



# Newsletter 21

## Spring 2014



*Bedford Bus Station pre-redevelopment, nine days before temporary stopping arrangements kicked in. **Suzy Scott***

- One bus station opens while another closes (Page 5)
- Passenger Focus report *How Late Is Late?* (Page 4)
- Round-up of Bus Service Changes (Page 11)
- Read reports of our recent Liaison Meetings (various pages)



The Newsletter of the Bedford Area Bus Users Society (BABUS) is produced by [here to there](#)

## Welcome to the BABUS Newsletter 22

If you have any further questions, you want to send a contribution for the newsletter, or you spot something you think is wrong, please feel free to drop us a line!

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**Membership queries – including changes of address for your membership, or to change either way between electronic copies and paper copies** should be addressed to Mr Simon Norton, BABUS Membership, 6 Hertford Street, CAMBRIDGE, CB4 3AG or by email to **simon.norton@babus.org.uk**

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To phone us, simply call **0871 218** then **spell out BBUS on your phone. (i.e. 0871 218 2287)**. When you get through, leave us a landline number where we can call you back. If you prefer to fax, then send it to **0871 218 3293** Calls to these numbers are charged at 10p a minute plus any network extras. These voicemails and faxes go through to Suzy, and will be forwarded to as the situation requires.

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## **Forthcoming Newsletters**

**The table below is reissued to update the dates of the Summer newsletter, and to correct the issue numbers!** Normally this will not be in every issue, aside from notice of the date for contributions to the next one.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Deadline for contributions</b>	<b>Target date for paper copies mailed/E-copies emailed</b>	<b>Target date for the copy to go on the website</b>
Summer 2014	22	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2014	Weekend of Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 June 2014	Weekend of Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June 2014
Autumn 2014	23	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> August 2014	Weekend of Saturday 30 and Sunday 31 August 2014	Weekend of Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 August 2014
Winter 2014/15	24	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Weekend of Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 November 2014	Weekend of Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 December 2014
Spring 2015	25	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2015	Weekend of Saturday 30 January and Sunday 31 January 2015	Weekend of Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 February 2015
Summer 2015	26	About 6 weeks before AGM – dependant on date chosen	About 4 weeks before AGM – dependant on date chosen	About 3 weeks before AGM – dependant on date chosen
Autumn 2015	27	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> August 2015	Weekend of Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2015	Weekend of Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> and Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2015
Winter 2015/16	28	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Weekend of Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> and Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Weekend of Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> and Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2015
Spring 2016	29			
Summer 2016	30			
Autumn 2016	31	These will be	Similar dates in	Subsequent years
Winter 2016/17	32			
Spring 2017	33			



## **Annual General Meeting 2014 - Save The Date!**

***By Suzy Scott***

We can now confirm that our Annual General Meeting will be on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2014, at the Salvation Army, Congress Hall, Commercial Road, Bedford, MK40 1QS (SatNav postcode is MK40 1NY). The guest speaker this year will be Linda McCord from Passenger Focus. The full paperwork will be enclosed with Newsletter 22.

To accommodate this, the deadline for the next Newsletter (22) is a little earlier - . Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014. Contact details are on Pages 2 and 14 of this Newsletter.

### **Got a friend who wants to join us?**

On Pages 15 and 16, you will see an abbreviation of our current Membership Brochure. Feel free to cut them out, and present it to a friend who may be interested in joining us!

Complete the form and return with payment to our Membership Secretary – OR... you can now join online! Same price – just pay online with a credit or debit card!

## **Passenger Focus Report – how late is late?**

### ***From Passenger Focus***

Passenger Focus has published new research exploring bus passengers' views of punctuality and timetable information – and what they wanted in future.

Key findings show that bus passengers:

- are tolerant of some lateness – within reason
- are generally prepared to turn up early or catch an earlier service when their journey is time-critical
- see timetables as a 'guide' rather than a promise, saying that five minutes' leeway feels about right
- would prefer a timetable that is accurate and harder to remember than one that is easy to remember but less accurate
- feel that there is no point complaining directly to bus operators because they won't get a response.

David Sidebottom, acting chief executive of Passenger Focus, said: "Our bus passenger survey shows punctuality is one of the main reasons for people to be unhappy with their bus service. We wanted to explore this, and find out what people actually want from published timetables.

"We'll now take the results of this and our other work on punctuality round to local authorities and bus operators as a way of bringing to life what makes a good service for passengers."

## **One closes, and another opens**

***By Godfrey Willis***

Further to the item on **Bedford Bus Stations** initial work (Page 8, Newsletter 20), the facility in Greyfriars closed as per plan after the last bus on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January. The following morning the temporary arrangements came in and with a small number of minor issues (most now resolved) have worked satisfactorily.

As part of the initial programme to help passengers find their way around the changed stops BABUS volunteer, Martin Brookes spent 2 weeks alongside Stagecoach and Bedford Borough Council staff.

