

Bus User

No. 55 Summer 2014 | £2.25 Where Sold | www.bususers.org

Working for passengers

Bus

**You make the difference to people
– and I thank you for that**
Gillian's farewell message to members



Bus Users
Working for passengers

Champion

Life President

Dr Caroline Cahm MBE

Chair

Gillian Merron

Vice Chair

Jeff Anderson

Director

Tracy Jessop

Chief Executive

Claire Walters

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Join Bus Users to help us
represent the views of bus
users and make a difference
to bus services.

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Complaints

If you have a complaint
about a bus or coach
service, you need first to
contact the bus or coach
company concerned to try
and resolve the issue. If
you're unsuccessful in doing
this, we will investigate
your complaint and follow
it up with the bus or coach
company. Please contact:
enquiries@bususers
or 0300 111 0001



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Groups training day

Following on from the successful local groups event last year, a similar training day is to be staged on Saturday 9 August at Woodbrooke Conference Centre in Birmingham. The agenda is likely to include advice on how groups can deal with operators and make a difference, the role of the highway authority and feedback on our new website. There will also be an opportunity for groups to tell us what support they require in the future and to network with other members facing similar challenges.

We also hope to consider the outcome of the consultation on the development of Bus Users' Groups, highlighted in the last edition. If any groups have not yet responded, please do so by 31 July at the latest.

Invitations will be sent to groups shortly and anyone considering setting up a group is most welcome by contacting the Vice Chair, Jeff Anderson at jeffanderson@bususers.org.

Bus User 55 Features

Bus Users News	4
Passengers are at the heart of things	7
Catch the Bus Week	8
It can be done	10
Edinburgh AGM report	11
Solving transport isolation in Wales	14
A long trip to Southsea	16
Passenger satisfaction rising	18
Making life easier for bus passengers	20

Plus our regular features:

Bus Users Groups (page 19), Have your say (page 22),
Membership matters (page 24).

Bus User is published in March, June, September and December
by Bus Users, Terminal House, Shepperton TW17 8AS

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Print: The Lavenham Press www.lavenhampress.com

Copy date for next issue: 30 August



From the Chair

This is my final 'From the Chair' as I will be leaving my role as Chair of Bus Users UK next month in order to take up a new role as Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the voice of the Jewish community in Britain.

I will miss leading Bus Users to be a voice for the millions of people who, day in day out, use bus services up and down the country. This is work that really matters because it makes a difference to the quality of people's lives, and I will be proud to remain a member. As I can often be heard to say – 'It's all about people!'

When I joined Bus Users over three years ago, I was tasked with raising our profile and standing, improving our professionalism, and broadening the base from which we get our financial support.

During my time as Chair, our organisation has undergone immense change and is firmly on a path to continued progress. Backed with new sources of funding, Bus Users is now the designated body for passenger complaints under the EU Passenger Rights Legislation, and Bus Users Scotland was launched last year. In addition, Claire Walters was appointed to the new post of Chief Executive to undertake and action a full strategic review. Under the supervision of the newly established Board, Bus Users has been examining, rethinking and changing the way we work. There is now a professional-looking and interactive website that reflects what we do and what we are. The proportion of our funding that comes from the bus industry has reduced with more now coming from the devolved Governments and, with our new European role, funding is coming from Westminster for the first time.

Our profile, reputation and effectiveness have improved a great deal and I am confident that the building blocks are in place to continue to do so. As members at the AGM expressed so eloquently – and I agree – there is no going back.

The Board will meet in June to make interim arrangements and to proceed with a process to appoint a new Chair who can continue to take Bus Users forward.

My last engagement – and a very enjoyable one it was too – was to welcome members, staff and guests to

our AGM. We chose Edinburgh, not only to give people from the northern half of the country the opportunity to be there, but to celebrate the establishment of our new office in Scotland. The confidence shown in us by the Scottish Government is an endorsement of what we have achieved elsewhere in England and Wales. The Scottish Government is funding us to run a complaints appeals service, to monitor bus service punctuality and reliability and to extend our Your Bus Matters programme.



I want to say 'thank you' to all of you: our members, staff, industry partners and supporters. You do a great deal – and will, I know, continue to do more – to further the cause of bus users all around the country through your passion, action and commitment.

You make the difference to people – and I thank you for that.

Gillian Merron
Chair

Do we need more notice of service changes?

Bus Users has challenged a suggestion from the Competition Commission that bus companies should be required to give a longer period of notice if they wish to modify existing bus services or introduce new ones.

Claire Walters, Chief Executive of Bus Users, believes the move could be counter-productive for passengers. Responding to the Department for Transport's consultation on the implementation of the Commission's bus registration remedies, she said: 'Imposing a three-month delay or longer for

new services to be introduced or for changes to be made to improve existing services, hinders operators from being responsive to the needs of passengers.'

Bus Users recognises that local authorities need time to organise replacement services where services are being withdrawn. We also acknowledge that there needs to be an adequate notice period for anyone affected by changes to a service. However, making passengers wait unnecessarily for improvements while putting up with unreliable or poor services, is not in anyone's best interests.

'We'd like to see more discretion given to traffic commissioners to enable services that benefit passengers to be introduced in a shorter timescale,' said Claire.

Bus Users has also raised concerns over the proposal to introduce 'banding' for frequent services. Obliging bus companies to run roughly the same number of buses at the same times each day is likely to lead to resources being wasted when things are quiet. Bus Users believes that this could have an impact on fares and lead to overcrowding at particularly busy times.

You can read Bus Users' response to the consultation in full by visiting www.bususers.org/publications

NEW STAFF

We welcome new staff to our Scottish and Welsh teams.

Bill Caldwell has joined Bus Users Scotland as the third of our Bus Compliance Officers monitoring the regularity, punctuality and quality of bus services. Bill is based in northern Scotland and will concentrate on this vast area where bus services are often vitally necessary to more remote communities.

Also in Scotland, **Harry Barker** has been appointed to the Bus Appeals Body Scotland team, as passenger representative. A retired senior banker, Harry is a regular bus user and brings a wealth of knowledge to the post.

Angela Guarno has joined Bus Users Cymru as Office Administrator, working Mondays and Fridays. Angela comes to us from NatWest Bank with a wide range of skills including customer care and mystery shopping.



Harry Barker



Tram role

Bus Users Scotland (BUS) has been asked to handle unresolved complaints relating to the newly-introduced Edinburgh Tram as an extension to its existing bus complaints role. This is further confirmation of the important part BUS is playing in Scotland, where it is now looking after the interests of both bus and tram passengers.



Honour for Marianne

Marianne O'Brien, a long-time Bus Users member and a tireless campaigner for better bus services in Surrey, has been honoured for outstanding service to the community of Haslemere. Marianne received a special medal from Haslemere's mayor 'for services to community transport'. We congratulate her for all her work and her well-deserved award.

Bus punctuality concerns

Bus Users has raised concerns over proposals by the Senior Traffic Commissioner to extend the 'window of tolerance' around bus punctuality.

