

---

## Newsletter of BABUS-Bedford Area Bus Users' Society Spring 2009

---

### Contents

News and Notes	1
New and improved website	2
Bus Surgery	3
BABUS Manifesto	4
Bus Users UK (BUUK) AGM	4
News from Stagecoach	5
Liaison Meeting with Bedfordshire County Council, 12 February 2009	5
Liaison Meeting with Stagecoach East, 7 May 2009	6
Ivel Sprinter, WiFi, and Plus Bus,	7
Timetable and Realtime Information, and New technology and Buses	8
Forthcoming Meetings	8
AGM Balance Sheet	9
Minutes of AGM 2008	10
Notice of AGM	12

---

### NEWS AND NOTES

**Our Annual General Meeting will be held at Bedford Congress Hall (Salvation Army), Commercial Road, Bedford, on Saturday 20 June 2009 at 10am. This newsletter includes relevant documents.**

**Contact BABUS via 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.**



***New Stagecoach Coach for X5 route (see page 3)***

### 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.

**BABUS Newsletter Editor: Alan Hopkinson: email: [alanhop@another.com](mailto:alanhop@another.com)  
4, Beverley Crescent, Bedford, MK40 4BY, Phone: 01234 352645**

### Vacancy – Secretary

Applications are invited for the position of Secretary to BABUS. Do you have skills and experience that you could bring to this crucial role in supporting the Committee and the many 'back-room' tasks that enable BABUS to function?

For a job description please contact the Secretary and Acting Treasurer (WilliamsHenblas@hotmail.com) before 20 June 2009.

### NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE

Hello, I'm Suzy, and I've just taken over as Webmistress for BABUS. I only joined a few weeks ago, but was asked if I'd take over the running of the site, and the rest, as they say, is history. The work of the previous web person is much appreciated in getting the group known (that's how I found out about the group), but he has been unable to work on it recently.

So, I've started with relatively simple content, similar to the old one. I've already uploaded a number of back issues of the newsletter. The new website can be viewed at <http://babus.org.uk> and will be updated with more content as time and material allow.

I have also created a new Bulletin Board. Unfortunately I was unable to import the old one, so even if you registered before, you will need to do so again. The rules for the Bulletin Board are fairly simple, and incorporate legal requirements (i.e. policies on cookies). If you have not yet signed up, go to <http://babus.org.uk/bb> and click on "Want To Join?" as shown opposite.

After you click on **Want To Join?**, you get another board up showing "Click Here To Join/Bulletin Board Rules". Click to read those, and this will show you how to email your membership request to Suzy - to avoid the Forum becoming filled with spam. To be added to the Bulletin Board, please email [web.bb@babus.org.uk](mailto:web.bb@babus.org.uk) with your choice of user name. Please also advise if you are a current BABUS member for the 2009/10, and if so, in what capacity (personal or corporate).

If you click **Register** then it will generate an error to show that registration has been disabled – do not worry, it is merely a procedure to avoid having the Bulletin Board filled with unwanted junk, and keep our members' details safe! If you have problems in signing up, or if you've got

something you'd like to display on the website, please contact [me@suzyscott.com](mailto:me@suzyscott.com)

The screenshot shows the Bedford Area Bus Users Society website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'HELP', 'SEARCH', 'LOGIN', and 'REGISTER'. Below that is a 'Welcome, Guest. Please login or register.' section with a login form and a 'Forever' session length dropdown. A 'News' section shows 'SMF - Just Installed!'. A 'WANT TO JOIN?' section has a 'Want To Join?' button and a link 'Want To Join - Click Here...'. The 'Forum Stats' section shows '6 Posts in 5 Topics by 12 Members. Latest Member: PJW' and a 'Latest Post' from May 05, 2009. The 'Users Online' section shows '1 Guest, 0 Users' and 'Most Online Today: 1. Most Online Ever: 9 (May 15, 2009, 09:...'.