We all must be grateful to Martin as not only was he helping to deal with a "confused" public but he had to endure some of the foulest weather imaginable.

BABUS, in turn, has received thanks from both the Operator and the Local Authority for the help that Martin gave. This is an excellent example of where BABUS can show a positive approach by being on the front line rather than simply being a behind the scenes lobbying group.

Hopefully the temporary arrangements will continue smoothly for the next nine months. A list of the stops and services for the interim period can be found on Pages 18 and 19 of this Newsletter (the last two pages inside the back cover).

Over in Northampton the new North Gate Bus Station is scheduled to open on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2014. Your Chairman attended the meeting of the Northampton Bus Users Group where details were given by both Stagecoach Midlands and the Borough Council on aspects of operation.

The Bus Station buildings will be open between 04:30 and 00:30 (less on Sundays) with security staff in attendance. Stagecoach Midlands staff will be manning the Travel Shop and have clear instructions to advise enquirers on bus services irrespective of operator and this will be "audited" regularly. National Express ticketing facilities will not be provided due to the often complex and time consuming process against the limited space for customers.

There are fourteen stands at the Bus Station and a further eight in the Drapery. Following earlier intervention by BABUS amongst others Service 41 between Bedford and Northampton will now use Stand 14 in Bradshaw Street, just outside the new facility. A map of the new stops and street layout can be found on Page 20/the back cover.

Further afield, and the Bletchley bus station and Central Milton Keynes stopping arrangements are also expected to change in the near future, so watch for local announcements.



## **Summary Report of Stagecoach East and BABUS Liaison Meeting**

**11<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

***By Peter G Williams***

This was the first formal meeting between Stagecoach and BABUS since Jan 2013 and the first with the new Bedford management, although there had already been informal contact. This initial meeting mainly concentrated on outstanding, historic, issues and did not really address new or emerging topics.

In answer to BABUS Stagecoach policy on the contentious issue of 'wheelchairs versus buggies' was restated, given that recent court cases had resulted in, apparently, contradictory decisions. Wheelchair users should have priority. The driver had authority to request buggy owners to fold and store them. If this was likely to be unsuccessful and result in difficulties for the driver then Stagecoach would consider what alternatives were available.

Initial experiences with the temporary bus stops configuration (following closure of Bedford Bus Station) were reviewed. Stagecoach was satisfied that, over the two weeks following closure the arrangements had worked well.

Stagecoach gratefully acknowledged the on-site support provided by BABUS Publicity Officer, Martin Brookes, over these two weeks, in some most unpleasant weather conditions.

Turning to the Bus Station refurbishment programme, Stagecoach considered it was far too early to start

planning operations within the new facility.

There was discussion of some significant changes to the Route 50 timetable that were about to be introduced. These changes, which were seen as improvements, had been initiated by Stagecoach Midlands. It was particularly gratifying to note that a number of proposals put forward by bus users had been accepted. An example was the re-timing of an evening service on Route 50 from Bedford to provide a connection with the first off-peak evening train from London.

Stagecoach reviewed experience gained from changes recently made to X5 operations. The transfer of the driver change-over point from Bedford to Milton Keynes Coachway appeared to be satisfactory. The re-working of the timetable for the entire Oxford-Cambridge route had improved reliability. The age of the vehicles and the mileage accrued was becoming an issue in terms of maintenance required. It was confirmed that drivers had been briefed on a change in policy for handling larger items of passenger luggage. There were no plans to provide an additional X5 stop at Cambourne.

BABUS representatives reported that problems with bus access into new residential areas were a growing concern. The topic had been discussed with fellow bus user groups in Northampton and Milton Keynes and the two local authorities. As it was clearly a matter beyond the scope and competence of BABUS it had been

referred up to Passenger Focus. At the local level BABUS was supportive of the Stagecoach initiative in seeking to improve services in the Sandy area.

It was reported that BABUS was undertaking an audit of bus stops in the urban area of the Borough. It was clear that there were deficiencies on roads served by multi-operator routes. Under an agreement with the Borough Council, Stagecoach was responsible for roadside displays at urban locations. Information for services provided by other operators could not be displayed unless the necessary material was supplied in a compatible format.

There was a detailed discussion on suggested improvements, tabled by BABUS, relating to Route 51, Bedford to Rushden, in the Wymington area. Proposals included changes to the timetable and amendments to the route, designed to broaden the appeal of the service to passengers. These proposals would be considered by Stagecoach.

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**Bus Users UK – South East  
Midlands Group Meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
November 2013**

***By Peter G Williams***

Following an initiative by Bus Users UK in July 2013 (see Newsletter 19, pages 26-27) at which the need was expressed for better communication between bus user groups on a regional basis, an informal meeting was arranged between Northampton Bus Users Group, Milton Keynes Bus Users Group and BABUS.