Under current guidelines, buses running up to one minute early and five minutes late are still considered to be running on time. Following a consultation on the Senior Traffic Commissioner's guidance to bus operators, however, the proposal has been made to extend this leeway to eight minutes, allowing buses to run anything up to seven minutes late.

Stephen Morris, Deputy Chief Executive of Bus Users, has expressed concern about the proposed change. 'The punctuality of buses is vital to the millions of people who rely them each

day, and current guidelines that buses should run no more than five minutes late are seen by most people as entirely reasonable,' he said.

'But this goodwill will be tested if standards in punctuality are relaxed, and the current growth in passenger satisfaction that bus operators have been enjoying could fall as a result.'

'Much of the suggested guidance is extremely welcome,' said Stephen. 'It will enhance relationships between local authorities and bus operators and, ultimately, improve services for bus passengers.'

To read Bus Users' response to the consultation in full, visit www.bususers.org/publications

Updates on the cuts



There is some temporary respite for residents of Worcestershire and Cumbria facing the proposed withdrawal of all local council bus subsidies. Worcestershire and Cumbria County Councils will continue to subsidise their local bus networks for the time being.

As we mentioned in the last issue the weight of opinion expressed in the consultation led Worcestershire to postpone the cuts, while support for bus services in Cumbria continues for a further year, albeit at a substantially reduced amount. However the county still intends that its support for bus services will end after that.

Cumbria's website shows several services that were due to be curtailed will 'continue until further notice', and that 'no decision' has been taken on their future. Others are shown as continuing until 'at least November 2014'.

However over in North Yorkshire council cuts have bitten deeply, leading to the demise of Pennine Motor Services, whose bright orange and grey buses have been part of the Dales landscape since 1925. NYCC has apparently taken the view that a two-hourly frequency is adequate on any service that needs support.

STOP PRESS! In *Bus User* 53 we mourned the end of the popular Moorsbus service, providing access to the North York Moors, when the county council and national park authority withdrew funding.

Now we are delighted to learn that a group of volunteers has got together to raise funds and as we went to press it looked likely that the service would be running again this summer.

Revised proposal from Nexus

Nexus, the integrated transport authority for Tyne & Wear, has been consulting over proposals for a Quality Contract, which would involve them taking control of all the bus services in the area and inviting bus companies to submit tenders to run them.

Quality Contracts have been an option for local authorities ever since the 2000 Transport Act, and while a number of authorities have explored the possibility of implementing a scheme, none has progressed as far as a formal consultation. Quality Contracts are a radical scheme, suspending the deregulated regime which has been in place for more than 25 years.

Bus Users responded to Nexus's original consultation and noted that partnership schemes have often delivered most of the benefits that a Quality Contract scheme would, though we remain open to any scheme that would improve things for passengers.

One specific item that we raised was that the zonal fare system included as part of the proposals, whilst benefitting many passengers, would have a particularly adverse effect on

some residents of Gateshead. This and other concerns raised in response to the original consultation are addressed in a supplementary consultation which closed in early June.

The original proposals involved letting most of the network on three large contracts, which did not necessarily coincide with existing bus garages. The revised proposals would leave the main network unchanged from the current network in Tyne & Wear, and allow it to involve smaller contracts based on individual garages.

Another concern Bus Users has raised is what happens to services run from those garages to places outside the Quality Contract area (eg longer-distance routes to places like Durham, Middlesbrough etc) if the other operations from those garages pass to a different company.

Meanwhile the bus companies have come up with proposals involving partnership working, which they maintain would deliver most of the benefits more quickly and at a lower cost to ratepayers.

We will continue to watch the unfolding situation with interest.

We need support!

Bus Users is a fairly select band of people, and without being in any way ungrateful for the tremendous support our members show, we do need more supporters.

In order to be really representative we need thousands of people to be supporting us – the more the better! To this end we have now introduced our supporters scheme, whereby people who don't want to commit to supporting us financially can still show their support to our cause.

Supporters don't get the magazine and they aren't eligible to vote at our AGMs, but we are developing an email communication system so we can keep in touch with them.

It's simple to show support through our website, so if you know anyone who you think might support our cause please point them in the direction of our website.

All they need to do is click on the 'Get Involved' tab, then from the tabs down the side of the Get Involved page select 'Supporters', fill in the form (and copy the code at the bottom of the page just to prove they're real people and not robots!) and submit it: that's all there is to it. The more supporters we can get the more we can increase our influence.

Stories please!

Tracy Jessop, Director of Bus Users UK, is asking members to send in examples of individual hardship caused by bus cuts.

'We know that many people's lives have been affected by the loss of local bus services. Focusing on individual cases of hardship is a powerful way of illustrating the effects of the cuts,' she says. Please send stories to Nicola.parkins@bususers.org.

Passengers are at the heart of things

Bus Users Board member, Tracy Jessop, speaks to GAVIN BOOTH about Norfolk's successful bus service network

Recent cuts in government funding have made life very difficult for many bus passengers who found that their local transport authority was unable to allocate as much money as they would wish to support bus routes. Across the country we have seen cuts that have left significant areas with fewer – sometimes no – bus services.

One authority that has handled this in a different way is Norfolk County Council, and Tracy Jessop, Assistant Director of Environment, Transport and Development at Norfolk, told Bus Users members at the recent AGM in Edinburgh how her council had tackled it. When we later talked in more detail, it was encouraging to hear how partnership, collaboration and sheer common sense have minimised the impact on passengers and ensured that a comprehensive bus network is maintained.

'We set out to keep as much of the network as possible intact,' she says. 'We have a mix of commercial and non-commercial services and a decreasing budget for supported services, so our approach was to trim round the edges to see where we could save money to plug the funding gaps. As we have seen, some local authorities put the funding problem in the "too difficult" box, and stopped funding entirely or cut services back to the bone.'

Tracy's approach was to talk to the bus operators – there are around 40 of them, including three of the big groups and a raft of independent companies, some with very few buses but still an important part of the local mix. Some marginal services moved across the line to be operated commercially, and this provided cash to plug funding gaps. The commercial services have been linked with supported services to rural and deep rural parts of Norfolk, sometimes on a demand-responsive basis. Tracy acknowledged that this may not have been so attractive for some passengers, but the only other choice was no service. 'It was a mindset shift – people like regular scheduled services but think nothing

of ringing to book a taxi in advance, and demand-responsive services are buses that act as taxis.'

Norfolk County Council doesn't run its own bus routes but relies on partners to deliver services. Tracy sees the council's role as allowing the market to flourish and to represent users. The passenger is at the heart of all the council's transport decisions.

With a remit that includes highways, Tracy has been able to introduce measures like junction improvements, traffic signal phasing and roadway widening that can be low-cost fixes that bring improvements in reliability and punctuality. 'The bus operators see that we are actively working to improve things for them,' she says 'and that makes it easier to talk to them. We do this on a one-to-one basis, recognising commercial sensitivities.'

