New deal for Scottish bus passengers
OUR MISSION
To champion the interests of bus and coach users and to campaign for better bus and coach services

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Join Bus Users UK 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 our Passenger Service Advisers: Karen King karen.king@bususers.org
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MBE for Margaret Everson
Margaret Everson, Senior Officer at Bus Users UK Cymru, has been awarded an MBE in the Queen’s 2013 Birthday Honours List. Awarded for services to bus users and to transport in Wales, during her years with Bus Users UK Cymru, Margaret has been a great advocate for bus travel, an ambassador for bus users and a respected and recognised commentator within the field.

Her colleague at Bus Users Wales, Barclay Davies, said: ‘Margaret has gained the confidence of bus passengers, the transport industry and local authorities across Wales. She has helped to turn Bus Users UK Cymru into a highly successful campaigning body and the voice of the bus user, creating a model that is respected throughout the UK.’

Margaret has been a great champion for bus users in Wales, who last year made more than 110 million journeys. She has specifically campaigned on behalf of passengers with sensory loss, the vulnerable and the elderly, and developed good practice guidance for bus operators and local authorities.

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As always it’s good to catch up with so many members at the AGM. We are fortunate in Bus Users UK to have a membership that is so passionate and committed and you have been very helpful to the development of the organisation through your feedback and input. I hope those of you at the AGM, or reading about it in this issue of Bus User, sensed that we are now very much on a journey and have indeed made a good deal of progress.

I’m also very pleased to be able to welcome our new board member, Tracy Jessop. Tracy is doing excellent work at Norfolk County Council and is a tireless worker for bus users. Last year she was Chair of ATCO, the very influential organisation for local authority public transport officers, and she is also on the board of the Community Transport Association. We are very fortunate to have her expertise and enthusiastic commitment to the cause of bus users and I’m looking forward very much to working with her. The local authority sector is of course an essential component in successful bus services and we are glad too to be strengthening our contact with them through Tracy’s appointment.

I’m equally delighted to welcome our two new staff members in Scotland, Greig Mackay, our new Officer for Scotland, and Patrycja Kwapiszewska, who is managing our new Edinburgh office. Scottish Government has recognised the strengths of our organisation and appointed us to handle complaints and bus service monitoring in Scotland. Apart from London, where London Travelwatch handles complaints, we now handle bus users’ complaint appeals for the whole of Great Britain. The recognition we’ve had from Scottish Government is testimony to the work done by our Senior Officer in Scotland Gavin Booth down the years and more recently by our Chief Executive Claire Walters.

I’ve also been spending time in Wales recently. Welsh Government, like Scottish Government, shows its confidence in our ability to look after bus users’ interests and to perform the service compliance monitoring and I had a valuable meeting with Transport Minister Edwina Hart early in June. Accompanied by Margaret Everson, Senior Officer for Wales, I went to the heart of the Assembly Government in the Senedd. We were delighted to hear her commend Bus Users UK for the work it does for passengers in Wales and the likely continued support that ensures our work for the passenger will continue. Issues raised included contribution of the bus to the economy, cuts to funding, developing services to communities, linking bus services to other services such as NHS appointments, and the Minister welcomed our input and expertise in these matters.

Following our meeting with the Minister we travelled the short distance to the new depot of New Adventure Travel. Managing Director Kevyn Jones welcomed us and showed us around the fine new facility. He told us of the challenges facing the smaller independent operator in today’s competitive bus market. He is proposing new services for the Vale of Glamorgan.

The previous month I had been to Cardiff to present the Bus Users UK Cymru-sponsored award for Excellence in Passenger Transport at The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Wales National Transport Awards, and took the opportunity to meet Cynthia Ogbonna, the managing director of Cardiff Bus. Cynthia is also doing an excellent job of meeting the challenge facing operators in Wales following changes in the funding regime for bus services there.

Finally we are delighted that Margaret Everson has been awarded the MBE for services to bus users and to transport in Wales in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List. This is a richly deserved honour for Bus Users UK’s leading voice in Wales. We’re very proud of Margaret and this is recognition of many years of service in representing the interests of bus users in which we can all delight.

Gillian Merron
Chair
The UK's oldest bus passenger?

Is 100-year-old Agnes Willens, from North Berwick, the oldest regular user of buses in the UK? First Scotland East thinks so, and Agnes, a regular passenger on the X24 service, received a bouquet of flowers from regular driver, John Lyall, to mark her 100th birthday in April. John said: ‘She’s very popular amongst our drivers, and we’re always keen to give her a helping hand if needs be, but she is extremely independent. Agnes is very much an admired local character and extremely spritely for a centenarian!’ Agnes said: ‘I enjoy my trips in the bus. I'm very well looked after. As long as I’m still fit enough I’ll keep using the bus.’ The photo shows Agnes with John Lyall (in hi-viz vest) and her son William.

What’s Claire been up to?

In April I attended my first Bus Users AGM and got to meet many of you, which was both good fun and very interesting. With my background in other non-profit organisations, I was amazed at the proportion of our membership who turned out for the AGM; the commitment of our members is phenomenal and I hope you enjoyed the day as much as I did.

I know previous AGMs have been used to develop our strategy, which has been invaluable, and since I joined the organisation I’ve been working hard to implement it. This year your input has given us lots of ideas about campaigns, which have provided much food for thought. Campaigning is an essential part of our strategy and while at the moment we are putting in a lot of necessary groundwork in to ensure our structure is fit for purpose we’ll be rolling out some campaigns in the near future.

As part of that groundwork, I have spent a lot of time in Scotland helping Gavin to interview and appoint two staff members for our new office in Edinburgh (see page 8). We have four more posts to fill for Scotland so I expect to be spending more time there over the coming months as we increase our work across the country.

A further part of that groundwork has been deciding on a website and logo designer. We’ve had fantastic service from FWT, who have provided our website for us free of charge for years, and the savings for Bus Users UK have been immense. Nonetheless, nothing is forever and to improve our profile and to give members the service they deserve we now need something more interactive and flexible. It’s also quite a few years since Bus Users UK has refreshed its image and we’re taking the opportunity to update our branding too. So we have now selected a design team which will be working with us for the next few months to ensure that our new logo and website will be everything we need to support the strategic plan and keep us moving onwards and upwards.