This was held in the Guildhall, Northampton on 2 Nov 2013 when representatives from the three groups had an opportunity to exchange information on group composition and governance, on geographical area of influence, on liaison with bus operators and local authorities and on issues faced by bus users.

The outcome of this initial meeting was that a sub-group within Bus Users UK has been created to include the three bus user groups. It is to be known as the South East Midlands Group to take account of the region covered by the Local Enterprise Partnership – SEMLEP.

Key issues for more detailed consideration have been identified. These are:

- Service cuts and withdrawal of local authority funding;
- Bus stations;
- Application of Section 106 funding to public transport;
- Roadside publicity;
- Timetables and scheduling;
- Liaison with local authorities and bus operators;

- Road-rail interface
- Bus-bus interface;
- RTPI displays, GPS and smart ticketing;
- Lack of enforcement over obstruction to buses and bus routes.

The Group will hold a further meeting early in 2014.

### **First Capital Connect Franchise** ***From FirstGroup Press Office***

FirstGroup, the leading transport operator in the UK and North America, has signed an agreement with the Department for Transport to operate the First Capital Connect rail franchise for a further six months. This means that the First Capital Connect franchise will operate beyond its current planned end date of 31 March 2014 to 14 September 2014. This new end date is coterminous with the Government's anticipated start for the new Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise, for which there are several bids submitted.

This award secures continuity of rail services for passengers and retains the Group's experience as the delivery partner of the multi-billion pound Thameslink Programme already well underway on the network. During this six-month period First Capital Connect will continue with its comprehensive maintenance programme, as well as introducing service improvements for passengers including new and enhanced information at stations, better customer assistance and higher levels of cleaning.

### **Report of Meeting with Bedford Borough Council, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014** ***By Peter G. Williams***

The topic – “policy on bus service provision for new developments” is now a fixture on the agenda for meetings with local authorities and bus operators. It is also seen as a priority for the recently-formed South East Midlands ‘consortium’ of bus users groups.

In this context BABUS had referred the matter to Passenger Focus. The aim of this action was to highlight concerns over bus access to new residential developments where bus operators had experienced difficulties in access due to narrow roads and parked cars. The Borough questioned this action on the grounds that it did not take due account of local politics in relation to one specific local case. There were ongoing issues affecting this development.

BABUS representatives reviewed the background behind the decision to refer the subject to Passenger Focus. There was a long-standing and apparently growing problem with bus provision in new estates and with the application of S106 funding as at least three local cases had recently arisen. Clearly the issue was beyond the scope and competence of local groups such as BABUS, hence the decision to refer the matter to Passenger Focus at a national level in an attempt to obtain guidance.

Borough officers pointed out that, for new developments, there was clear guidance on provision of access to public transport in new estates.



However, some government pronouncements on the use of S106 and Community Infrastructure funds were not helpful to local authorities.

There was a detailed briefing by Borough officers on the timetable for the forthcoming closure of Bedford Bus Station. There had been a suggestion, at the eleventh hour, that the start date of the agreed closure plan should be modified. The Borough cited a range of problems that would arise from any change to the schedule.

BABUS representatives supported the Borough view, emphasising that passengers needed clarity from the outset and that good communication was at the core of the exercise. Borough officers described the arrangements for informing passengers from Day 1 of the transfer to the array of temporary bus stops. There would be an information kiosk together with mobile advisers operating across the wider area. Details of temporary bus stops would appear in local newspapers with leaflets available through key locations.

For rural bus routes in the Borough work to amend roadside information was in hand with some one-third of 300 panels being updated. Work on updating bus stop flags had not yet commenced.

Reference was made to planned changes on Stagecoach Route 50 and on GP service 68 in Kempston (for Ampthill Road Morrison's). An assessment of the impact of the Bus Station closure would be wise before

arriving at any conclusions suggesting further modifications.

## ADVERTISEMENT



### **! NEW OCTOBER 2013 EDITION ! Stagecoach East Fleet Handbook by Steven Knight Media**

If you have an interest in the buses that operate for Stagecoach (the vehicles) operating in our area, this book will certainly be of interest! It's a fully illustrated guide to the Stagecoach East fleet – that's Bedford, Cambridge, The Fens and Peterborough areas. Full colour photography is used throughout.

The book is £5.50 plus £1.00 postage/packaging, with cheques payable to HERE TO THERE PUBLISHING LTD please! (Sorry 80p cheque surcharge on less than £10)

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**Summary report of Grant Palmer**  
**Passenger Services and BABUS**  
**Liaison Meeting, 17 Dec 2013**

***By Peter G. Williams***

The main topic for discussion was Bedford Bus station refurbishment programme. Generally, most Grant Palmer North Beds rural services would transfer to Harpur Street (former Stop X) whilst the Bus Station was out of use. One exception was Service 27 which would use Stop R3, River Street in order to serve Bedford Midland railway station. Services 20 and 21 would use Stop E (Iceland); Services 42 would use Stop R2, River Street; Service 68 would use Stop R3.