I've been online since 1998, and running various local bus enthusiast online groups and Forums since 1999. In 2005, the local Dundee Bus newsgroup became the Dundee Area Bus Forum. In 2007, I started travelling (and have now moved) frequently to Royston when I was travelling weekly to see my girlfriend. When in late 2007, the Anglia Bus News Page compilers were about to cease the page for personal reasons, I took over the running, and quickly replaced it with the Anglia Bus Forum – an online bus enthusiasts and passengers group that encompasses most of the East of England. For more on this, go to <http://angliabusforum.com>

*So, what does a woman from Royston have to do with buses in Bedford? Well, each weekend I used to travel from Dundee to Royston and got the coach from Dundee to Milton Keynes (590) by day on a Friday, then by X5 via Bedford to Cambridge, where I was picked up at Madingley Road Park & Ride. I went back on Sunday night via Trumpington P&R, National Express 010 to London, 592 back to Dundee (which did not serve MK), back for 0900 Monday morning. Once, when checking the X5 times, I saw the link to the BABUS website, and it went from there!*

## BUS SURGERY

The Bus Surgery that was set to be held by Bus Users UK in Bedford on 24 October 2008 had to be postponed. It was held on Friday 20 February instead. Here is a report from *The Bus User*, the official newsletter of Bus Users UK.

It was a cold but sunny February day for our Bedford Surgery on 20 February, but at least all the snow had gone! Stagecoach in Bedford provided the bus for us, and we had several senior managers from the company, as well as colleagues from Bedfordshire County Council and BABUS — the local bus users group.

Around 60 people came along to give us their views. These ranged from the usual problems with late buses and traffic congestion in the area to more positive compliments regarding new coaches on the long-distance X5 service and more new low-floor buses for the area. Clarity of bus stops was also a concern, although a number of people were positive about their local bus service, with several merely stopping to say that they thought the service was good! A number of people also suggested new routes.

The Park & Ride service seems well used and much appreciated.

Thanks to Zoe Paget and her team at Stagecoach in Bedford, and to Jonathan Farr at the Council for his sterling work. Also thank you to members of BABUS — Bedford Area Bus Users Society — for their input during the day

Bus Users UK are doing an excellent job undertaking activities which in many areas would be beyond the expertise and capability of the local bus users' group. You can see their latest newsletter on the Internet at [http://www.bususers.org/newsletters/bususers\\_34.pdf](http://www.bususers.org/newsletters/bususers_34.pdf) where you will see details of how to join for £12 per year, £7 for senior citizens. They advertise BABUS in their Newsletter. They hold an interesting Annual Meeting. BABUS member John Smith attended this year's AGM and kindly sent a report.

### **BABUS MANIFESTO -- AN UPDATE by Simon Norton**

Since the last newsletter there have been several developments on the proposed BABUS manifesto.

Firstly, several BABUS members have come up with comments which have led to changes in matters of detail.

Secondly, David Sharwood has come up with proposals for the Bedford town network.

But thirdly and most importantly, there was a committee meeting on 18 Apr at which the manifesto was discussed. It has long been clear that the original idea of targeting prospective councillors at this year's local elections was too ambitious, and it was pointed out that in addition to the likely general election in 2010 there would be further local elections in 2011 which might be a more reasonable target.

We should aim to produce a summary manifesto which could be targeted at decision makers. This would be developed through consultation with the BABUS membership as a whole, via the bulletin board. It would be supplemented by an ongoing dialogue restricted to the members' section of the bulletin board focusing on details of routes, timings and connections, which would provide an opportunity for members to raise local concerns and submit comments based on their detailed local knowledge.

This programme could not be started until the website and bulletin board were fully functional, and I then envisage the following:

1. I would collate the original manifesto with those amendments already made and David Sharwood's proposals for the Bedford area and post this on a web page where it could be continuously updated as consultation among our membership went on.
2. Members and advisers would be invited to contribute ideas for topics left out of the original manifesto. In the last newsletter I specifically excluded some topics, but that doesn't mean that they can't figure in the final manifesto. And there are also those topics which I don't have the knowledge even to draft, such as town buses in Biggleswade or Leighton Buzzard.
3. When there was reasonable consensus as to the manifesto among members, we could circulate sections dealing with particular areas among local interest groups for their comments. We hope that they would wish to support us and, if they were not already members, they might even be motivated to join!

I would also like to expand on why I think a manifesto is necessary. This is my personal view and does not purport to represent BABUS policy.

Let me start by parodying a well known rallying call for action against Nazi tyranny:

When they came for the people of Ampthill, I did not speak out, because I was not from Ampthill.

When they came for the people of Potton, I did not speak out, because I was not from Potton. When they came for the people of Cranfield and N Beds, I did not speak out, because I was not from Cranfield or N Beds.

So when they came for the people of my town, Shefford, there was nobody left to speak out for me.

The parody refers to the progressive withdrawal of evening transport from those of Bedfordshire's smaller towns that are not served by rail. "N Beds" refers to the A6 corridor north of Bedford, formerly served by the Homehoppa. Shefford still has evening buses, and this piece is certainly not intended to disparage our hard working Secretary who lives near there !