From one end of the country to the other, I have been spending some time meeting operators in the South East of England and some transport planners from Kent County Council, which gave me some insights into their priorities and concerns. Some of these chime pretty well with ours, which is handy!

Our local groups are the lifefood of Bus Users UK and are essential for ensuring we remain properly connected with the ‘grass roots’. Our strategy includes a commitment to help local groups develop and we’re just in the process of finalising a local groups training day for July. This will take place in Birmingham and will focus on good communications, with the event providing information, training and support for all our hardworking volunteers around the UK.

Claire Walters, Chief Executive
Readers will know from the article in BU49 that the RNIB has been campaigning to get drivers to look out for blind people waiting for a bus and to call out to them to let them know which bus has just rolled up. We’ve recently been alerted to a situation in Colchester where blind people are often left behind by buses in the High Street: due to the closure of the town’s bus station more services are crowding on to the stops there and often can’t pull in. This is not of course a situation unique to Colchester.

There is a problem with drivers calling out to alert passengers of their bus however. These days most drivers sit behind a Perspex screen. Many drivers actually don’t like them, because they do cut off their contact with passengers (contrary to popular belief a lot of drivers do actually enjoy a bit of interaction with their passengers) but they are there to keep them safe from passengers who might decide to turn violent or might try to relieve drivers of the day’s takings. Shouting out the number and destination of the bus from behind a...
screen, particularly if the bus has been prevented from getting close to the kerb by another bus or an illegally-parked car or van, means this approach isn’t ideal.

Reading Buses has been experimenting with a loudspeaker on the outside of the bus that announces the number and destination of the bus as the doors open. As far as we know this remains a unique experiment and we understand manufacturers are not yet convinced of the need to develop such systems. Nonetheless Reading’s trial has been very successful and after the one-off trial, all the new gas buses are fitted with the system.

The next problem is not to annoy people living right by bus stops, especially as some of Reading’s buses run right through the night! But it’s a very worthwhile system that goes one stage further making buses yet more accessible.

Road to Nowhere
A survey by the charity Guide Dogs shows that blind and partially-sighted people are being cut off from family and friends, missing vital doctors’ appointments and forced to turn down jobs because buses don’t cater for their needs.

The charity calls on the government to regulate to make audio-visual technology on buses mandatory. Guide Dogs also calls on local transport authorities and bus operators in England who are applying to become ‘Better Bus Areas’ to include the cost of installing on-board audio-visual systems in their submissions.

The Road to Nowhere survey reveals that 80% of people with sight loss say they are unable to enjoy the freedom that others take for granted because they find travelling by bus so difficult. Almost three-quarters (72%) have been put off visiting friends and family, and almost two-thirds (65%) have missed out on social occasions like birthday parties.

The survey also showed that driver training still has a long way to go, which calls into question the government’s decision to delay implementing EU bus driver training standards for up to five years. A ‘shocking’ 54% of respondents had missed their bus stop because drivers refused to agree to tell them when they reached their destination.

Guide dog owner Joel Young missed a hospital appointment in Oxford because there was no helpful audio information on his bus. He said: ‘I got on what I thought was the right bus, but after about five minutes I realised I was heading into the centre of Oxford. I was really embarrassed and frustrated because I had been waiting for this appointment for
weeks and I knew I wouldn’t make it by the time I got off. It was a difficult and stressful experience that would have been made much easier if the bus had just announcements that told me where it was going and what the stops were.’

The Road to Nowhere survey found that being excluded from bus travel has a clear knock-on effect for the health and employment prospects of people with sight loss. More than one in three (35%) said the prospect of travelling by bus had put them off attending doctors or hospital appointments, 34% had been made late for work and 14% said it had prevented them from taking a job. There are other financial implications too; nearly one in three blind and partially sighted people spend up to £30 a month on taxis rather than take the bus.

Guide Dogs chief executive Richard Leaman said: ‘Buses are a vital way for people with sight loss to get out and about freely and independently, but many feel excluded from bus travel because of a lack of accessible information. At present there is inconsistency within and between bus companies, which means some routes in some areas are fitted with audio-visual technology but, on many buses, passengers who are visually impaired have no help at all.

‘We call on the government to regulate to ensure that all buses are Talking Buses. We also urge local authorities and bus companies in England to use available funding to fit more buses with audio-visual technology for the benefit of all passengers.’

Another UK charity, Action on Hearing Loss, is urging bus companies and bus stations to ensure they provide accurate, real-time visual information to avoid confusing or severely inconveniencing passengers who are deaf or hard hearing.

At the Transport Select Committee’s first oral evidence session on access to transport for people with disabilities, the charity’s chief executive, Paul Breckell, highlighted that people with hearing loss plan their journeys in the same way as other passengers but often face real difficulties when changes happen just before or during their travel if the information is not communicated visually, immediately and accurately.

The charity has a catalogue of complaints from people with hearing loss who didn’t receive accessible information about changes to their bus, coach, rail or plane journeys so experienced a poorer service in comparison to other passengers. In some cases, they ended up in avoidable traumatic situations such as having to walk three miles in the dark and cold after boarding the wrong bus.

Paul Breckell, says: ‘Although access has improved for passengers with hearing loss in recent years, people who are deaf or hard of hearing still face many challenges getting real-time information when using the transport network. A minor change, such as a bus stand alteration or a delayed connection can very quickly become a confusing or distressing situation for someone with hearing loss if they aren’t informed about what is happening.

‘It’s vital that transport companies and travel hubs such as bus or rail stations provide immediate and accurate visual information to avoid leaving deaf or hard of hearing passengers standing or heading in the wrong direction!’

www.guidedogs.org.uk
www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

**TIPS TO HELP PASSENGERS**

Action on Hearing Loss’s tips to help transport companies and stations meet the individual needs of passengers with hearing loss include:

- Provide all travel information – especially changes – visually, accurately and in real-time.
- Ensure staff are trained in basic deaf awareness so that they can communicate effectively eg always facing passengers and speaking clearly.
- Locate information desks in well-lit, quiet areas so that passengers with hearing loss do not experience too much background noise and can better lip-read staff.
- Ensure a hearing loop is available at information desks and there is a regular process to check that they work. Loop systems can help hearing aid wearers to hear the voice of staff over background noise.
New deal for Scottish passengers

Bus Users Scotland – BUS – is the new name for our growing presence north of the border. Bus Users UK has been active in Scotland for some years now, but, with funding from Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government’s transport agency, we will be taking on new responsibilities – handling passenger complaints and monitoring bus services, as we do in Wales.

