
Newsletter of BABUS-Bedford Area Bus Users' Society Summer 2010

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AGM ELECTIONS

Peter Williams of Clifton has agreed to be acting chairman of BABUS as well as Treasurer. Godfrey Willis was confirmed as Secretary. He lives in Bromham and is an extensive user of buses in the area and further afield. In the past, Godfrey has served as Secretary for a shipping society (firstly as London Branch Secretary and then as National Secretary) and so has relevant experience of what this kind of job entails.

BULLETIN BOARD

About half of BABUS individual members do not have access to the internet and cannot visit our website or engage in discussions on the electronic bulletin boards. It is possible to give an indication of the level of use of these facilities. Perhaps the following information might prompt other members to consider how they might use these services, possibly, for example, via the computing facilities available at their local public library.

19 members are registered to use the service and some 460 messages have been posted on the electronic bulletin boards since re-launch some 15 months ago. Over 100 separate topics have been discussed across the 7 bulletin boards. Some of the information is open to the general public.

The most popular topics discussed are: Central Bedfordshire bus services; X5 timekeeping; Biggleswade Town Plan; Luton-Dunstable guided busway; and, Destination displays on buses.

For enquiries, contact BABUS through the website at <http://babus.org.uk> or on the BABUS Enquiry Line on 0870 486 1369 (24 hour answering and fax service). If you leave a message and would like us to call you back, please leave a landline telephone number. We regret we may not be able to respond to mobile numbers. You may also send a fax to 0870 486 1369.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership year runs from 1 April until the following 31 March. **To continue to receive all the benefits of membership**, renew your membership by sending a cheque for £3 (£12 for group membership) payable to **BABUS**, to the Membership Secretary, Simon Norton, 6 Hertford Street, Cambridge, CB4 3AG. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a receipt by post; alternatively ask for a receipt by email.

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Chairman's report to AGM 5 June 2010

By John Yunnie, Chairman, BABUS

In making my Chairman's report, I would firstly like to thank you all for attending today and secondly thank all the members of the BABUS Executive Committee for their efforts during the past year and for their support of me during my term of office.

We started the year in a difficult situation in that the AGM twelve months ago was unable to appoint someone to the very important role as our Secretary; arguably the most important job on the Committee. Throughout the remainder of 2009, I attempted to fill both my own position as Chairman and that of Secretary but there is no doubt that this proved to be an impossible task, especially as it coincided with a rapid decline in health for both my mother and another family member for whom my wife and I had responsibility and leading eventually to the death of both elderly ladies at the beginning of 2010. As a consequence, some of the things that BABUS had hoped to do during the latter part of 2009 were delayed.

During this time, a member did come forward with an offer to take on the role of Secretary and I must place on record my thanks to Rachel Okello for having done so. However, she had hardly taken up the role and attended one meeting when she was offered a University place away from Bedford and had to stand down. Another appeal to members for someone to fill the vacancy was then answered by Godfrey Willis whose offer to become our Secretary was accepted by the Exec Committee at their meeting on 6 March this year. Prior to that, Godfrey had already attended a meeting between BABUS and the two Unitary Authorities with whom we now liaise in an 'acting' capacity as Secretary and, in the short time he has been in post, has proved a great asset to BABUS with his enthusiasm and wide knowledge of the local 'bus scene'.

During the twelve months since our last AGM, we have continued to liaise with our major local bus operator, Stagecoach, and with both Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils. I would like to thank Zoë Paget at Stagecoach, Chris Pettifer at Bedford Borough and Simon Ayres at Central Bedfordshire for their cooperation in enabling these liaison meetings to take place. Matters we believe to be of importance to our members are raised at these meetings and, although we do not always achieve what we believe to be total success, we

do think that they are a very useful forum. However, it became apparent during the year that the long standing arrangement whereby any member of the Exec Committee who was available attended such meetings was becoming a problem in that, on some occasions, there were simply too many people in attendance for an effective debate to take place. In view of this, we resolved at a Committee meeting last autumn that, in future, only a small group of no more than four or five members of the Executive will attend any given liaison meeting with our partners. This has already been put into effect and the early signs are that it is producing more effective and productive meetings.

