport solutions. In practice, community interest appeared to be less focused on the hub's functionality and more on the practical aspects of shared mobility.

Key considerations

The project evaluation suggests an overemphasis on the Digital Mobility Hub platform, contrasting with community interest in practical shared transport solutions. Findings from the HVCA survey strongly support this.

For instance, when considering lift-sharing, respondents prioritised safety, often citing concerns about sharing with strangers. They also emphasised the importance of knowing the person or having a vouching system. Practical considerations like scheduling and availability were also key, particularly for EV chargepoint sharing where users focused on location, ease of booking, and reliable access.

Motivations for using shared transport options often centred on saving money), helping the environment or community and convenient access to destinations rather than platform features. This reinforces the need for future initiatives to prioritise demonstrating tangible shared transport benefits, using the platform as a supporting tool

2.2 Area analysis

This section presents an analysis of the Buxton and Hope Valley areas, focusing on transportation challenges and opportunities for shared mobility solutions. Previous studies commissioned by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) in the *Buxton And Hope Valley Rural Transport Hub Study*[1] found that limited public transport in Buxton and Hope Valley creates car dependency evidenced by the high reliance on car travel, with 83% of all visitors claiming they usually travel to, or around, the Peak District by car (Noting that there are Limited connections by sustainable modes of transport..

To address these challenges, the digital hub under consideration aimed to provide users with opportunities to experiment with shared mobility solutions in Buxton and Hope Valley. The following Area analysis conducted by Cenex focused on peer-to-peer (P2P) car sharing, EV charging sharing, and lift sharing, examining demographic trends, parking availability, and existing infrastructure.

The findings were intended to inform the development of targeted initiatives that promote sustainable transportation options in these areas. The analysis identified potential for all three shared mobility options, but with some key considerations:

2.2.1 Peer-to-peer Car Sharing

The limited public transport options in Buxton and Hope Valley contributed to a reliance on car ownership. Peer-to-peer (P2P) car sharing offered a potential avenue to reduce car ownership and enhance mobility. However, successful implementation required addressing challenges such as building trust between users, resolving insurance issues, and ensuring vehicle maintenance.

The analysis suggested that areas with a higher proportion of affluent households and multi-vehicle ownership, such as those in the southern parts of Buxton and Hope Valley, could be prime locations for P2P car sharing.

[1] **BUXTON AND HOPE VALLEY RURAL TRANSPORT HUB STUDY 16/07/2021**

The findings from the area analysis informed the development of targeted marketing campaigns and community outreach strategies. This involved partnering with relevant stakeholders like CoCharger and HiyaCar to promote P2P car sharing within the community.

Key considerations

- ***Trust: Building trust between car owners and renters is crucial for the success of P2P car sharing initiatives. Platform features and reputation management can play a significant role in achieving this.***
- ***Insurance: Addressing insurance concerns is essential. P2P car sharing platforms typically offer insurance solutions to mitigate risks for both parties involved.***

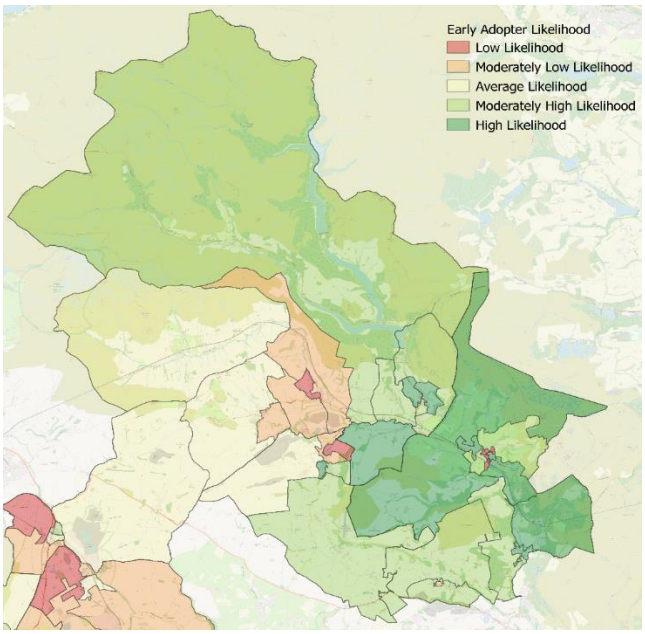

Figure 4: Areas of likely early adoption of EVs in Hope Valley

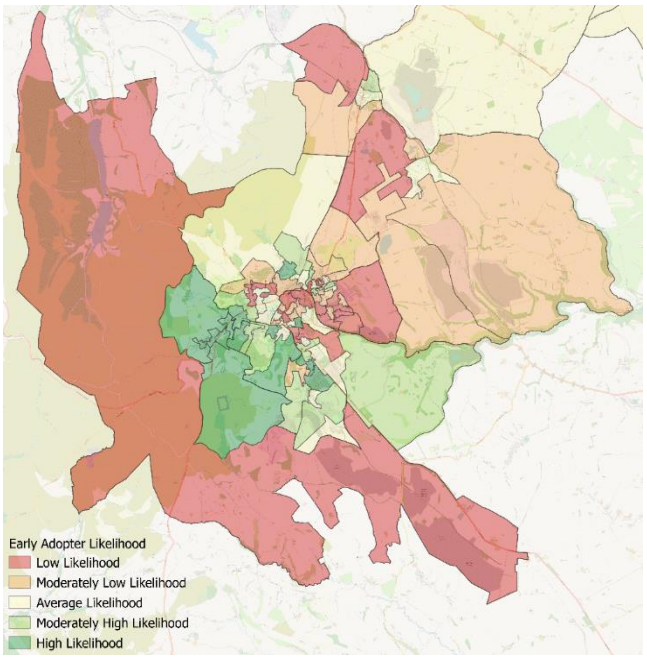

Figure 3: Areas of likely early adoption of EVs in Buxton

2.2.2 EV Charging

The analysis identified several factors influencing EV adoption and charging infrastructure needs in Buxton and Hope Valley:

- Limited Charging Infrastructure: The lack of public charging points, particularly in rural areas, was a significant barrier to EV adoption.
- Potential for Community-Based Charging: Areas with a higher density of potential EV adopters (as identified in Figure 4 and Figure 3) could benefit from community-based charging initiatives, such as shared charging points at residential properties or community hubs.

Figure 4 and Figure 3 show the locations of potential EV adopters in the next two to four years. This analysis found that urban centres were often the least likely to be early adopters due to the lack of off-street parking, and that the most likely areas of early adoption were areas just outside the urban centres with a lower density of housing

Taken in isolation, the demographics favourable to EV adoption presented in Figure 4 and Figure 3 do not necessarily show the locations where public residential charging infrastructure was likely to be required in the same timeframe. EV users with access to off-street parking can install domestic charging equipment, enabling them to charge at home and reducing their dependence on public infrastructure.

To take this into account, further analysis was completed to identify parts of the Buxton and Hope Valley that are more likely to require the installation of public residential EV infrastructure or access to shared chargepoints by including analysis of the proportion of off-street parking availability.