BABUS reported on discussions with the Borough Council and with the new operations manager at Stagecoach in Bedford. We were generally reassured by these consultations although there were some outstanding concerns over the responsibility for the provision of advice and guidance to passengers during the construction period. Reference was made to by the Council to publish a 'wrap-around' for a weekly local newspaper and to provision of a stand in the town centre where information would be provided. BABUS reiterated their view that these arrangements needed to cover all operators and had to be in place from 'Day 1'.

BABUS representatives reported on an audit of bus stops being undertaken across Bedford town with particular reference to the quality of information provided at stops served by more than one operator. The exercise had been

delayed by the September 2013 changes.

Reference was made to the stop at Harrold Institute (Routes 25 and 26) and Route 29 where it was now understood that the stop at 45 Mill Road, Sharnbrook, would be a recognised time-tabled stop. Timings on Service 27 were likely to be eased in an attempt to improve reliability.

There was a broad discussion covering withdrawal of Route 45, the (re-) introduction of Stagecoach service 52 (Bedford-Cranfield-Milton Keynes) and the linkage with Route 73 (Bedford-Biggleswade via Sandy).

The matter of GP Service 42 and the Toddington Green connection with Centrebus Service E was reviewed. This connection provided a through service to/from Dunstable (White Lion Busway Stop) and Luton but was no longer guaranteed. Centrebus service E ran approximately every half hour. The return services did not provide for a connection.

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## **Changes to Stagecoach Bus Route 50 (Bedford – Kettering)**

*By John Smith*

From Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014, most weekday buses will be timed a few minutes later in each direction to improve timekeeping. In particular, the present 0852 and 0952 to Bedford will leave Sharnbrook, Swan, at 0900 and 1000, Monday - Friday. The last evening bus from Bedford will call at Bedford Railway Station at 2004 to provide a connection with the first evening off-peak train from London. New timetables can be had from Kettering Library, Bedford Central Library, Sharnbrook Post Office, and can also be downloaded from the BABUS website ([www.babus.org.uk](http://www.babus.org.uk)) timetable library.

## **Other Service Changes**

*By Suzy Scott*

While local minds will be set with one of the bus station redevelopments... Bedford, Northampton, Bletchley, and the rest... but in other areas, things have been more muted than usual. The key word certainly coming over is "reliability". Our operators have not yet gone as far as another major operator, not a million miles away, who cut services into two, over the last two years, to enhance reliability... only to go and join them back up again this year... so we can be thankful for small mercies!

One we omitted from Newsletter 20 was a vehicle type change – some new Enviro20D diesel buses for Bedford. These are an updated Euro5-engined version of the ubiquitous Darts that have charged around Bedford of late.

These have been bought for the Park & Ride Service 2 to give a refresh, as well as a bit more capacity. After an initial delay of some weeks (further to issues relating to their interior upon arrival in Bedford), they entered service in November 2013.

Another change that slipped under my radar (until picking up a new timetable I'd forgotten!) that the 81 from Bedford to Luton at 04.45 in the morning now runs at 04.35. This bus is usually a coach, as it works on to the 99, which has needed more time to get into MK.

Service X5 changed in January with some minor changes, and running times of up to 20 minutes longer than before. This should allow a more reliable service. However, having said that, just two weeks later, capacity problems were being encountered. There is now a duplicate coach on the 07.11 from Bedford to Cambridge, Monday to Friday, which will provide more seats.

Grant Palmer has made changes to Services 42, 44, 68 and 197, mostly for reliability. After the 197 picks up in the afternoon, it drops off only as required. The 42/44 now has up to ten minutes more running time, to more realistically match the demand. There are also rerouting around Kempston on the 68, tied into the new Morrison's store.

As we close for press, we hear that Centrebus have surrendered the Central Beds contract for Service 202 between Dunstable and Harpenden, from Spring 2014. Further details were not available at the time of going to press.

## Ivel Valley Walkers

The Ivel Valley Walkers were founded in 1984 and we celebrated our 25th anniversary in 2009. We currently have around 350 members, many of whom walk with us on a regular basis. Members of other local groups often join us too, knowing they will get a good walk and a friendly welcome. We regularly welcome new people on our walks and many go on to become members. A good number of walks are planned for the coming months, the majority accessible by public transport. Please contact the numbers given or visit **[www.ivelvalleywalkers.co.uk](http://www.ivelvalleywalkers.co.uk)**

