

Brighton Area Buswatch

Representing local bus users



A branch of Bus Users UK

Buswatch News – June 2018

Valley Gardens Phase 3 consultation

Brighton & Hove City Council has announced plans for the final stage of the scheme which covers roads between the Edward Street junction through the Old Steine to the Palace Pier 'Aquarium' roundabout. There is a public consultation which is open until 29 June on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

This is a very important area for buses which most bus services pass through. While Buswatch will support improvements to cycling, walking and the pedestrian environment, the needs of bus users must be given higher priority than was the case in Phases 1 & 2.

Martin Harris, Managing Director of Brighton & Hove Buses shares this approach. He told us: "Phase 3 is an important opportunity to establish measures that aid the journey times of bus users to mitigate for the effects of other phases so that the scheme overall, along with some of the associated commitments we have received for the highways network for bus routes, is beneficial for public transport. This has been the nature of our discussions with the City Council so far."

Our priorities are to maintain and enhance facilities for buses between Grand Parade and the seafront or North Street, with bus priority lanes on the west side of the gardens. There needs to be improved bus stop facilities by the Royal Pavilion to facilitate interchange between buses in all directions. Buses must have sufficient space to manoeuvre and overtake at bus stops so passengers can board and alight easily. It is also vital there are adequate facilities for terminating buses to turn around and stand while not in service. This includes times when there is unplanned disruption, preventing buses from continuing to other parts of the city centre. Buses must not become a cause of congestion.

Modelling of new road layouts must take some account of the seasonal factors which can have a huge impact in this area. Planning road capacity solely on the basis of the traditional Monday to Friday peak periods found in other cities, will not address local issues. We tend to favour retaining the Aquarium roundabout in some form as it works well and provides a very useful turning facility for buses, especially when there are delays along Coast Road.

New buses for Coastliner 700



Stagecoach has introduced thirty new double deckers onto the Coastliner service between Brighton, Worthing and Littlehampton. They have free wi-fi and USB charging points. The buses have latest Euro VI low emission engines, helping to improve air quality in urban areas. Our photo shows Stagecoach South Managing Director Edward Hodgson cutting the tape at Churchill Square to launch the new buses, with Ben Thomas and Richard Johnson from Brighton & Hove City Council.

Patcham and Hollingbury night buses restored

Good news! the N5 Night service now runs across Brighton and Hove again. There are two journeys to Patcham and Hollingbury, leaving Churchill Square at 0105 and 0205 on Monday to Saturday nights. There is also a later 5A to Patcham leaving Churchill square at 1212am. The three journeys to Hangleton now start from Hollingbury Asda instead of Old Steine. One N7 now runs to Whitehawk instead of Brighton Marina, passing the Clock Tower at 3am. The N12 & N14 towards Newhaven and Eastbourne have been revised slightly to improve timekeeping.

Buswatch would like to see further improvements including restoration of the N1 (Brighton Station – Hove – Portslade - Mile Oak – Downs Park) to Old Steine to connect with the N25 Universities service which used to serve Hove and Portslade.

Summer timetables

Brighton & Hove Buses introduced its summer services last weekend, 17th June. One of the biggest improvements was recommended by Buswatch. This is route 13X between Brighton and Eastbourne via Seaford, Seven Sisters and Beachy Head which now runs every 30 minutes during the day on Sundays. In addition to providing a regular service to Beachy Head the 13X provides a limited stop service between Brighton & Seaford covering the 12X which doesn't run on Sundays. There have been many complaints about crowded buses on Sundays along the coast road and the 13X should address these. Unfortunately plans to run the 13X hourly on Mondays to Saturdays during the summer months were dropped, although they are shown in the January edition of Bus Times. Instead the weekday 13X runs just three times a day until 27 August, leaving Brighton Station at 0915, 1245 and 4.15pm.

Other improvements include the 77 from Brighton Palace Pier to Devil's Dyke which now runs daily, every 45 minutes until 31 August. However, University services 25 & N25 are reduced during the summer vacation which continues until 14 September.

New electric Hybrid bus on loan

Passengers on routes 5/5A/5B can look out for the new white bus with blue and green stripes which is being trialled for a few weeks. The electric hybrid looks similar to the latest diesel buses with the addition of a glazed staircase, but this one can run on electric power for between 1.5km and 3km. This should take it through the most of the low emission zone between Palmeira Square and Old Steine. The £380,000 bus switches to diesel power in other areas. The busy 5/5A/5B routes are expected to be next in line for new buses, probably early next year.

All our local bus companies are making good progress towards meeting the Euro V emissions standard and expect to achieve this by 2019, a year ahead of the deadline. The City Council is now intending to introduce an ultra-low emission zone, requiring all buses and taxis to meet the tougher Euro VI emissions standard by 2024. This will be considered by the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 26 June.

New Data Protection regulations

Thank you for responding to our GDPR request. Those who didn't no longer receive Buswatch News. While there was a fairly good response from our supporters, only ten Brighton & Hove City Councillors and none of our local MPs replied, which is disappointing. This could of course be because they were overwhelmed with similar requests. We hope to welcome some back so if you know of anyone who has asked why they no longer receive this newsletter please encourage them to get in touch.

Brighton Area Buswatch meeting

The next meeting with bus company managers and Brighton & Hove City Council will be at 5pm on **Wednesday 18 July 2018** in Brighton Town Hall. Meetings are open to all, but space is limited so please contact Buswatch at the address below if you wish to join us.

Buswatch News is produced and edited by Andrew Boag, Chair, Brighton Area Buswatch. We welcome your contributions and suggestions. The next issue is due mid-July 2018. E mail: brightonbuswatch@gmail.com. Phone: 01273 620215



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