**Brighton Area Buswatch**

**Representing local bus users**

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**A branch of Bus Users UK**

**Buswatch News – July/August 2017**

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**Brighton’s brightest bus shelter!**

This colourful bus shelter has appeared in the Old Steine right in front of the Royal Pavilion. It was commissioned by Brighton & Hove Buses and the work was carried out by artists Art+Believe. The aim is to celebrate the city’s diversity, creativity and community spirit in time for the Pride Festival. The word ‘together’ was agreed between the artists and the bus company to create a positive message, the opposite of apart. The shelter will remain in this style until September.

**Supported bus services**

New contracts for operating bus services supported by Brighton & Hove City Council are due to be announced shortly.  This involves tenders for the the 16/66, 37, 47, 52, 56 & 57 plus various school services and Breeze Up to the Downs routes 77, 78 & 79. We had hoped to include details here but there has been a delay announcing the awards. Details will be published on the Brighton & Hove City Council website [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk) and new timetables will begin on 17 September.

**Compass Travel withdraws Brighton – Horsham Sunday service**

The hourly Sunday service on route 17 between Brighton & Horsham via Patcham, Henfield and Partridge Green will be withdrawn after 10 September. The service is operated by Compass Travel on Sundays and by Stagecoach during the week. Compass Travel Managing Director Chris Chatfield says the service was making a loss and it does not receive a subsidy. Sadly, neither Brighton & Hove City Council or West Sussex County Council are prepared to subsidise it. Buswatch has written to Stagecoach asking them to consider adding a Sunday service on a commercial basis as a trial.

**B&H Bus service improvements from September**

A relatively small number of changes will be made to Brighton & Hove bus services when the winter timetable starts on 17 September. There will be more daytime buses on routes 7 & 25 and extra peak journeys on route 23 following pressure from Buswatch and local users.

The first of 31 new two door buses have begun to appear on route 7 recently with many more to follow in the autumn. They will also be used on route 49. The new buses are to the latest Euro VI standard which produces up to 98% less emissions. There will also be three new single door buses for the Coaster 12/12A/12X service. The existing hybrid double decks on route 7 are being repainted and rebranded for route 2, enabling them to reduce emissions in Rottingdean High Street as well as the Low Emission Zone and in St James’s Street. Route 27 will also receive newer buses.

**B&H bus ticket fraud**

There have been several reports of counterfeit 7-day bus tickets being sold in the Brighton area. These will not be accepted by drivers who have been instructed to issue a one-day Network Saver to avoid passengers being stranded. There is an ongoing Police investigation which has already led to five arrests. For further information go to the website [www.buses.co.uk](http://www.buses.co.uk)

**National Express changes**

National Express coaches from Brighton to Gatwick, London, Heathrow and Stansted are running to new timetables. Some coaches now run between Brighton and Gatwick only while others continue as before but timings have changed. There have been press reports of coaches becoming less reliable and connections being missed. Reports from passengers would be welcome.

**Try the Mendip Mule and Jurassic Mule**

If you are travelling down to the west country during the summer holidays you may like to try the vintage open top bus services operated by Mendip Mule motors in East Devon and West Dorset. This summer there buses up to every half hour  Charmouth – Lyme Regis – Seaton – Beer and connections are provided with certain trains at Axminster. More details: <http://www.mendipmulemotorbus.co.uk>

**Buswatch News**

This issue of Buswatch News is being sent out later than normal and will cover July and August. Writing this and managing Buswatch has become an almost full time job over the past five years so I’m taking a break for a while. Our quarterly meetings in Brighton Town Hall will continue, chaired by Deputy Chair David Dufour, but we need help if our present level of activity is to be maintained. If you have an interest and some knowledge of bus issues and feel you would like to get involved, please get in touch.

**Brighton Area Buswatch meeting**

The next meeting with bus company managers and Brighton & Hove City Council will be on **Wednesday 11 October 2017 at 5pm** in Brighton Town Hall, Bartholomew Square. Note earlier start time, 15 minutes earlier.

**Buswatch News is produced and edited by Andrew Boag, Chair, Brighton Area Buswatch. We welcome your contributions and suggestions.**

**E mail:** **brightonbuswatch@gmail.com**.  Phone:  01273 620215