- Sun 10:00 am & 1:45 pm **Three**  
2.3 **Hills Circular & A Walk on The Wildside.** Ridgmont Train Station SP965373 7 & 6 miles. Barry 01234 353704 or 07860 348347 on the day
- Wed 10:00 am **'NIMBY'**  
5.3 **walk.** Biggleswade, Dan Albone car park (near Sainsburys). TL187453 6 miles. See Langford's Wind Farm at close range. Antony 01767 601969 or 07857 890829 on the day
- Fri 10:05 am **Bus to**  
7.3 **Walk.** Cranfield, Vale Court stop. SP966428 9 miles. Bedford Bus Station, bus 52 at 9:30. Tony S 01234 831388
- Sun 10:00 am Woburn, car park  
9.3 opposite Church. SP950332 12 miles. Bob & Celia 01234 768011 or 07710 768282
- Tue 10:00 am Ampthill Park West car  
11.3 park . TL024382 12 miles. Bob & Celia 01234 768011 or 07710 768282

- Wed 10:00 am Keysoe Row, Village  
12.3 Hall. TL083612 7 miles. Nick W 01234 210437 or 07950 673657
- Thu 10:00 am **Weekday**  
13.3 **Amble.** Sharpenhoe Clappers car park. TL065296 4 miles. Carol 01582 882628
- Sun 10:00 am & 1:45 pm Old  
16.3 Warden Village Hall car park. TL138440 8.5 & 3.5 miles. Marcus 01462 812005 or 07417 498199 on the day
- Wed 10:00 am Ayot Green car park,  
19.3 on right after Ayot Green on Ayot St Peter Rd. TL221144 6 miles. Ian 01462 812294 or 07866 389443
- Fri 10:45 am **Bus to**  
21.3 **Walk,** Bromham, Oakley and Stevington. Bromham Mill. TL010507 6 miles. Bedford Bus Station 10:15, nr 41 from bay 11. Val B 07527 052095
- Sun 08:30 am **Foxton Locks, NW**  
23.3 **of Market**  
**Harborough.** Bedford Park gates at the top of De Parys Avenue. TL050506 11 miles. Shared transport. Parking fee at Foxton. Tony S 01234 831388
- Tue 10:30 am Note late  
25.3 start. Burroughs Green, Church Lane. On B1061 from Newmarket. TL637554 12 miles. Discover source of river Stour. Antony 01767 601969 or 07857 890829 on the day
- Wed 10:00 am Waresley Woods CP .  
26.3 TL256550 6 miles. Off Waresley to Great Gransden road. (max vehicle height 2.1m). Sheila 01480 392223 or 07885 615595

Thu 10:00 am **Weekday**  
 27.3 **Amble.** Lilley, Cassel Memorial Hall car park, near church. TL119263 4 miles. Park to left of car park entrance. Julia 01462 672321 or 07840 707924

Sun 10:00 am & 2:00 pm Ashridge  
 30.3 Estate Visitor Centre, near Bridgewater Monument. SP970130 7 & 5 miles. Nick M 07803 125876

## April

Wed 10:00 am **Walk to**  
 2.4 **RSPB.** Biggleswade, Dan Albone car park (near Sainsburys). TL187453 7 miles. Marcus 01462 812005 or 07417 498199 on the day

Fri 11:30 am **Bus to**  
 4.4 **Walk,** Delightful village, river, country estate and rolling countryside. Sherrington, The Green, corner of High St and Church Rd. SP887464 6.5 miles. Bedford Bus Station bus 40 at 10:45, nr 40 Stagecoach from gate 11. Marcus 01462 812005 or 07417 498199 on the day

Sun 10:00 am Letchworth, Wilbury  
 6.4 Hills Picnic Site car park. TL200326 13 miles. Graham 01462 711751 or 07776 430750

Tue 10:00 am Sharnbrook village car  
 8.4 park, opposite post office. SP995596 12 miles. Val B 07527 052095

Wed 10:00 am Lilley, Cassel Memorial  
 9.4 Hall car park, near church. TL119263 6 miles. Julia 01462 672321 or 07840 707924

Thu 10:00 am **Weekday**  
 10.4 **Amble.** Biggleswade, park at end of Dunton Lane . TL204435 5 miles. (no through road off A6001 London Road, next to BP petrol station). Antony 01767 601969 or 07857 890829 on the day

Thu 10:00 am **Ripple.** East Area.  
 10.4 Sutton Bridleway 8 clearance. Point of contact Andrew G willam 0300 3006544. Meet at High Street near John O'Gaunt Public House

Sun 10:00 am & 2:00  
 13.4 pm Riseley, High Street near the former Five Bells PH. TL040627 7 & 5 miles. Sue & Bob 01234 823974 or 07849 827049

Wed 10:00 am Ampthill Park, west car  
 16.4 park. TL024382 7 miles. Jim 01525 405344 or 07966 735318

Fri 10:00 am **Good**  
 18.4 **Friday.** Dunstable Downs - Chiltern Gateway Centre. TL008194 9 miles. Car park charge (free to National Trust members). Nick M 07803 125876

Sun 10:00 am Maulden Woods. Car  
 20.4 park off A6 north of Clophill. TL073394 12 miles. Jim 01525 405344 or 07966 735318