Beginning in January, BABUS, has been engaged in two major exercises aimed at improving the lot of bus users. Firstly, we set about visiting virtually every rural parish in the Bedford Borough area to establish what information about bus services (timetables, maps etc.) is on display at bus stops, on parish notice boards and anywhere else in the village where such information might be provided. This work was led by Godfrey Willis who put an immense amount of time and effort into the task. What it revealed was a horror story of poor quality information with long out of date timetables (sometimes for bus routes that no longer exist), bus stop flags showing, again, routes that ceased to operate long ago or telephone numbers for enquiries that are not now valid. A particular point of note is that when significant new bus services are launched, such as the North Beds Dart network a few years ago, sums of money are expended on smart new bus stops and timetable displays. However, if the service is not successful and subsequently withdrawn, no attempt is made to remove the outdated information which can linger on for years, giving a quite incorrect impression as to what bus services now operate. This project was extended to cover those parts of Central Bedfordshire that used to form Mid Beds and here a similar situation was exposed by Peter Williams, Peter Hirst, Alan Sprod and Godfrey Willis. A detailed report of our findings is being provided to both Councils and we have been pleased to learn that Bedford Borough has taken on two members of staff tasked with updating the situation in their area. We hope that Central Bedfordshire will also be able to take some effective action to also improve things. People cannot be expected to use buses if details of when they run are not easily

available. Timetable booklets and the internet all have a place but do not remove the need for clear information to be available 'on the ground'.

The second major activity has been our involvement with Bedford Borough's Rural Transport Review. We were kindly invited to send representatives to both the initial meetings held for Parish Council representatives in early February and then, to have a BABUS representative travel with the bus that visited parishes in April and early May so that local people could discuss their needs from the bus service in their area. It was stressed throughout this exercise that the objective is to provide a better, more appropriate bus service to the rural parts of the borough than is available at present. Where it is found that existing route patterns and timings no longer suit people's needs, there may well be significant changes but all against a background of the council seeking to get better value for the £900k+ that is used to support these otherwise loss making services rather than to cut the overall level of support. In other words, potentially more buses than now but at a lower cost per journey made.

At the most recent meeting of the Executive Committee, we considered the area in which BABUS is effectively able to operate since that had never been fully defined and we have never been very active in the far west and south west of the county. We agreed that we will aim to represent bus users throughout the Bedford Borough area and also within that part of Central Bedfordshire that used to be within the former Mid Beds District. Where routes from within those areas extend beyond their boundaries, we will, of course, have an interest in the whole route and there are a few minor caveats that I will not bore you with at this morning. However, we firmly believe that by focusing on the areas I have described, we will become a more effective organisation.

Finally, my wife and I have decided to move away from the area and, in view of this, I will not be standing for re-election as BABUS Chairman later in the meeting. I have found my two years as a member of the BABUS Exec to be of great interest, especially the past year as your Chairman. Having lived in or near Bedford for most of my adult life, I shall always have a great interest in the bus services in the area so intend to remain a member of BABUS even though I will no longer be living close by. At the end of my term of office, I close by again thanking my colleagues on the Exec Committee for their

support during the past year and wish my successor, whoever that may be, every success in the future.

SUMMARY OF GRANT PALMER'S ADDRESS TO BABUS A.G.M.

Grant Palmer, the proprietor of Grant Palmer Passenger Services, opened by thanking the Society for inviting him to attend.

His bus and coach business is based in Dunstable and his involvement in transport had been in that area throughout his career.

In the early 1990's his father had a coach business in the area but following competition with Luton and Dunstable who, in turn, became Arriva he sold the business in 1994, he himself, continuing to work for Arriva as an engineer at Dunstable depot looking after 34 vehicles. Promotion took him to the Arriva garage at Garston (Watford) which housed 146 vehicles.

He recommenced a business of his own in 1999 from small beginnings. His initial fleet consisted of two Atlantean Double Decks purchased from Stafford and renovated at High Wycombe - these were used on school contract work for Bucks C.C. He returned to the Luton area in July 2000 after winning school contract journeys to and from Harlington Upper School and buying a third vehicle.

At this point he made his break into Stage Carriage services by operating Route 3 - a circular service in Luton using Mercedes midi buses. The winning of route 202 and other school contracts saw the business grow. A major boost came from the winning of services in Leighton Buzzard as the contraction of the "Big" operators benefited the likes of him and Centrebus.

In 2004 he purchased the existing premises in Dunstable which allowed all vehicles to be housed under cover.

He currently owns 34 vehicles and has a staff of 63 with contracts in Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire and routes covering a large area. Although not a player in North Beds he noted that he had recently moved to near Sharnbrook!

