

Brighton Area Buswatch

Representing local bus users



A branch of Bus Users UK

Buswatch News – June 2017

Pride and Diversity Bus relaunched



Brighton & Hove Buses has refreshed its Pride bus with a bright new colour scheme. It has been redesigned to promote and celebrate diversity in the community. Buswatch usually avoids copying press releases but on this occasion it seems appropriate to quote B&H Managing Director Martin Harris: “after the terrible events in Manchester and London, we want to stand side by side with those who work to heal divisions in our society and to support those that are vulnerable in our communities and to stand by those who oppose hate”. Martin continues “The Diversity Bus not only celebrates Pride and everything it stands for but is a symbol of our broader support for diversity and inclusion in general. We have a long history of supporting diversity across sexual orientation, gender, race and ethnicity, improving services for disabled people and welcoming refugees”.

The bus carries messages of love and celebration and the simple but powerful message #moreincommon, set up in the aftermath of MP Jo Cox’s tragic murder a year ago to demonstrate how much more we all have in common than that which divides us. The Diversity Bus will be available for partners in the city for community events where the messages on the bus can be of some value.

New community pot for local groups and charities

Every year Brighton & Hove Buses has been quietly giving away small pots of money in a bid to help sustain Brighton and Hove's unique, exciting, innovative community, arts and cultural initiatives that make us the envy of cities throughout the country. It is now opening up its community pot to a twice-yearly bidding system to support community groups and charities in a more transparent way. The closing date for applications is 30 June.

Brighton & Hove Buses Managing Director Martin Harris said: "We've never seen ourselves as just a bus service. We're part of the lifeblood of Brighton and Hove. "We feel a responsibility to sustain and connect communities. And as a leading business in the city we strive to be responsible so that in every action we take, we try to do the right thing by the community – of which we're both a part and is part of us.

Valley Gardens Scheme

Our Committee remains very concerned about the Valley Gardens scheme which would reduce the capacity of the main A23/270 roads between St Peter's Church and the Royal Pavilion/Edward Street. The 'Public Realm' or environmental aspects of the scheme will be considered at a meeting of the Environmental, Transport and Sustainability Committee on 27 June.

In connection with the Valley Gardens proposals Brighton & Hove Buses have asked for new bus lanes to help protect buses travelling towards the City Centre at three locations:

- 1) The A23 at Patcham, between the A27 roundabout and Carden Avenue
- 2) Beaconsfield Road approaching Preston Circus
- 3) Marine Parade between Lower Rock Gardens and the Sea Life Centre

These are all low cost schemes that could be implemented quickly, before the Valley Gardens works begin and would provide some compensation for delays incurred elsewhere.

Stagecoach goes contactless

Stagecoach has become the first bus company in Sussex to accept contactless payments. Unlike London where a flat fare is deducted automatically, you need to tell the driver what ticket you want to buy before placing your card on the reader. The new system should make it easier and quicker for passengers to pay.

Re-tendering of supported bus services

Supported bus services in Brighton & Hove are being retendered by the City Council this month. These include the 16/16, 37 (evening & Sundays), 37B, 47, 52, 56 & 57 which need a subsidy to continue running. This time, bus companies bidding have been invited to submit suggestions for changes or improvements to services. The Big Lemon bus company has been holding meetings with local residents in Woodingdean, Ovingdean and Saltdean to seek ideas. The budget for supporting these services has been cut by around 10% so the Council will be hoping to achieve savings to avoid cutbacks to services.

New opportunities for days out

Seaford & District has introduced a new 'Tourist Trail' service between Lewes and Eastbourne. The 124 passes through many scenic areas in the South Downs National Park, serving Glyndebourne, Charlston Farmhouse, Drusillas and Alfriston plus Pevensey Castle on most journeys. There are three return journeys on Saturdays Sundays and Bank Holidays until the end of August. An all-day ticket costs £7.50 for adults and £5 for children and concessionary pass holders. Vintage buses are used, mostly open top double deckers for the best views.

Another scenic ride of Southern Transit's Adur Valley Line service 3 from Shoreham, Holmbush Centre to Horsham, via Beeding, Steyning, Small Dole, Henfield and Southwater. Buses run four times a day on Thursday only until 20 July, then Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank holidays until 3 September. Double deck buses are used. An adult return from Shoreham to Horsham is £7 and concessionary passes travel free.

Congratulations to Mo Marsh!



The new Mayor of Brighton is Moulsecoomb and Bevendean Councillor Mo Marsh, a resident of Queens Park and a very committed bus user. Mo frequently makes her views known to Buswatch and to bus company managers. She certainly isn't afraid to complain when she experiences long waits or drivers fail to pull in to the right stop. Mo is fulfilling a valuable service because so many people wouldn't bother to complain and bus companies need to know when things aren't right. Hopefully they'll make a special effort ensure to buses run regularly on route 18 to Queens Park over the next year...and beyond!

Brighton Area Buswatch meeting

The next meeting with bus company managers and Brighton & Hove City Council will be on **Wednesday 12 July 2017 at 5pm** in Brighton Town Hall, Bartholomew Square. Note earlier start time, 15 minutes earlier.

We will be joined by Sean Power who is responsible for the control of traffic lights at Brighton & Hove City Council and has agreed to take questions. This is an issue we discuss frequently so if you have any specific issues please send them to brightonbuswatch@gmail.com so we can inform Sean before the meeting and he can come prepared! Our meetings are open to all members and supporters but please let us know in advance if you wish to attend as space is limited.

Buswatch News is produced and edited by Andrew Boag, Chair, Brighton Area Buswatch. We welcome your contributions and suggestions. Printed A5 copies of this newsletter are available from Hove town hall reception and a pdf or large print versions are available on request. The next issue is due in mid-July 2017.

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