



Report from your Chairperson

As I write, the economic forecast for our country and the global economy is getting gloomier by the day. In these challenging times, we would be foolhardy to think government cutbacks will not affect us.

Some time ago we prioritised the upgrading of our ageing minibus fleet and immediately set about implementing this policy.

Whilst we have not made as much progress as we might wish, we have managed to purchase 2 new Ford Transit minibuses and 1 Volkswagen 16 seater Crafter in the past 15 months. We are presently awaiting a response from the People in Need Fund but see little opportunities for Capital Funding from other sources to purchase more minibuses on the horizon.

With this in mind the **ACTS Strategy Group** is now actively considering ways to raise funds in the New Year.

This is where **you come in**. We are looking for every one of our **ACTS members to COME UP WITH SUGGESTIONS** for ways we might raise funds, e.g.

- Sponsorship for Dublin Mini-Marathon
- Sponsorship for Dublin City Marathon
- Sponsorship for Walks etc.

We also wish to hear from members that might know or have contacts in one of many **Lions** or **Rotary Clubs** in South or West Dublin, as we might be able to get assistance from them.

Its early days yet but if you have any suggestions, have family members or friends that might help with fundraising or feel you know some person or persons that might be able to assist us in any way, please contact the ACTS office or e-mail: info@actsltd.ie or obriengerry@ireland.com

As I stated at the outset, all the signs are that things will be very tight financially in 2009. Nonetheless, I am confident if we all pull together, **ACTS** can continue to provide an efficient service and blossom in the coming years.

In conclusion, may I wish all **ACTS Members** and **Staff** a very **Peaceful Christmas** and **Prosperous New Year**.

Michael Fox (Chairperson)

THANKS TO ACTS



Our pictures show, above Mark and his Mum with our driver, Philip
Right: Lynn with Joe
Far right: Gene with Margaret at UCD.

Seven years ago, my son Mark lost the use of his legs as the result of a medical condition. Until then, the family had no idea how difficult it would be to obtain the services of a wheelchair taxi. Initially we had tremendous trouble getting Mark home to Dundrum from Stewarts Hospital in Palmerstown, where he is a resident. Then we heard about **ACTS** - it changed our lives so much as Mark absolutely loves to come home regularly and we can depend on **ACTS** to do this in a safe, enjoyable and affordable manner. We are now very familiar with many of the excellent drivers, like Philip, Gerry, Shane and lately, Martin. Emma and Peter man the phones in the office and take the bookings - they are so co-operative and always do their utmost to facilitate Mark's trips. The service even operates on Christmas Day.

On behalf of myself, Mark, his sisters, Suzanne, Katie and Jane, I wish to express my deep appreciation to all the staff at **ACTS** for their dedication to this super facility, as without it we would not be able to guarantee Mark his regular visits to his family home in Dundrum.

Betty McArdle



FEEDBACK

From our members

FROM THE MANAGER'S DESK:



Una

I suffer from MS and live in Kiltipper Wood Care Centre, Tallaght. I find **ACTS** very helpful and approachable to make my bookings to go to the Square or hospital in Tallaght. I also find the drivers at **ACTS** very helpful for taking me to concerts, which I love going to, such as, in Vicar Street or Croke Park.

Una Kinsella

Lynn

I've had the good fortune of being with **ACTS** since it was established many years ago. Over that time, I have been transported, on numerous occasions, to a wide variety of events, both near and far. Having recently joined a gym, I find it reassuring to hear encouragement from the drivers on regular visits. **ACTS** staff are ready, willing and able to facilitate my social requests as well as prioritising their many clients regular commitments. As a regular user of this service, it has made me grow in confidence and for that ~ a huge Thank You.

Lynn Doyle

Kieron

Very many thanks to **ACTS** for 'many' and varied reasons! The first reason is for existing in the first place and for patiently endeavouring to assist less able clients to travel to and from places of education, sports and recreational facilities (as well as good many other facilities) and for being able to help to assist clients to get into and emerge from their homes as well as accessing and getting out of the other buildings which one visits. It makes a tremendous difference to my life as well as to the lives of numerous others who are similarly helped by **ACTS** now as well as since the foundation of **ACTS** and similar transport services.

All these transport services are invaluable and deserve more Government support, which would help bring down costs and expand the services.

Kieron Mulcahy ~ A satisfied client and frequent service user.

They say that God does act in mysterious way. Well now I am inclined to believe it. One day at home I was flicking through the yellow pages when I noticed an advertisement for a company called **A.C.T.S.**, short for Accessible Community Transport Service.

This service was not only an answer to my prayers, but it was to relieve me of my pent up frustrations, at having to use Dublin's transport as a disabled person. Both taxis and buses are in my opinion unsafe for people like myself who need to commute to work or college on a daily bases. For example most of the wheelchair taxis I have used have no proper ramps and once inside there are no harnesses to secure the wheelchair. As for the buses, it has often been my experience that when a bus would arrive at a stop the ramps would not be working properly, which meant I had to wait on another one for up to forty minutes.

Well no more waiting, thanks to **A.C.T.S.** all my transport problems has been solved. The service from my experience is reasonably priced, always on time, allowing for human error of course. The drivers and staff are second to none; they are always courteous and kind whenever I have any contact with them. God does really **A.C.T.** in mysterious ways.

Margaret Lacey (A Satisfied Customer)

Many thanks to all who of you who booked and used our accessible transport service in 2008 and a special word of thanks to those of you who have given us written feedback for this issue of the Newsletter as we work to develop and improve the service to you.

In 2007 we ran a deficit due to the costs of getting mechanical repairs done to our ageing fleet and I am afraid that we still had big costs in 2008 in order to keep our fleet on the road and also due to the high cost of diesel.

This year we have managed to keep 6 **ACTS** buses out doing daily runs from Monday to Friday from early morning till evening and then at least two buses on duty each evening and up to three buses at weekends. We continue to increase our passenger trips from month to month and we expect to well exceed the 2007 figure of 16, 500 passenger trips.

Our drivers are very important to **ACTS** and as they ensure that the high standard of driving and of passenger safety are maintained while they all have received their Midas Driver Certificates in 2008. Two drivers left the employment of **ACTS** in 2008 namely Shane and Ricky while we are happy to welcome John and Anthony Walsh (no relations) both of whom have settled in very well to our requirements.

Our office staff of Peter and Emma continue to take your bookings on the phone and to get back to you within 15-20 minutes to let you know if we can do the booking while Michael Morgan who looked after the accounts at the office left our employment on 5th Sept.

DRIVER'S VIEW

I have worked for **ACTS** for just over two years now; two very enjoyable years. On the eighteenth of November I had the pleasure to accompany Gerry to Monaghan for the Midas Driver of the year award. While Gerry attended a conference on Community Transport all over Ireland I took part in the Driver of the year where I finished joint runner up, I would like to thank Gerry for allowing me the opportunity of taking part in this competition and I would encourage my fellow drivers in **ACTS** to take part in this annual competition.

Michael (Mick) Kelly



Above: Mick Kelly, right, receives the Joint Runner-up prize in the MiDAS Driving Competition from Gerard O'Hanlon, Stredia.

YOU RING **ACTS** WE BOOK

We will ring you back to confirm. It is important to book us 48 hours in advance.

We will make every effort to meet your full booking requirements.
Call 2921573 or 2921574 for more information

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