Turning to the future he pointed out that Government funding will decide this, concessionary fares will play a large part and that these must be passed to operators. Massive increases in fuel costs caused a £2,500 rise in his bill over the previous year.

There is a future for bus services, they need a higher profile and the going will be tough.

There then followed a discussion session with topics ranging from his premises at Dunstable, through staff relations to bidding outside his current area.

BREAKING NEWS

Following the recent review conducted by Bedford Borough Council and after studying the feedback from the Stewartby area, changes to bus services will take place from 26th September. Existing Stagecoach Route 168 will be replaced by a more frequent service of ten round trips on weekdays between Bedford, Kempston and Stewartby operated by Grant Palmer (route number not yet allocated). Two trips in each direction will serve the ends of Kempston Rural Parish giving a 100% increase in journeys over this meandering section. Timings have been produced to cater for people working in Bedford plus shopping journeys and serving Wootton doctor's surgery -the first inward journey being 07:15 from Stewartby with the last back at 17:45. In the return direction buses will stop where safe to do so within Stewartby village. The down side is the loss of the section of 168 to Marston and Lidlington although the former has the hourly V1 service to and from Bedford. Lidlington has an hourly rail service.

BABUS in Action (1)

When the bus lane was devised for inbound services in Bedford Kingsway the traffic lights controlling the junction with St John's Link were intended to allow priority for buses over traffic coming into Bedford off the London Road-Ropewalk-Amphill Road roundabout. The scheme never worked as intended so bus drivers rarely used the bus lane, preferring instead to use the centre or right-hand lanes. BABUS made representations to the former County Council in February 2008 over this unsatisfactory situation. It is good, therefore, to report that, at long last, the Borough Council has now taken action to ensure phasing of the traffic lights, thus giving buses priority over other traffic. This phasing should also improve road safety by reducing potentially conflicting movements between buses and other road users.

BABUS in Action (2)

Did you see the letter to the editor in a recent *Bedfordshire on Sunday* from our secretary

Godfrey Willis? He wrote about the problem of the Arriva buses and Stagecoach coinciding in bay 9 of the bus station. If only BABUS had been informed in advance we could have checked with the bus companies about this problem. Indeed he received a pen for the star letter donated by Lane Holmes. Congratulations to Godfrey!

JOINT LIAISON MEETING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES 20 May 2010

From a report by Godfrey Willis

The Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Area Bus Users' Society joint Liaison Meeting was held at Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, on Thursday 20 May 2010.

Present were John Yunnie (BABUS Chairman - in the Chair), Chris Pettifer (Head of Transport Operations, Bedford Borough Council), Simon Ayres (Head of Transport Central Bedfordshire Council), Stephen Sleight (Transport Officer, Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership) and three other members of BABUS Committee including the secretary Godfrey Willis.

Under matters arising, the Chair said there was still no change in the Rope Walk bus stop position and the latest position re Templars Way, Sharnbrook was not known. Bedford Borough would investigate this.

The situation regarding the "unsafe" stop on the Bridge at Arlesey Rail Station had moved on and the Central Bedfordshire representative informed the meeting that a contract had been let for a revised service 90 from 9 August 2010. The associated timetable does not permit certain journeys to divert to the Old Oak entrance to the station so the stops on the bridge will have to be used. A site meeting had confirmed that to change the layout would cost between £50k and £60k which was not tenable: in respect of Stagecoach services the problem seems insoluble.

The situation regarding the updating of the old timetable information at many rural locations in the Borough Council area is now in hand and two people are being employed for six months to do "a blitz" of such information and remove as necessary. The old "Dart" flags will be replaced by a standard bus stop sign. Until the Central Bedfordshire Council rural bus service review is completed, obsolete information will remain in their area.

Plans for future of bus services

Bedford Borough Council reported that with no Kickstart funding now available, enhancements to weekend and evening services were unlikely. On a positive note following a visit by Brian Souter, the founder of Stagecoach, to Bedford and a meeting with Councillors, the relationship between Stagecoach and the council had improved and good progress was being made in certain areas. A further meeting was planned to discuss evening services particularly for returning rail commuters.

New Town service 10 was expected to start in August running between Woodlands Estate (Brickhill) the Black Tom area and the Railway Station: it will need two vehicles to operate the frequency planned. There are still plans for a Sunday town service pattern to replicate weekdays but it will not now receive any government kickstart funding.