Mon 08:30 am **Easter**  
 21.4 **Monday,** London Parks & Heaths; Golders Green to Westminster. Bedford Railway Station. TL041497 9 miles. 8.48 train (Flitwick 8:58); Group Save return for 4 people £10 at 2013 prices Tony S 01234 831388

- Tue 10:00 am Ashridge Estate Visitor  
22.4 Centre, near Bridgewater Monument. SP970130 13 miles. Marcus 01462 812005 or 07417 498199 on the day
- Wed 10:00 am **Bluebell**  
23.4 **Walk.** Wootton, park carefully in Hall End Road near Chequers PH. TL001457 6.5 miles. Martin 01234 767876 or 07761 209981 on the day
- Thu 10:00 am **Weekday**  
24.4 **Amble.** Maulden. The Brache (Road beside the ground). TL051381 4.5 miles. Bruce 01525 402885
- Fri 11:30 **Bus to Walk** St Neots,  
25.4 Market Square X5 Stop E. TL181602 6.5 miles. Bedford Bus Station X5, Stop E 10:55 bus to St Neots . Pat P 01480216029
- Sat 10:00 am **Ripple.** East Area.  
26.4 Sutton Bridleway 9 clearance. Point of contact Andrew Gwillam 0300 3006544. Meet at High Street near John O'Gaunt Public House
- Sun 10:00 am & 2:00 pm Weston,  
27.4 Herts. (near A1M Jn 9). Maiden Street near duck pond. TL259301 7.5 & 5 miles. Mike C 01462 491032 or 07815 939549
- Wed 10:00 am **Cowslip**  
30.4 **Walk.** Radwell Meadows Country Park, off Nortonbury Lane near Letchworth. TL234349 7 miles. Antony 01767 601969 or 07857 890829 on the day

## **Your Shout – For Your Views**

No matter how much we write here, or how many people we have on the Committee, we cannot see all, do all Committee Members do like to hear feedback of things good and bad, so we've decided to open up a space on every Newsletter for your views.

This could be your views on BABUS as a group – how are we doing as a society, what could we improve, or give you that we don't already?

This will also include Bus Services – have drivers been missing stops regularly, not running to time, or have there been other problems?

This section will also cover Council issues like bus stop and shelter provisioning, timetable displays etc.

While we cannot promise an instant fix, this Newsletter does go to our Corporate members, and we can always raise matters at council and operator liaison meetings. So, get in touch;

**BABUS Newsletter – Your Shout**  
**Miss Suzy Scott**  
**Apartment 4**  
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**WELWYN GARDEN CITY**  
**AL8 6PD**

You can also email us at **suzy.scott@babus.org.uk** with a Subject Line of **Your Shout/BABUS** or something similar. All communications to Your Shout will be considered for publication. The Editor reserves the right to edit, snip, or reformat letters.



## **Got a friend who wants to join us?**

On these two pages, you will see an abbreviation of our current Membership Brochure. Feel free to cut out these two pages, and present it to a friend who may be interested in joining us!

## **BABUS - the group for everyone who uses the bus!**

**BABUS** (short for Bedford Area Bus Users' Society) was founded in November 2005, and is one of a growing number of voluntary local bus user groups, operating across the country. Our aims are threefold;

- ♦ **to represent the interests of bus users who either live, work or travel through the Bedford area**
- ♦ **to encourage people to use buses**
- ♦ **to act as a focal point between bus users, bus companies and local authorities**

BABUS has an interest in all bus services operating in Bedford Borough, and most of Central Bedfordshire. BABUS is affiliated to Bus Users UK, the national watchdog for bus passengers, and liaises with several other groups which have areas bordering our own.

Members receive a regular newsletter, and invitations to meetings. Volunteer Committee Members help to keep the Society going, and every little helps, if you feel you may like to do something to help the Society.

If you have access to the Internet, either at home or at a library, café etc. you will be able to access our website, **[www.babus.org.uk](http://www.babus.org.uk)** including a Bulletin Board and Timetable Library.

BABUS is involved in lobbying for better bus services, user facilities, passenger information, such as;

- ♦ **Redevelopment of bus stations to meet the needs of bus users,**
- ♦ **Integration between bus & rail services,**
- ♦ **Provision of bus shelters and timetable information,**
- ♦ **Expanding Park & Ride facilities,**
- ♦ **Easy access to buses,**
- ♦ **Improved services in rural areas,**
- ♦ **Real-time information on running times**

BABUS works with its members and get involved in bus related issues that concerns you. You will enjoy the benefits of a lobbying group with a proven record of airing and solving local bus issues. So, what have we done recently?