The recent Passenger Focus Bus Passenger Survey showed that overall passenger satisfaction in Norfolk was high, at 89%, and punctuality and journey time (88%) also scored highly.

Tracy lives between two market towns in Norfolk and described how in one of these, competition has resulted in higher-frequency bus services and a doubling of passenger numbers in four years. In the other a two-hourly supported service had

become a half-hourly commercial service with newer buses as a result of co-operation between the council and the bus company. 'People see the buses, note the frequency and switch from their cars,' she says.

Throughout Norfolk there are improved bus shelters, timetable information cases and bus stop flags, and the council is introducing more real-time information displays, allowing bus operators to use these for messages advising of delays or other problems.

Tracy has enjoyed her first year as a Bus Users Board member. She welcomed the chance to meet staff and members at the Edinburgh AGM, talking of the passion and knowledge that was displayed. She is helping to ensure that Bus Users is positioned where it should be and supports the proactive approach. 'People should know our opinion,' she says, 'because we represent the people who use buses day in, day out.' **BU**





Catch the Bus Week

28 April-4 May

This year's Catch the Bus Week had a higher profile than ever, as bus operators organised events to promote bus travel as an attractive and environmentally-friendly alternative to car use

Gillian Merron and Claire Walters of Bus Users made a fact-finding trip to the bus heartlands of West Yorkshire. Buses are the leading form of public transport in the area and are vital to the local economy, ensuring people have access to work, schools, shops and local services – even in the most rural communities.

At Leeds bus station, Gillian and Claire were shown the new MCard, a joint venture between bus and rail operators and Metro, the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, who are working together to introduce smart multi-operator and multi-modal travel

throughout West Yorkshire. Gillian and Claire experienced the new MCard system first-hand when they were issued with cards at the Travel Centre and travelled on a local service.

'Getting an insight into the First operation provided a great opportunity to see the continuing progress to improve services for increasing numbers of bus users,' said Gillian. 'It was a particular pleasure to meet the whole team who are dedicated to literally keeping the show on the road, from drivers to customer services operators, upholsterers and painters.'



Bus Users Chair Gillian Merron (left) and Chief Executive Claire Walters tried out West Yorkshire's new MCard in Leeds.

BELOW
Bus Users Events Manager Sue Dawson (right) at an event in Oldham.

Brandon Jones of First said that his company was delighted to show Bus Users many of the improvements that have been introduced in West Yorkshire and have helped generate over 100,000 extra customers a week on First buses. He added that new initiatives such as MCard demonstrate the benefit of working in partnership and encouraging even more people to use the bus.

FirstBus managing director, Giles Fearnley, hailed the second annual Catch the Bus Week a 'fantastic success', listing some of First's highlights – the launch of new hybrid buses in York and Sheffield, the introduction of M-ticketing (using mobile phones) in Manchester, and a 20% reduction in the cost of weekly tickets in

Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Around the country, Bus Users staff worked with local authorities and bus operators to stage Catch the Bus Week events. Greig Mackay represented Bus Users Scotland at a Try the Bus day at Dalkeith, with representatives from Midlothian Council and local bus companies.

Sue Dawson, Bus Users' Events Manager, attended an event in Chester organised by the Council's Travel Smart Team and supported by Arriva and Stagecoach. Sue also took part in fun events organised by FirstBus at Chester, Worcester, Hanley and Oldham. These were very well attended and although primarily intended to promote the advantages of bus travel, many visitors also used the opportunity to discuss recent and proposed changes to local bus services.

Nottingham City Transport marked the week with its Easyrider Challenge, encouraging passengers to keep count of all their journeys made on individual Easyrider cards during the week – the passenger who 'beeped' on the most buses over the week won a free month's travel.

Sheffield MPs Meg Munn and Angela Smith hosted their constituency surgeries on board stationary Stagecoach Yorkshire buses in parts of the city, as part of Stagecoach's involvement in the Catch the Bus Week campaign.

Stagecoach North Scotland marked the week with a variety of competitions to win prizes, including iPads and free tickets, and invited children to write poems and draw pictures related to bus travel. There were also ticket giveaways at Aberdeen, Elgin and Inverness to encourage local businesses and the public to use the bus more. **BU**



It can be done



BEN COLSON, recently retired from his successful Norfolk Green bus business, argues that the 16-19 age group is one that bus companies should be catering for

If you ask consumers whether they would like prices to be lower, unsurprisingly they say yes. Ask more penetrating questions and a different picture emerges, one of general contentment with bus fares amongst bus users. But not universally so.

It is over 30 years since bus operators were freed from price controls, but they have not been good at developing pricing policies that align price with the ability to pay. Now that retired people travel free (which causes some discontent here in West Norfolk even amongst that age group), the one universal group that has less ability to pay – for almost everything – is younger adults. Arguably, they have been especially badly affected by the economic downturn of the past few years.

That is why it makes economic and financial sense for operators to offer discounted rates for this age group. It is not social provision, rather it is commercially driven, and therefore the fewer restrictions there are the better. Discounted prices across the board, easy to use, no ID passes, that is the sort of simple product proposition that can open up this considerable latent market – as most recently Reading Buses has found out with its SOLO! ticket.

But, operators will say, it is their relationship with their local authorities that tends to get in the way of pursuing such simple market-driven policies. The

problem apparently lies where the authority buys bulk seats for college students, often at full price. In Shire areas, this without doubt impacts whether or not the bus service is retained at all. The fear – real or presumed – is that authorities will simply tell their students to pay individual fares on the bus and avail themselves of the discount, thus saving the authority the cost of its post-16 education transport policy.

Shire bus services are increasingly suffering

degradation as a result of the widespread under-reimbursement for over-60 free travel. It is not in operators' or local authorities' interests for the situation to be made worse by a similar

perverse outcome for younger people too. Where there is a will, there has to be a way through this undoubted conundrum.

In Norfolk, one operator has provided quibble-free discounts for 16-19-year olds for nigh on a decade now. The County Council persuaded the others to follow suit nearly a couple of years ago. Sure, the level of discount varies between operators – but the key is that there is a discount. The youth of the county is universally better off for it, and operators' fortunes are also more secure in the longer term. A pragmatic approach has provided discounts for this group whilst not making age the sole determinant of price, so the authority recognises that the economics of carrying 70 students to college at 8.30am is wholly different from the operator commercially catering for the same people's optional trips in the evenings and at weekends.

The Norfolk experience shows that it can be done, and that there are positive longer-term benefits for authority and operator. **BU**





Bus Users UK AGM

— EDINBURGH, 17 MAY 2014 —

Just over a year after it was established, Bus Users Scotland's new staff team proudly welcomed members to Edinburgh for Bus Users UK's 2014 AGM



Joan Aitken

Although a long journey for many, this did not deter around 50 members from attending and enjoying a full day of talks and discussions. The location also encouraged participation from members who do not normally attend the AGM, and we were pleased to welcome some new faces from Scotland and the north of England, including one who said: 'I've never been to an AGM before, but I will certainly make the effort in future.'