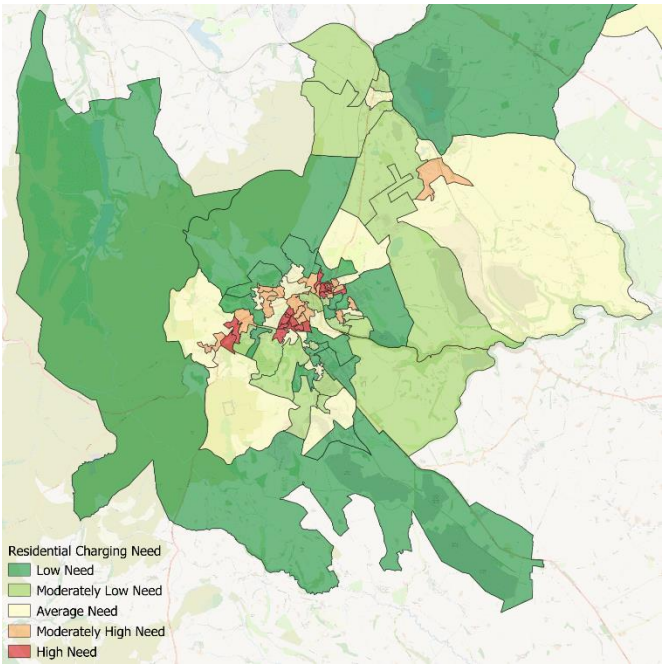

Figure 6 Areas of residential charging need in Buxton

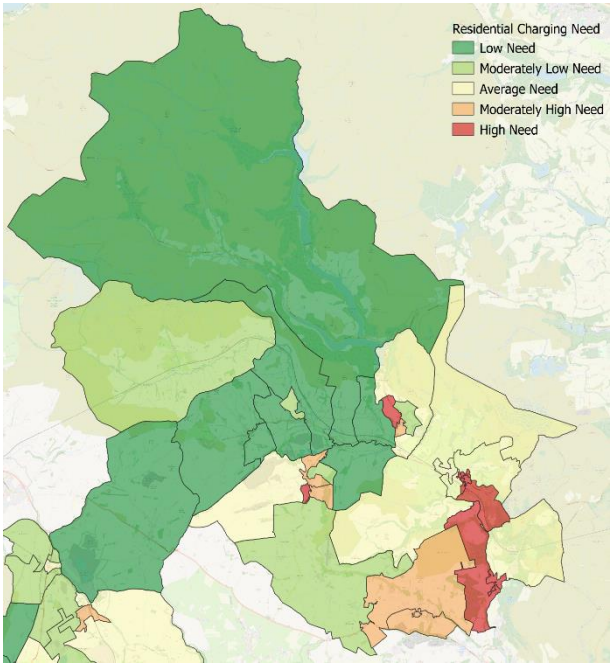

Figure 5: Areas of residential charging need in Hope Valley

Figure 5 and Figure 6 illustrate the projected residential charging demand in Buxton and Hope Valley, respectively. These maps show that generally it is the centres of towns that normally have the highest need for residential EV charging due to the lack of off-street parking, which means EV owners couldn't install their own chargepoints and are therefore reliant on public charging from public, domestic, or business sources. The higher cost of public charging compared to domestic or shared options was a key barrier to EV ownership.

Though the areas in green were the lowest need for residential EV charging, this doesn't mean that they do not need public charging options but were likely to not need as much. This analysis was based on residents only and not visitors to the area.

The findings from this analysis informed the development of strategies to promote home charging solutions in partnership with Co-charger and identify potential locations for community-based charging initiatives within Hope Valley and Buxton.

Key considerations

The higher cost of public charging compared to domestic or shared options is a key barrier to EV ownership.

2.2.3 Parking and chargepoints

Considering the maps of areas of charging need identified above, the current status of EV chargepoints and parking in the areas of Buxton and Hope Valley were identified. This was then utilised to identify the current areas lacking EV chargepoint coverage to then identify the ideal parking

areas for installation of chargepoints. These are shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** & REF _Ref137543291 \h **Error! Reference source not found.**.

The parking data had limitations in that they identified all parking including on-street and privately owned car parks throughout the area, though this showed that there was a significant amount of parking, with options for partnerships to deliver EV chargepoints on privately owned land as well as delivering on council land or on-street.

The chargepoint data was also limited because the information was from the National Chargepoint Registry[2] (retired in November 2024) which was not always updated by chargepoint operators so can be out-of-date and not reflect the status of units that may have been offline for a significant amount of time.

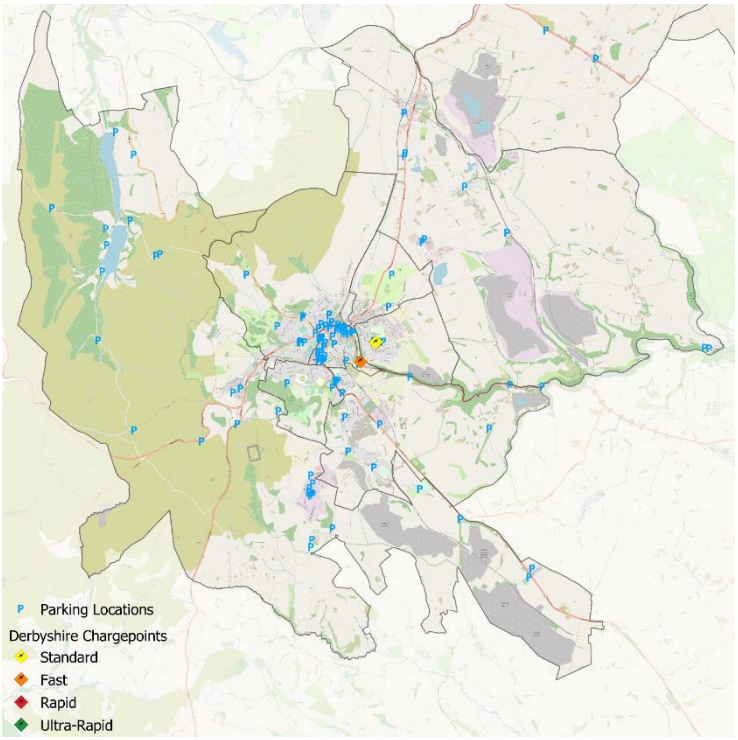

Figure 7 Current chargepoints and parking locations in Buxton

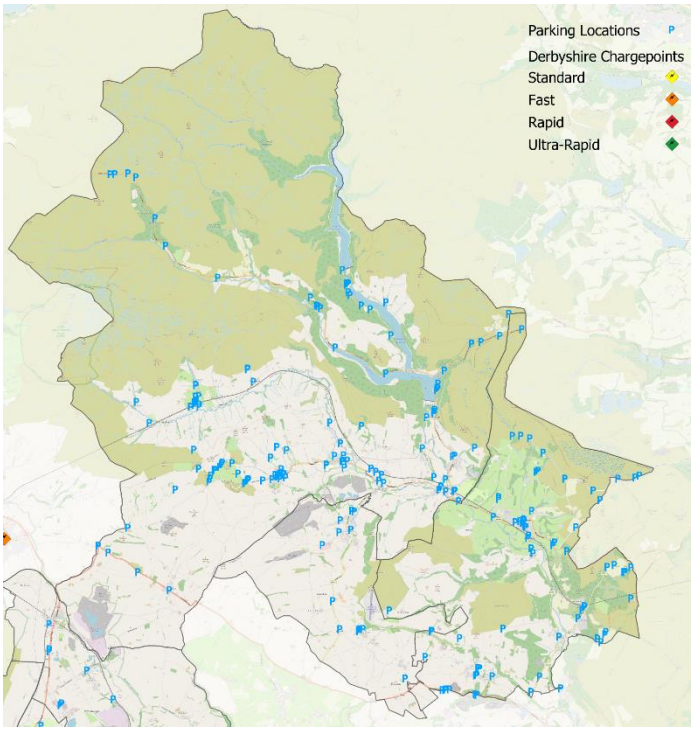

Figure 8 Current chargepoints and parking locations in Hope locations in Hope Valley