- ♦ **Campaigning by us successfully brought buses into Bedford Bus Station. Previously, passengers for some Grant Palmer services had to cross the main road, and Cedar Coaches passengers had to walk to Harpur Street. So we suggested taxis should be covered by an extended area around Greyfriars near the shopping centre. Now, all buses – regardless of the operator – can fit into the Bus Station.**
- ♦ **We've also been involved in discussions regarding the new Bus Station site, taking a longer term approach to today's problems that exist for bus users.**
- ♦ **We were involved, through liaison meetings, in the development of revised rural services north of Bedford, and a new look commercial Stagecoach network around the town.**
- ♦ **We have worked with like-minded user groups that border our area, and helped to inspire those wishing to start their own.**
- ♦ **We conducted a comprehensive review of every rural bus stop in Bedford Borough, reporting where problems existed, or out of date information was still displayed. We've also helped to work on a Bus Stop Defect Card to make reporting even easier.**

### Got a friend who wants to join us?

On these two pages, you will see an abbreviation of our current Membership Brochure. Feel free to cut out these two pages, and present it to a friend who may be interested in joining us!

## Membership Form – For A Friend

I would like to join BABUS. Payment is enclosed in full (payable to **BABUS**).  
You can join online via PayPal, credit or debit card, if you visit **www.babus.org.uk**  
**If you are a group that requires to be invoiced, or wish to pay by BACS,  
please ask for information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Annual fee enclosed (tick correct box)

☐ INDIVIDUAL £5 per year

☐ FAMILY £5 per family per year please add these additional names

☐ ORGANISATION £12 per year

Membership is subject to the Terms & Conditions, such as our Constitution. In accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act, please sign and date below to give your consent to your details being held on computer.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Next, simply tear off these two pages from the Newsletter, and post to;**

Mr Simon Norton  
BABUS Membership  
6 Hertford Street  
CAMBRIDGE CB1 1AA

**If you require a paper receipt, please enclose a SAE.**

**Arriva to run world's most demanding electric bus route – in Milton Keynes**

***Below from Arriva press office. Thanks to Peter Ballantyne for supplying some background on the launch. He reports that the first trip appeared to take considerably more time than scheduled, (do I sense the drivers didn't want to break them?) What is, however, not quote explainable is the fact several have been delayed on the ferry over from Northern Ireland, following recent severe weather around the coast!***



Baroness Kramer, the Minister of State for Transport, officially launched an all-electric bus route that will test whether electric buses can perform on a par with their diesel counterparts in a real-world operational environment. The buses will run for five years in a carefully-monitored programme, which will objectively assess their technical and commercial viability.

Eight electric buses will take over a route that even diesel buses find demanding, running seventeen hours a day, seven days a week, with each bus covering over 56,000 miles per year. However, the Milton Keynes electric buses have a special technological advantage to help them meet the rigours of their route: wireless charging. Instead of plugging into the mains, the new buses will be able to recharge their batteries wirelessly during their working day. This means they can run a

continuous service for a whole seventeen hours, just like a diesel bus.

The concept is simple: wireless charging plates set into the road transfer power directly to receiving plates underneath the bus, using a technique based on the principles of electrical induction. In just ten minutes, a bus parked over a charging point will replenish two-thirds of the energy consumed on its fifteen-mile route. Only two wireless charging points are needed to service all eight buses, which will charge in the time scheduled for driver breaks. The eight electric buses have important environmental benefits: they will remove approximately five tonnes of particulates and noxious tailpipe emissions from the city's streets each year and approximately 270 tonnes of CO2 per year from the atmosphere. As the UK electricity supply becomes greener in future years, the CO2 savings from the continuing operation of electric buses on this route could increase to more than 680 tonnes per year.

**Thank to everyone for all your contributions.**

**Over the next three pages, you will find details of the stopping arrangements at Bedford Bus Station during refurbishment work (already in use) plus the Northampton City Centre arrangements (from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014).**

