

Public Transport Liaison Officer Report 2018 -19

I helped with residents' queries and also spoke at the second Long Strops public inquiry. On behalf of passengers I raised / worked on the following issues:

Electronic Bus Timetable Display Screens at Route 66 Bus Stops.

In March 2017 SCC switched off all the electronic route 66 display screens as they had life-expired and could not be repaired. Work on the first replacements didn't begin until December 2017 and then it stopped. After repeated communications with SCC, work recommenced in April 2018 but stopped soon after. More than two years on we have just been advised that the work will recommence in June 2019 to connect the power supplies and get the displays working. A fellow resident and I both raised concerns about the huge amount of time it has taken to do this work with our two County Councillors and with Mary Evans, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs.

The work is being done in phases: firstly to install new poles, secondly to connect the electrics and thirdly to connect up the new electronic screens. Longstanding issues will also be addressed such as the drainage at Lummis Vale bus stop and the clearway markings / safety concerns at Kesgrave Fisheries.

Printed Timetables at Bus Stops

Suffolk County Council has decided to stop producing printed timetables at bus stops. This isn't helpful from a passenger's point of view. So I asked First Bus if they would be taking over this responsibility. They advised me *"We will be taking on the provision of printed information at stops along our routes in Suffolk. The quality of the information will also improve, so it contains details on fares and our apps for example, but we will only be producing details of our services"*

Bus Stop Work Needed

A few of our bus stops still don't have a raised tarmac waiting area – so this means that wheelchair users and others struggle to access local buses. And two of these bus stops (in Fentons Way) have no proper waiting area at all – there is just a grass verge which gets muddy after rain. The path to one bus stop (Ropes Drive) needs repairing and widening so it is wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users. Residents have also requested 4 bus shelters. Kesgrave has not had any new bus shelters since approx 2008 and passengers have been asking for several years for shelters at two locations. It is an unpleasant experience to wait for a bus in the rain and wind with no shelter and a deterrent to bus use. Suffolk Highways provided a quote for the work in October 2017 and local funding needs to be found.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)

There are problems along our newer 68 bus route with on street double parking blocking bus access. Buses often get stuck along this route and I asked SCC if the situation could be improved. They provided advice on how our local TROs could be amended, but as with everything, the process of getting the work done seems to rely on us finding funding. SCC no longer has budgets available to cover the work which they used to do in the past.

Park & Ride No. 800 Bus

Many passengers have commented how helpful it is to have the 800 bus stop additionally at Kesgrave Fisheries on Main Road. The stop seems to be reasonably well used.

New Hospital Bus Service No. 68 Bus from July 2017

Passengers advise that 68 bus services are now running on time and are very reliable. More and more people are using this service as it is very convenient for getting to and from the hospital and Ipswich town centre.

The Impact of Road Closures on Bus Routes

We've had a few emergency road closures and a few planned road closures in Kesgrave which were needed to carry out water and gas work. The impact of road closures on bus users can be very significant. For example when Beech Road was closed, bus diversions went all the way along Main Road (A1214) to Bell Lane and completely missed out sections of Penzance Road which they could have reached, if only the bus diversion had gone via Edmonton Road and Oregon Road. Passengers were literally left stranded at bus stops on both Beech Road and Penzance Road, having no idea that the road was closed further along the route and there was no bus service. I've contacted SCC and First to ask them to ensure that future bus diversions go via Edmonton and Oregon Roads and that temporary bus stop closure notices are placed at bus stops which are not in use.

Community Transport Services

For those unable to access bus services, a Community Car service is available Monday- Saturday 8am-7pm to take residents from their homes to places such as the doctors' surgery, hospital, supermarket and to day centres, in return for a payment of 45p per mile.

We helped Community Transport operator BSEVC recruit 2 new volunteer drivers in Kesgrave to enable them to improve our local service; a big thank-you to those drivers. More drivers are needed – please contact BSEV if you are interested, thank you.

A minibus service is also available Monday- Saturday 7am-7pm which is accessible for wheelchair users. Journeys cost £2.40 for a single journey up to 5miles and £3.30 for a single journey between 5-9 miles.

For more information and booking you can contact BSEV between Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm on: Tel: 01449 614271 or bookings@bsevc.co.uk or text to 07493 866652

Pedestrian crossings

Residents have requested additional pedestrian crossings to help them access bus stops: Ropes Drive just before Battles Lane and Main Road – near All Saints Church and near Edmonton Road. Once again, we would need to find local funding for these.

Public Transport & the Proposed Persimmon Housing Development off Bell Lane

In June 2018 I gave evidence at the second Public Inquiry into the proposed new housing development south of Long Strops. This inquiry was held when Persimmon Homes appealed against the initial refusal by the inspector for development at this location.

At this second inquiry, the developers were proposing to divert the Route 66 bus into their proposed cul-de-sac housing development off Bell Lane. They had offered 5 years worth of funding to the bus company to enable this diversion. I raised concerns about what happens after the 5 year funding ends and about the impact of this diversion on existing bus passengers and the likely delays to Route 66 services with buses having to make right turns across Bell Lane and getting stuck in traffic.

Information about Public Transport services

Detailed information can be found here: www.kesgrave.org.uk/publictransport and free Information leaflets are available from Kesgrave Town Council Office and Kesgrave Library. This includes the

Kesgrave Bus Map - researched and designed by the Town Council. This colour-coded street map identifies where local bus services run and which buses operate from which bus stop. The map is available from the Town Council office and online at www.kesgrave.org.uk/busmap

If you wish to raise a complaint about a bus service – the bus company will need the date, time, direction of travel and bus stop/route location details so they can investigate further.

Any queries please contact: Sue Hall, Public Transport Liaison Officer, Kesgrave Town Council, Ferguson Way, Kesgrave IP5 2FZ Email publictransport2@gmail.com