It may seem invidious to compare living under Nazi tyranny with being unable to get out and about in the evening. After all, didn't the philosopher and mathematician Pascal say that all human troubles were because we had not learnt to sit quietly in a room -- long before the environmental problems of excessive travel were even thought of?

Well, one of our foremost environmental writers, George Monbiot, disagrees. We have civil liberties because previous generations have not been content to sit at home and put up with what the governing class chooses to impose on them. See <http://www.monbiot.com/archives/2009/05/19/the-barbarians-at-the-gate>. People kept in their homes for lack of transport are not going to be agitating for change. Which is exactly what the governing class wants!

There must be no compromise in the fight to ensure that people in all Bedfordshire's communities, and those in adjoining areas, have the basic mobility they need to participate in society. We must not allow politicians to play off one community against another, for when the spirit of exclusion is allowed to emerge, it knows no bounds. In the late 50s rail closures started in a small way, but soon broadened into the Beeching axe which destroyed our railways as an integrated network. Scargill was ridiculed for suggesting that our coalfield communities would be destroyed by mine closures, but that's exactly what happened -- without even the environmental benefits of clean power, as we're still burning coal, only it's now imported. Currently our postal system is disintegrating in ways that go far beyond the closure of local post offices.

In the 1930s the effects of economic depression were mitigated by strong communities. Now it is essential community services that are likely to be the first target when our government and local authorities cry "austerity". It is up to organisations like BABUS to ensure that our politicians, at both local and national level, abandon their long standing habit of treating bus users as fair game and start granting us the services we need to play our full part in the workings of society. If we are not for ourselves, who will be for us?

## **BUS USERS UK AGM, Llandudno, April 25, 2009**

**by John Smith**

The meeting of Bus Users UK (BUUK) was attended by some 40 members and bus company representatives from all parts of the UK. A large number of other members took the trouble to send their apologies.

Since the previous AGM, the Government has announced that the remit of Passenger Focus, the official railway passengers' watchdog, will be extended from 2010 to become the official watchdog for bus passengers in England and Wales. This work will be fully funded by the Government. Up to now, there has been no Government funding for such work in England – BUUK has undertaken the work on a voluntary basis supported by members' donations, financial help from the major bus companies and a small, but growing amount of income from carrying out 'mystery shopper' surveys for bus companies. The Welsh and Scottish Governments have been fully funding the work in their countries for some while now.

The appearance on the scene of Passenger Focus has created great uncertainty over the future role of BUUK in England. Passenger Focus has stated that its main mode of operation in the bus field will be to undertake research, including a large scale annual bus passenger satisfaction survey. However, it has not announced whether it will take over the running of local bus surgeries or whether it will look to BUUK to continue to organise these. Neither has it announced whether it will take over the running of the Bus Appeals Body that is currently managed by BUUK and the Confederation of Passenger Transport.

If BUUK is to continue to be a significant player in promoting and protecting the interests of bus passengers in England, new financial arrangements must be worked out very soon.



Last year, there was a decline in personal membership, offset to some extent by an increase in affiliated group membership (including BABUS) and a small increase in local authority membership. However, the bulk of the funding in recent years has come from 'no strings attached' associate membership fees from the major bus companies. With the uncertainties outlined above and the credit squeeze, First Bus has indicated that it is likely to withdraw its financial support and conceivably this may prompt the other major operators to reconsider their positions. Expenses were higher last year than previously as more professional support was required to respond to various government consultations and to interface with Passenger Focus.

BUUK members and affiliated groups are being asked to encourage not only their friends and acquaintances to join but also their local authorities. This would be a start but, if BUUK is to continue running the local bus surgeries and/or the Bus Appeals body, there would seem to me to be no real alternative but to seek funding from Passenger Focus for effectively carrying out this work on behalf of that body.

### **NEWS FROM STAGECOACH: £3.5 million investment in X5 coaches**

Following an investment of £3.5 million, seventeen brand new coaches entered service early this year on the popular X5 Cross County route. See photograph on the cover.

Says Tony Cox, managing director of Stagecoach East: "We are upgrading our entire fleet on our Cambridge to St Neots, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Bicester and Oxford route. The new coaches boast greener engines, leather seats, free WiFi, power sockets, air-conditioning and access for a wheelchair user. We hope that these improvements will change people's perceptions of coach travel and encourage greater use of this form of transport.

"The investment in the new coaches is opening up accessible public transport to more and more people in Bedfordshire. Commuters will love the free WiFi and power sockets, meaning they can start work as soon as they get on the coach. Wheelchair users can book to take advantage of the wheelchair space and leisure travellers will benefit from the comforts of air-con, toilets and leather reclining seats.

"The coaches will have Euro 4 engines, which means that less pollutants will be pumped out of the exhausts and passengers can reduce their

carbon footprint more than is currently possible. And all of our 70 or so drivers on this route have been put through extensive training on safe driving, manual handling and customer care and they will all wear the new X5 uniform to reflect the upgrade in quality," Tony Cox added.

From 19 January X5 coaches no longer use Drummer Street bus station in Cambridge, but arrive at, and depart from, Parkside (bay 16) - a change that did not affect arrival or departure times. This move, he said, has come about due to the wheelchair lift not being able to be deployed in the bus station. The new guided bus way will occupy the X5 departure stand.

Coaches coming into Cambridge also stop at Four Lamps Corner (Victoria Ave/Maids Causeway) and East Road opposite the Grafton Centre whilst those departing towards St Neots, Bedford etc will also now stop at Victoria Avenue. The stops at Northampton Street in both directions are retained.

Coach route X5 runs up to every 30 minutes between Cambridge, St Neots, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Bicester and Oxford, seven days a week.

The last of the 17 new coaches entered service on 2 February 2009.

One of the new buses is depicted on the cover of this newsletter.

### **MEETING WITH BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, 12 February 2009 Report by Peter Glyn Williams**

Bedfordshire County Council was represented by Simon Ayres, Public Transport Team Leader.

BABUS representatives expressed concern over the lack of destination blinds or signs on the three County Council vehicles now been operated by Meridian Line Travel of Royston on East Beds routes. A revised timetable for these routes had been published.

John Yunnie raised the matter of additional stops on Route M50 at Sharnbrook. He described a problem with narrowed footpaths on the railway bridge in Templars Way, Sharnbrook that is causing a perceived safety issue for those bus passengers who live in the former Council Houses. This could be alleviated by providing an additional stop on each side of the road, just east of the bridge.

There was also an issue with stops at the junction of Templars Way with the A6 where there had not been a southbound stop since the

M50 replaced the former 50/52/53 routes in the Summer of 2006.

BABUS has raised the matter with Stagecoach who had not rejected the suggestions made. Mr Ayres agreed to refer the issue to Bedford Borough Council.

BABUS representatives raised a number of queries concerning the operation of services in February's bad weather. There were issues around some bus routes not being included on the Council gritting plan, and poor and untimely provision of public information from both Stagecoach and the County Council.

David Sharwood, BABUS Disabilities Officer, suggested that BBC Three Counties Radio was a more immediate and effective medium than the various websites.

Stephen Sleight, Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership, reported on his response to the DfT Consultation 'Clarifying the Definition of Which Services are Eligible for the Statutory Bus Concession in England'. Concerns had been expressed over various in the proposals:

- exclusion of services where the majority of seats can be reserved in advance – impact on community bus services
- exclusion of services that do not run once a week for a period of at least 6 weeks – impact on community bus services (*NB: eventually withdrawn*)
- services operated primarily for historical interest or for tourism – impact on the Chilterns Rambler
- services where the fare charged by the operator has a special amenity value – impact on the Bedford Park and Ride

It was understood that responses had also been submitted by Sharnbrook Parish Council and the East of England Sustainable Transport and Rural Access Forum.

Mr Ayres advised that as a result of local government reorganization he had been allocated to Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority as Team Leader for Public Transport. He reported that the concessionary fares schemes would be consolidated from 1 Apr 2009 with both Unitary Authorities undertaking all functions for their respective areas. There would be no changes affecting pass-holders for 2009/10. A new booklet for Central Bedfordshire was being prepared. This would include details of a reciprocal arrangement with Hertfordshire.

Mr Ayres outlined the new round of Central Government Kickstart funding for new bus services in England. Bids were being invited from local authorities by 31 Jul 2009. The emphasis was to be on partnership working and community consultation. Purchase of new vehicles was not encouraged. The County Council had written to all operators inviting suggestions. Replies had been received from Stagecoach and Centrebus.

Mrs Alma Tebbutt highlighted the need for cross country services in the Great Barford area; passengers currently had to change in Bedford. Mr Ayres felt there was scope to develop such services using the new provision in the Transport Act whereby community bus drivers could be paid.