***Suzy***

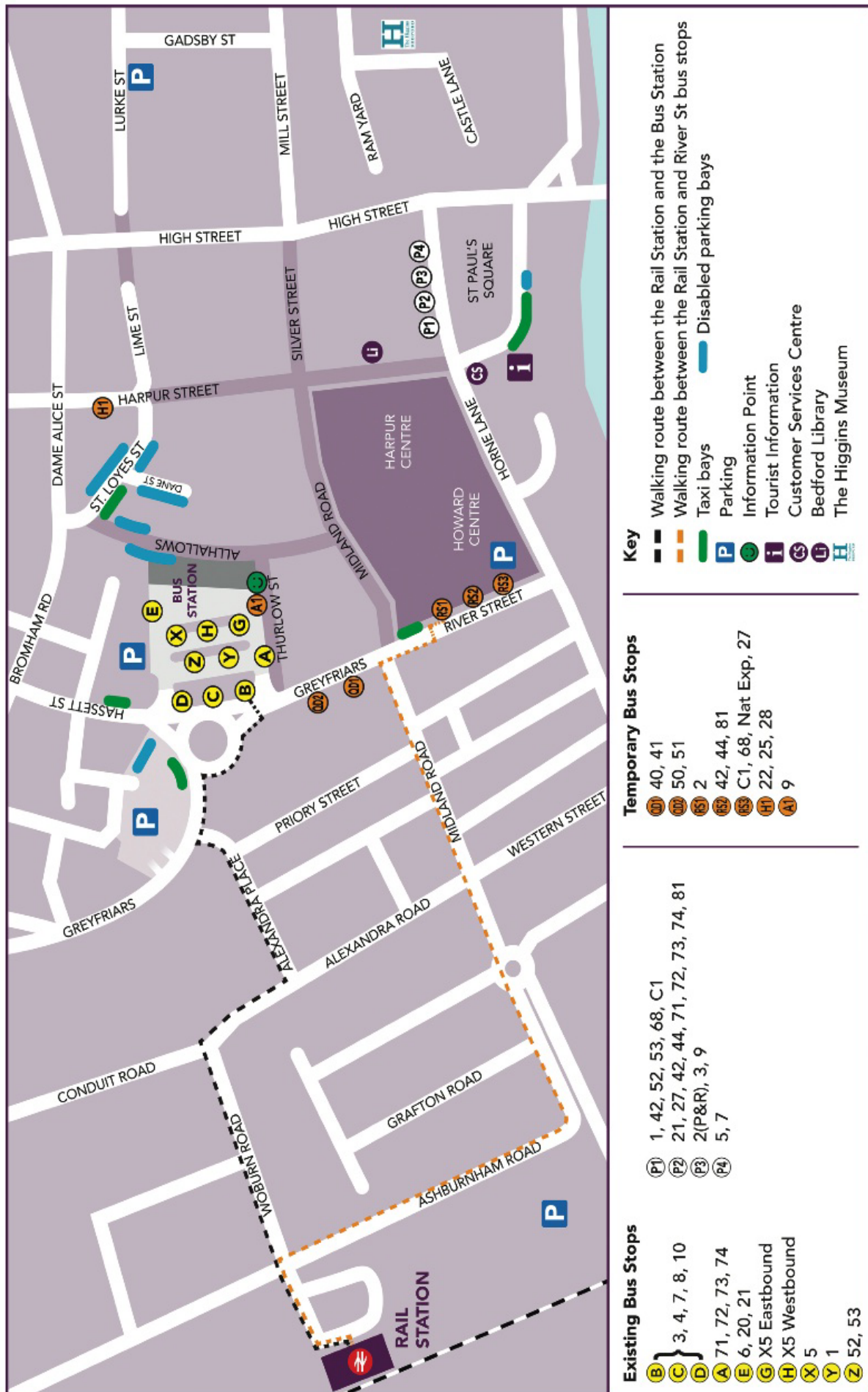
# Bedford Bus Station – Stopping Arrangements from 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014

## Where to Catch Your Bus

Service No.	Destination	Town Centre Bus Stops	Service No.	Destination	Town Centre Bus Stops
1	Kempston	Y (P1)	40	Milton Keynes via Bromham	001
2(P&R)	Elstow Park & Ride	031 P3	41	Northampton	001
3	Fenlake	B / C / D * (P3)	42	Dunstable (Grant Palmer)	032 P1 P2
4	Goldington (Tesco) via Wendover Drive	B / C / D * (P4)	42	Flitwick (Stagecoach)	032 P1
5	Elms Farm (Norse Road)	X (P4)	44	Flitwick/Silsoe	032 P2
6	Brickhill	E	50	Kettering	002
7	Woodside	B / C / D * (P4)	51	Oakley/Rushden	002
8	Great Denham	B / C / D *	52	Milton Keynes via Marston Moretaine & Cranfield	Z P1
9	Shortstown	A1 P3	53	Wootton	Z P1
10	Goldington (Tesco) via Putnoe	B / C / D *	68	Stewartby	033 P1
20	Woodlands Estate via Larkway	E	71	Hitchin via Henlow Camp	A P2
21	Woodlands Estate via Larkway	E	72	Hitchin via Arlesey	A P2
21	Abbeyfields	E P2	73	Biggleswade via Willington & Sandy	A P2
22 Bedford Shopper	North Bedford Estates/Yelden	H1	74	Biggleswade via Cople	A P2
25	Harrold/Sharnbrook/Rushden	H1	81	Luton	032 P2
27	Wilden via Goldington Green	033	C1	Milton Keynes via Wootton & Cranfield	033 P1
27	Wilden via Willington	033 P2	X5	Cambridge	G
28	Kimbolton via Riseley	H1	X5	Oxford	H
28	Bolnhurst via Little Staughton	H1	305/314	Liverpool/Southport & Clacton-on-Sea (National Express)	033

\* Please note for services 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 your bus may leave from either Bus Stop marked B/C/D – the bus will pull in at the first available stop nearest the front.

# Bedford Bus Station – Stopping Arrangements from 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014





**Northampton Town Centre & new Bus Station**  
**Stopping Arrangements from 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2014 – 41 to Bedford from Stop 14**

