



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

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February 2026

January Buswatch meeting

January 21st saw our first Buswatch meeting of the year, and AGM. We welcomed two new committee members, whilst retaining myself, Nigel and Peter as Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary respectively.

The following are the public notes from the main meeting:

Bus stops N4, R1 & S4

- N4 is deemed unsafe and unusable – antisocial behaviour has moved here, from the benches in New Road. It is also a wind tunnel. There is a temporary bus shelter (moved here from somewhere else) as the previous one was damaged in transit. The shelter may not be modified, but replaced with a better shelter. The building behind the bus stop is being renovated. Hopefully this will reduce antisocial behaviour. The thinking behind the North Street bus stops was explained – grouped together according to the area served. It was suggested the '18' & '21' should be moved back to N3, as with St James's Street /Queens Park routes.

- R1 We were told bus shelters were ordered before this part of the project started, but has been delayed by the suppliers. Temporary seating was considered, but with the shelter always imminent, it was deemed better to wait. These would have needed to be found from elsewhere. The New Road ones being unsuitable.

- S4 is not very user friendly either – timetables being haphazard (front and back of the stop, instead of next to each other). The kerbside obstruction is being moved so buses can pull forwards to the head of the stop.



Photo courtesy of Nash Travelman

Coach arrangements, including Pool Valley

It was suggested a number of options are being considered for Pool Valley. A councillor questioned whether a coach station is the best use for the area. Whilst still serving Old Steine, near Brighton Station is seen as an alternative position for coaches 025 & 066 (& a new route?) to layover. It was questioned- if coaches could pick up/drop at Old Steine, in a timed manner; and whether non-UK coaches could use the (wrong side) bus stands in the Old Steine. Presumably with the displaced routes (25, 25X) instead using Pool Valley.

Bus priority.

Bus priority at traffic signals, is to be expanded following trials along Eastern Road. Although the council was criticised for it slow uptake of future bus lanes.

Real Time Information (RTI) signs and on bus systems.

Lots of concern and disappointment with RTI screens. A date was set for all screens to be updated and working properly. Clocks on some newer buses were found to be out by about 20 minutes.

Disruption, praise and ticket acceptance.

Following the immense disruption caused by the Royal Mail Van, at Roedean incident; bus drivers who endured the works, were heaped with praise for aiding passengers, often in remote and unusual places.

Although questions were raised why ticket acceptance took so long. [Two later incidents in Peacehaven and Falmer saw ticket acceptance, in just over an hour – Brighton & Hove should be praised for this].

Metrobus arrangements:

Following a fire on a Hydrogen bus, at Metrobus Crawley, to maximise safety, the whole fleet of buses was withdrawn. The fire was not related to the Hydrogen element of the bus. Modifications to the batteries will be needed to prevent future overheating. The buses are still under warranty. The speed of which replacement buses were brought in, was praised. But, due to the many different types of buses being used, sourcing spare parts can be difficult –sometimes leading to services being affected.

Route 18: There was a discussion on route 18, for the benefit of a bus user attending the meeting. There is no deadline for making suggestions, but changes to the service could well be made in the Spring.

Aquarium junction

Work is progressing on the Aquarium junction, with barriers replacing the former roundabout, until spring; whilst work continues around it. Buswatch notes, under the current plans- the Sea Life Centre bus stop (P1) would become inaccessible for more than one bus at a time, and require a large swing to get anywhere near the bus stop, for the first bus. This was fed back at the engagement event. We also intend to follow up concerns about the loss of the crossing point at Sea Life Centre, leaving bus users unprotected.

Half-Marathon day

1st March sees the first big event of the year, with the Brighton Half Marathon. This will involve largescale disruption to bus services, from start of service and at least 14.00. Details available on the B&H bus company website and app. Worse, it has also just been announced that Brighton will play Nottingham Forest at home, with most fans hoping to arrive before the 14.00 kick off. The risk of chaos looms large.

East Sussex Ticket changes

On 1st February 2026, most tickets in East Sussex, introduced under Bus Service Improvement funding were withdrawn. These included the East Sussex Day ticket (£6.10), 19-29 East Sussex day (£4.75), Under 19 East Sussex day £3.75, Short hop (£1), Medium hop (£2), Child accompanied (50p), Child unaccompanied – off peak (£1.00). The Freedom weekly will be retained, but increased to £20.00, from 16 February 2026. This aligns with East Sussex half term holidays. The reason given is the too many people took up the fare offers! The full impact is yet to be felt, but further funding in April may see some of these tickets return. In the meantime bus companies have been trying to negotiate a joint ticket offer. It has been advised that those in the ‘haven’ areas can make use of Compass Travel’s one-day £7.00 NetworkSAVER, available for 119, 120, 123 & 145; as well all Brighton & Hove and city centre services (bar the 17 & 700).

Consultations

The Safer Better Streets Programme, aims to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility, in Brighton & Hove. Under consideration are schemes for Court Farm Road, Surrenden Road/Holt, Holmes Avenue, Surrenden Road North and Nevill Road. Silverdale Road may not be on a bus route. A link to the consultation site, can be found by searching safer-better streets 2026 and use the ‘yourvoice’ link. Closing date for the survey is **Sunday 22nd February 2026. Brighton Buswatch will put their thoughts forwards.**

Buswatch meeting

The next Brighton Buswatch meeting takes place on **15 April 2026 at 16.00 – location to be announced.** Space is normally limited, but interest is gathering; so please e-mail Buswatch or message via Brighton Buswatch Facebook group, if you would like to attend.

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