Bus Users UK Chair Gillian Merron welcomed members to the Augustine United Church, a historic building in the heart of

Edinburgh's city centre. After housekeeping announcements and adoption of last year's minutes, members were treated to a lively presentation by Scotland's Traffic Commissioner, Joan Aitken. Joan brought her role and responsibilities vividly to life, emphasising her overriding concern for passenger safety and the difficult decisions she sometimes has to take in censuring operators and, as a last resort, revoking licences. Joan also warmly welcomed the establishment of Bus Users Scotland and its new team of Bus Compliance Officers.

The business of the AGM followed, with reports on the year's activities by Gillian Merron and key members of staff. Gillian

< highlighted the progress that has been made in raising Bus Users UK's profile, diversifying funding and ensuring that the organisation is on a professional footing. Jeff Anderson, Vice Chair, reported on Bus Users' initiatives to extend its local group network, and thanked existing groups for their hard work. Tracy Jessop, Director, outlined her Local Authority background and emphasised the need for operators, transport authorities and passengers to work together to find solutions to funding cuts.

New role

Stephen Morris, Deputy Chief Executive, described Bus Users' work with Government and other decision-making bodies, including responses to public consultations and discussions on our new role as recognised body under the European Passenger Rights Directive. Stephen also reported on the work of the Bus Appeals Body, for which Bus Users provides the passenger representative.

Margaret Everson, Director for Wales, summarised the work of Bus Users Cymru over the past year, which has included a higher profile on radio and television, and efforts to highlight the problems caused by reductions in local authority funding and concessionary fares reimbursement.

Gavin Booth, Director for Scotland, reported on the successful establishment of Bus Users Scotland, adding some local colour by sporting full Highland dress. He introduced members of the Scottish team and commented on the good relations already established with the Scottish Government, Traffic Commissioner, and senior bus company complaints staff.

Barclay Davies reported on the work of Bus Users' complaints

team. Staff handled an increased number of complaints over the past year, reflecting the organisation's higher profile, particularly through our new website. Barclay emphasised that most complainants are not motivated primarily by financial concerns, but rather by the desire for an apology and an assurance that the problem would not recur.

Sue Dawson, Events Manager, summarised a successful year of Your Bus Matters events, and thanked local members who had helped to publicise them. She reported that bus drivers appear more prepared to intervene to resolve conflicts between wheelchair and buggy users, and highlighted the individual hardship that can result from transport poverty.

local groups, and to work to develop strategic partnerships with organisations who share our concerns.

Bill Wright, Finance Director, presented the accounts of Bus Users UK, and reassured members that a 'Yes' vote in the Scottish referendum is not expected to affect either the funding of Bus Users Scotland or the income received from bus operators based in Scotland.

Gillian Merron then gave formal notification that she would be standing down as Chair of Bus Users UK at the end of June, to take up an appointment as the Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Jeff Anderson stood down as a director by rotation and was re-elected. Gillian confirmed that



Claire Walters

The year ahead

Claire Walters, Chief Executive, thanked colleagues for their work over the year and outlined Bus Users UK's priorities for the year ahead, including implementation of the Strategic Plan, organising more Your Bus Matters events, and working with bus operators to address underlying issues of concern. She also pledged to increase support for Bus Users'

appointment of a new Chair was the responsibility of the Board, which will be meeting shortly to discuss this.

Claire Walters thanked Gillian for her leadership of Bus Users UK over the past three years, and presented her with a gift in thanks for her important contribution to our work.

Over a buffet lunch, members had the opportunity to talk to

Sarah Boyd



with the development of Edinburgh's new tram system, and growth in both population numbers and tourism. Sarah emphasised that customer service lies at the heart of the company's philosophy, and described new initiatives including a popular app that allows tickets to be purchased on a mobile phone.

Tracy Jessop spoke about the challenges of maintaining transport provision in the face of

Directors and staff and view a slide show presentation on Bus Users UK's new website. Lunch was followed by our traditional 'Just a Minute' section, and several members took the opportunity to subject themselves to the discipline of Gavin Booth's whistle in speaking for no longer than 60 seconds on an issue relating to bus travel. Nicola Parkins, Projects Coordinator, presented a poem about rural bus cuts in the style of Sir John Betjeman, and Gillian Merron rounded off this section, fulfilling her ambition to do her own one-minute piece. Entitled 'Getting the basics right', Gillian spoke about the things that bus operators need to get right: clean and comfortably heated buses, decent toilets, clear vision through windows and so on. She concluded: 'This much I have learned!'

public funding cuts. She outlined the bus strategy of her own local authority, Norfolk County Council, which focuses on maintaining core routes and providing safe, secure interchanges with other means of transport in a flexible 'hub and spoke' pattern. She emphasised the importance of listening and joint planning, and the need to 'do things differently'. She then asked members to break into groups and consider the pressures faced by different local authorities, and the ways in which Bus Users members and groups can help their local Councils. The groups reported back to the meeting and Gillian Merron welcomed the announcement of the decision to form a new Edinburgh group, Bus Users' second local group in Scotland.

Gillian brought the meeting to a close and thanked the Scottish team, particularly Patrycja Kwapiszewska and Greig Mackay, for their work in organising a successful day. Events were rounded off with a scenic tour of the city, courtesy of Lothian Buses, complete with an entertaining commentary by an Edinburgh tour guide.

Members seemed to enjoy their day, and several gave

positive feedback: 'The talks were interesting, the refreshments were marvellous, and the discussions were enlightening,' wrote one. Members were also invited to suggest venues for next year's AGM. We'll consider all the ideas submitted... though sadly, we're unlikely to be inviting you to the Isle of Barra or the Bahamas! Edinburgh will be a tough act to follow, but we'll do our best. **BU**



Gavin Booth blows the whistle on Gillian Merron's Just a Minute contribution.

Just a Minute

Bus Users' members who contributed to the Just a Minute slot were Ray Wilkes, Mervyn Dickson, Mark Jones, Michael Barlow, John Nicholas, Roma Patten, Hugh Jaeger, David Redgewell, Nicola Parkins and Gillian Merron. Their topics included websites, funding, local services, bus priorities, the art of persuasion and bus cuts.

Presentations

The next part of the afternoon was devoted to presentations by Tracy Jessop and Sarah Boyd, Head of Operations at Lothian Buses. Sarah gave an overview of the history of Lothian Buses and its predecessors, and outlined the company's present-day brands and operations. Recent challenges have included roadworks problems associated

Solving transport isolation in Wales

Community Transport is very much on the agenda as a possible solution for rural bus services, especially if it can dovetail with 'conventional' bus services. BARCLAY DAVIES describes the innovative thinking that has provided the solution to transport isolation in North Gower

Before April last year, City and County of Swansea Council had funded two return evening bus journeys between North Gower, Gowerton and the City Centre on Mondays to Saturdays.

Passenger numbers were low, and the subsidy for each passenger carried was high. In response to reductions in funding from the Welsh Government from April 2013, the Council took the decision to terminate the contract for this service, but remained keen to look at other ways of meeting the needs of these communities and filling the gap in evening provision.

