

Bus Partnership



Option 24/7
with
Somerset Bus Partnership
for
TravelWatch SouthWest

11th November 2022 via Zoom

Lee Fletcher, Peter Travis and Graham Ellis



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- Options 24/7
background and where we are
- Somerset Bus Partnership
background and where they are
- Looking forward, questions, contact details

- Options 24/7 was formed in response to a **2016** Wiltshire Council consultation on cutting bus funding. It included options of removing support from evening and weekend services, leaving buses between school times on Mondays to Fridays only.
- Perhaps as a result of many write-in responses (“none of the above – I support Option 24/7”) there were hardly any support cuts. *The choice offered had been between 50% and 90% funding cuts.*

- We established a good working relationship with council officers with a common goal of providing a bus service suitable for general use and not just for schoolchildren and seniors.
- We looked at the public transport network as a whole and not just individual routes, and ways of operating such as partnerships and franchising.
- We knew “*a bit*” about buses and operation and learned a whole lot more!!

- In late **2019**, when First were withdrawing their 7 day, including evening, Bath – Melksham – Devizes service, leaving just Faresaver (running 6 days a week, no evening service, we arranged public meetings and resolved to request 7 day service, evening service, and covering of all route sections from both operators.
- The service we ended up with meets our resolution. Whether that would have been the case had we not made feeling strongly known is hypothetical

Bus Back Better - 2021



- Many of the ideas are in line with ours (we could almost have written some of the lines ;-)
- We looked around for an existing formal passenger representative organisation rather than set something new up, but looked in vain.
- So – Option 24/7 is your Wiltshire community rep.

Option 24/7 - now



- Reps in all 19 community areas
Also specialist reps (limited mobility/ Xborder)
- Monthly meetings – strategy, marketing, ops
- Service level agreement
- Getting info out and explaining hard choices
- WC / BSIP officer; planning route changes

Not forgetting



- Consultation
- Oiling the wheels
- Innovative thinking and progress
- Networking
- Passenger Charter

Electric buses / Whippet / Surveys / Connections / Ticketing /
Information at bus stops / Contracts for working / route updates