At the close of the Meeting thanks were recorded to Simon Ayres and his County Council colleagues for hosting regular liaison meetings since 2006.

## **STAGECOACH EAST LIAISON MEETING 7 MAY 2009**

### **Report by Peter Glyn Williams**

Stagecoach hosted the meeting and were represented by Zoë Paget, Operations Manager, Stagecoach in Bedford.

#### *Matters arising*

John Yunnie (BABUS Vice-Chairman) had circulated a note citing a number of issues carried over from previous meetings:

i) Bus stop timetables in Union Street and Clapham Road.

Zoë Paget said that there would be a broad overhaul of timetables for Routes 51 and M50 when a new livery was introduced for these services and in due course.

ii) MK Metro Services

Zoë Paget said that she had met with and discussed various issues with MK Metro representatives. Despite being given assurances about future cooperation the lack of information provision remained an issue.

#### *X5 issues*

Dave Menzies, on behalf of BABUS, raised concerns over the suitability of the Parkside terminating stop in Cambridge. Zoë Paget said that X5 had been withdrawn from Drummer Street due to clearance problems with the wheelchair lift. She advised that Parkside was

seen by Cambridge City Council, only as an interim arrangement. There was no prospect that the X5 and National Express facilities at Parkside might be improved.

There was some discussion over the provision for wheelchair users, including the requirement to give 48 hrs notice before travelling. Zoë reported that Stagecoach was getting a favourable response from wheelchair users.

Stephen Sleight (BRCC) said that the level of comfort and service afforded by the new fleet of vehicles was impressive and much appreciated by passengers. These improvements extended to the new signage and printed literature.

#### *Bedford Bus Surgery – feedback*

Colin Franklin (BABUS Chairman) said that thanks were due to Stagecoach for their support for and input into this event.

#### *Buses in snow*

There was some discussion over information provision to the wider public during the disruption caused by snow in February. It was felt that radio was a more appropriate medium than the Stagecoach website. David Sharwood (BABUS Disabilities Officer) suggested that BBC 3 Counties Radio was probably the most effective channel.

#### *Other items of business*

i) Zoë Paget confirmed that concessionary passes could be used on Route VT99. It was possible that VT99 could serve the new MK Coachway; she thought the new interchange would not now be completed in 2009.

ii) John Yunnie raised the matter of suitability of vehicles on the 125/6 routes. The "S" registered low floor vehicles that are now being used had limited seating at low floor level and very confined seating in the raised section. Zoë Paget said that the three vehicles used for this service were the only suitable vehicles that were available.

### **IVEL SPRINTER**

#### **by Alma Tebutt**

It is pleasing that the Ivel Sprinter bus is running to almost full capacity on the trips to Tesco and St. Neots. With summer holidays approaching more drivers are needed to fill in the gaps when regular drivers are away. If you feel you can spare a few hours to help this voluntary service please ring Trish 01462 701323.

Fortnightly journeys to Tesco (St Neots) for June and July will be as follows:

Monday June 1 <sup>st</sup>	09.57am – return 11.30am
Monday June 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am – return 12 noon
Monday July 6 <sup>th</sup>	09.57am – return 11.30am
Monday July 20 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am – return 12 noon

#### **Fortnightly journeys to Bedford – return 1.00pm**

Monday June 15 <sup>th</sup>	9.57am
Monday July 6 <sup>th</sup>	9.57am

#### *Monthly journeys to St. Neots – return 11.30am*

Thursday June 11 <sup>th</sup>	9.10am
Thursday July 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.10am

Enquiries for Ivel Sprinter ring Lesley 870957

### **WiFi**

#### **by Alan Hopkinson**

People with laptop computers can use the Internet by wireless connection if they are near a transmitter. Some trains and bus services are now providing a wireless transmitter on their buses to provide WiFi for their users. I normally leave for work just after 6am so it was not a problem for me, despite being weighed down by a laptop, to take the 0605 bus from Bedford to Oxford from where I took a bus to Chipping Norton. This service, route 20 (since renumbered S3), is provided with WiFi. I fortunately picked up a timetable from the Bus Station Enquiry office in Oxford. The timetable gave me the instructions and after 20 minutes I had got it to work. Tip: I had to remove mention of a proxy server from the Internet Explorer.

