

# MID-LOUTH NEWS

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Now it's easy for Togher residents to pay a visit to Drogheda

## Door-to-door service helps dozens to travel

BY CHRISTINE DOHERTY

TOGHER is just 12.8 miles away from Drogheda, but there are dozens of people who have never been able to use their free bus pass to travel into town – until now.

Welcoming the arrival of a weekly Louthlink bus route into Drogheda, local community activist, Hugh McMahon says that now that Togher's pubs have closed, the minibus provides a social function.

'Thanks to the new Louthlink bus, many people who relied on their families and neighbours to take them for their shopping can now get picked up from their front door and brought into Drogheda and back again.

'On the way, they meet their friends and neighbours which means that social links between peo-



Users of the Louthlink bus service on its arrival from Togher last Wednesday.

ple are maintained,' he says.

Free to bus pass holders, the bus costs €5 return for everyone else

making it a cheap alternative to public transport.

The minibus, which is driven by the affable

Eamon McDonnell is organised by Louth leader's Kevin Traynor.

'If someone is interested in getting the bus, they

simply ring us and we decide if we can pick them up from the house or else a nearby convenient location. It is as sim-

ple as that,' says Kevin Traynor.

Togher will not be only the Louthlink foray into mid-Louth, there are plans for a route covering Ardee, Dunleer, and Tallanstown into Drogheda, another covering Smarmore, Ballapousta and Collon, and third route for Tullyallen and Drybridge.

'We would encourage as many people as possible to ring and enquire about the service which is open to everyone, not just those with bus passes.

'This would be great for women whose children are at school and they want to spend a few hours in Drogheda or students who need to get into town or just someone who doesn't want to drive, but would like to get into Drogheda,' says Kevin Traynor.

More information from Louth Leader on 6856804 or 087-9637216.



Hugh McMahon and John Sarsfield on the Louth Link bus service from Togher.



Peggy Carragher and Eileen Hand find the bus service very useful.

## Louthlink eliminates four mile walk for 81-year-old

BY CHRISTINE DOHERTY

WALKING over four miles to catch a bus would be tough at any age – but for 81-year-old Vincent Conefry it was the only way he could get into Drogheda using public transport.

Now thanks to the new Louthlink service he is picked up at his front door, driven in comfort into town, and then brought back again later in the day – all free of charge thanks to his bus pass.

A dapper man, Vincent lived and worked all his life in Drogheda. Making the weekly trip is more than doing his grocery shopping it means keeping his connections with the town itself.

'The new bus service has made a huge difference to my life. It means I don't have to walk home with heavy bags of shopping which I always seem to have by the end of the day.



Passengers on the Louthlink bus service from Togher arrive in West Street, Drogheda.

'I love meeting my neighbours on the bus and also catching up with old friends and neighbours when I am in town,' he told the *Mid-Louth Independent*.

He simply picks up the phone and tells the driver when he wants picked up on a particular day.

'It really is a wonderful service because when the weather is wet and cold I only have to go a few feet and get into the bus.

'It drops me in West Street and I go off for a few hours and then come back. It is really comfortable compared with Bus Eireann.'

## Support essential service

MOTORIST Peggy King regularly uses the Louthlink service because she wants to support the new bus service which she says is 'essential' for mid-Louth residents.

'I can get around in my own car and pop in and out of Drogheda when I want, but I think that if people don't use a service like this one, then it will be lost.

'We need to use our community facilities to keep them alive – and this is one which was badly needed in Togher and other areas.'

Sitting next to her neighbours and friends, Peggy King also says it is nice to have someone else do the driving and also the parking in town.

'It takes the pressure off when you don't have to drive yourself and it is like a door to door service, without any of the hassle of having driven yourself.

'I would recommend it to everyone, drivers and passengers alike.'

## Freedom for its users

'INDEPENDENCE, that's what the new bus service gives me because I used to have to rely on my family to drive me places,' says Togher woman, Eileen Hand.

Sitting at the rear of the minibus, she enjoys the freedom of making her own way into Drogheda.

'It means I can decide where I want to go and when rather than asking one of the family who are working or coping with their own children.

'It really gives me a great sense of freedom because I can have a little bit of craic on the bus, then meet some friends for a cup of tea or just wander around for a couple of hours before heading home again.'

She is a great fan of the Louthlink services and says now there is no excuse for anyone, particularly those with a free pass, to be sitting at home.