Bus Users Cymru coordinated a Your Bus Matters event in Penclawdd, on the north side of the Gower Peninsula, in July 2013. Many of the comments related to the inability to travel by public transport in the evenings which affected people with evening jobs, attending evening classes, or visiting hospitals, the cinema, theatre or other events in the city centre.

The lack of evening services was highlighted by older people, but also by young people who were unable to travel independently.

There is an hourly bus service between Swansea City Centre via Gowerton to Pontarddulais, and also a rail service between Swansea and Gowerton Station. Consideration was therefore given to providing a more frequent shuttle-type service between North Gower and Gowerton, linking into these existing services and allowing passengers to transfer on to bus or rail services to and from the city centre or Pontarddulais. Proposals were developed for a timetable of five return journeys between Gowerton and Llanrhidian, with some journeys running to fixed routes and times but others being on a flexible demand-responsive basis.

Discussions with the Council's Social Services

Department established that there were some minibuses in their fleet that would be available in the evenings for operation of a community bus service. This coincided with a planned upgrade of the Social Services fleet in late 2013, and the opportunity was taken to procure two vehicles that would be suitable for both Social Services and public transport use. Discussions then took place between the Council and DANSA (www.dansa.org.uk), which operates dial-a-ride and community bus services across Swansea, about the possibility of them providing drivers, taking bookings and co-ordinating the demand-responsive journeys. This was agreed, and a Service Level Agreement was drawn up which enabled DANSA to register the 116 service with the Traffic Commissioner and to start running on 24 February this year.

The service operates under a Section 22 permit, enabling community buses to carry the general public and means that concessionary bus pass holders can travel free of charge. Agreement has also been reached with First Cymru Buses, which operates the connecting service between Gowerton and the City Centre, for interavailable tickets on its 404 service and the 116. The evening 116 service is also included in the First Cymru timetable booklet.

Initial feedback has been extremely positive, and the number of passengers using the service

continues to grow. One of the regular travellers who led a campaign for the reintroduction of an evening bus service commented that he can now not only get to and from the city centre but from North Gower to Benidorm, as the service allows connections with rail and Greyhound coach services to Cardiff and Bristol airports!

We hope the success of this pilot scheme will lead others to explore similar models of partnership between council departments and a community transport provider.

Credit is due to the officers and members of City and County of Swansea Council for the innovative approach they have taken here to use existing resources to provide a solution to overcome the isolation of the bus users of rural North Gower. **BU**



An innovative partnership approach has resulted in a successful community transport scheme in North Gower.

Help find Britain's Best Bus Driver!

The organisers of the annual UK Bus Awards are asking Bus Users members to help find the Top National Bus Driver.

UK Bus Awards are looking for drivers who have gone that extra mile to provide the passengers' ideal – a driver who is friendly, helpful, conscientious and mindful of people's comfort and well-being; in short, a true professional who is a worthy ambassador for the job.

You can help by nominating drivers who have impressed you. Their names will go forward to a judging panel of independent experts, who will consider the nomination in conjunction with information provided by his or her employer. The judges then choose a short-list of drivers to go forward to the finals. At this point the short-listed drivers will be checked by a 'mystery traveller' to check on the standards of customer service and professionalism delivered on the ground.

Nominations for the 2014 competition are now open, and the organisers are looking forward to hearing from you over the next few weeks. You can nominate somebody by filling in an online form that will take a couple of minutes. You'll receive an email acknowledgement, and then contact will be made with the company that employs the driver to seek their endorsement of your nomination.

UK Bus Awards Chairman Tony Depledge sees the online nominations procedure as an important part of UKBA's aims to widen participation. 'The importance of drivers as skilled professionals and industry ambassadors cannot be overstated,' he said. 'In difficult and trying circumstances, they deliver their passengers safely and comfortably to their destinations, day in, day out: our award recognises particularly the customer service skills demonstrated by the best of our professionals.'



Raul Campos Felgado of Lothian Buses was clearly delighted to win the Top National Bus Driver title at the 2013 UK Bus Awards. You can help choose the 2014 winner.

Tony believes that bus industry customers are in the best position to tell UKBA about outstanding performance. So why not nominate your favourite driver now? Visit www.topnationalbusdriver.co.uk/joomla/online-nomination or, if you're not online, write to UK Bus Awards, Kingsley, Station Road, Settle, North Yorkshire BD24 9AA. Nominations close on **Friday 27 June. BU**



A long trip to Southsea

ANDREW BOAG, chair of Bus Users' Brighton Area Buswatch group, rode Stagecoach's 700 coastal service shortly before recent route changes

One of Britain's longest bus routes, the Stagecoach Coastliner service from Brighton to Southsea, was broken up into three shorter journeys at the beginning of May. If you want to go all the way through now, you need to change buses at Littlehampton and Chichester, while those travelling through Portsmouth will have to change again to reach Southsea.

Not many people do travel the full route, with a journey of more than four hours, but a week before the change I decided to take the plunge and travel all the way from Brighton to Southsea.

My bus turned up on time, having left Old Steine in Brighton at 10.05. I made my way upstairs to the front seat for a grand view. The journey towards Worthing was fairly uneventful, but it was a sunny Saturday morning and there were some fine sea views through Hove and between Lancing and Worthing.

We picked up quite a few passengers on the way, and buses heading towards Brighton were busy. At

Worthing our driver changed over and after a few minutes we were on our way again through suburban Worthing and on to Goring and Rustington. Progress was slow but punctual.

One aspect particularly noticeable throughout West Sussex was the absence of yellow bus stop markings and raised kerbs for wheelchair access. At many stops passengers had to step into the road between parked cars to hail the bus. This is hardly the way to attract new bus users, especially in an area with a high proportion of older people.

Beyond Littlehampton the road opens up and the route becomes slightly more rural with some fine views over the countryside. Bognor Regis was busy with Saturday shoppers, and quite a few boarded our bus to go to Chichester. By now we were inland, heading away from the coast.

Chichester has a thriving market and it was here I cheated slightly by getting off the bus to stretch my legs – the upstairs front seat isn't good for tall people! I





The Coastliner was popular with shoppers and holiday-makers, but few passengers travelled the full four-hour route.

BELOW
The lengthy Coastliner 700 route before it was cut to improve reliability.

walked from the Market Place to Chichester Cathedral where I picked up the same bus ten minutes later. In that time it had gone down to the bus station and back up to the Cathedral in a U shape. I had lost my front seat, but seats further back had much better legroom and ventilation. Soon we were approaching Hampshire, around three hours after leaving Brighton, and not long after that Portsmouth's Spinnaker tower became visible in the distance. The bus took a short break at Havant bus station.