Trials have been undertaken using buses fuelled by new fuels.

Turning to the Rural Review, a bus surgery had been held in many villages (using a Bedford Borough Council bus) and questionnaires had been issued to individuals. Some locations had been very well attended and the final date for receipt of completed questionnaires had been extended to 11 June.

BABUS officers had spent time riding with the vehicle and were appreciative of being present and to being part of the debate. Bedford was asked to share the outcome of the questionnaire responses in due course.

When questioned on other follow up matters the Bedford Borough representative replied that a further meeting would be held with Parish Councils, probably in mid July and discussions would take place with relevant operators.

It was thought that no meeting had been held with Road Runner re their services and asked that Bedford do so as soon as possible.

The Central Bedfordshire Council (C.B.C.) representative advised that recent events within the authority were the visit of the Transport Minister for which no written account had been seen, the approval of the Luton - Dunstable Guided Busway but this was now subject to the new government's approval and the ongoing full review of Transport in Central Beds being undertaken by consultants TAS which was covering everything from school transport to

mobility vehicles and public services. The report was not yet complete.

Following the recent meeting with Stagecoach the Bedford Borough report had been passed to them with a view to correcting commercial service information and it had in due course been forwarded to the marketing people based in Northampton.

The issue of updating service information for other operators shown on a Stagecoach flag remains unresolved

Publications Update

New publications for Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard areas dated May 2010 are now available and copies were passed to those who had not yet seen them. A reissue of Flitwick and Ampthill area is due shortly.

BABUS asked for a complete list of C.B.C publications and were advised:

- Flitwick and Ampthill
- Biggleswade and Sandy
- Shefford
- Dunstable
- Leighton Buzzard and Woburn
- Complete area map

Bedford Rail Station relocation

The absence of Kickstart funding had put the linking of the rail station and town centre by regular bus on hold although plans to increase commuter services were noted. A series of recent meetings on the station redevelopment plans had highlighted the generous bus interchange facilities being provided but with the less than generous bus service in offering.

The extension of the Elstow Park and Ride to the rail station would at least be a start and Bedford Borough was asked to consider this

There were five items: of other business:

- the recent weekend closure of the A6 north of Sharnbrook Roundabout had been a disaster for bus services.
- The BABUS Chair advised that the future BABUS geographical area would exclude the Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard, Woburn area to enable the committee to capably cover the remainder of the former county and

address issues arising in a meaningful manner.

- Public Transport details were now displayed within Borough Hall well away from reception; hopefully with the imminent relocation of Central Bedfordshire Council this can be rectified.
- Bedford Borough suggested that at the next meeting the local authority representatives could advise the effects any new government policies would have on public transport.

MEETING WITH STAGECOACH EAST

From a report by Godfrey Willis

BABUS held a meeting with Stagecoach on 17 May 2010 at Bedford Bus Station

Present were Zoë Paget (Operations Manager, Stagecoach East), Steve Loveridge (Stagecoach East) with John Yunnie (BABUS Chairman, in the Chair), Colin Franklin (BABUS Vice-Chair), Godfrey Willis (BABUS Committee Secretary) and Stephen Sleight (Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership Officer).

The Chair raised the issue of notification of problems in winter weather, flooded roads in the Ouse Valley and planned road closures for repairs. There appeared to be no means of advising potential passengers of disrupted services, revised routing or consistency of such routing. This had been a major issue in some villages on the recent "Rural Review" tour by the Borough Council.

Stagecoach responded that in respect of flooding they were reliant on police advice as to state of roads along with information supplied by drivers of first journeys. Different vehicle types are affected in different ways and re-rostering can help. The Northampton helpline number has details of disruptions. It was requested that clear instructions be given to M50 drivers regarding the alternative route in Milton Ernest being via Radwell Road and New Road to reduce the walk for Radwell and Felmersham customers.

Discussion returned to the helpline number which does not make clear to callers that there is a queue and enquirers ring off thinking no-one is answering. Stagecoach advised that with the requirement for total introduction of low floor single deck vehicles by 2015 and double deck by 2017 this would change the inter availability position and thus would need to amend some

disruption plans. Turning to pre-planned road closures for repair/maintenance the Chairman was very concerned that during the recent weekend closure of the A6 north of Sharnbrook roundabout and despite his personally having advised Stagecoach, no publicity was available for intending passengers. It was known people bound for Bedford stood at Sharnbrook unaware that the stop was not being served. Furthermore the first inward 125 journey had run as booked until Knotting Turn at which point it could proceed no further – no other buses served Knotting, Melchbourne and Yelden all day.