BUS now has an office in Edinburgh and has welcomed two new members of staff, with other new appointments to be made shortly. Greig Mackay is Officer for Scotland, and Patrycja Kwapiszewska is Office Manager.

Our new staff will be working with Gavin Booth to get the additional activities under way as soon as possible and have been learning the ropes from their Welsh colleagues.

Claire Walters, Chief Executive of Bus Users UK, said: ‘It is great to have Greig and Patrycja on board to help us establish Bus Users Scotland as the voice of bus passengers in Scotland. They have already hit the ground running and our next task is the appointment of Bus Compliance Officers, who will be helping to ensure that bus services throughout Scotland are running reliably and punctually, and that other quality standards are met and maintained. We look forward to working with passengers, bus operators, local authorities, Transport Scotland and the Traffic Commissioner to ensure that the millions of people who use buses in Scotland every day get the best possible deal.’

Gavin Booth, Senior Officer for Scotland, said: ‘Our increased responsibilities in Scotland are good news for bus passengers as we will be championing the interests of the passenger. We will be working hard with bus operators and local authorities to resolve complaints so that very few will ever end up with the appeals body that we will also be creating. Delays, erratic services and cancellations which cause huge frustration to passengers will also be brought to the attention of the operators and we will work to resolve them.’

Look out for posters advertising our contact details rolling out across Scotland soon!

Consultation works!

In BUS50 we carried an article by Paul Kirby describing some campaigning by local bus passengers in Wetherby, and including suggestions about mounting a successful campaign.

We are happy to report that these efforts seem to have been successful. Paul says ‘This is great news. We received an email from Metro (West Yorkshire PTE) telling us what we all wanted to hear. Common sense has prevailed. Thanks again to all who contributed to the success of this campaign. I will be marketing the X98/99 route myself in North Wetherby to reduce the likelihood of this happening again.’

In the email, the Bus Consultation Team at Metro said: ‘During the consultation process, we received many comments about the provision of Sunday evening services between Wetherby and Leeds. It became very clear that despite the fact that the services were not well used, many people wanted the present services to continue. It was decided to try and maintain the service if it could be done within the overall budget for the Leeds area. Bus companies were asked to quote prices for the provision of a two-hourly service on both X99 and 770 and for the present hourly service on both routes. When the tenders came back in, it was clear that it would be possible to maintain the service in its current form for the next three years within the budget available. There will now be no change to the Sunday evening services between Wetherby and Leeds.’
Age Scotland spoke to older people across the country about their experiences of local bus services. It found that the impact of poor bus transport is felt in both rural and urban Scotland, and, increasingly, the National Concessionary Travel scheme providing free bus travel for the over-60s is failing to meet the needs of Scotland’s older people.

The Age Scotland report, *Still Waiting: Older people and local bus services*, notes that local bus travel is a lifeline for many people in later life, helping them remain independent by enabling access to local amenities and services, including shops, GP’s practices and social clubs. It is also an important way of keeping in contact with friends and family, helping to tackle social isolation and loneliness.

It recognises that while the free bus pass scheme has been incredibly popular, many older people who live in areas that are poorly served by regular buses, or who have mobility problems, are unable to take advantage of their passes. So they are forced to pay for community transport services, such as charity-run and volunteer-dependent minibus and car-lift schemes, to make journeys essential for their health and wellbeing. ‘Worryingly’, the report continues, ‘many of these lifeline transport services are under threat of closure due to a lack of statutory funding from local and central government’.

These issues are not unique to Scotland, of course, and readers will relate to the case histories in the report; we reproduce a couple here.

**Bo’ness Golden Oldies**

David, in photo with Eliza and June, has diabetes and asthma and a kidney complaint that affects his mobility. He is a leading light in the Bo’ness Golden Oldies Club, a monthly social occasion, but recent changes to local bus services took buses away from Castle Hill, where the club meets, and there has been a fall-off in attendance as a result. The club ran a minibus, but this proved expensive, and the bus service changes had wider implications for David, who needs to attend hospital appointments on a regular basis. He argues that better transport for the town’s older people would make a huge difference.

**Margaret and Bill from Melrose**

Margaret is full-time carer for her husband Bill in Melrose; both are in their eighties and rely on the local WRVS service to get out and about, but they are reluctant to call on the WRVS to help with leisure appointments, so they have had to give up some of their hobbies and interests. There are bus services past their house, but the services are infrequent, says Margaret, ‘and almost never turn up when they are timetabled’. And, she adds, the bus ‘takes hours and hours just to travel a few miles down the road as it stops at every village.’

**Jane from Tomintoul**

Jane lives in the highest village in Scotland, on a road that generally closes first when the snow comes, but while there is one bus a week to Keith, and one to Elgin, and a dial-a-bus on Mondays and Fridays, she feels trapped and would like to go shopping on a Saturday with everybody else. Tomintoul is in Moray while the nearest town, Grantown on Spey, is in Highland and there is no transport between them. ‘If there was just a link to get to Grantown’, she says, ‘I would then be in Highland and could get a bus to Aviemore. Having a pass makes no difference at all to me as I can’t use it’.
Most bus companies want to give their passengers a good service, not least so that they stay on board (literally!) and don't use the car, or their feet. But this relationship gets awkward (for bus companies and us, the passengers’ champion) when said passengers don't deliver on their side of the bargain. We don't represent vandals, folk engaging in low-level anti-social behaviour on buses or people deliberately trying to avoid paying their fare.

The last group have been around since time began and as a Brighton conductor many years ago, I heard all the reasons for such behaviour – and they haven't changed. People felt they were getting 'nothing for it' (until teleporting is perfected, this will remain a weak argument); that the fares were too high; that they didn't want to give money to the state or private enterprise or both. And there was of course a particular issue around youngsters on the cusp of having to pay a higher fare.

Revenue protection, as it's usually called nowadays, varies from operator to operator. In some parts of the country, inspectors are so rare that you see passengers placing tickets straight in the used tickets box having paid the driver. In other parts of the country things are more like the old days.