In Hilsea and Portsmouth our progress slowed again in the urban environment. We crawled through the North End shopping area, but after that bus lanes

helped us avoid queues on the main roads towards the City Centre. The Commercial Road shopping area looked uninspiring and in desperate need of investment, so I stayed on the bus to an area which seems to have an identity crisis: the shopping centre is called Gunwharf Quays, the adjoining railway station is called Portsmouth Harbour and the bus station is called The Hard Interchange! I presume there is a historical reason for this, as Portsmouth buses have traditionally terminated here. Apparently the bus station is getting a much-needed facelift shortly.

The final leg of the journey to Southsea, Clarence Pier is one of the most scenic parts of the whole route with spectacular views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight.

My bus was on time throughout, and was well driven by careful and courteous drivers. Nevertheless it is not hard to see why Stagecoach decided to split the route. The day before I made my journey, central Brighton had been brought to a standstill due to road subsidence on the seafront, while the following day there was a large demonstration in Brighton creating serious disruption. Roadworks have plagued the service in recent years and made it difficult to provide a reliable service over such a long route.

Few people make long journeys, and when services are frequent – sections of the 700 route are every ten minutes – changing buses at the same bus stop isn't difficult.

I returned to Brighton by train, which took one hour and twenty minutes – exactly three hours less than the bus. **BU**

This is a modified version of an article which first appeared in Brighton Area Buswatch News in May 2014.





Passenger satisfaction rising

The annual bus passenger survey carried out by Passenger Focus gives us an opportunity to see how bus companies are catering for their passengers across the country

The good news is that the latest survey revealed that overall passenger satisfaction has risen to an impressive 88%, though as always the results vary widely.

For the first time, two Scottish companies opted to take part and, impressively, Lothian Buses achieved the top score of 96% overall satisfaction, with First Glasgow on 91%. The figures for English companies ranged from Reading Buses with 94% satisfaction, Ipswich Buses and First in Suffolk on 93% and a range of Stagecoach operations with 91% and 92%. The four big bus groups, Arriva, First, National Express and Stagecoach, scored well overall, with marks ranging from 86% to 90%, but the bus companies still in local authority ownership –



Bus Passenger Survey
Autumn 2013 Report

Passengerfocus

Lothian, Reading and Ipswich – all scored over 90% for passenger satisfaction.

Of the hundreds – sometimes thousands – of passengers questioned in the different areas, Value for Money was the one area where scores were disappointing: as low as 48% satisfaction in the West of England Partnership area (covering Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South

Gloucestershire), and 49% in Essex, suggesting that value for money is something that bus companies need to address if they are to hold on to existing passengers and win new ones.

Punctuality is clearly another area that concerns passengers, with Milton Keynes (65% satisfaction) and the West of England Partnership (69%) scoring particularly poorly.

But it's by no means all bad news. In the conurbation areas covered by the Passenger Transport Executives – Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne & Wear, West Midlands, West Yorkshire – there have been notable improvements in satisfaction, with Tyne & Wear staying the top PTE for overall journey satisfaction. **BU**

Cooperation in the South East Midlands

Bus Users consulted its local groups recently about plans for developing a new local group structure for the organisation. Work is continuing on this, with a strategic aim of having a network of Bus Users groups covering the country in the long term.

As part of the overall strategy for local bus user groups, communication between groups was discussed at last year's local groups' meeting in Selly Oak, Birmingham, in July. This led to an informal discussion between Bedford Area Bus Users Society (BABUS), Bus Users UK Northampton and Milton Keynes Bus Users Group (MKBUG). Since that meeting, further contact between the three groups led to the decision to meet more formally on a regular basis.

The first formal meeting was held in Northampton on 2 November last year and was chaired by Peter Ballantyne, the MKBUG Chair. The groups agreed to address a wide range of common issues, including: service withdrawals and cuts to subsidies; liaison with local authorities and bus operators; bus stations; timetable and scheduling issues; the interface between bus services and rail; GPS tracking; real-time passenger information systems; electronic ticketing; lack of enforcement of parking and bus lanes; bus service priority in the region; cross-county bus services.

Also included on the very comprehensive agenda of issues is the use of Section 106 Planning Gain Money for transport provision. This is a particular issue in the areas covered by the groups, where there is a lot of new housing development taking place. Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 enables planning authorities to require developers to fund infrastructure improvements, which can include bus services. There has been a particular issue around this in Bedford, with a local councillor questioning the need for bus services to one major housing development in the town. It is also a major issue as Milton Keynes continues to develop.

The groups also agreed to rotate future meetings around the region and to rotate chairing between the groups. So the second meeting was held in Milton Keynes on 11 January this year and was chaired by the BABUS chair, Godfrey Willis, continuing the discussions started in November.

It was recognised that each area had different



Representatives of the MKBUG, Northampton and BABUS groups at the Milton Keynes meeting.

profiles; the Bedford and Northampton areas have a high proportion of rural services, while Milton Keynes has more of an urban focus. Northamptonshire for instance has opted for a demand-responsive service for much of its rural areas, run by County Connect.

A third meeting in Bedford on 22 March included an additional agenda item, discussing the contracts of smaller transport operators.

One problem identified by all three groups was the lack of traffic management by each transport authority. Insufficient priority was given to the smooth flow of buses in central areas, causing delays and knock-on effects on timetables, and there was a lack of enforcement in central areas of traffic bylaws in relationship to car traffic. The meeting discussed what some cities had done in creating bus-only areas with bollard-controlled bus lanes.

A second common problem was the lack of planning control in new residential estates, and the lack of thought by planners to the free flow of public transport, with high-density housing lacking drives, and through-roads not wide enough to allow parked cars and buses to use the same road. Lack of planning was also identified in the provision of bus services for medical centres and sheltered housing, by allowing them to be built away from bus routes.

Claire Walters, Bus Users' Chief Executive, attended a meeting of the combined groups in Milton Keynes at the end of May. 'It's great to see local groups cooperating in this way on issues of common concern,' she said. 'We'll follow their progress with interest, and see whether there are lessons that could be applied by groups in other areas.' **BU**

Making life easier

Initiatives from bus companies and others are helping to streamline bus services and make bus travel more attractive

Grasshopper eases north-east travel

For many passengers the Holy Grail is a ticket they can use on the services of more than one operator. It does happen in Britain, but certainly not everywhere, so we welcome the Grasshopper ticket launched recently in north-east Scotland.

The two major operators, First Aberdeen and Stagecoach North Scotland, have teamed up with half-a-dozen smaller operators and Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council to offer a multi-operator ticket covering Aberdeen city and the shire commuter belt. Grasshopper Day and Weekly tickets can be used on buses of all participating operators. Steve Walker, Managing Director of Stagecoach North Scotland, said the Grasshopper ticket offers a good value alternative to the costs of running a car.

Getting About in South Yorkshire

TravelMaster, which runs a scheme for tickets valid on buses, trains and trams in South Yorkshire, has introduced a new range of GetAbout discounted tickets for young people in the area. The new GetAbout Day and GetAbout 7-Day tickets offer young people with valid MegaTravel, MegaTravel MiCard and 16-18 Student Passes unlimited bus and tram travel in South Yorkshire at the introductory price of just £2.50 a day or £6.50 a week.