Figure 7and Figure 8 illustrate the significant disparity between the abundance of parking and the scarcity of readily available EV chargepoints. This highlights the need for a substantial increase in charging infrastructure to serve residents, visitors, and those passing through the area with EVs. The extensive parking availability across Buxton and Hope Valley presents vast opportunities for installing new chargepoints. These strategically placed chargepoints can cater to the needs of local residents, visitors, and travellers alike.

[2] NCR - National Chargepoint Registry (dft.gov.uk)

This analysis helped identify ideal parking areas and opportunities for businesses collaborations for future installation of chargepoints using Cocharger (Figure 7and Figure 8).

Key considerations

- ***The lack of existing chargepoints doesn't necessarily reflect a low demand for EVs in the area. This, coupled with the high volume of visitors, underscores the need for a non-home-based charging options.***
- ***There is a need for EV owners without private off-street parking to be able to charge at near-domestic (not public) rates.***

2.2.4 Lift Sharing

Lift sharing could be a valuable solution for reducing car dependency and improving accessibility in Buxton and Hope Valley, especially for those living in rural areas with limited public transport options. In Buxton and Hope Valley, lift sharing is distinct from other forms of shared travel because it has higher levels of awareness and participation However, challenges such as building trust, coordinating schedules, and ensuring safety need to be addressed.

The analysis suggested that areas with higher population density and commuting patterns could be more suitable for lift-sharing initiatives. Additionally, leveraging existing social networks and community groups could facilitate the formation of lift-sharing groups.

The project leveraged these insights to develop strategies for promoting lift-sharing within the community, including the involvement of the local community in reviewing and development of online platforms and the facilitation of community-based initiatives.

Key considerations

Challenges such as building trust, coordinating schedules, and ensuring safety need to be addressed.

2.2.5 Car Club vehicles, fleets, and land use

Following the conclusions of a lack of chargepoints, it was important to understand where there are car club vehicles within the area, and subsequently where there aren't in order to better plan for the roll out of further car club vehicles. It was also important to identify the land use within the area to understand where businesses are likely to be running vehicles that may also need charging infrastructure and where fleets of larger vehicles are operated that may have the opportunity to install shared chargepoints for the local community. These are all identified in Figure 9 and Figure 10.

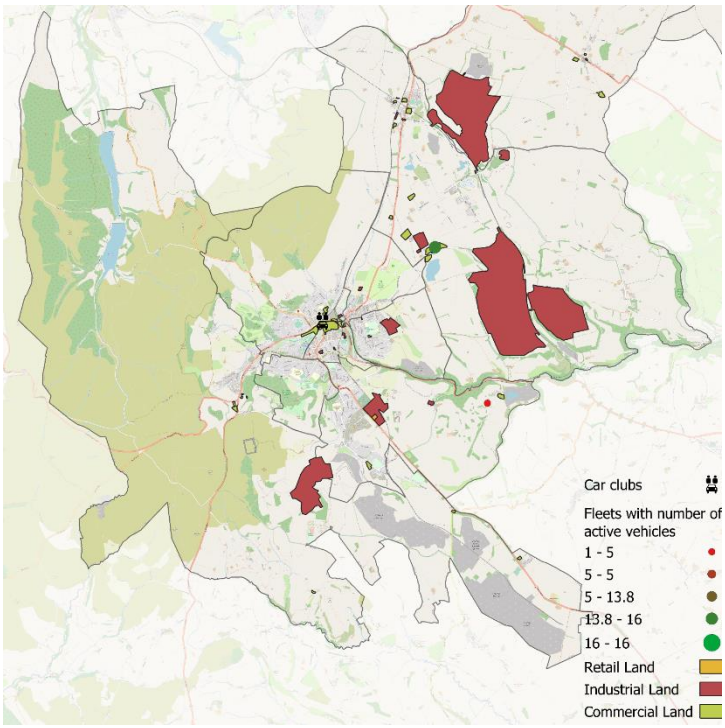

Figure 9Car club vehicles, fleets, and land use in Buxton

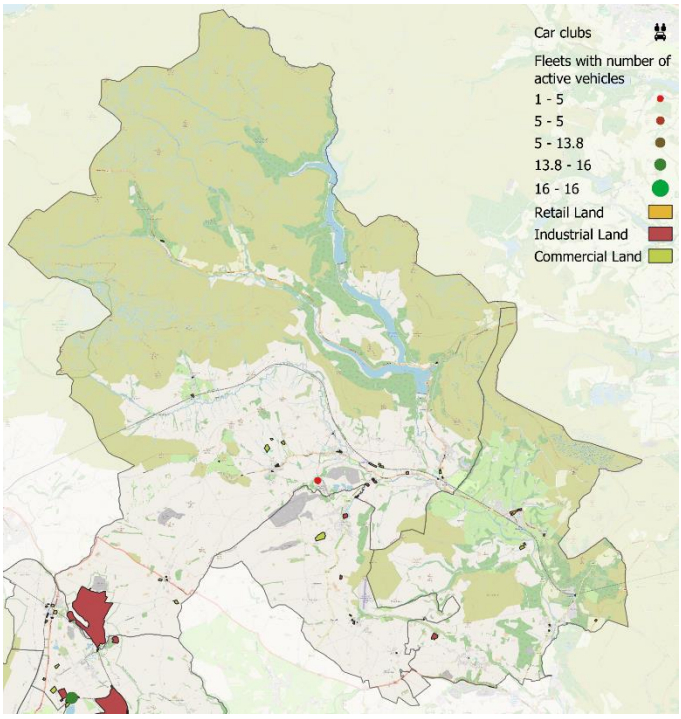

Figure 10 Car club vehicles, fleets, and land use in Hope Valley

Figure 9 and Figure 10 show that there was a single car club vehicle in the area[3], located at Buxton Railway station, which limits people's abilities to transition away from the traditional vehicle ownership model as they cannot guarantee they will have access to a vehicle given that it is a single vehicle shared across the town. This is further compounded by the fact that the Hope Valley region has no car club vehicles.

Analysis of fleet locations revealed a limited number of fleets, primarily consisting of larger vehicles, with most fleet cars and light goods vehicles (LGVs) not included in the dataset. These fleets were often located outside town centres, potentially suitable for higher-powered charging infrastructure to support longer journeys and larger vehicle sizes.

