

# CASE STUDY



*"The Trapeze technology makes it possible to offer services geared to the needs of residents and employers alike..."*

**David Blainey**  
Transportation Officer,  
Flintshire County Council



#### Trapeze offices in Europe:

**Denmark**  
+45 87 44 1600

**Germany**  
+49 40 5300 310

**U.K.**  
+44 (0) 161 435 6009

**Spain**  
+34 91 432 11 39

**Holland**  
+31 10 8500 823

[www.trapezegrup.com](http://www.trapezegrup.com)  
[info@trapezegrup.dk](mailto:info@trapezegrup.dk)

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# Flintshire County Council

## Reducing Congestion and Improving Employment with flexible Route Service

### SNAPSHOT

<b>Type of operation:</b>	DRT transport to work scheme
<b>Number of Trips per day:</b>	250
<b>Trapeze Products used:</b>	Pass, PassMon, PassWeb, Flex, MDC

### BUSINESS PROBLEM

The Deeside Industrial Park in Wales is home to 10,000 employees who commute from nearby residential areas. With no public transport linking the industrial park to the surrounding communities, 98.6 percent of journeys to the area are by car, creating traffic chaos at peak times and reducing air quality in the area. The employers were also hard hit by the lack of public transport with an average of 38 percent of vacancies unfilled after 12 months because workers without cars were unable to attend job interviews and make their way to work. With funding from the National Assembly for Wales, Flintshire County Council developed an innovative scheme to provide accessible transport between the industrial area and the nearby conurbations.

### GOALS

In addition to providing affordable, reliable transport to workers, the new Deeside Shuttle will reduce parking problems, traffic congestion and pollution. When running at maximum capacity, phase one of the Deeside Shuttle will save 2,200 car journeys per week.

"Our primary goal was to improve the quality of life throughout the area," says David Blainey, Transportation Officer for Flintshire County Council. "We had a great opportunity to help people find employment, help employers fill vacancies and to offer members of the community a choice about how they travel to work."

### SOLUTION

The employers in the industrial park operate around the clock with shifts starting at staggered hours, which made a conventional fixed route service impractical. Flintshire opted instead for a flexible routing demand responsive service. A "spine" route runs between the residential and industrial areas and vehicles deviate within zones to pick up or drop off passengers. Vehicles have fixed stops as well as scheduled deviations to coincide with shift changes. To manage booking, routing, scheduling and dispatching operations, Flintshire chose Trapeze PASS. The system also supports the management of contracted service providers.

"We were very impressed with the comprehensive passenger and vehicle management capabilities of the system," recalls Mr. Blainey. Flintshire also installed Trapeze Web which enables passengers to book, change or cancel travel online using terminals provided by employers.

"The software is essential to the success of this scheme. When our clients request travel, we are able to automatically schedule them on the most appropriate vehicle or help them plan future journeys. Our GPRS in-vehicle computing units interface with the software so that we can dis-

patch buses, communicate with drivers, pinpoint locations and adjust services in real time," Mr. Blainey explains.

### RESULTS

The service was officially launched in March of 2003, and was an instant success. "We have literally changed people's lives," Mr. Blainey says. "One client was paying for taxi service to and from work, and now is able to save £35 per week. Others have told us they can apply for vacancies where before they had been unable to travel to the interviews." The Welsh Assembly is considering further funding to expand the scheme to other areas of Flintshire. The County Council estimates that at maximum capacity the Deeside Shuttle could save 24,000 car journeys per week and reduce net carbon emissions by 22 tonnes per year.

### BOTTOM LINE

"This project is evidence of the vital economic and social role that transport plays in a community," Mr. Blainey explains. "The Trapeze technology makes it possible to offer services geared to the needs of residents and employers alike, and it helps us keep costs down while providing valuable data for tracking our success."