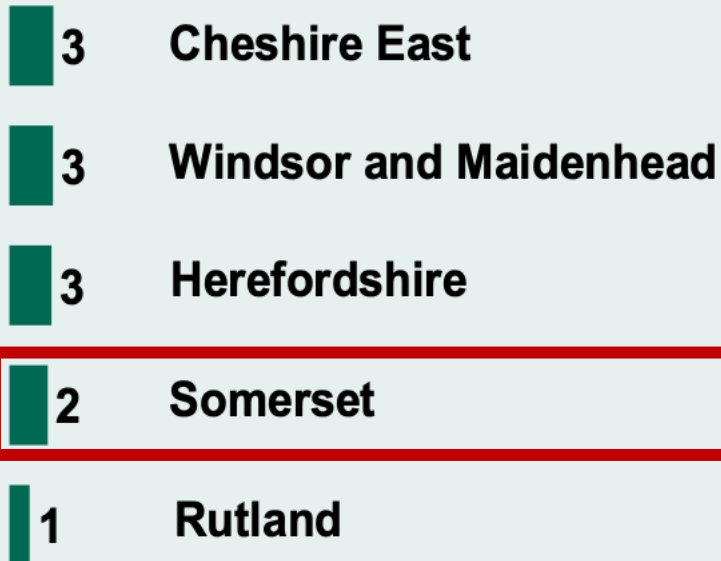


- Peter's Slides Here

Somerset | Working Together
Bus Partnership | for Better Buses

Lowest 5 Local Authorities

passenger journeys per head



**BUS JOURNEYS PER HEAD IN SOMERSET
FELL BY 43% IN THE DECADE
PRIOR TO THE START OF COVID.**

**SOMERSET'S BUS SERVICES HAVE
THE LOWEST
SATISFACTION RATING
OF ANY LOCAL TRANSPORT
AUTHORITY IN ENGLAND.**



March 2021

Somerset | Working Together
Bus Partnership | for Better Buses

**MAKING SURE
LOCAL VOICES
ARE HEARD
ON BUSES IN
SOMERSET**

zoom

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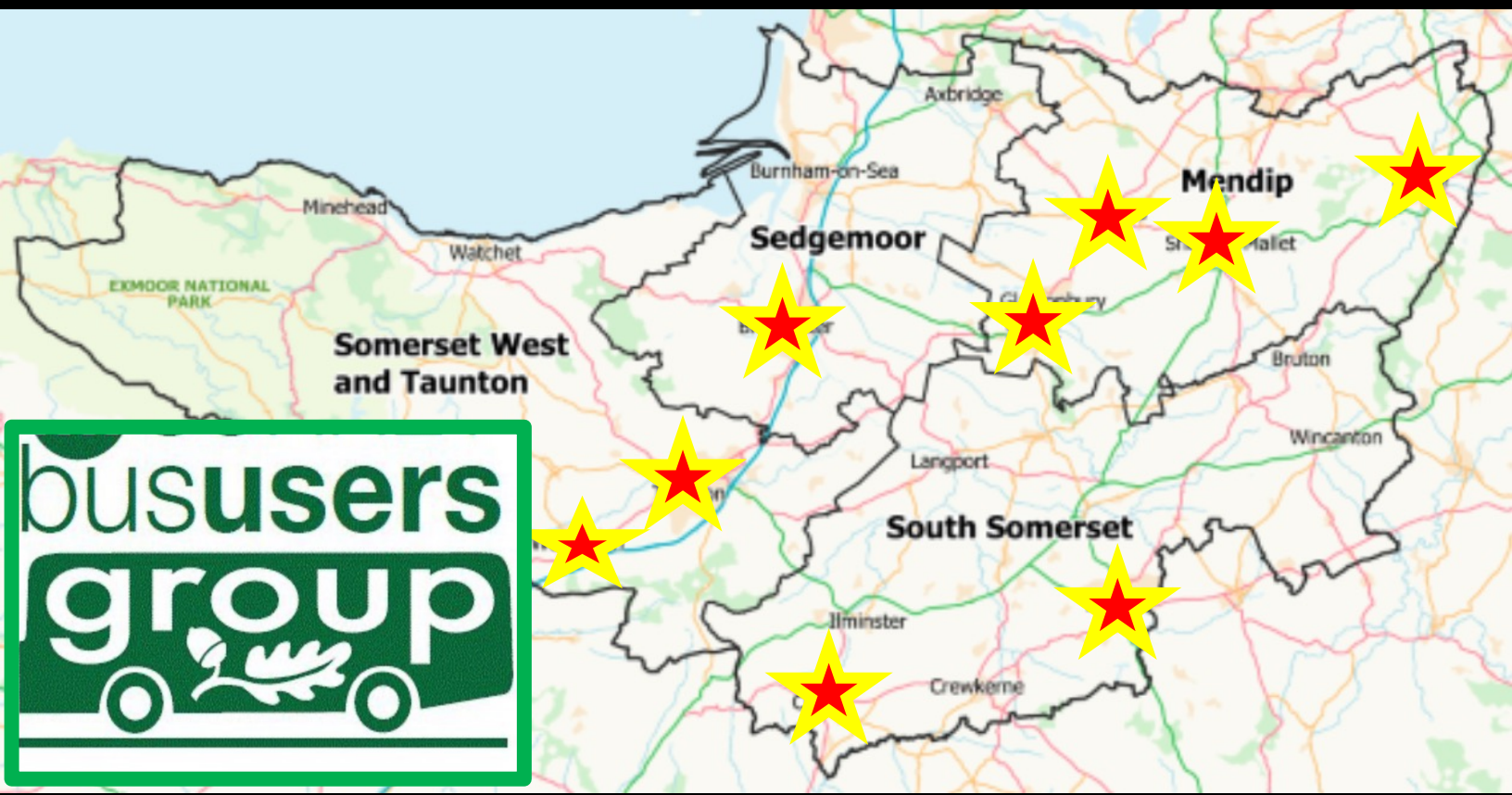
WE HAVE

BUS

CHAMPIONS

ACROSS SOMERSET

BUS USER GROUPS ACROSS SOMERSET



2014	2022			
Frome & Villages	Bridgwater	Wells	Glastonbury/Street	Wellington
	Yeovil	Chard	Shepton	Taunton