Additionally, analysis of land use identified areas with high concentrations of commercial, industrial, and retail establishments. These locations, often located further from town centres, may be suitable for employee charging hubs, enabling businesses to support the transition to electric vehicles for their workforce. However, the land use data, derived from the OpenStreetMap[4] plug in, has limitations and are therefore not guaranteed to be accurate but are indicative of the land use within the area.

The area analysis conducted by Cenex laid the foundation for the project, by providing crucial insights into resident needs and existing infrastructure. This data informed the development of targeted strategies across various shared mobility solutions in Buxton and Hope Valley.

[3] This vehicle was removed by Enterprise prior to any community engagement on the project

[4] OpenStreetMap, accessed May 2023

Key considerations

- ***Data Limitations: The land use data, derived from the OpenStreetMap plugin, has limitations and may not always accurately reflect the actual land use patterns.***
- ***Fleet Vehicle Data: The analysis did not fully capture the extent of fleet vehicles operating within the study area due to data limitations.***

3 Evaluation of impact

The Digital Hub project highlighted the significant potential of community-led initiatives to drive shared mobility in rural areas like Buxton and Hope Valley. While the digital platform offered valuable resources, its impact was somewhat limited by challenges in effectively engaging users and seamlessly integrating with existing community practices. Notwithstanding the challenges encountered in engaging users, the digital hubs efficacy was significantly diminished by its failure to be perceived as a practical tool.

It is essential to prioritise community engagement, user-centric design, and integration with informal networks. By understanding local needs and preferences, and by leveraging existing social connections, we can create more effective and sustainable solutions.

3.1 Evaluation of the Digital Hub

The digital hub developed as part of the Moving Together project had mixed results. While it offered a range of features, including user profiles, vehicle listings, and booking systems, it faced challenges in terms of user adoption and engagement. Key factors contributing to these challenges include:

- Need for the inclusion of informal arrangements.
- Need for community involvement in the initial design of the digital hub.
- Disconnected user journey: no direct link between solution awareness and service provider sign-up.
- Lack of Trust: Concerns about data privacy and security may have deterred some users.

To address these challenges, future projects should focus on simplifying the platform's interface, enhancing security measures, and implementing effective marketing and outreach strategies.

Key Lessons:

- **Leveraging informal networks:** Informal networks can be a powerful tool for promoting shared mobility, particularly in rural areas.
- **Digital tools:** Digital platforms can enhance the effectiveness of informal groups by providing tools for communication, matching, and payment.
- **Low tech solutions:** Users demonstrated a clear preference for low-tech solutions, especially when first engaging with the service.

Challenge	Mitigation Carried Out	Recommendations for Future
Enterprise car club vehicle removed from Buxton rail station	Contact with Enterprise revealed long-term decision to withdraw from Buxton; service removed from MT website to avoid confusion.	Create good relationships with all suppliers listed and check long-term intentions and willingness to respond to feedback.
Defining and implementing an effective strategy for achieving behavioural change	The project's emphasis had initially been on the website, rather than identifying and delivering effective strategies to reach people to tell them about shared travel.	A change in emphasis from leading with the website, to instead use engagement to identify the needs and barriers to shared travel by communities in the area, then to move on to developing appropriate solutions.
How to influence enough people through engagement	Getting the right balance at engagement events between presenting shared transport as part of a wider transport system and having enough of a profile to enable discussion about it specifically.	Incorporate shared transport within engagement about wider transport, but ensure it has specific space in the agenda to enable a discussion about it.

Local volunteers and community organisers	Local volunteers and community organisers could help by prompting and encouraging members of local groups to try shared transport	
Many users preferred simpler, more familiar solutions over complex technological platforms,	Development of case studies and guidance of informal lift sharing techniques based on, for example, WhatsApp in small community groups	Learn from engagement what the user needs and barriers are and focus on solutions that meet these needs.
Getting people to understand the role of shared travel	Explaining the role of shared travel as one option in a wider sustainable transport system, to be used as appropriate for certain trip types and circumstances	Set explanations of shared travel within a sustainable travel hierarchy and transport system, making clear trip types or people for whom shared travel might be particularly suitable.
Trust in the service providers and promoters	HVCA were a trusted local organisation, based on experience, but there was no reassurance for service providers on the platform.	Undertake a rigorous process for selection of any recommended service providers, both to justify trust and to assure a high-quality product.
Limited use of incentives to encourage use of shared transport solutions.	Hiyacar was the only product to offer incentives, but these were not put up front in the offer.	It is considered that more use of incentives would have been useful; indeed some suggestions were made during the engagement process including: Better, more upfront presentation of incentives,
People generally preferred to share amongst a small group of known people but may get disappointed if enough sharing opportunities do not materialise.	S33 car club and Buxton lift-sharing group both started with a small number of individuals, in order to build capacity and reassurance.	Start new initiatives off small and aim to quickly grow and transfer to a more sophisticated platform. Manage expectations of early adopters.
Lift-sharing: initiatives seemed to concentrate particularly on more regular trips to major destinations, such as commuting or trips to hospitals and railway stations	Buxton Lift-sharing group focussed initially on trips between Buxton and Macclesfield, and between Buxton and other main railway lines (Macclesfield and Chinley stations)	Initial focus on lift-sharing for regular trips to major destinations would be a good starting point to get people interested and generate more matches.
Kinto Join challenges:	The barrier of perceived personal security risks is a major one. * Most requests to existing groups	

3.2 Platform usage

The following section looks at the needs assessment form designed to capture and evaluate the user needs. Data from the user needs assessment form was analysed to evaluate user needs. The Buxton Digital Hub had 180 views, while the Hope Valley Hub had 260 engagements. However, only 28 individuals completed the online form. Despite the limited response rate, the available data provides insights into user behaviour, digital hub usage trends, and the platform's impact on travel patterns within the community.

3.2.1 Needs assessment

The following outlines the identified needs of the user base, gathered through platform interactions and survey responses. This approach allowed for the collection of data intended to provide an understanding of user behaviour and preferences.

Monitoring platform usage involved the use of an online needs assessment in the shape of an online form. The form on the digital hub aimed to show how shared mobility can complement existing public transport networks, providing flexible and convenient travel options for journeys beyond the reach of public transport, or for those with irregular or unpredictable travel needs.

The needs assessment online form was designed to help users easily identify suitable shared transport options based on their individual journey needs. This user-friendly approach ensures the digital hub provides a personalised experience for local residents, visitors and business owners. The form enables users to:

- Specify their travel needs: Indicate the type of journeys typically undertaken (e.g., daily commute, weekend trips) and the frequency of travel.
- Set travel preferences: Share preferred modes of transport (car, bike, public transport) and any specific requirements (e.g., accessibility needs).
- Provide location details: Input home and work locations (if applicable) to receive targeted recommendations for nearby shared transport options and routes.

By analysing the user input, the digital hub was designed to provide personalised recommendations for the most suitable shared transport services, walking/cycling routes, or public transport options. This personalised approach was designed to ensure that the platform effectively meets the specific needs and preferences of its users, including residents, visitors, and businesses.

Having engaged with users this function was found to be limited, while this personalised approach intended to meet the specific needs and preferences of users—residents, visitors, and businesses—the personalised recommendation feature needed further adjustments.