The official chain of information was not clear and BABUS would be raising this aspect at a forthcoming meeting with Bedford Borough Council but, as (i) he had advised Stagecoach and (ii) there were large digital displays on the A6 in advance of the work so it was amazing no publicity had been posted by the company. Stagecoach responded that there had been conflicting information supplied by the local authority and it had been suggested that buses would be allowed through – posters had been supplied but it was apparent they were not posted at stops.

As this type of work is becoming more common with the state of roads in the area the issue needs addressing urgently.

BABUS asked if any other similar situations were forthcoming in the near future and the A428 slip road closure at Wyboston was mentioned. The Travel Shop had details but with its hours of opening not coincident with the road closure times this is of limited value.

Bus Stop Information:

The secretary Godfrey Willis introduced this item following the detailed survey BABUS has undertaken in rural areas as part of the B.B.C review. Stagecoach information was far superior to that of any other operator in the area but there was an issue where the main flag has been erected by Stagecoach and reference is made to other operators' service numbers which also serve the stop but quickly are out of date. Clarification was sought re:

- (a) Who can add/delete/amend such subordinate information?
- (b) Is there a process for keeping it up to date?

BABUS accepted that "other" operators could change their service numbers and routes without reference to Stagecoach but it turned good intentions into meaningless data. Godfrey will forward a copy of the report submitted to

Bedford Borough Council to Stagecoach, who will forward to Northampton as appropriate.

Allocation of Bus Station bay space:

Biggleswade – Five or six operators use this location and bays are located on three sides of a square building. Several routes are at the Bus Station together offering interchange facilities and around 13:30 virtually all are present except Stagecoach which causes traffic problems. There is a marked reluctance to use the empty Stagecoach bay.

Stagecoach advised that the location is managed by Biggleswade Town Council and one side is not reserved for Stagecoach. The reluctance to use it probably stems from the ultimate departure exit from the Bus Station as this bay only serves High Street. He added that Stagecoach often have problems with other operators vehicles taking a long layover here.

Bedford – the revised Milton Keynes services now operated by Arriva are shown to use bay 9 between c xx25 and xx35, this clearly conflicts with long standing P1 times (see later item also). Locally the Arriva services had been sent to Bay 1 which in itself causes elements of conflict with Grant Palmer services plus J2 and V1 which can be in the same location at similar times.

Stagecoach confirmed that bays 1 and 2 are very busy and that an exercise is underway to see if bays can be reallocated to different services but it is advisable to keep routes to similar areas together (no longer applies to Bromham etc with P1 on Bay 9 and 1A,1C on bay 1). Timetable changes to cope with peak hour traffic may affect this situation also. It appeared that Arriva “assumed” Bay 9 would be fine.

Buses serving the relocated Bedford Rail Station:

The BABUS Vice-Chairman had attended meetings and an exhibition relating to redevelopment of the railway station. There are two schemes of work:

- (i) The Network Rail sponsored plan for relocating the station to the south utilising the existing Focus D.I.Y.
- (ii) The Borough Council scheme for the station quarter redevelopment which includes Ashburnham Rd and Ford End Bridge.

The Borough Council scheme includes a bus interchange facility of 6 bays, 3 in each direction and adjacent to the new station buildings. With the anticipated increase in commuters BABUS

asked what bus services were planned to use this facility.

Stagecoach views are that the station is not central to town, will be subject to traffic congestion and inevitably any diversion via the station will cost a vehicle to maintain service levels. Route 6 (Town Centre – Brickhill – Tyne Crescent) is the obvious candidate for diversion but the annual cost of £120k would need careful consideration.

Stagecoach believed that the obvious choices for the station interchange are:

- (i) Extension of the Elstow Park and Ride from River St via Midland Road
- (ii) The resurrection of the late Mayor's idea of a circular service via Bromham Rd, The Prison, St.Peter's, High St, St.Paul's Square, Harpur Centre and Midland Rd.

A service frequency of every ten minutes would be needed.

No funding had been proposed by the Rail Companies.

The Chair agreed that BABUS would raise the issue at next Bedford Borough Council liaison meeting.