A new GetAbout+ Day ticket is also available, offering a day's unlimited countywide travel on bus, tram and train for just £3.60.

TravelMaster GetAbout Day, GetAbout 7 Day and GetAbout+ Day tickets are available on First, Stagecoach, TM Travel and Sheffield Community Transport buses or Supertram services. GetAbout+ Day tickets are also available from staffed rail ticket offices. TravelMaster tickets are valid on most buses and all trams, the exceptions being dedicated school buses and night buses.

'Young people are the adult passengers of tomorrow and often rely on public transport to get out and about,' says TravelMaster Chairman, Duncan

Roberts. 'It is important that public transport remains affordable to young people and we are delighted to be able to offer cheaper fares through the new GetAbout ticket range.'



Engaging passengers through cutting-edge technology

First Aberdeen has unveiled an innovative new customer engagement scheme. All advertising panels on board 20 First Aberdeen bendybuses, including seat backs, now carry NFC (Near Field Communications) and QR code messaging. Passengers can use their smartphones to tap or scan the NFC and QR symbols placed on the seat-back advertising vinyls and bulkhead posters to win prizes and learn more about the product or service advertised.

It's thought that First Aberdeen is the first bus company outside London to feature NFC on all buses on one particular route.

The new scheme promotes the Young Scot Card, which enables cardholders aged between 16 and 18 to access a one-third discount from the cost of adult single bus fares in Scotland. The card also provides users with discounts at a range of retailers and service providers. Smartphone users can also take part in a First Aberdeen competition to win high street vouchers, iTunes vouchers, an iPad or cinema tickets.

for bus passengers

Google maps app

Google Maps has added Traveline's national public transport information to its app.

'Given the tremendous reach and exposure of Google Maps, a huge number of people will now be able to access accurate and easy to understand public transport information,' said Giles Fearnley, Managing Director of FirstBus. 'The use of new technology is critical as we continue to improve our services and encourage more people to use the bus.'

Bus Users shares Mr Fearnley's enthusiasm for the new app. Users of Google Maps will now have access to public transport options, which we hope will encourage more people to see the bus as a reliable, cost effective and convenient means of travel.

Mobile phone tickets

Passengers in Manchester and Edinburgh can now use their mobile phones as bus tickets.

In Greater Manchester, First bus passengers can buy tickets online via a new app, 'FirstBus Mobile Tickets', and show them to the driver on a mobile phone screen.

The app makes it easier for passengers to buy tickets, and removes the worry of not having the correct change. It should also speed up boarding times, and will hopefully encourage more people to travel by bus.

Passengers can buy day, week, month and new Carnet tickets with the app, which is available free on App Store and Google Play. Customers download the app, register, select the ticket they want and navigate the

secure payment system. Bus tickets live in a 'virtual wallet', ready to be shown to the driver on the passenger's phone screen.

Monthly tickets purchased using the new app cost £48 compared to the usual £50. First are also introducing a new Carnet ticket at £18 for 10 adult single trips, for people who catch the bus now and again. All passengers need to do is activate one of their trips just before they travel.

Lothian Buses have also moved into mobile phone ticketing, with a new app that allows passengers to load their phones with at least £10-worth of 'm-tickets'. The single tickets and DAYtickets are activated just before boarding a bus, and are used by showing the phone to the driver. Tickets can be bought and used at any time – all passengers need is a mobile phone and a valid debit or credit card. Sarah Boyd of Lothian Buses told the recent Bus Users' AGM in Edinburgh that more than 200,000 m-tickets had been sold in just six months. Lothian m-tickets can also be used on the new Edinburgh tram, which started carrying passengers at the end of May. Initially day tickets can be bought in this way, with single tickets to follow. **BU**

Mobile phones are now an alternative to paper bus tickets on First's Greater Manchester services.





Have your say

Are there issues about bus travel that you feel strongly about, or have you had an experience as a passenger that you'd like to share with other readers? These pages are for our members' letters and photos, so we'd love to hear from you.



A quick fix!

I saw a leaflet advertising an event on Easter Sunday at Haigh Country Park, Wigan, Lancashire. I visited their website to find only information for visitors arriving by car, yet I know two local bus services pass by the entrances. I contacted them and asked that public transport information be put on the website.

I was not expecting action so soon, but within days the website had been updated to include information on local bus stops and a link to the website transportdirect.info. Now visitors can find information on visiting the park by walking, bus, rail or any combination.

Bernard Powell, Southport

Well done Bernard. This is a great example of how action by individuals can make a real difference – do other members have similar success stories?

AGM thanks

Thankyou for an excellent AGM in Edinburgh. The talks were so interesting, the refreshments were marvellous, and the group discussions were enlightening, highlighting the difference in attitude of different local authorities towards Bus Users UK.

The AGM was a very heartening experience for me. City of York Council have set up their own bus user organisation with restricted membership, which does not include most of us who are members of Bus Users UK. They organise their own 'Meet the bus manager' and 'Meet the city transport planners' public meetings. The organising consultant does not see any point in York being represented on or connected with Bus Users UK. In consequence, it was especially great for me to be part of the 'family' at the AGM.

Brian Nye

Car clubs and buses

Car sharing, where a fleet of cars is shared between a much greater number of drivers, is now taking off in the UK.

The average private car in the UK sits idle for 96% of the time (RAC Foundation Survey), and many households are now dropping the annual cost for running a car, typically £4,000-£6,000 a year, and paying instead for a bus pass, with 'pay as you need' car use through taxis, car hire and car club shared vehicles. This means a typical net gain of £2,000-£3,000 per year in disposable income, and some households gain even more.

Recent surveys reveal that the 130,000 UK members of car clubs have a very different pattern of bus, train and bike use and present a new and growing customer base for public transport. We have already got bus passes, notably Go-Ahead's The Key, where access to the car club is included as a feature of the bus pass. The day when a transport user buys all their transport through a single point of purchase is getting closer, if not already here for some users.

Dave Holladay



My birthday falls during Catch the Bus Week this year – what a nice coincidence considering how much I love riding with Go North East! Charlotte **@Eskie_Pond**

Please could you clarify if it is legal for a bus to carry standing passengers whilst travelling on a motorway? **@RTomzo**

It is legal as long as the bus is licensed to carry standing passengers – it should say on the bus the number allowed to stand. **@BusUsersUK**

Wrong philosophy?

I was reluctant to take First's 701/702 from London to Windsor, as the day return fare was £16.50. This is not a particularly long journey, taking 1 hour and 20 minutes for a 25-mile trip.

Let's compare this journey with one from London to Oxford, a journey of double the distance. The 'turn up and pay' ticket on the Oxford Tube is about the same, £17, though big discounts are available online. Between 9.00 and 22.00 on a Sunday they have 47 coaches to Oxford, compared to 17 on the Windsor route. First call their service 'frequent', but it is hourly at times.