3.2.2 Needs assessment finding: Understanding User Behaviour and Attitudes

The following outlines the identified needs of the user base, gathered through platform interactions and survey responses. This approach allowed for the collection of data intended to provide a tailored understanding of user behaviour and preferences, including:

- User demographics: Age, occupation, location, and other relevant demographic information can help identify target user groups and tailor services accordingly.
- Travel patterns: Data on travel frequency, destinations, and preferred travel times can inform service scheduling and resource allocation.
- Motivations for using shared mobility: Understanding the reasons why users choose shared mobility over other options (e.g., personal vehicles, public transport) can help refine service offerings and marketing strategies.
- User satisfaction: Feedback on service quality, ease of use, and overall satisfaction can be used to continuously improve the platform and user experience.

The analysis of data collected through the online form provided insights into user behaviour, user types and preferences, enabling the platform to better serve their needs. The following section explores user attitudes with the Moving Together digital platforms in Buxton and Hope Valley.

The following section also incorporates insights from the HVCA Commonplace survey, based on 24 responses. It's important to note that HVCA surveys, including the Commonplace survey, have shown a bias towards older residents who own their homes and are likely to be environmentally minded, given HVCA's primary audience. These insights highlighted key community attitudes towards shared mobility. Safety and trust were paramount concerns, particularly for lift-sharing, where respondents emphasized the need for familiarity or a reliable vouching system.

Conversely, strong motivations for sharing included environmental consciousness, community support, and cost savings. For EV charging point sharing, community-mindedness and facilitating

EV adoption were key drivers, alongside potential income. These findings underscore the importance of addressing trust concerns while promoting community and environmental benefits

Hope Valley

Overall, the results indicated a strong interest in community-based mobility solutions and a willingness to embrace more sustainable travel options.

Community Engagement:

A significant portion of respondents (80%) expressed that a strong community that supports each other is important to them. This suggests a receptive environment for peer-to-peer initiatives that foster collaboration and shared resources.

A high level of interest was observed in traveling in more environmentally friendly ways (75%) and earning extra money or saving money on travel (68%). This indicates a strong motivation for adopting sustainable transportation alternatives.

Car Ownership and EV Adoption:

A majority of respondents own cars (70%). Among car owners, there is a growing interest in electric vehicles, with 25% already owning EVs and 30% planning to purchase one within the next 5 years.

This presents a significant opportunity for promoting EV adoption and supporting the development of charging infrastructure. A notable percentage of respondents (45%) expressed interest in sharing their chargepoint if they own an EV. This indicates a willingness to contribute to a community-based charging network. This aligns with HVCA Commonplace survey data, showing interest in EV charge point sharing, with motivations including helping neighbours and EV uptake.

Travel Behaviour:

The most common reasons for using a car are commuting, shopping, and leisure. A significant portion of respondents (55%) use their cars daily or multiple times per week. Alternative modes of transport, such as walking and cycling, are used by a smaller percentage of respondents. However, there is interest in exploring these options further, with 30% expressing a willingness to cycle or walk more if safety and infrastructure were improved.

A significant number of respondents (40%) have experienced difficulties accessing transportation destinations due to a lack of car availability. This highlights the need for alternative transportation options to address mobility gaps. This reflects HVCA Commonplace survey data, indicating interest in lift-sharing, driven by factors like saving money, sociability, and environmental benefits

Accessibility:

A small percentage of respondents (10%) identified as having a disability. However, it is important to note that accessibility considerations should be integrated into all transportation planning and service development to ensure inclusivity.

Technology Adoption:

Smartphones are the most common tool for journey planning. The majority of respondents have access to Wi-Fi and mobile network coverage. This suggests that digital platforms and mobile applications can be effectively utilised to promote and facilitate shared mobility services.

Public Transport Usage:

A significant proportion of respondents (60%) do not use public transport regularly. The most common reasons for not using public transport include service unavailability, lack of accessibility, and high cost.

The results from the Hope Valley underscored the need for a hub offering shared and accessible options that address existing challenges, promote sustainable travel options, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Buxton

Overall, the Buxton online form reveals a mixed response to current transportation options and a strong desire for improved accessibility and affordability**.**

Community Engagement:

A moderate level of interest was observed in traveling in more environmentally friendly ways (65%) and earning extra money or saving money on travel (55%). This indicates a potential for engaging residents in shared mobility solutions, but further efforts are needed to raise awareness and address concerns.

Car Ownership and EV Adoption:

Like Hope Valley, a majority of respondents own cars (75%). Among car owners, a smaller percentage (15 %) own EVs compared to Hope Valley. However, 25% are considering purchasing an EV within the next 5 years, indicating a growing interest in electric vehicles. A moderate level of interest was observed in sharing chargepoints among EV owners.

Similar to Hope Valley, Buxton residents in the HVCA Common place survey showed interest in EV charge point sharing, with practicalities and community benefits as key motivators

Travel Behaviour:

The most common reasons for using a car are commuting, shopping, and leisure. Half of respondents (50%) use their cars daily or multiple times per week. Walking and cycling are used by a smaller percentage of respondents compared to Hope Valley.

A significant number of respondents (45%) have experienced difficulties accessing transportation due to a lack of car availability. This further emphasizes the need for alternative transportation options. HVCA Common place survey data showed Buxton residents expressed interest in lift-sharing, with similar motivations and concerns

Accessibility:

A similar percentage of respondents (12%) identified as having a disability compared to Hope Valley. Accessibility considerations should be prioritised in all transportation planning and service development to ensure inclusivity.

Technology Adoption:

Smartphones are the most common tool for journey planning. The majority of respondents have access to Wi-Fi and mobile network coverage. This suggests that digital platforms and mobile applications can be effectively utilized to promote and facilitate shared mobility services.

Public Transport Usage:

A significant proportion of respondents (65%) do not use public transport regularly. The most common reasons for not using public transport include service unavailability, lack of accessibility, and high cost. These reasons are similar to those identified in Hope Valley.

Insights from the Buxton form highlight the need for improved transportation options that are accessible, affordable, and sustainable. These findings highlighted the need and applicability of the digital hub but also emphasised that further efforts are needed to promote and encourage the use of alternative modes of transport, such as public transport, cycling, and walking. The findings also pointed out that, promoting EV adoption and developing shared mobility solutions can contribute to a more sustainable and efficient transportation system in Buxton.

Based on the responses from Buxton and Hope Valley (combined sample size of 28), while awareness of shared mobility concepts was present, actual participation was limited. Perceived barriers to participation included safety concerns, lack of trust, and inconvenience.

Motivations for shared mobility included environmental concerns, cost savings, and social benefits, but practical considerations such as geographic limitations were also significant factors. For example, residents in more rural areas of Buxton expressed concerns about the availability of shared mobility options in their locations.

It is important to note that the survey sample size is not fully representative of the entire population of Buxton and Hope Valley. Further research is needed to gather a more comprehensive understanding of resident attitudes and behaviours.

