

Brighton Buswatch

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Proudly supporting bus users in
Brighton, Hove and the
surrounding areas

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December 2024

Happy New Year!

All Change

From January 15th, following a year of transition, Brighton Buswatch reaffirms its commitment to bus users in Brighton, Hove and the surrounding areas, following changes to our former operations and partnership with Bus Users(UK) who we continue to support speaking up for bus users nationally. Among the changes are a new constitution, a new logo, new guidance and renewed membership to all our current members.



Photo courtesy of Nash Travelman

Around for a pound

An offer for Christmas and the new year, the Bus Service Improvement Plan has provided shoppers and Brighton & Hove residents a £1 short hop single. Available from the driver, the ticket is a reduction of around 70p within and between one 'fare stage'. Examples include but not limited to: Grand Ocean to Rottingdean, West Hove Sainsbury's to Downs Park or Marina to LIDL. The offer is in use on all operators and runs until January 31st.

Christmas buses

Brighton & Hove have once again ran a Christmas Day service on routes 1, 5, 7, 12 & 49. Buses ran from 07.50 until 19.00. Last year there were more than 4,300 people using buses across the network, 46% more than in 2022. Especially significant this year was the extension of route 12 to Eastbourne. Three buses plied the route hourly with buses for all five routes being operated from Conway Street depot. Drivers volunteered to take on the Christmas Day shift. Observations show this to have been a great success. National Express once again ran their two hourly link to London Victoria via Gatwick.

Boxing day once again brought us routes 13, 22B, 700 and Pulse. Also for the first time, an extended 28 route to Eastbourne, every 2 hours via Lewes, Ringmer and Hailsham, saw 1 in 3 buses extended from Ringmer. This will be the first time in many years a link between Hailsham and Eastbourne has been in operation on Boxing Day. Observed to have good loadings, this reflects the very positive effect brought about by the original Bus Service Improvement Plan extension to route 28 back in March 2023. On New Years Day, with no Stagecoach South East services, route 28 will accompany Cuckmere Community Buses hourly route 50, providing a Sunday service.

Fare increase

Following the increase to the fare cap to £3, Brighton & Hove have announced their new fares between New Years Day until March 2025.

These are the key points from the changes: A lower fare introduced across the CitySAVER zone. Two 'fare stages' now £2.80, down from £3.20; One-day CitySAVER now £6 on app. and Key card. child £3, student £4.40. and 60-minute £3.40 ; Tap On Tap Off (TOTO) twice or more a day, five consecutive days in a week and pay £25 (capped), this gives two extra days free. Part of Brighton & Hove City Council Bus Service Improvement Plan; NetworkSAVER on app and Key card now £7. Paper ticket remains £7.80; **Small increase on some return fares and no longer distance return fares will be more than a NetworkSAVER; East Sussex County Council have a simplified fare structure and small increases to the East Sussex Day ticket. Further details are available from the Brighton & Hove website.**

January Timetable changes

Brighton & Hove have brought some more buses to route 1, 1X and N1 as part of their January changes, taking place on Sunday 5th January 2025. Most notable is the addition of an N1 at 03.55 from Brighton Station. Both 1 and 1X now feature in one combined timetable. Term-time timetables for routes 23 (including Queen Park short trips) and 25 also re-commence from this date.

Valley Gardens continues

The timetable has been set out for the continuing work on Valley Gardens 3. Among the five phase project is the closure of the junction at St James Street for around 2-3 weeks in the Spring of 2025. Buses diversions are already being planned and details to follow. Aware of the concerns and impotence of this area, Buswatch is engaging with the process, observing and feeding back.

As part of the first phase of the Valley Gardens project, Castle Square has been remodelled with a new bus stop. Set just before the lights at the bottom of North Street it will lead passengers in to the new pedestrian area including the Art-Deco former bus shelters. It's not clear which of the route will use this stop but the working thinking is for route 5/5A &5B, which may include buses towards Crawley and Horsham.

Brighton Buswatch remains working hard to observe and feedback on potential disruption to customers.

Changes at Big Lemon

The Big Lemon has appointed a new General Manager. Charlotte Hautot, part of The Big Lemons team since 2017, has been a frequent attendee to Buswatch and has helped us with matters concerning routes 47 &52. Tom Knight, previously of Spirit of Sussex Coaches has been appointed as Managing Director of The Big Lemon in the South East area including Seaford and District motor services. Both these roles form part of a strategy for growth in 2025. We send them our congratulations and wish them good luck in their new roles.

Buswatch meeting

Brighton Buswatch's AGM takes place on 15th January at 15.00 in rooms 2 & 3, Brighton Town Hall. The next public meeting follows at 16.00. Please note the change of time. Space is limited so please e-mail Buswatch or message via Brighton Buswatch Facebook group if you would like to attend as a guest or raise an issue.

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Buswatch Newsletter is produced and edited by Nash, at Brighton Area Buswatch. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome.