
Newsletter of BABUS-Bedford Area Bus Users' Society Summer 2011

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This issue brings you news of the latest changes to bus services in the Bedford Borough Council area which also affect bus services in other neighbouring authorities.



Grant Palmer (see illustration on the left) has been awarded the contract to run the Bedford Borough Council services to the north of Bedford (see page 5 for more details).

As we went to press we heard that Geoff Amos Coaches ceased operating bus services from 5th August 2011.

Replacement services operated by Stagecoach on behalf of Geoff Amos Coaches will start on Saturday 6th August, on the current GA01 and GA02 timetable, with the exception of early morning

and late journeys to Eydon.

Permanent replacement services will be announced in due course. Further information will be available from Stagecoach Midlands at www.stagecoachbus.com/northants, or from the public transport pages of the Northamptonshire County Council website as soon as possible.

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.

For enquiries, contact BABUS through the website at <http://babus.org.uk> or on the BABUS Enquiry Line 0871 218 2287 or 0871 218 BBUS (24 hour answering and fax service). NOTE THIS IS A NEW NUMBER, DISREGARD ANY OTHER ON PUBLICITY. If you leave a message and would like us to call you back, please leave a phone number. You may send a fax to 0871 218 3293

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SYNOPSIS OF TALK GIVEN BY PHILIP NORWELL, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, STAGECOACH EAST AT THE AGM
By Godfrey Willis

Philip Norwell thanked BABUS for the invitation to speak and opened with two items “hot off the press” – firstly that the Cambridge Guided Busway was planned to open on 7th August 2011 – albeit some two years late and secondly that in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List a Knighthood had been bestowed on the Stagecoach founder – Brian Souter.

Philip, himself, had started his career with the Eastern Counties Omnibus Co at Peterborough in 1974, on achieving the age of 21 he became a driver at the Oundle outstation and drove for eighteen years. In 1997 he moved to Cambus and following various reorganisations and rationalisations arrived at Stagecoach in Cambridge which from the 2010 company reorganisation became responsible for (most) services in and around Bedford as Stagecoach (East). Stagecoach (Midlands) covering Northamptonshire and Warwickshire amongst others had a small toe hold in Bedford with route M50 from Kettering.

The Stagecoach ethos has always been “get on with it” and what had served in the past was not necessarily suitable for the present. He cited the introduction of “Citi” branded networks in Peterborough and Cambridge where existing routes, unchanged for years, had been cast aside and new networks introduced. Service patterns needed to be simple and repetitive for sustainability and as a result of the changes a 100% increase in ridership had been achieved in Cambridge over eight years with 48% similarly in Peterborough in five years.

He quoted the example of Cambridge to Haverhill where seven new vehicles had been deployed on what was now a regular half hourly service which was readily understood throughout the neighbourhood. Odd deviations, variations and exceptions make many a passenger fail to understand a service and not bring repeat business.

Locally the X5 service was a similar operation – regular frequency all day, modern coaches and fast journey times bringing about the award of “Best Coach Operation of the Year” in 2009 and 2010 – he wondered if a hat trick were possible?

Where local authority funding was an issue then the company had to align itself to the authority and even political boundaries. In the past

Bedfordshire County Council had not been easy to work with but the new Bedford Borough Council are well organised in the transport field, positive thinking and probably the most proactive local authority he had to deal with currently. He compared this with sister company Stagecoach (Midlands) dealing with Northamptonshire County Council. Alas, Central Bedfordshire Council were not in the same league as Bedford Borough Council.

In Bedford since the 1970’s the local bus service had been reliant on school’s contracts which had not provided regular services (gaps between 07:30 and 09:00 or 15:00 to 16:30 for example). Speculative increased services had been provided through the Planets initiative with some routes now half hourly through the day. Two types of service are provided – the Commercial group where the whole operation is run at the operator’s cost and the tendered or funded group where gaps have been identified and there is a social need to fill them. Recent government spending cuts have decimated some services in the latter group although Bedford, in general, has survived whilst Central Bedfordshire has not done so well.

Some recent initiatives such as Sunday services in Bedford Town have been fairly successful.

The next series of changes are planned from 21st August which will consider re-promoting, tidying up anomalies and taking into account customer and staff proposals. Full details are not yet available but Stagecoach is aware of the concern re serving the Rail Station at Bedford, of the operation of the Park and Ride service from Elstow and something needing to be done for Great Denham. Introduction of revised Local Authority tendered routes from the same date will have an effect on the company’s operations. A fleet of new Double Deck vehicles is to be provided for service 1 to Kempston as this route goes from strength to strength.

Threats on the horizon relate to changes in the concessionary fares reimbursement, a reduction in Fuel Duty Rebate which operators currently receive and a Competition Commissioners Review of the Bus Industry.

There followed a Question and Answer session.

LATEST NEWS

Bus Services Changes for Town and Rural Bus Routes from August 21st

August 21st sees the introduction of new tendered bus services by Bedford Borough

Council. In addition, Stagecoach will be making changes to a number of their services on the same date. Other operators will also be making changes to their services at the same time. A summary of the changes is shown below taken from the Bedford Borough Council website. These changes also affect services in Central Bedfordshire. Information is available including timetables on the Stagecoach website, at <http://www.stagecoachbus.co.uk/serviceupdatedetails.aspx?Id=3152>:

See also Bedford Borough Council's website at http://www.bedford.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/public_transport.aspx

Bedford and Kempston Town Services

1 to Kempston via Bedford Road

The routing for route 1 unchanged. The service will run with departures from the bus station every 12 minutes Monday to Saturday during the day from 0600 until 1900 there will be a further journey at 1930 and an extended hourly service between 2000 and 2300. Journey times to be extended slightly to assist time-keeping. Half hourly Sunday service retained. Now operated with brand new Double Deck vehicles. £0.75 million invested on this route.

2 to Ampthill Road and Park and Ride

Route 2 will call at Bedford Bus station. It will operate every 12 minutes from the bus station between 0642 and 1854. It will then run at 1915 and hourly from 1945 until 2245. Journeys from Park and Ride site will operate every 12 minutes from 0701 to 1901. It will then run at 1930 and hourly from 2000 until 2200. This service will no longer call at Bedford Rail Station.

3 to Fenlake

The routing on route 3 is unchanged. It will depart from the bus station every 20 minutes from 0655 to 1855.

4 to Goldington

Route 4 will depart the Bus Station every 20 minutes from 0630 to 1910 with a further departure at 1930 and an extended service running hourly from 2000 until 2300.

This service will no longer serve Brookfield Road, The Boundary and Cricket Lane which will now be served by the new service 10.

5 to Norse Road

Route 5 will operate with departures from the bus station every 12 minutes from 0540 to 1816 with further departures at 1836, 1856, 1916, 1936, 1953, 2023, 2053, 2153 and 2253.

This service will no longer operate the peak extensions to Elms Farm Industrial Estate which will now be covered by the new service 10.

6 to Brickhill

6 will operate from the bus station approximately every 12 minutes from 0530 to 1811. It will then operate every 20 minutes between 1811 and 1911 and then extend to operate hourly from 1941 until 2241. The final journey to the bus station will arrive at 2251. Service 6 will operate via the railway station at peak times.

Service 6 will now serve the Woodlands development, replacing the existing service 10. As a result, it will operate in both directions on Tyne Crescent but will no longer serve the section of Tyne Crescent between Ashmead Road and Avon Drive.

7 to Woodside

Service 7 will now operate with departures from the bus station every 20 minutes from 0610 to 1850. It will then run with further departures at 1920, 1950, 2010, 2030, 2130 and 2230.

This service will no longer serve Putnoe Street, Arundel Drive or Church Lane which will now be served by the new service 10.

8 to Queens Park

This service will now operate with departures from the bus station every 20 minutes from 0605 to 1945. It will then run hourly from 2017 to 2317. All journeys will operate to Great Denham and therefore the temporary 8A service will no longer run. Buses will now operate via Winifred Road in both directions and as a result will no longer serve Iddesleigh Road. As buses will be serving Great Denham and not turning, the bus stop on the loop at the eastern end of Old Ford End Road will no longer be served.

9 to Shortstown

The route for this service is unchanged. This service will operate from the bus station at 0635, 0650 and 0705. It will then run every 12 minutes from 0717 to 1817 and every 20 minutes from 1825 until 1945. The service will then be extended to operate hourly from 2015 to 2215.

10 (new service)

The existing 10 to Woodlands will no longer operate and Woodlands will now be served by service 6.

A new service 10 is being introduced. This service will operate via Union Street, Roff Avenue, Park Avenue, Kimbolton Road, Putnoe Street, Arundel Drive, Church Lane, Cricket Lane, the Boundary, Brookfield Road and Goldington Road. Early morning and evening peak journeys will extend to Elms Farm Industrial Estate. This service replaces parts of the former 4, 5 and 7 routes.

The loop around Cricket Lane, the Boundary and Brookfield Drive will be served in the opposite direction to the current. This is to enable the bus to only carry out left turns on Goldington Road and thus improve journey times.

The new service will operate approximately every 20 minutes from 0540 to 1740. It will then operate with departures every 30 minutes between 1805 and 1935.

Stagecoach Rural Services

40 Bedford – Biddenham – Bromham – Stagsden - Milton Keynes

40 service has been altered to route all journeys via Bedford Rail Station. The service will run with a departure from Bedford at 0625 (Mon-Fri) and then run hourly from 0745 to 1845. There will be an additional journey running as far as Bromham at 1835. Sunday services will depart from Bedford at 1015, 1315 and 1515

41 Bedford – Bromham - Stagsden - Turvey – Northampton

41 has been altered to route all journeys via Bedford Rail Station. The service will run with a departure from Bedford at 0555 and then run hourly from 0715 to 1815. Sunday services will depart from Bedford at 0845, 1145 and 1630. The service is timetabled to take longer as it passes by Bedford Railway Station.

J2 Bedford - Interchange Retail Park - Flitwick

This service will be re-numbered as 42.

Departures from Bedford will be at 0620 (Mon-Fri), 0720 and then hourly from 0845 to 1745.

M50 Bedford – Clapham- Oakley – Milton Ernest – Radwell – Felmersham - Sharnbrook – Wymington - Rushden – Kettering

We are currently awaiting a revised timetable for this service that will come in to effect at the end of July. It is understood that this will see the introduction of additional journeys to this service.

51 Bedford – Clapham – Oakley

This service will run with departures from Bedford every 30 minutes from 0645 to 1815. The 1745 departure will continue to Pavenham, Carlton, Harrold, Odell, Sharnbrook and Rushden. Inbound towards Bedford the service will operate from Oakley every 30 minutes from 0702 to 1732 with an additional journey at 1832. There will be a journey from Rushden to Bedford at 0640 and from Higham Ferrers to Bedford at 0732.

V1/V2 – Bedford – Wootton – Marston Moretaine – Cranfield

This has been split in to two new services, 52 and 53.

52 will run hourly from Bedford via Kempston to Marston Moretaine and Cranfield between 0630 and 1830 on Monday to Saturdays only.

53 will run from Bedford, via Hillgrounds Kempston to Wootton every 30 minutes between 0645 and 1845 from Monday to Saturdays. There is an additional departure Mon-Fri at 0615. There will also be an hourly Sunday service from 0845 until 1645.

M1/M2 – Bedford – Shortstown – Cotton End – Shefford – Hitchin

These services will be renumbered 71 and 72.

The Monday to Saturday service will run every 30 minutes from 0605 to 1835 with additional departures at 1935 and 2135. The Sunday 72 service will depart from Bedford every two hours from 0935 to 1735.

M3 Bedford – Cardington – Cople – Willington – Sandy - Biggleswade

This service is being renumbered as 73.

This service will run at 0620, 0650 (Mon-Fri), 0740, 0815 (Mon-Fri) 0820 (Sats) and then every 30 minutes from 0850 until 1850. There will be additional departures at 1950, 2050(Sats) and 2250(Sats). The Sunday service will depart every two hours between 1005 and 1805.

M4 – Bedford – Cardington – Cople – Biggleswade

This service is being renumbered as 74.

This service will depart Bedford at 0835 (Mon-Fri) 0840 (Sat) and hourly from 1025 until 1825.

S1 Bedford – Elstow – Wilstead – Luton

This service has been renumbered as 81 and has much extended hours of operation. The new service has been extended to operate with departures from Bedford at 0445, 0545, 0620, 0730 and then hourly from 0915 until 1715 with further departures at 1830 and 1930. There will be return journeys from Luton at 0735 and then hourly between 0915 and 1815 with additional journeys at 1930, 2030, 2100 (Sats) 2200 (Mon-Fri) and 2300.

The Sunday service will depart Bedford at 0715 and then every two hours from 0815 until 1815. Return journeys from Luton will depart every two hours from 1115 until 1915 with additional journeys at 2125 and 2225.

The extra journeys are positioning journeys for the V99 Milton Keynes station to Luton Airport route.

X5 Oxford – Bicester – Buckingham – Milton Keynes – Bedford – Great Barford – St Neots – Cambridge

This service has been modified with some changes to stopping arrangements in the St Neots area. Overall service levels and stopping arrangements for Bedford Borough villages are unaltered. However, the first bus from Cambridge now leaves at 06.20 rather than 05.30 which means the first bus into Bedford from villages on the route is 50 minutes later than before. In Buckingham, the bus will call at the bus station in the High Street, not at Tesco's outside the ring road.

124, 125, 126, 136

These services are withdrawn. The commercial 124 is partly replaced by an extended journey on the 51 service. Supported services 125 and 126 are replaced by the new rural tendered services.

New Bedford Borough Tendered Services Operated By Grant Palmer Ltd

25 - Bedford Bus Station – Bedford Rail Station – Sainsbury's Clapham Road – Oakley – Pavenham/Stevington – Carlton – Harrold – (Odell – Sharnbrook)

This service will operate with departures from Bedford at 0720 (Mon-Fri) then hourly between 0840 and 1740. Service towards Bedford will operate from Harrold at 0640 (Mon-Fri) then hourly from 0910 until 1710. The 0640 from Harrold will start from Sharnbrook at 0627 and also serve Odell. The 0910 from Harrold will start from Sharnbrook at 0857 on school days and will also serve Odell.

26 – Rushden Skinners Hill – Rushden ASDA – Wymington – Souldrop – Sharnbrook – Odell – Harrold – Hinwick – Podington – Wymington – Rushden

This service will depart Rushden at 0848, 0938, 1042, 1138, 1242, 1432 (Sch Days), 1442 (Sat and Sch Hol), 1538, (Sats and Sch Hols) 1642, 1738. Services will alternate the direction they operate. On school days there will be an additional journey from Sharnbrook via Harrold, Hinwick, Podington and Wymington to Rushden with a departure at 1558

27 – Bedford – Cardington Rd – Willington Loop – Great Barford – Renhold – Wilden – Ravensden – Salph End – Norse Road – Goldington Green – Bedford

This service will operate with departures from Bedford at 0825, 0925, 1025, 1125, 1325, 1425, 1525 (Sat & Sch Hol), 1625 and 1725 (Mon-Fri). There is an additional journey between Ravensden and Bedford at 0902 (Mon-Fri). Services operate in both directions around the loop.

28 - Bedford – Ravensden – Colmworth – Bushmead – Little Staughton – Pertenhall – Kimbolton – Tillbrook – Lower Dean – Swineshead – Riseley – Keysoe – Bolnhurst – Colmworth – Ravensden – Bedford

This service will operate 9 journeys per day with journeys operating in both directions of the loop. Departure times from Bedford are at 0900, 1015, 1100, 1215, 1300, 1515, 1615, 1745. There is an additional journey from Little Staughton via Kimbolton, Tillbrook, The Deans, Swineshead, Riseley, Keysoe, Bolnhurst, Colmworth and Ravensden to Bedford at 0739 (Mon-Fri)

29 – Pavenham – Felmersham – Sharnbrook – Bletsoe – Thurleigh – Bolnhurst – Little Staughton – Bushmead – Colmworth – Honeydon – Staploe – Duloe – St Neots

This new East West service offers three departures per day in each direction. Journey to St Neots are at 0900, 1100 and 1313 with return journeys at 1005, 1215 and 1405.

Other Grant Palmer Ltd Services.

42 – Bedford – Ampthill Road – Interchange retail Park – Flitwick

This service is unchanged.

44 – Bedford – Ampthill Road – Elstow – Wixams – Wilstead – Clophill – (Ampthill/Flitwick)

This service will be re-timed by approximately 15 minutes to maintain half-hourly service headway with the Stagecoach 81 (formerly S1).

68 – Bedford – Ampthill Road – Kempston – (Kempston Rural) – Stewartby

This service is unchanged.

New Demand Responsive Service

A new demand responsive services for Knotting, Melchbourne and Yelden will be introduced on September 5th. The service will operate from 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and from 8am to 6pm on Saturdays. Full details will be available shortly.

Cedar Coaches

152 – Bedford Ravensden – Thurleigh – Riseley

Cedar coaches will continue to operate a 152 service commercially between Bedford and Riseley. The service will operate approximately every 2 hours between 0710 and 1841.

151 - Bedford – Renhold – Wilden – Ravensden – Salph End – Bedford

Cedars will operate a new commercial 151 service approximately every 2 hours between 0755 and 1755. This service will run in conjunction with their 152.

Expresslines

Service 123 Rushden – Wymington - Poddington - Hinwick

Service 125 Rushden – Knotting – Melchbourne – Yelden - Rushden

These services will be withdrawn.

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE

Bedford Borough Council issued on 12 July a press release about the forthcoming changes outlined above, adapted below.

BOROUGH BUCKS THE TREND WITH BUS SERVICES BOOST

Bus services across the borough are set to be transformed with major improvements to routes in rural and urban areas launching on August 21st 2011. The timetable changes include a long hoped-for extension of services in Bedford and Kempston until up to 11pm, free rural weekend travel for under 16's and new paperless smartcard ticketing in the urban area.

The new plans are the result of extensive negotiation with bus operators Stagecoach and Grant Palmer, and have been the subject of widespread consultation with rural bus users.

Feedback from the consultation in rural areas, carried out in Spring/Summer 2010, is directly reflected in the changes in order that services are shaped by the needs of local bus users.

The combination of the Stagecoach commercial changes and the new Bedford Borough rural services will bring benefits right across the borough. Key improvements include:

- The new rural services introduced by the council and run by Grant Palmer will offer free travel to under 16's on Saturdays and daily during school holidays
- Late evening buses across Bedford and Kempston on most routes, with last buses up to 11pm, Monday to Saturday.
- Smartcard ticketing to be introduced on all Stagecoach buses, including the popular Megarider.
- Rural locations seeing an increase in the frequency of services with some areas receiving a service for the first time in many years
- Regular half-hourly connection between the rail station, and the bus station
- Use by Grant Palmer of bus stops in the vicinity of the bus station (not at Harpur Street) for their new rural services, will result in better connectivity in town, between services for the North Eastern part of the borough, and the rest of the bus network

- Guaranteed connections at rural locations taking the worry out of longer journeys involving more than one bus

Route 2 (formerly the Park and Ride service) will also be extended, so could provide a suitable travel option for individuals looking to get to and from evening events held at the Corn Exchange and venues across the town.

The Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said: "With bus services being slashed elsewhere due to the financial climate for local authorities, we have turned the problem on its head, by first finding out from residents what they want and then working with the operators to achieve the best possible services with the resources available. The result is a real boost for local services, with most urban buses running much later into the evening, for example, and new or restored services in a number of rural areas. We are looking to build on this and form a Voluntary Partnership Agreement with all bus operators to enable a joined up approach to residents' travel needs."

A representative of Bedford Bus Users' Society (BABUS) commented: Whilst some areas may face changes to bus services currently enjoyed, comparisons with rural service levels in adjoining areas indicated that villages within Bedford Borough are still served well with many of the changes being a direct result of feedback from bus users."

Grant Palmer, Proprietor of Grant Palmer Ltd, said: "We are very much looking forward to a voluntary working partnership with Bedford Borough Council to maintain and enhance where possible the North Bedford Rural Bus network. We will endeavour to meet the community's needs and expectations with a network of routes that have been designed following community involvement via Transport Road shows organized by Bedford Borough Council."

Andy Campbell, Managing Director of Stagecoach East, added: "We are pleased to be working with the Borough alongside other operators to promote public transport in the area. I am encouraged by the pro-active approach taken by Bedford Borough Council."

Stagecoach introduced £750,000 worth of new buses locally. The six new vehicles proudly promote 'Bedford Bus,' the new brand being launched for Stagecoach buses operating within the borough.

BABUS IN ACTION **by Godfrey Willis**

Both the recent liaison meetings between some of your Committee and Local Authorities or Bus operators have focussed on the major service changes in and around Bedford planned for August 2011.

Meeting with Stagecoach 4th July

Guest speakers attended from both Stagecoach East at Cambridge and Stagecoach Midlands at Northampton and Kettering.

Philip Norwell outlined the changes planned by Stagecoach East, (outlined above):

Chris Simes, Commercial Manager for Stagecoach Midlands (accompanied by Brian Hadden, Depot Manager Kettering) opened his session by referring to the recent position in Northamptonshire where subsidies for bus services were at one stage to be nil but finally a small amount of money had been retained. There had been a major effect on service provision. One plan by the local authority had been to provide a "call connect" service of minibuses but for this to work a network of trunk services is required for the minibus to connect into.

Turning to the M50 he confirmed that no major changes were envisaged for the commercial service but the effects of the Bedford Borough Council changes in the north of the county would need to be considered. M50 would be renumbered 50 in the next changes.

He outlined changes planned for 24 July which is the date for the next round of alterations in Northamptonshire and from when the 50 is to be diverted via a new medical centre called "Nene Park Clinic" located behind the current Rushden and Diamonds Football ground. A new service "49" is to supplement the route between Kettering and Rushden, also serving the medical centre but diverting in Rushden via the Industrial area and Waitrose supermarket – the intention is to run at the opposite half hour to route 50. Further changes to route 50 result from the Northamptonshire cuts and involve rerouting through Barton Seagrave. The trunk route to Bedford retains its weekday frequency but journey times are being slightly extended to improve reliability. The Sunday service is retained but the diversions via Wymington and Oakley are to be debated with B.B.C

He then referred to the recent "nightmare" situation within Kettering with a series of major

road works, short notice road closures and temporary stopping arrangements. This was now almost completed and the new interchange facility at Horsemarket had been introduced.