Key considerations

Buxton and Hope Valley digital hub needs assessment key findings:

- ***Strong community focus: Respondents indicated a high value on a strong and supportive community. This highlights the potential for initiatives that build on existing social connections and trust. This aligns with HVCA Common place survey data, showing trust and community connections are vital for participation.***
- ***Environmental awareness: A significant portion of respondents (expressed interest in traveling in more environmentally friendly ways. This aligns with the project's goals of promoting sustainable transportation.***
- ***Willingness to share: There's a willingness to participate in car sharing and lift-sharing programs. This suggests a potential user base for such initiatives.***
- ***Car ownership and usage: Most respondents own a car, and many travel frequently. This indicates a reliance on cars for everyday travel.***
- ***Limited use of public transport: However, in both communities, the limited use of public transport and the lack of readily available EV charging infrastructure pose significant barriers to the adoption of sustainable transportation modes. This suggests a need for alternative transportation options that complement car usage.***
- ***Openness to alternatives: There's some interest in exploring alternatives like car clubs and lift-sharing. This indicates a willingness to consider new ways of traveling. Lift-sharing and community car clubs were perceived as more accessible options compared to P2P car sharing and EV charger sharing. This aligns with preferences for lift-sharing and community-based models in the HVCA Common place survey data.***

3.2.3 Profiles of Different User Types & limitations

Analysis of user data, particularly from the online form in the “Tell us more about you” section of the digital hub and the Jotform survey, revealed a diverse range of user type. These user profiles, while not directly mirroring the DfT's comprehensive transport personas, provide valuable insights into the specific needs and preferences of the local community.

The following table identifies the key user types within the Derbyshire Dales and their specific needs based on the data from the online form and some insights form the HVCA Commonplace Survey. It's important to acknowledge that while the Derbyshire Digital Mobility Hub aims to address the needs of these diverse user groups, the platform's scope and the available service providers limited the extent to which all needs can be fully met.

	Characteristics	Platform Needs
The Eco-Conscious Commuter	Prioritises environmental sustainability. Seeks to reduce carbon footprint. Early adopter of new technologies.	Clear communication of environmental benefits. Information on carbon footprint of travel modes. Integration with cycling and walking options.
The Occasional Driver	Owns a car but uses it infrequently. Motivated by cost savings and convenience.	Clear and transparent pricing. Information on cost savings. Convenient booking and flexible rentals.
The Public Transport User	Relies on public transport. Frustrated with infrequent service. Seeks to supplement travel needs.	Integration with public transport information. Information on connecting services. Options for booking shared transport with public transport tickets.
The Older Rural Resident	May have limited access to public transport or mobility limitations.	Clear information on shared mobility options. Easy-to-understand instructions and support. Options for assisted travel or community volunteer support.
The Tourist	Visiting the area for leisure purposes.	Information on local attractions and points of interest. Convenient booking for car hire, taxis, and tours. Information on walking/cycling routes and bike hire.
The Business Traveller	Businesses seeking efficient transportation for employees and clients.	Information on corporate accounts and group bookings. Access to business travel services information. Integration with business travel management systems.
The "Interested but Hesitant" User	Interested in shared mobility but has concerns about safety, security, and convenience.	Clear information on safety measures, user reviews, and safety ratings. Information on insurance and passenger protection. Easy-to-use booking and payment systems.

The identified user profiles, while distinct, exhibit some overlap with the broader transport personas outlined by the Department for Transport (DfT). For example, the "Older Rural Resident" profile aligns closely with the DfT's "Older Less Affluent" persona, who may face challenges accessing public transport due to limited-service frequency, mobility limitations, or lack of accessibility. This persona highlights the need for accessible and inclusive transport solutions in rural areas, where car ownership often remains essential for daily living.

Limitations:

It's important to acknowledge that the platform has limitations in addressing the specific needs of all user groups due to factors such as the availability of service providers, the scope of the project, and the complexity of certain user needs.

For example, while the platform aims to provide information on public transport options, the extent of this information may be limited by data availability and the scope of the project. Similarly, while the platform aims to address the needs of businesses, the range of business-specific services may be limited by the availability of suitable providers in the region.

Furthermore, the project faced challenges related to the stability of service providers. The difficult economic climate led to the closure of one of the initial project partners, impacting the scope and delivery of certain services.

Despite these limitations, the Digital Hub provided valuable information and resources to the local community and promoting the adoption of sustainable transportation options.

3.3 Key Challenges and attitudes

The following section details the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents and their attitudes towards shared transport options, highlighting key concerns and preferences that emerged from the data.

The surveyed respondent pool primarily comprised older, home-owning individuals with limited experience with shared transport options. This skewed demographic, reflective of the rural nature of the Hope Valley and Buxton areas, may not fully represent the needs and perspectives of the wider community, particularly younger residents and those with limited access to private vehicles.

To address these concerns, engagement with the two communities was shaped around events and community groups that trusted the Buxton and Hope Valley teams. and had building on these social connections within communities. This involved engaging with local groups and organising events that fostered community interaction. By building on these existing social connections, the project team engaged with existing and new small, informal lift-sharing groups understand what the best practices for safe and secure sharing looks like.

P2P car sharing:

- Faced concerns about vehicle condition, insurance liability, and the hassle of managing bookings.
- Clear and transparent information on insurance, vehicle maintenance, and booking procedures was crucial to address these concerns.
- The platform aimed to provide clear and accessible information on these aspects, including links to relevant insurance policies and booking guidelines.

EV charger sharing:

- Concerns included driveway access, potential conflicts with other users, and the complexity of managing transactions.
- Easy-to-use booking systems, clear guidelines, and community-building initiatives could help address these concerns.
- The platform included information on finding suitable locations for home charging stations and provided links to relevant resources for managing transactions and resolving potential issues.

Many respondents lacked awareness of existing shared transport options and their benefits. Increased visibility and promotion of successful local examples was important. The platform aimed to address this by showcasing successful local examples of shared transport initiatives and highlighting the benefits of different sharing options.

While most respondents were generally open to the concept of shared transport, they lacked familiarity with specific examples and were hesitant to engage in unfamiliar sharing arrangements.

Concerns regarding safety and security, social interactions, and the inconvenience of coordinating schedules were prominent among potential lift-sharers.

Notably, a significant number of respondents expressed a preference for sharing with known individuals within small, informal groups, often favouring low-tech solutions like WhatsApp. This preference for familiar and low-tech approaches highlights a key finding: over-reliance on complex technology may hinder the adoption of shared mobility solutions within these communities.

Key findings

Preference for Low-Tech Solutions: Some respondents expressed a preference for low-tech solutions, particularly for lift-sharing, suggesting that over-reliance on complex technology may hinder adoption. This finding highlights the need for the digital platform to provide information on and support for low-tech options alongside more technologically advanced solutions.

3.4 The Role of Informal Networks

A key finding is the need for the digital platform to provide information on low-tech options, such as informal lift-sharing groups and community-based initiatives, alongside information on more technologically advanced solutions. By recognising and leveraging the existing informal networks and practices, the platform can become a more relevant and effective tool for promoting shared mobility.

Informal networks, such as WhatsApp groups and community forums, play a significant role in facilitating shared mobility in rural areas. These networks often rely on personal connections and trust to coordinate shared journeys. By integrating these networks into digital hubs, local authorities (LAs), community organisations, and other stakeholders can enhance their effectiveness and reach.