National Express West Midlands is the only operator – so far – to have involved Bus Users UK and its complaints mediation service in revenue protection cases, and in April I was invited to spend a day with NXWM's revenue protection team. This team works in a variety of ways, including on-journey ticket inspections (still I'm told the main method back in Brighton) but also what are called ‘Gateway’ exercises where the team bases itself at a key stop, boards every bus serving it, inspects tickets and passes, and asks anyone without a valid one to join them on the pavement for further discussions. When enforcement is considered to be an issue they are sometimes accompanied by the police. Most people found are notified of a fine and left to continue their day, with an essentially free ticket if necessary. If they don't pay the fine in reasonably short order, it increases; instalment arrangements are sometimes agreed.

The team I was with sought to represent all sections of the West Midlands community and all ages; some of them are also special constables in their spare time. They were scrupulously polite and really quite friendly with most of their finds, as indeed were the finds in return. One struggles not to use the 'all very British' cliché at this point. And this is not to diminish the impact of such fraud on revenue and, therefore, the fares others pay. One or two people chose to just walk away once off the bus – and without a police presence, the team cannot do much about this – but most accepted that they had been in the wrong.

National Express reckons that at any one time 3% of their passengers are travelling without a valid ticket – a significant loss of revenue, were it to go unchecked. When Bus Users first got involved we did mediate one or two cases where we felt that the passenger had been a little unfortunate, but we haven't had a referral for a while, suggesting that the system is working well and we appreciate National Express's candour in inviting us to get involved.

JULIAN OSBORNE spends a day with National Express revenue protection team in the West Midlands and finds a ‘very British’ approach works
AGM in Oxford

Back at our AGM in Hove in 2011 Hugh Jaeger of Bus Users UK Oxford had used his Just a Minute session (in fact he took about 15 seconds!) to invite us to Oxford for an AGM. We like to spread our AGMs around the country to enable as many people as possible to attend at least some AGMs, so we had already decided to go ‘up north’ for 2012. However this year we were able to take up Hugh’s invitation and clearly Oxford was a popular choice, as we packed the Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, just a little outside the city centre on Abingdon Road.

The fact that we were a little way outside the city centre enabled people to sample the excellent local bus service. Oxford Bus Company also kindly put in an extra stop on its Redbridge Park-&-Ride service for us, not so much for anyone arriving by car (as if!) but to give us more journeys from central Oxford; normally the service passes the hotel without stopping, and putting in an extra stop is not as easy as you might think.

So a big thank-you to Philip Kirk and his team from Oxford Bus Company and to Martin Sutton and his team from Stagecoach Oxford, who were both hugely supportive to us. As well as treating us to fascinating descriptions of what has gone on with Oxford’s bus services in recent times, in which they were joined by John Disley of Oxfordshire County Council, they also provided buses for a tour of the city afterwards. Indeed part of the reason for going to Oxford was to understand, and to see firsthand, how two bus companies competing with each other can actually work together to provide a better bus service to the public and save resources at the same time.

When Nicholas Ridley, Margaret Thatcher’s Transport Secretary deregulated bus services, with an idyllic view of bus services being provided by thousands of owner-drivers running bus services as if they were nice little sweetshops, he virtually demanded the word ‘integration’ should be banned from the Oxford English Dictionary. It has taken around 25 years and a new Transport Act for bus companies to begin to co-operate with each other to integrate their services in a way that most bus users would like. The major Oxford bus companies have led the way in showing how competing operators can actually work together to produce something sensible for bus users.

Ministerial introduction

We had invited Transport Minister Norman Baker to be with us. Whilst he has prior commitments on Saturdays he was keen to address us and did so via a DVD he had had specially made for us. If you weren’t there, you can see what he had to say on our website (www.bususers.org) which has a link to his videoed speech.

Buses are the backbone of community, he said, citing the fact that as many people commute by bus as do by rail and that as...
bus users we spend £22billion a year in city centre shops. He praised partnerships like that in Oxford and spoke of Bus Users UK’s useful role in promoting good partnerships. He was pleased to see that we had improved our profile, which was reflected in the 54% increase we had seen in complaints handled in England and greater recognition by Scottish and Welsh Government. He was appreciative of our input to Government and urged local members to continue to be involved at the local level. He also encouraged us to be a champion for the bus industry, by promoting their successes, as well as being their ‘critical friend’.

Mr Baker confirmed that Bus Users UK would continue to be the body to review complaints for bus users outside London and said that the DfT would soon be announcing the arrangements to comply with the EU regulations on bus passenger rights.

A year of progress
As in previous years, much of the business of the AGM was given over to Gillian Merron’s Chair’s Report, outlining the considerable progress Bus Users UK has made this year and enabling staff members to report briefly on their own particular activities.

A major development this year, announced by Gavin Booth, suitably attired in his kilt, is that Scottish Government has given us a new role in Scotland. We have been setting up a new office for Bus Users Scotland in Edinburgh and Bus Users Scotland is now handling complaints, previously a role for Transport Scotland’s Bus Passengers Platform. It will soon be taking on a bus compliance monitoring role.

Gillian talked about the work that has been done on developing our strategy and thanked members for their input. The strategy aims to ensure that bus users’ opinions are taken seriously by decision makers, that buses are seen as the viable choice of transport and to get Bus Users UK recognised as an independent voice for bus users throughout the UK as well as providing an appeal service for bus service complaints.

Gillian introduced Claire Walters, our Chief Executive, and the two Passenger Service Advisors, Rena Verlander and Karen King, who deal with the growing number of complaints we handle. As the Welsh Government has asked us to take over the role of ensuring buses comply with their timetables, other appointments this year have been our three Bus Compliance Officers, Siân Thomas, Michael Anderson and Nesta Jones.

Members’ input at last year’s AGM has resulted in Bus User magazine’s new format. It is now less expensive to produce yet is more effective and higher quality. It has been well received outside the organisation too, and Gillian congratulated everyone involved.

There are signs that the message that bus users are essential to the economy, cohesion of local communities and the well-being of the country, is beginning to get through and we will ensure that this message is pushed forward from a position of strength.