School Bus “Lottery”:

Commercially operated school journeys convey out-of-catchment area children from Bromham to and from Sharnbrook Upper School. Two vehicles are employed and the 140 available seats are over subscribed. The request to BABUS from a parent affected concerned the “lottery” of ticket issuing which is done on a set day prior to each term on first come at the Travel Shop first served basis. This can mean that a child gets a ticket for terms 1 and 3 but not term 2 etc. It was requested that a system be considered for the next school year whereby a scholar with a Term 1 ticket can get priority booking for Term 2 and so on. Spare places still available at the end can be sold to new passengers. Stagecoach said a system of “tear off slip with cheque attached” being returned during the holiday periods between terms could achieve this aim. Stagecoach will investigate.

Service updates:

With the withdrawal of “Kickstart” funding no further progress made with enhanced evening and Sunday services.

J2 retimings rationale – the Chairman raised the issue of the January retiming of the J2 which had resulted in Stagecoach and Grant Palmer

X42 journeys "shadowing" each other between Ampthill and Bedford.

Stagecoach responded that for economic working of buses the original 50 minute turn round of J2 vehicles in Bedford had been examined. By considering changes to the J2/M4/51 timings the former vehicle could work to and from Oakley during the layover – the impact between Ampthill and Bedford was an unfortunate side effect.

P1, 1A,1C service pattern – the recent changes imposed by Arriva by the revision of routes 1A/1C to and from Milton Keynes had produced a similar "shadowing" situation with the P1 on the Bromham road with both companies' vehicles leaving together (and initially from the same bay). Whilst BABUS realised that major changes within Milton Keynes had produced this scenario it had, in effect, reduced the bus service to Bromham to hourly.

Others – A further review of routes M3/M4 is likely and peak hour retiming into Bedford on various routes are likely to be extended to produce better punctuality.

BEDFORD STATIONS TRAVEL PLAN

Bedford Stations Travel Plan Steering Group met on 29 April and 8 July and Colin Franklin represented BABUS. The minutes are not yet available for the meeting of 8 July, so this report is confined to the earlier meeting. The main point was that the Station Travel Plan was likely to be launched in late summer with an event. Since the meeting, Network Rail has postponed their plans to rebuild the station building until after 2016, and have officially withdrawn the planning application. The platform lengthening will go ahead as initially programmed. The impact of this withdrawal on the station quarter redevelopment is under consideration by the Borough.

NOTES FROM GREAT BARFORD

By Alma Tebutt

Ivel Sprinter

Now the summer season is approaching there may be more demand for use of the Ivel Sprinter service. More voluntary drivers are needed. If you have a few hours to spare to become a driver will you please ring Trish 01462 701323. Many thanks to Sue who offered to drive us to Tesco on Easter Bank Holiday Monday it was much appreciated.

Fortnightly journeys to Tesco for August:

Monday August 2, 09.57am - return 11.30am
Monday August 16 10.30am – return 12 noon

Monthly journeys to Bedford – return 1.00pm

Monday August 16 09.57am

Monthly journeys to St. Neots – return 11.30am

Thursday August 12 09.15am

Enquiries for Ivel Sprinter ring Lesley 870957

For BABUS ring Alma on 871210.

CHILTERN RAMBLER BUS

Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership is again supporting the Chiltern Rambler bus service. During the Summer months, the Chilterns Rambler 327 bus calls at various points in the Chilterns including ZSL Whipsnade Zoo. It runs on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays until 26 September 2010 with 2 journeys each day beginning at Luton Railway station, at 10.29 and 12.45. Unfortunately buses from Bedford do not connect very well in either direction, so you are probably better off taking the train to Luton where the buses start from and finish at the railway station. Concessionary passes accepted. There is a Special 2 for 1 offer at ZSL Whipsnade Zoo. Contact Dacorum CVS on 01442 253935 or visit www.inatalink.org.uk for further information.

OXFORD – SWINDON SERVICE

The Oxford to Swindon Stagecoach service 66 has been doubled in frequency during the day with slightly later services in the evening. It makes it attractive to take the X5 to Oxford and the 66 to Swindon to avoid travelling via London if you are going to the West Country. The X5 Dayrider Gold is accepted on all Stagecoach buses in the Oxford area except the service to London.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

BABUS Committee members will be attending the following meetings in the near future. If you have any issues you would like raising please email the society, details on the cover. Starting times of some of the meetings are not yet determined.

23 Aug 10 Stagecoach liaison meeting 14.30

7 Oct 10 Meeting with Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Councils, Borough Hall