Strategies for integration:

Key Aspect	Description	Strategies
Recognition of Informal Networks	Existing informal networks (e.g., WhatsApp groups) play a significant role in facilitating shared mobility, especially in rural areas. They rely heavily on personal connections and trust.	- Acknowledge their importance - Understand their dynamics
Integration Strategies	How to effectively incorporate informal networks into a digital hub to enhance their reach and effectiveness.	- Community mapping: Identify networks, map activities, understand needs, and identify key facilitators. - Digital empowerment: Provide training and support to community members for using digital tools. - Personalised experience: Tailor the platform to specific community contexts (demographics, geography, customs). - Data privacy and security: Ensure user data is protected and address privacy concerns.

Platform Role	The digital platform should provide information on both low-tech (informal lift-sharing) and high-tech shared mobility solutions.	- Offer a range of options - Cater to diverse preferences
Outcome	Integration of informal networks will lead to more effective and wider adoption of shared mobility initiatives.	- Increased reach

4 Case studies: Community lead initiatives

This section explores several examples of community-led shared mobility initiatives within the Hope Valley and Buxton areas. These case studies demonstrate the power of grassroots action in addressing local transportation needs and fostering a sense of community ownership. By examining the successes and challenges faced by these initiatives, we can gain valuable insights into the factors that contribute to their success and identify opportunities for the digital platform to support and empower similar community-led efforts.

4.1.1 Case Study: S33 Car Sharing Club

The S33 Car Sharing Club serves as a valuable case study demonstrating community-led shared mobility solutions. This grassroots initiative highlights the power of local action in addressing transportation needs.

Key Factors:

- Community-driven outreach: The club reached potential members through a multi-faceted approach, including presentations at the Community Cafe, messages on local village Facebook groups, posters and leaflets distributed throughout the villages, blog posts in the HVCA newsletter, and, crucially, word-of-mouth communication.
- Targeted recruitment: Focusing recruitment efforts on households with multiple vehicles or individuals aspiring to reduce their car dependency proved to be a successful strategy.
- Adaptability and responsiveness: The club proactively addressed initial feedback by developing a dedicated explanatory webpage on the HVCA website to provide clearer information on club operations and membership.

Lessons Learned:

- Clear and concise communication: Providing clear and accessible information about the club's operations, membership benefits, and booking procedures is crucial for attracting and retaining members.
- Leveraging existing community networks**:** Utilising existing community networks and communication channels, such as local Facebook groups and community events, is essential for effective outreach and member recruitment.

Key learning

- ***Some techniques are currently more accepted than others; people are fairly comfortable with lift-sharing, whereas they are not at all familiar with P2P car sharing. More work must be done to normalise these unfamiliar behaviours.***
- ***Theres a need for more case studies to build confidence among communities.***

Integration with the Digital Hub :

The Moving Together platform can enhance the S33 Car Sharing Club by:

- Providing integration with a user-friendly online booking system: Streamlining the booking and payment process for members.
- Facilitating communication: Creating a dedicated online forum or messaging board for members to communicate, share tips, and coordinate journeys.
- Promoting the club to potential users: Integrating the S33 Car Sharing Club into the platform's directory of shared transport options and promoting it to relevant user segments.
- Sharing best practices: Sharing the successes and learnings of the S33 Car Sharing Club with other communities to inspire and support the development of similar initiatives.

The S33 Car Sharing **C**lub exemplifies the potential of community-led initiatives in driving shared mobility adoption in rural areas. By integrating community-led models into the digital hub, there is an opportunity to empower local communities to take ownership of their transportation needs and foster a more sustainable and equitable future for rural transportation in Derbyshire.

4.1.2 Case Study: Buxton EV Charging Initiative

The Buxton EV Charging Initiative provides insights into the challenges, practicalities and opportunities of promoting shared EV charging solutions. There appeared to be more local interest in electric vehicles in Buxton than in other forms of shared travel, based on the distribution of existing Co-charger members, and events such as the Energy Fair hosted by Transition Buxton.

Key Observations:

Challenges in establishing community charging hubs: Despite initial exploration and outreach efforts, securing buy-in from property owners and community groups for the establishment of community-based EV charging hubs proved challenging. Factors contributing to this included organisations' existing corporate policies for EV chargers, site difficulties, installation costs, and buildings insurance.

Effectiveness of targeted outreach: Targeted outreach efforts, such as leaflet distribution in areas with limited off-street parking and engagement with specific segments of the population through initiatives like Day Zero's organic box scheme, proved to be effective in reaching potential hosts and raising awareness of shared EV charging options.

Value of community events and partnerships: Events like the Repair Cafe provided valuable opportunities for informal discussions and community engagement, although specific interest in shared mobility options varied across events. Collaborations with organisations like Transition Buxton and local car dealerships (e.g., Luigi's Motors) proved beneficial for raising awareness and promoting shared mobility options. Future actions will include engaging with more car dealers in the surrounding area, such as Macclesfield, continued promotion to catch people at receptive moments in their vehicle renewal cycles, and trying to identify any case studies of successful sharing.

4.1.3 Hope Valley WhatsApp-Based Lift-Sharing Groups

Informal WhatsApp-based lift-sharing groups have emerged as a valuable tool for facilitating shared mobility in the Hope Valley area. A number of existing, more informal, lift-sharing groups, usually based around WhatsApp, were identified in the Hope Valley. Two were village-wide, in Bradwell and Grindleford (over 50 members), one based around a Scout Group in Bradwell, and one a one-off arrangement for an event. A New Buxton-Macclesfield Lift-Sharing WhatsApp Group has also been established as a direct result of this project, and builds on learning acquired from it. Very recently established, it already has 30 members.

The two larger groups started by catering for commuter trips to the main centres, including Sheffield. The Grindleford group was also promoted to Ukrainian refugees as a way of increasing their mobility in a rural area. Members like the added security of being in a limited group of people who get to know each other.

WhatsApp functioned well enough for this purpose; there was no great desire for any more functionality, although as groups grow and more messages are sent this view may change. Little publicity had been given to the groups; recruitment was mainly by word of mouth and invitation, although Bradwell has used the village Facebook group. Groups would like to increase membership in order to maximise the chances of matches. Posts are mainly requests for lifts, rather than offers.

In all cases, the groups had been established on the enthusiasm of a key motivated person, with a personal interest in environmental and community matters.

- The Grindleford group gets a reasonable amount of engagement, but not all requests appear to be able to be met.
- The Bradwell group requires reminders to members to use the platform.
- The scout group is a smaller scale regular arrangement that works well within this group of people, although its existence could be promoted more amongst scout members.

The WhatsApp-based lift-sharing groups demonstrate the power of social networks and community-driven initiatives in facilitating shared mobility in rural areas. By supporting and promoting these grassroots efforts, communities can leverage existing social connections to improve transportation options and enhance community cohesion.