Deputy Chair Jeff Anderson gave an overview of Bus Users UK’s efforts to build and support bus users groups. Local groups are vital to the organisation and we need to build a large network of local groups across the UK.

Claire Walters spoke about her background from the non-profit sector and thanked all staff members for their support and welcome, while her deputy, Stephen Morris, reported on our continuing work with the Department for Transport and the Transport Select Committee. He represents us on DfT’s Crime Liaison Group. He and Claire have
met London TravelWatch to forge closer links as well as RNIB, Guide Dogs, Women’s Institute and the European Passenger Federation.

He also reported that we are at the end of the tendering process for the new website, which should be up and running by the autumn. At the same time our image is to be refreshed, and a variety of potential new logos were shown over lunch to enable members to feed back their views. Stephen thanked FWT, which has very kindly supplied our website free of charge for the past 10 years.

Senior Officer for Wales Margaret Everson reported that Bus Users UK Cymru had taken part in consultation exercises for the Bus Funding Review arising out of the 25% cut in funding to the bus industry and had taken part in ministerial taskforce meetings to develop public transport networks. John Richards, our former representative for North Wales, had travelled around Wales by bus, using his concessionary pass to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Welsh Government’s concessionary pass and of Bus Users UK Cymru.

We are required to comply with a new Welsh Language Measure as far as possible and we are also working with the new Transport Minister for Wales, Edwina Hart.

One of our Passenger Service Advisors, Karen King, and Barclay Davies, Officer for Wales, outlined how our complaints handling works. Out of more than 1,000 complaints handled last year only 49 had to be referred to the Bus Appeals Body, demonstrating that that we are negotiating satisfactory responses. We have seen an increase in complaints relating to disability issues, not least the on-going conflict between buggies and wheelchairs and drivers not kneeling the buses. There has also been an increase in more complex complaints, requiring meetings to be brokered between operators and complainants.

Susan Dawson, who runs the Your Bus Matters programme in England, reported that the surgeries programme has continued to flourish and operators are being more receptive. However the weather was against us in 2012 leading, she reckoned, to herself and Chris Dale, who helps at most events, developing trench foot! In Wales our surgery programme covers all areas and is important for discussing issues and encouraging new members. Barclay Davies has noted an increase in interest from local authorities and politicians who wish to use surgeries as consultation events.

Julian Osborne has a new role as commercial manager and is developing our mystery passenger work into a major source of income. If anyone is interested in undertaking mystery passenger work for us, please contact Julian via enquiries@bususers.org. Julian also administers the Bus Appeals Body and reported that the Traffic Commissioners have now formally asked us to refer any decision not implemented by an operator to them.

Presenting his financial report, Bill Wright, our Finance Administrator, highlighted a large increase in turnover during 2012, reflecting the increase in volume of our work. We also received additional funding from Welsh Government to fund the three Bus Compliance Officers. We built up a surplus during the year, as staff for whom funding had been received started later in the year than anticipated. This has formed the basis of a development fund, to cover our new website, rebranding and appointments. The 2013 accounts will show a further increase in turnover due to the strengthening of our work in Scotland.

New director, new direction

The election of Tracy Jessop as a director of Bus Users UK at the AGM marked a shift in our governance. Stephen Morris and Barclay Davies both stepped down as directors, so our board now comprises Gillian Merron as Chair, Jeff Anderson as Vice Chair and Tracy Jessop as director. Tracy has a senior post in the transport department of Norfolk County Council and has wide experience of public transport. The board is now in a better position to guide and direct the staff team.
Getting strategic
Claire Walters and Nicola Parkins reported on progress with implementing the strategic plan, which is based on input from members at recent AGMs. The plan will continue to adjust to the organisation as it develops, with mechanisms to feed back into it. Our mission statement is to champion the interests of coach and bus users and campaign for better bus and coach services and is backed by values of inclusion, excellence, being inspired by bus and coach users’ needs and partnership. All our work must be underpinned by passengers’ needs and views and mechanisms to achieve this include surgeries, surveys, meeting local groups and handling complaints.

We need to continue to increase our effectiveness as the voice of coach and bus users and to increase our credibility through increasing the number and breadth of members and improving our profile. The forthcoming new website will provide for local groups’ forums, template websites, email facilities, notice-boards and training facilities. We also need to continue to work constructively with bus operators, both when things go wrong and when they are doing well.

A number of potential issues on which to campaign were displayed over the lunch break for comment; these are shown in the panel on the facing page.

Just a Minute
After lunch, we held our now-customary Just a Minute session, in which members can speak for a minute each on their chosen topics. We had a good line-up, with 18 people wanting to speak this year. All were very well-disciplined at keeping their comments to a strict minute, avoiding the indignity of being cut off in their prime by the bekilted Gavin Booth’s Acme Thunderer, which he wielded with his customary aplomb. These were as listed below:

- **Mervyn Dickson**
  West Linton village bus issue.

- **Derek Crane**
  The no eating and drinking policy on Stagecoach buses.

- **Stephen Aselford**

- **Ray Wilkes**
  Service reductions in West Yorkshire and the need for quality partnerships.

- **Michael Barlow**
  Rural routes and suggested funding for the Home Counties to be provided on a per capita basis.

- **C. J. Danpure**
  Service co-ordination and cuts in Stevenage.

- **Jackie Wilkes**
  The need to encourage bus use.

- **John Nicholas**
  The marginalisation of buses on the High Street by local councils.

- **Stephen Aselford**

- **Martin Thorne**
  Appropriate vehicle sizes for time of day and route.

- **Trevor Jones**
  Highlights from the European Passengers Federation conference and the need for an international oyster card.

- **John Carr**
  Restoring the balance since the loss of early morning services & accessing employment by public transport.

- **Jackie Wilkes**
  The need to encourage bus use.

- **Roma Patten**
  Building an integrated public transport interchange & asked for assistance from people with expertise in this area.

- **John Nicholas**
  The marginalisation of buses on the High Street by local councils.

- **Alan Jones**
  The need to address bus stations that are not big enough and have poor facilities.

- **Ash Mather**
  Ten things I hate about being a bus user.

- **Monica Macleod**
  Ways that bus usage can be increased.

- **David Redgewell**
  Barriers to using public transport for disabled passengers.