He concluded by inviting questions and comments. These are summarised as follows:

Operation of Route M50

Southbound journeys are often late to such an extent that late starts in the return northbound direction are inevitable. It seems to be a snowball effect. BH responded by referring again to the Kettering problems and the number of “en route” events that affect such a lengthy journey. He believed the schedule was robust but referred back to the forthcoming changes outlined by CS with slightly longer journey times. A discussion took place as to whether from July the northbound “50” could work the southbound “49” and vice versa to give recovery times at Kettering. This would be investigated.

The changeover of drivers at Kettering was also discussed with a request that to save time the changeover is made at Horsemarket in the northbound direction so that once the southbound journey leaves Eskdaill Street, if on time, it stands a good chance of keeping time throughout.

Bedford Bus Station

The second point relates to information available at Bedford Bus Station concerning M50. Whilst southbound delays are perhaps inevitable on some occasions, northbound passengers waiting at Bedford Bus Station are unable to find out the position for the return journey. Staff in Bedford Travel Shop claim they cannot advise as “it’s not our service”.

Mr Simes stated that as far as passengers are concerned Stagecoach is one company and internal divisions are not relevant. He was disappointed with this response and a further discussion ensued as to how it could be improved.

Meeting with Bedford Borough Council 7th July

The Local Authority Chairman confirmed that major changes to bus services, both commercial and tendered are planned to take place on Monday 22nd August or if the service operates on Sundays then the previous day.

a) Town Network

BABUS had already met with Stagecoach earlier in the week where full details had been shared so he only summarised at this meeting.

b) Rural Services

BABUS were reminded that the Authority had undertaken a unique tendering process for the North Beds services and it was confirmed that Grant Palmer had been awarded the contract. There had originally been six interested operators, this had been shortlisted to three and subsequently Grant Palmer had been appointed through the procurement process. The awarded tender includes some school contract work in the area.

Grant Palmer attended and outlined the services he will be running (see above).

Services are based in many cases on feedback from what users said at the road shows or in the survey forms.

Connections will be maintained at Harrold Institute between routes 25 and 26.

BABUS stated that the main selling points need to be the above (what users wanted) plus the new services being provided and new links such as routes 27 and 29.

It was also confirmed that Cedar coaches will continue to run an element of existing route 152 between Bedford, Thurleigh and Riseley on a commercial basis plus some journeys between Bedford and Renhold on the former 151.

A Demand Responsive Transport service has been agreed with Northamptonshire to link Knotting Green, Knotting, Melchbourne and Yelden with Rushden. It is not known whether this could also link these villages to Sharnbrook. This will commence on 5th September so the existing Expresslines 123 service will continue until that date.

Vehicle sizes:

It is intended that Routes 25 and part of 28 will be operated by 29 seat vehicles whilst smaller vehicles (16 seat possibly) will operate the remainder. All will be in Bedford Borough Council “livery”

c) Inter Urban Commercial Services

The proposed Stagecoach changes were outlined – these relate to current routes 40, 41, 51, J2 (to become 42), M1 (to be 71) M2 (to be 72) M3 (to be 73) and M4 (to be 74)

S1 becomes 81 with extra journeys to and from Luton for working the 99 to Milton Keynes whilst V1 is split into 52 and 53 from Cranfield and Wootton respectively. There will be no Sunday service on 52 but hourly during the day on 53.

The use of Planet names is being discontinued.

Stagecoach Midlands are renumbering M50 "50".

It is intended to reissue the Bedford Borough Council Timetable booklet from the commencement of all these changes.

There was no time for any other items and a date for an additional meeting to cover these was sought.

OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED

The chart on page 10 is a summary of the meetings attended by your Committee members in recent months. Given the volume of meetings now attended is impracticable to give a full report from each in this newsletter. We intend to summarise the bigger Liaison Meetings with Local Authorities etc but any member wishing details of or outcome of any of the other meetings should apply to the Secretary, Godfrey Willis (godfreywillis116@yahoo.co.uk).

NOTES FROM GREAT BARFORD

from Alma Tebbutt

The good news for Great Barford is that although the X5 will have reduced stops in St. Neots (these will be replaced with an alternative service) the Great Barford service will remain. Hopefully with fewer stops the bus will not be full by the time it arrives in Great Barford.