I asked Marc Reddy, MD of First Berkshire, for an explanation of the ticket cost on the Windsor route. His response was that the company had invested heavily in the service over the past few years, with new vehicles and additional capacity with high specification double-deck vehicles; they also vary the prices throughout the day, which has encouraged more off-peak travel on the service.

I can only conclude that the reason for such a high ticket cost is to take advantage of the tourists who view Windsor as a must-see destination. The



Would First's London to Windsor service benefit from a rethink on ticket prices?

'peak' buses I took had only a handful of passengers, yet it was a glorious sunny Sunday and Windsor was very busy.

I have never criticised First for their fares here in Leeds, since for me personally they are reasonable. But their philosophy is clearly not working on the Windsor route and I suggest they make their fares cheaper to attract more passengers. The train costs just £10 and is much quicker.

Paul Kirby, Wetherby

Cuts and concessions

I read the correspondence in the last issue on 'cuts' with interest.

Andrew Pearson has a point when he suggests a countrywide 50% reduction in place of the current concessionary system England has now. I would go further and suggest a one-third reduction with one card useable on both bus and rail. It would then be up to the present local authorities to augment the statutory provision if they so wish.

In Worcestershire and Cumbria, after consultations (protests) the two counties will continue to subsidise the bus network for a further year at a substantially reduced amount, after which in the case of Cumbria their bus subsidies will cease. It is a pity that

Cambridgeshire backed down when it faced the threat of legal action after proposing to remove bus subsidies entirely. It would have been interesting, if such action had gone ahead, to know the court's interpretation of the relevant parts of the Transport Acts of 1968 and 1985. It could happen next year if Cumbria carry out their threat to stop bus subsidies altogether.

It is not just the rural services which are at risk. A service which passes my door is threatened with withdrawal because Arriva state it is not 'commercially viable'. Since the service is the only link from Chorlton to the local hospital there have been plenty of protests about the firm's proposed action.

SA Ewald, Manchester

Email your letters and photos to nicola.parkins@bususers.org or post to:

Bus User magazine, Hopetoun Gate, 8b McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4LZ. **Deadline for Bus User 56: 30 August**

Views and opinions expressed in 'Have your say' are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of Bus Users UK. The editor reserves the right to shorten or edit letters.

Membership Matters

Welcome

To new members

Lesley Barsby, Warsash, Hants; Glyn Calvert, Enfield; Peter Cowlyn, Wells; Christopher Hogan, Stourbridge; Ian Hunter, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire; Gareth Lankester, St Albans; Anthony Mckeown, Glossop; Ian Roberts, Abergele; Chris Smith, Lewes; John Tuomey, London.

Bus Users LOCAL GROUPS

Age UK Colchester peter@ageconcern.org.uk
Association of Devizes Passengers
www.facebook.com/Devizes Passengers
BABUS (Bedford Area Bus User's Society) www.babus.org.uk
BBUG (Bath Bus Users Group) chair@bath-bus-users.org.uk
Bradford & District Older People's Alliance (BOPA)
www.bopabradford.org.uk
Brighton Area Buswatch brightonbuswatch@gmail.com
BUGS Bus Users Group Stevenage www.betterbuses.org.uk
Bus Users Shropshire bususersshropshire@hotmail.co.uk
Bus Users UK Northampton
13 Dryden Avenue, Daventry NN11 9DJ
Bus Users UK Oxford hugh_jaeger@hotmail.com
Bus Watch West Haringey chrisjbarker46@gmail.com
Campaign for Better Transport – Cambs
6 Hertford Street, Cambridge CB4 3AG
Campaign for Better Transport – West Yorkshire
rwilkes@blueyonder.co.uk
Cardiff People First cardiffpeople1st@btconnect.com
Christian Peoples Alliance Party (Northampton Branch)
colin.bricher@ntlworld.com
City of Hull & Humber Environment Forum
info@hullenvironmentforum.org.uk
Colchester Bus Users Support Group
peterkay.essex@btinternet.com
Dengie Hundred Bus Users Group (DHBUG)
contact@dhubug.org.uk
Devon Senior Voice Transport Group
Mr John Montgomery, 150 Cleeve Drive, Ivybridge PL21 9DD
Ealing Passenger Transport Users Group www.eptug.org
Footprint Trust www.footprint-trust.co.uk
Friends of DalesBus www.friendsofdalesbus.org.uk
I.W. Bus & Rail Users Group iwbususers@fsmail.net
Kendal & District Bus Users (KADBUS) 01539 740761
Milton Keynes Bus Users Group
www.mkbug.co.uk
Norfolk Bus Forum fedsec@norfolkwil.org.uk
North Herts Bus Users Group (NHBUG)
marilyn.kirkland@north-herts.gov.uk
North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum www.nptf.co.uk
North West Surrey Bus Users Group
mjworley@btopenworld.com, www.facebook.com/nwsurreybug
Oxfordshire Unlimited daveholmes.home@btinternet.com
Pattishall Parish Council ann.atkin51@btinternet.com
Penllwyn Community Partnership Sian Woosnam,
c/o 12 Highmead, Penllwyn, Blackwood, Gwent NP12 2PE
The Pensioners & Fifty Plus Action Group
tomag42@hotmail.co.uk
Radstock Public Transport Group
george@whitecsl.demon.co.uk

LOCAL GROUPS continued

Railfuture www.railfuture.org.uk
Railfuture Severnside contact details to follow
Rame Peninsula Public Transport Users Group
g.cadwallader@btinternet.com
Rural East Lothian Bus Users www.relbus.org.uk
The Senior Council for Devon Transport
andrea@scfd.org.uk
Southend Area Bus User Group
donaldfraser17@btinternet.com
St Neots Area Bus Users Society info@snabus.org.uk
Swale Senior Forum 01795 424725
Swindon Climate Action Network
www.swindonclimate.org.uk
TravelWatch NorthWest
admin@travelwatch-northwest.org.uk
TravelWatch SouthWest www.travelwatchsouthwest.org
Tring Bus Users Group 01442 824508
Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group
ne11ee@fsmail.net
West Cumbria Bus Users Group
David Andrews, tel 01946 695373
West Leigh Residents Association
donaldfraser17@btinternet.com
Wirral Transport Users Association
17 Poulton Road, Bebington, Wirral CH63 9LA



Joining Bus Users

We always welcome new members; membership is available to anyone who uses buses for whatever purpose. It doesn't matter if you only use them occasionally. It's also open to groups of bus users and organisations that share our concern for better public transport.

You can join online (www.bususers.org) and pay by debit card via Paypal, or by Direct Debit. If you wish to pay by BACS, please contact finance@bususers.org for details and, of course, existing members can pay by cheque if you prefer.

Annual subscriptions

£15 for individuals
£10 for senior citizens, under-18s and unwaged.
The subscription for local groups is **£20 (£10** in the first year).

Bus companies and local authorities that share our desire to improve communication with passengers and who support the Confederation of Passenger Transport's Code of Good Practice can take out associate membership; please contact us for details at the Shepperton address or email enquiries@bususers.org.