- **David Cooper**
  Facilities for taking bicycles on the bus.
Following the unanimous vote at the AGM, Tracy Jessop has been appointed to the board of Bus Users UK.

Tracy is currently Assistant Director for Travel and Transport at Norfolk County Council where she manages the council’s portfolio of services for strategic transportation issues.

Tracy leads a team of staff delivering public transport covering bus, rail, demand responsive transport and park-&-ride; integrated passenger transport including education and social care transport; intelligent traffic systems; travel information; development control; and travel planning.

A co-opted board member of the Community Transport Association UK for 2013, Tracy is an active member of the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers, spending a year as Chair during 2012, and the Transport Committee of the Association of Directors of Environment, Planning and Transport.

When it comes to public transport, Tracy is committed to ensuring that customers are at the heart of service delivery: ‘I am very passionate about changing the shape of transport service at national level and challenging providers to be the very best they can be, recognising that by working together the final outcome is often much better and more sustainable.’

Commenting on the appointment, Chair of Bus Users UK, Gillian Merron said: ‘Tracy Jessop will make a valuable contribution to Bus Users UK. She brings with her a wealth of experience including her tenure as Chair of the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers and has built extensive networks among government, the bus and coaching sectors and professional bodies. We are very much looking forward to working with her.’
If you have ever sat in a busy bus wondering why on earth the driver has switched off the engine and seems unwilling to go any further, or at a bus stop where the real-time information counts down to zero but the bus never appears, then you will welcome a new Passenger Focus report (Bus passengers’ experience of delays and disruption) that acknowledges that these scenarios are not uncommon, pinpoints the reasons and suggests remedies.

Regular bus users will recognise that there are many good reasons why buses are delayed, sometimes well beyond the control of the bus company, but nonetheless frustrating, particularly when you haven’t the remotest idea what’s going on.

We all know the perfectly valid explanations for delays and disruption – congestion, roadworks, accidents, diversions, processions – and might be more sympathetic if we’re delayed for these reasons, as long as someone lets us know. The delay might make us late for work or for an appointment, or could well involve us in extra expense if we miss a connection and have to take a taxi, but at least we’re not cursing the bus company under our breath.

So what can be done? Passengers feel powerless and Passenger Focus rightly suggests that a lot must and can be done. Bus companies should – as an increasing number do – make greater use of social media as an element in their passenger communication strategy. But for on-bus passengers who are not into Twitter, surely drivers can keep passengers informed, particularly if they are in radio contact with their garages, and especially as most
will have mobile phones. Passengers are less concerned when they know the reasons for delays, particularly when drivers can give an estimated departure time. Then there is at least the option of walking, taking another route, catching a taxi – or simply giving up and going home.

Many drivers see their job as simply driving the bus, while others make an effort to keep passengers informed. We support the view that the bus industry should take further steps to develop a customer service ethos. Passengers want a more customer-focused attitude from bus drivers, particularly when services are delayed and disrupted. This research shows a big gap between how passengers want bus drivers to behave towards them and the reality.

Some delays are totally within the bus company’s control – like the frustrating pantomime that seems to be tolerated by some companies where a driver changeover becomes a lengthy chat between incoming and outgoing drivers, often while prospective passengers are left waiting on the kerb in all weathers. Others are essential to comply with legislation, like when drivers find they are running early and stop at a quiet stop until they are back on time; early running is clearly not desirable, though passengers don’t necessarily understand why a driver stops for a few minutes and maybe even switches off the engine.

The quotes that accompany this article come from passengers and drivers who took part in this survey.

Anthony Smith, Passenger Focus chief executive, said: ‘There are some important messages here for bus companies, local authorities and government. Real-time departures information helps passengers make an informed choice about what to do if buses are delayed. It’s clear that passengers want this at the bus stop, so the challenge is how to achieve that in an affordable way. Smartphone apps also have an important part to play.

‘We know that many bus companies are trying to improve the customer-service side of how their drivers work. This research, echoing findings in our Bus Passenger Survey, suggests that tackling this long-standing cultural issue should be a high priority for the bus industry.’

‘They stop and shout that they can’t let me on as there are too many buggies on board... buggies can fold down, my chair and me can’t fold down.’

Exeter – passenger using a wheelchair

‘If I lived near a train station I’d never get the bus.’

Birmingham – student

‘Bus drivers should relay the information [they receive over radios] – that’s useful, courtesy and customer service.’

Leeds – commuter

‘There’s one person on the radio who’s controlling at least 108 buses... so if something major does happen... there’s one guy to deal with it all.’

Bus driver
Good news recently has been the award of yet more Government money to invest in greener buses. £12 million has been awarded to enable bus companies to buy 213 more low-carbon buses in the fourth round of the Green Bus Fund. In all the Government has awarded £87 million, enabling more than 1,200 new low carbon buses to enter service in England. This is reckoned to save around 28,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year.

It’s perhaps ironic that what is a green form of transport anyway should be leading the field in terms of reducing carbon emissions. A much greater effect on carbon emissions would come from breaking the dependence on cars that prevails in so much of the UK. It’s been done in London, by a combination of congestion charging and investing in public transport and it’s time the decline in bus use in other major conurbations was also turned round in the same way that it has been in London.

But let’s at least be grateful for what has been done; not only are these new clean, green buses doing their bit for the environment, and to boost the development of cleaner technologies that waste less fuel, very often these same buses are quieter and more pleasant to travel on too.

Up to now, by far the majority of ‘green’ buses have used hybrid technology. Basically that uses a combination of a diesel engine and an electric motor so you can use a smaller, more fuel-efficient diesel engine and when the bus’s engine isn’t actually doing anything to propel the bus, instead of all that energy being wasted it’s channelled into generating electricity that the bus can then use productively. However there are several ways to skin a cat.

Reading Buses has been leading the way with ‘green’ buses. Already about a third of its fleet is hybrid buses and during May, 20 gas-powered single-decker buses were introduced, 11 on to its Greenwave services which serve business parks on the south side of the town in May, and another nine on the service from the town centre to Shinfield Park, also on the south side.

Now under the latest Green Bus Fund award Reading Buses has been awarded funding for another 14 gas buses. The new buses use gas taken from the gas mains and compressed into tanks on the roof. They are substantially quieter than conventional diesel buses – and a lot safer than you might think – and have a luxurious interior with wood-effect floors. However like some other operators Reading Buses has found that not all passengers like leather seats and have decided not to go for them for the new buses.