Key learning

Overall, lessons from these groups include:

- ***Using the lowest level of technology that does the job. Increased functionality may be needed as groups grow, depending on the amount of messaging.***
- ***Word of mouth is a very effective way to recruit people, although there would be benefits in additional publicity, for example using local social media or posters.***
- ***Social media as a primary driver: The Buxton-Macclesfield initiative demonstrates the effectiveness of social media as the core method for stablishing a community lift-sharing network.***
- ***For wider groups, it may be beneficial to have the occasional social event so people can get to know each other before sharing.***
- ***A set of basic rules can be useful in order to set expectations and manage behaviours. A small amount of administration is necessary.***
- ***Publicising case studies would be a good way of raising awareness of the technique and encouraging new groups to form. It may also be useful to share these directly with community group leaders / committees so that they can encourage members to start their own informal lift-sharing groups and help recruit participants.***
- ***In common with many other shared transport initiatives, there is merit in starting small, but aiming to rapidly increase in size.***

5 Lessons learned & recommendations

The future success of the Moving Together and other digital hubs relies on recognising and supporting the valuable role of community-led initiatives. This includes understanding the nuances of community engagement, ensuring adequate resources. The digital hub should be seen as a tool to facilitate these initiatives, rather than the initiative itself.

The success of shared transport initiatives, whether digital platforms or informal community groups, hinges on recognising and supporting the valuable role of community-led action. Case studies like the S33 Car Sharing Club and the Hope Valley WhatsApp-based lift-sharing groups demonstrate the power of grassroots efforts in addressing local transportation needs. These initiatives, driven by local residents and often utilising simple tools like WhatsApp, effectively connect individuals, facilitate shared travel, and strengthen community bonds.

This section presents findings and recommendations from the project. It outlines:

- Recommendations for future digital hubs
- Core principles for effective implementation
- Recommendations for future shared mobility initiatives
- Integrating formal and informal tools

5.1.1 Recommendations for future digital hubs:

Building on the lessons learned from the project, the following recommendations should be considered to ensure the effectiveness of future digital hubs in promoting shared mobility:

Recommendation	Description
Serve as a hub for community-led initiatives	The Digital Hub should act as a central point for information sharing and resource exchange, connecting communities with successful case studies, best practices, and potential partners. It should provide a space for communities to share their experiences, learn from each other, and access relevant resources.
Support the development of community-based solutions	The Digital Hub should provide tools and resources to support the development and implementation of community-led initiatives. Importantly, the hub needs to be part of a broader, well-resourced community engagement programme to be effective. This programme needs to be a process that includes listening to the community and working with them through to the delivery of solutions.
Promote and celebrate local successes	The Digital Hub should actively promote and celebrate the successes of community-led initiatives, showcasing their impact and inspiring others to take action.
Integrate community feedback	The Digital Hub should actively gather and integrate feedback from community members to ensure that it meets their evolving needs and preferences.
Facilitate knowledge sharing	The Digital Hub should include a knowledge base with articles, guides, and videos on various aspects of shared mobility.
Provide data and analytics	The Digital Hub should provide data and analytics on shared mobility trends, usage patterns, and impact. This data can be used to inform decision-making and demonstrate the value of shared mobility initiatives.

Key learning

- ***Digital hubs should be more than just a technology platform; they should actively foster community-led initiatives.***
- ***A comprehensive community engagement programme is essential for the success of any digital hub.***
- ***The platform should facilitate knowledge sharing and provide data-driven insights.***

5.1.2 Core Principles for Effective Implementation

Drawing from the core principles that guided the project's community engagement, the following principles should underpin the effective implementation of future shared mobility initiatives:

Principle	Description
Community Led	Engagement with communities has shown that community members are more likely to participate in shared transport initiatives when they feel a sense of ownership and control. Going forward, there needs to be a continues emphasis on community-led approaches, enabling residents to define their transportation needs and co-create tailored solutions. This ensures relevance, sustainability, and responsiveness to local priorities.
Leveraging Informal Social Networks	Recognise the significant role of informal networks (e.g., WhatsApp groups) in facilitating shared mobility, particularly in rural areas where strong social bonds are prevalent.
Building Trust and Social Cohesion	Prioritise building trust and fostering community connections through consistent communication, shared experiences, and cultivating a sense of collective ownership. Safety and trust are paramount concerns, especially for lift-sharing. Knowing the person or having a vouching system is crucial.
Utilising Existing Community Assets	Maximise the use of existing community networks and resources, such as local groups, clubs, and volunteer organisations, for effective outreach and engagement.
Clear and Accessible Information Dissemination	Provide clear, user-friendly information about shared mobility options, including local success stories and best practices, to enhance awareness and participation. As the report findings indicate, a digital platform alone is insufficient; community engagement is paramount. Furthermore, HVCA Commonplace data supports the need for a user-friendly platform and clear, concise information to ensure effective adoption

Key learning

- ***Community ownership and control are important for successful shared transport initiatives.***
- ***Informal social networks play a crucial role, especially in rural areas.***
- ***Building trust and social cohesion is vital.***

5.1.3 Recommendations for Future Shared Mobility Initiatives

Informed by the project's evaluation of various shared mobility schemes, future initiatives should adopt the following recommendations to enhance their effectiveness and impact:

Recommendation	Description
Shifting Focus from Technology to Mobility Solutions	Move beyond a digital hub-centric approach and prioritise the promotion of shared transport solutions, viewing technology as a supportive tool rather than the primary goal. HVCA Commonplace survey highlighted that the functionality of the platform was not the primary focus for residents.
Integrating Shared Transport into Holistic Transport Systems	Position shared transport within the broader context of existing transport experiences, systems, and policies, ensuring seamless integration.
Supporting and Enhancing Informal Networks	Develop strategies to support and strengthen existing informal networks, providing guidance and resources for their growth and activity. Produce practical "how-to" guides for rural communities and local authorities.
Promoting Shared Transport as a Normative Behaviour	Utilise local case studies and success stories to demonstrate the practicality and benefits of shared transport, thereby normalising its adoption.

Key learning

- ***Technology should be seen as a tool to support shared mobility solutions in Buxton and Hope Valley.***
- ***Shared transport should be integrated into the wider transport system.***
- ***Informal networks should be supported and enhanced.***

5.1.4 Integrating Formal and Informal Tools

The project demonstrates the pivotal role of community engagement, particularly through informal tools, in addressing rural mobility challenges. A key recommendation for future digital platforms is to strategically integrate and support these community networks.

In rural areas, where formal transport options are often limited, informal tools like WhatsApp groups and local car-sharing circles become essential for connecting residents and facilitating travel. Future platforms should consider:

- The role of formal organisations: Understanding how formal organisations such as local councils, transport authorities, and community groups effectively support existing informal transport networks, such as WhatsApp-based lift-sharing groups.
- Integration of formal and informal systems: Understand how formal transport providers can leverage existing informal networks to improve access to shared mobility.
- Platform integration**:** Understand how digital platforms better integrate and support these informal services and methods, ensuring they are accessible and user-friendly for community members.

The project underlined the following key principles of community engagement:

Key learning

- ***Focus on community-led initiatives.***
- ***Build trust and foster social connections.***
- ***Tailor outreach strategies.***
- ***Leverage existing community networks.***
- ***Continuously evaluate and adapt.***
- ***Aiming for quality engagements not quantity.***
- ***Start with stakeholder mapping.***
- ***Engagement needs appropriate resourcing.***
- ***Recruit others to amplify messages.***
- ***Make any interaction a learning experience.***
- ***Repeat messages to catch people at that point when they are briefly receptive to change***

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