PROTESTERS 

CAMPAIGNERS 

PARTNERS

Somerset | Working Together
Bus Partnership | for Better Buses

BUS ADVISORY BOARD

+

BUS USER &

STAKEHOLDER GROUP

((BUS))

Somerset | Working Together
Bus Partnership | for Better Buses

**TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF
YOUR LOCAL BUSES.**

**TO CAMPAIGN FOR PROPER
FUNDING OF BUSES IN
SOMERSET.**

SOMERSET BUS MANIFESTO



SOMERSET'S BUS SERVICES HAVE THE LOWEST SATISFACTION RATING OF ANY BUS SERVICES IN ENGLAND.

SOMERSET ALSO HAS THE SECOND LOWEST NUMBER OF JOURNEYS PER HEAD IN ENGLAND.

NEARLY HALF OF SOMERSET'S CARBON EMISSIONS ARE CAUSED BY TRANSPORT.

WE CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER BUS SERVICES AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO GO BY BUS.

Somerset Bus Partnership

Connecting communities and encouraging public transport.

SOMERSET BUS MANIFESTO

1. BETTER BUSES FOR ALL OUR COMMUNITIES

Core network of frequent, high-quality services linking our towns and main villages.

Enhanced weekend and evening services.

Extension of the demand-responsive bus services, available to all and with longer operating hours.

2. AN AFFORDABLE TRANSPORT SERVICE FOR ALL

cheaper fares targeted at young people up to the age 25.

New, all-operator, countywide value ticket.

3. PROMOTION OF EXISTING & NEW SERVICES

Long-term publicity campaign to increase passenger numbers and improve financial viability.

Easily accessible public transport guides, timetables and maps.

Up-to-date information at all main bus stops, libraries and other information points.

Roll out of Real Time Information in towns and along major bus routes.

4. AN INTEGRATED TRANSPORT NETWORK

❖ Extend bus routes to link with local railway stations, and co-ordinate timetables to improve bus/rail connections.

❖ Maintain and enhance the County's bus stations and shelters.

❖ Introduce integrated ticketing across the county's different bus operators and with trains too.

5. INTRODUCE ZERO EMISSION BUSES

❖ Investment in electric buses to achieve a zero-emission fleet by 2030, in line with the county's climate change strategy.

6. MEANINGFUL FUNDING OF BUS SERVICES

To meet the aspirations in this Bus Manifesto and to provide the level & quality of bus services that Somerset deserves, the new Unitary Authority needs to provide increased financial support for services, as well as investing to improve infrastructure & vehicles.

❖ Bring Somerset's bus budget up to the average for similar rural local transport authorities across the South West by 2026.

❖ Invest in bus transport by making funds available from the new council's capital programme and from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

SOMERSET BUS MANIFESTO

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BEWARE

**CRISIS
A-HEAD**

**BUT
WHAT
WILL
HAPPEN
AFTER
MARCH
2023?**

**HOW WILL BUSES STILL OPERATE
ACROSS SOMERSET?**

WE
need to do
what we can
TO BOOST
PATRONAGE
On
OUR
Bus Routes

BUS STOPS



**WE NEED
TIMES OF BUSES
DISPLAYED
AT BUS STOPS
AND THE INFORMATION
NEEDS TO BE
CORRECT
AND
CURRENT.**



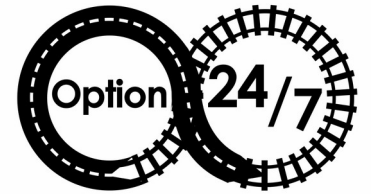
BUS STALLS: GIVE OUT TIMETABLES

**NOW,
EVERY
MONTH
IN SOMERSET
NEEDS TO BE
"CATCH
THE
BUS
MONTH"**





Option 24/7 - future



Known challenges

Next March (**2023**) – next funding cliffhanger

Driver Shortage

Next phase of BSIP funding – if at all?

Lots of infrastructure but nothing running on it?

Option 24/7 - future



Possibilities

Bus routes fit for modern purpose

Real Community bus inputs

Timetables and fares connect with each other

24/7 needs considered (not necessarily a 3 a.m. bus!)

With climate changes, CO2 reduction, bus WILL be back!