A change will also take place with the Villager twice weekly service being replaced by a weekdays hourly service operated by Grant Palmer as route 27. Grant Palmer has a reputation for friendly drivers and regular services. An added bonus will be, subject to parents registering their children with Grant Palmer, they may travel free in school holidays and on Saturdays on Grant Palmer buses. The route will cover Willington Loop, Great Barford, Wilden Renhold, Ravensden and Cardington Road Tesco. Timetables will be available shortly. All this is due to start on 21/22 August.

The above changes may not affect the Ivel Sprinter which has become part of our way of

life. But the Ivel Sprinter again needs more volunteer drivers urgently. If anyone has a few hours to spare and could help please ring **01462 701323**. Training will be given if required.

Ivel Sprinter

The fortnightly journeys to Tesco for August and September will be as follows:

Monday August 01st 09.50 return at 11.30am

Monday August 15th 10.22 return at 12 noon

Monday September 05th 09.50 return at 11.30am

Monday September 19th 10.22 return at 12 noon

The monthly journeys to Bedford – return 1.00pm

Monday August 15th 09.50am

Monday September 19th 09.50am

The monthly journeys to St. Neots – return 11.30am

Thursday August 11th 09.42am

Thursday September 09.42am

The Villager

The weekly journeys from Great Barford to Tesco until further notice will be:

From Silver Street Tuesday and Thursday 2.45pm

Return from Tesco Goldington Road 4.00pm

The route runs from Gt. Barford Bridge, along the High Street to Silver Street and may be stopped anywhere along the road provided it is safe.

Enquiries for Ivel Sprinter ring Lesley 870957

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.

**7 Nov 11 13.30 Stagecoach liaison meeting
TBC - Bedford Borough Council liaison meeting**

Meetings attended by BABUS representatives

15 Mar	Bedford Station travel Plan Launch	Bedford Stn
15 Mar	Passenger Focus Meeting re Bus station	Bus Station
17 Mar	Station Travel Plan Group Meeting	Borough Hall
22 Mar	BCA/BABUS 1st Liaison Meeting	Bedford
22 Mar	CBC Sustainable transport Fund Bid Meeting	Technology House
24 Mar	BBC/Grant Palmer Quality Signing Ceremony	Borough Hall
25 Mar	Publicity Drop at CBC Libraries	Biggleswade etc
March	North Beds Rural Service Bids	Borough Hall
05 Apr	BABUS Phone number problems	Bedford
08 Apr	Bus Stop Roadside Information Workshop	Borough Hall
21 Apr	BABUS Phone number problems	Royston
09 May	Station Travel Plan v Stagecoach 41	Borough Hall
13 May	S Sleight re BABUS phone number	Cardington
13 May	Grant Palmer re Flitwick Commuterbus	Sharnbrook
17 May	Rural Transport Partnership	Lidlington
18 May	Bedford Station and Route41 etc	Borough Hall
18 May	AGM Logistics Meeting	Salvation Army Bedford
23 May	Bus Services in Oakley with Parish Council rep	Oakley
26 May	Station Travel plan Meeting	Borough Hall
07 Jun	Arlesey Town Council	Arlesey
11 Jun	BABUS A G M	Salvation Army Bedford
14 Jun	North Beds Tendered Services TTs	Borough Hall
28 Jun	North Beds Tendered Services	Borough Hall
01 Jul	Grant Palmer re tendered services	Bromham
04 Jul	Henlow Parish Council presentation	Henlow
04 Jul	Stagecoach Liaison	Bedford Bus Station
06 Jul	Parish Council presentation	Cranfield
07 Jul	Bedford Borough Council Liaison Meeting	Borough Hall
08 Jul	Sustainable Transport Meeting	Borough Hall

BCA Bedford Commuters Association

BBC Bedford Borough Council