Stephen Morris
TfL is well aware of the challenges. In December 2012, Sir Peter Hendy, the Mayor’s Transport Commissioner, told our committee that in future TfL will have to be smarter about how it plans bus services and where it puts its last few vehicles in peak periods. Perhaps you have some ideas about this?

A wide range of organisations are calling for improvements to the way the service runs. For example, London Councils has called for more orbital bus routes to help people make journeys around outer London and more express bus services for quicker journeys.

The passengers’ watchdog London TravelWatch has also highlighted a range of issues including: prioritising buses; improving consultation with bus users; converting hail-and-ride services to conventional bus services; and finding ways to improve certain bus journeys, like those that serve hospitals. Perhaps you can give us your experience?

TfL also faces a challenge of modernising the bus fleet to cut down on harmful emissions and says it aims to become a world leader in clean bus technology including increasing the number of hybrid buses.

The Transport Committee is keen to hear the views of London bus users. Please visit our website at www.london.gov.uk/bus-investigation, send an email to transportcommittee@london.gov.uk or call them on 020 7983 4000.
Farewell to Roger French

Roger French, one of the best-known and best-regarded bus managers in the UK, retired in March. Members will remember him from his active participation in our 2011 AGM at Hove. Brighton Area Buswatch paid tribute to Roger after a distinguished 30-year career in their area in its March 2013 Newsletter.

‘Roger and his excellent team have doubled the number of people travelling on Brighton & Hove buses in the past 20 years by improving services each year. This is in contrast to some parts of the UK where bus use has been in continuous decline for decades. Unlike London he has achieved this transformation without the help of massive public subsidies.

‘Local people may not realise that Roger has become a legend in the bus industry for his many achievements. Indeed he has been voted amongst the top 50 most influential people in the transport industry in the UK – competing with such well-known figures as Sir Richard Branson.

‘Roger has been a keen supporter of Brighton Area Buswatch and our partners at Bus Users UK. We have rarely disagreed with his views and he has always tried to understand our concerns.

‘He has told us he would like us to keep him informed with local bus news. It will be an honour to do that.’

We join with Brighton Area Buswatch in wishing Roger a long and happy retirement.

Leafleting in Brighton & Hove

The Brighton Area Buswatch message is spreading fast! Their leaflets have been placed on most local buses and give details of what the group does and how to get involved. The group is grateful to the bus companies, Brighton & Hove City Council and to Bus Users UK for contributing to the printing costs.

Brighton Area Buswatch aims to influence decisions by building relationships and working with others. It meets Brighton & Hove City Council and local bus company representatives four times a year to discuss members’ concerns. The meetings also give the bus companies and Council an opportunity to explain future proposals.

Based on information from Brighton Area Buswatch March 2013 Newsletter

Local Groups are essential to the success of Bus Users UK as the passengers’ champion, and we are keen to hear of local initiatives and successes that we can feature in the pages of Bus User. Send your news and photos to the editor (gavin.booth@bususers.org).
Good news and bad news in Colchester

Electronic screens
C-BUS, the Colchester Bus Users Support Group, reports that contractors responsible for the electronic information screens in Colchester are not required to update the information immediately when services change, but only at ‘intervals’. In fact, they discovered, the information has not been updated since early January, so the times shown for a large number of routes are now wrong. Many of the errors relate only to frequent weekday daytime town services, but the Group has put up a notice warning that times shown for services 75 to Maldon and 133 to Stansted are all wrong. The signs also still show normal services on bank holidays, despite the issue being raised last Christmas. ‘It is inadvisable to visit the waiting room on these days as there a lot of angry people about...’ says the Group. At least the screens show the correct stands for buses, which was not achieved by the old bus station system pre-2006.

133 stops... where?
It’s not just electronic information that is giving the group cause for concern. When the new 133 timetable came into force on 3 March, Essex County Council changed its departure stop and put up a new timetable there. However it failed to take down the old timetable from the old stop. Repeated emails to all parties at the local bus company, Network Colchester/TGM, produced no reply. It turns out that drivers were still actually using the old stop, so, as nobody seemed to be doing anything, C-BUS put up a notice at the ‘old’ stop giving the new timetable.

Soon after that, however, Essex County Council decided that the buses were really leaving from yet a different stop, and that is what Traveline is now telling people, even though the buses are still using the first stop, which isn’t visible from the new one. However the 133 number is still shown on the original stop and the innocent passengers know nothing of the whole fiasco.

But you’ve never had it so good
Nevertheless there is good news in Colchester. There are now 116 buses an hour (89 town services and 27 country services) from the town centre, compared with 94 in 2007. Biggest improvements have been in the country routes, thanks to First being in an expansive mood nationally, and there has been more competition on these routes since local operator Hedingham Omnibus became part of Go-Ahead. The country routes are now better than they were in the ‘heyday’ of bus services. The town routes have seen a more steady expansion over the years as the once-small town has expanded.

Now, if only the bus industry locally could learn how to market improved products...

Based on information from Colchester Bus User News, May 2013
**Better shelters or better buses?**

Better shelters are more important than better buses. Of course, it would be nice to have better buses and better waterproof bus shelters, but if I have to choose between the two, I would always prefer a sturdy, waterproof, bus shelter, and a less modern bus, than the other way round.

How many people will leave their car behind to stand in the cold and rain, if there is only a flimsy bus shelter, or no bus shelter at all?

Here in Dunstable, Bedfordshire, the principle is ‘law-abiding bus users must be penalised in order to deter vandals’. I wonder how many other councils operate the same policy?

Though, of course, the bus operators are usually private companies, and the bus shelters are usually paid for by the councils. Is there any hope of getting that changed, or would the bus companies object?

**Sheila Colbeck,** Dunstable (Public Transport Rep for Dunstable & District Association of Senior Citizens)

We certainly support both better shelters and better buses, and it should be possible for passengers to enjoy both, particularly as they are generally financed by different parties, as Sheila observes. The shelter in the photo, in Paisley, is a good-quality structure, big enough for a number of passengers, with proper information, and in a well-lit and secure position. This is provided by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, while local bus operators are moving positively towards fully-accessible bus fleets. Gavin

**Norfolk Bus Forum**

With reference to BU48 under the heading ‘Local Groups’ there is an article on the formation of the Norfolk Bus Forum. (NBF).

