**For immediate release**

**North Norfolk Community Transport celebrates after receiving National Lottery funding**

North Norfolk Community Transport is celebrating today after being awarded £133,636 over 3 years for their group excursions ‘Making Connections’. The National Lottery Community Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK and the grant means so much to the people who are looking forward to getting out and about again. North Norfolk Community Transport will use their funding to run excursions for people without access to their own, or suitable, public transport to get to the places that make them happy and visit places of interest that they would otherwise be unable to enjoy.

Jane Bishop, Executive Lead says, ‘It is well documented that social isolation, and the associated feelings of loneliness influences peoples’ health and wellbeing. It has become clear from the trips we have already run that there is a large demand for a service that connects people with others where they can make friendships and share experiences. Following the impact of Covid-19 we cannot overstate the importance of the social aspect of these trips, the journey is usually more important than the destination!’

‘We believe that the support we offer can help people to regain their confidence and enjoy life again. Our drivers are extremely kind and supportive and used to encouraging new members to make friends and feel part of the group very quickly. Here’s what our passengers say:

*Met a new friend when we went to Mannington which was lovely… I love going on the minibus …when we went into lockdown, I was so worried we might not get Community Transport back, so I am thrilled and excited to be back on the bus.*

*Made a really good friend on the bus. I can’t begin to tell you the difference after being sat at home on my own, and now going out to see new places and meet new people. It means the world to me. Thank you for all you do.*

National Lottery players raise over £30 million a week for good causes across the UK. The National Lottery Community Fund distributes a share of this to projects to support people and communities to prosper and thrive. Jane Bishop said: “Thanks to National Lottery players, this grant means that we can run 120 trips a year for the next three years. That’s 360 joy filled days that will make a big difference to people’s lives!”

During the pandemic, in 2020 alone, The National Lottery Community Fund distributed almost £1 billion to charities and community organisations across the UK.

To find out more visit [www.TNLCommunityFund.org.uk](http://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/)

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Contact

Jane Bishop

Executive Lead, North Norfolk Community Transport

[jane@nnct.org.uk](mailto:jane@nnct.org.uk)

01692 500840

Pictures are available upon request.

**Additional information:**

NNCT is a registered charity, based in North Walsham. Its main purpose is to support people in North Norfolk who do not have their own transport and cannot easily use public transport, to access their local community and services, and help reduce their isolation. This is done through a variety of services, including accessible, door-to-door minibus transport, known as Dial-a-ride, our wheelchair accessible cars and social excursions to places of interest. These services are a lifeline for many, who would otherwise be unable to maintain their independence and access their local community. www.nnct.org.uk.