Our membership has requested me to point out that the article appears to imply that Bus Users UK came up with the idea to re-establish the NBF which it did not.

Our group spent much time and effort re-establishing the NBF and Bus Users UK was consequently invited to help after our initial work and contacts had been completed.

Whilst we appreciate the time and effort Bus Users UK has since put in to this initiative, we do not appreciate being ‘airbrushed out’ of being given any mention or credit for the work we put in to re-establishing the NBF.

**John Peacock,** Chairman Norfolk Bus Forum

There was certainly no intention to suggest otherwise, and although I can see nothing in the article to imply that Bus Users UK came up with the idea, I am happy to publish John’s letter in case any other readers misinterpreted our words. Gavin

**A dream come true**

In your March issue Paul Harley dreams of the day when he can stay indoors in the morning, monitoring the progress of ‘his’ bus, then leave home and walk to the stop to reach it a minute before the bus. Surely, he thinks, this will be a reality within the next decade?

Well yes, it is already a reality in Brighton and Hove. I have a Windows Phone app written by a Brightonian and adopted by the Brighton & Hove company that does exactly that. And yes, it is terrific.

**Martin Kerridge,** Hove

We look forward to the day when everybody’s dreams can come true – at least when they’re waiting for a bus. Gavin
Irresistible force of nature

Once space has been found for the driver’s cab, the staircase, the entry/exit doors, the wheelchair/buggy park and (sometimes) a luggage pen, room for seating is at a premium on the lower deck of most double-deck buses. Yet, strangely, four of the seats on my local buses are usually left unoccupied, with even physically frail passengers preferring to stand than to use them. The reason is all-too-obvious on closer inspection of this (unstaged) picture.

There seems to be an irresistible force of nature that impels some passengers to use any surface in reach of their feet as a footrest – with effects on the upholstery of the seat opposite that are all-too-obvious.

In older buses, the seats over the rear wheel arches were arranged longitudinally (ie with their backs to the windows), with an aisle wider than the length of most people’s legs. The downside of this arrangement was that there was usually only room for three on each side. Latitudinal seating allows two extra seats to be squeezed in – but if there is no net gain, because most people are understandably reluctant to sit on them, the overall effect on seating capacity is negative.

If bus company managers seldom ride on their own vehicles, they are likely to be oblivious to this problem. And it is hard to find anyone who will accept responsibility for solving it. Manufacturers use the excuse that ‘we build what the operators want’. Operators complain that they ‘can only buy what the manufacturers offer’. So where does this buck stop?

John Cartledge, Boreham Wood

We echo John’s concerns about feet on seats, though as he will know longitudinal seats over wheelarches on low-floor buses are uncomfortably high for many people in relation to the floor level. Gavin

Helping visually-impaired passengers

Just read BUS0, which was a good read as usual. I recalled when reading BU49 an article about the difficulties faced by people with visual difficulties and was wondering whether mobile phone with voice recognition and GPS capabilities and bus location technologies could be combined to assist with the problem of buses stopping.

These are some possible ways it could help:

- The person at bus stop could let the bus know they are waiting at a stop. Message on phone could be sent to phone device on bus to let driver know person is waiting at next stop.
- The person on the bus would get an alert to let them know their stop is approaching. I have used GPS to work out where my stop is.
- The person at the bus stop could be told where the bus is, and its estimated arrival time (but some way would be needed to convert the bus locating system to non-visual output).

I am sure relatively simple apps could be devised for phones for visually-sighted people and buses which in some cases would probably piggyback on apps for non-visually-impaired persons.

I do not know the extent to which these have been worked on and appreciate phone network coverage is an issue but there may be scope for relatively low-cost solutions that could help visually-impaired people either working themselves or with helpers. Obviously helpful drivers would still be required.

Paul McLoughlin, Romford

We would welcome any of the developments suggested by Paul and would be interested to know (a) if such things are now possible, and (b) if anyone might take up the challenge to produce them. There must be many people out there who, like your editor, are happy to benefit from the technological advances without understanding how they all work. See also pages 5-7 in this issue.

Gavin

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for space and legal reasons. The views expressed on the letters pages are purely the views of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of Bus Users UK.
Welcome

To new members
Derek Benjamin, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight; Anthony Berriman, Gravesend; Raymond Charman, Polegate; Roger French, Hove; John Gordon, Waterlooville; Michael Harris, Shoreham by Sea; David Hill, Weymouth; Brian Lerigo, Tring; Alan Mayston, Haywards Heath; P A Morris, Oxford; Anthony Price, Brighton; Barry Shaw, Barry; Judith Sommerville, Fleetwood; Richard Stow, Oxford; Andrew Wells, Darlaston; Nicholas Wren, Lancing

To new groups
Swale Senior Forum
Bernie Smith, 9 Blandford Gardens, Sittingbourne ME10 4HW
Tel 01795 424725

Tring Bus Users Group
Elisabeth Bendall, 10 Harcourt Rd, Tring HP23 5JJ
Tel 01442 824508

Bus Users UK LOCAL GROUPS

Age UK Colchester peter@ageconcern.org.uk
Association of Devizes Passengers
www.facebook.com/DevizesPassengers
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 Dryeden Avenue, Daventry NN11 9DJ
Bus Users UK Oxford Hugh Jaeger@hotmail.com
Bus Watch West Haringey c Barker@lineone.net
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)
sarah@burnhamtowncouncil.com
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@norfolkwi.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

Joining Bus Users UK

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.

If you wish to join please write to us at Bus Users UK, Terminal House, Station Approach, Shepperton TW17 8AS, or visit our website, www.bususers.org to download a printable membership form or to join online using PayPal.

You can also subscribe using on-line banking; please email our financial administrator, Bill Wright, on bill.wright@bususers.org, who will provide the bank details to be used and a reference to quote. Members can pay by Direct Debit – forms accompany subscription renewal notices and can also be downloaded from www.bususers.org.

Annual subscriptions

£15 for individuals
£10 for senior citizens, under-18s and unwaged.
The subscription for local groups is £18.50.

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.