### **PLUS BUS**

Plusbus is now available as an add-on which you can buy at any station for any town (or area) where the scheme is available. If you have a Bedford to London season ticket and need to make a journey in say Luton or Dunstable you can buy a ticket for £1.80 at Luton station, showing you have a valid rail ticket, and take as many buses as you wish for the rest of the day. Plusbus have generally negotiated the availability across most if not all operators in an area making it a better deal than tickets just available for one operator. In fact, to set the record straight, you can buy the Luton Plusbus ticket or any other Plusbus ticket that is available at any station in the country. It does not have to be bought with the ticket. This is particularly useful when you buy a discounted ticket online. Though Plusbus is not yet available when you buy tickets online, it can now be bought nonetheless at any station though only for the date of the outward ticket.

## TIMETABLE & REAL-TIME INFORMATION

Congratulations to Stagecoach for putting printed timetable information up at many bus stops in the Bedford area. Also X5 stops have a new flag which makes them more visible.

Simon Ayres sent the following news item.

The displays at the four bus stops alongside the Corn Exchange are now real time for those services which have been suitably equipped, namely Bedford Town Routes 1 to 9, Mars services M1 to M4, and the Park and Ride shuttle.

The displays default to scheduled time if the service is disrupted or if the satellite tracking fails for any reason. At the moment, about 50 Stagecoach buses are fitted in the Bedford area - all of the Dennis Darts, the Blue Solos and the Park and Ride buses, but none of the double-deckers. Eventually, the funding will be found to equip the whole Bedford Stagecoach fleet, including the X5 coaches.

The Grant Palmer fleet is about to be fitted with the tracking equipment as part of the firm's involvement in the Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis RTP1 scheme (along with Centrebus and Arriva). One benefit of this is that they will show up on the Bedford displays when they come here on services X42/X44.

At this stage, the Integrated Passenger Transport Unit at County Hall are not talking to any more operators about extending the scheme. This is because Simon Ayres and his team have their hands full just managing the roll out of the scheme to Stagecoach, Arriva and the others.

In the next stage of the project, both the Borough and Central Bedfordshire will be looking at locations where roadside displays can be most usefully sited. There is an experiment coming up in Toddington, where a display will be used to tell bus drivers how long to wait for the connecting bus on X31/X42.

## NEW TECHNOLOGY AND BUSES

*This article is adapted from an article in Computing 22 January 2009.*

The first large-scale NFC trial using smartcard standard ITSO went live in April 2008. The Department for Transport (DfT) started the first major government-backed trial of near-field communications (NFC) to enable mobile phone

ticketing on buses. The DfT carried out hardware tests for the technology, and began live trials in the north of England in 2008. The six-month trial in the north-west of England involved two bus operators and 36 passengers acting as guinea pigs using near-field communication (NFC)-enabled mobile phones to pay for bus tickets.

The first aim of the pilot was to demonstrate the viability of using an NFC phone as an ITSO ticket carrier, followed by testing to prove that ITSO-compliant products can be remotely loaded to, and validated on, NFC-enabled customer devices.

Software development carried out during the trial also led to the creation of cheaper ticket inspection devices, as well as changes to the ITSO specification to facilitate remote sales. Mobile ticketing could help bus operators generate savings, according to John Elliott of Consult Hyperion, one of the consultancies working on the project. "Bus operators do not believe that the benefits of using mobile technology for ticketing will be fed directly to them, but they can save on the cost of ticket inspectors and in the issuance of smartcards," he said.

The third and final stage of the research is an optional second trial to prove that the test technology from the second phase could be used in a live environment.

Widespread industry opinion suggests that the consolidation of bank cards and mobile systems could be the answer for a unified ticketing scheme, but progress could be hindered by the poor availability of NFC-enabled handsets in the UK, as well as conflicts between mobile operators and banks in areas such as security standards, said Elliott. Transport for London carried out a mobile ticketing trial with Barclaycard last year. The transport body told the London Assembly in October that it intended to replace the Oyster Travelcard with new mobile phone or bankcard-based systems.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

BABUS Committee members will be attending the following meetings. If you have any issues you would like raising please come to the AGM or email the society, details on the cover.

20 Jun 09 BABUS AGM

23 Jul 09 Stagecoach liaison meeting 10.15

10 Sep 09 Local Authority liaison meeting



**Balance Sheet and Source & Application of Funds  
covering period 1 Apr 2008 - 31 Mar 2009**

Opening balance at 1 Apr 2008:		
Current account	330.17	<i>Note 1</i>
Project account	7.58	<i>Note 4</i>
Total funds	<b>337.75</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Room & Hall hire	42.05	
Fee for stands at Bedford & Biggleswade		
Older Peoples' Fairs	20.00	
Website fees	29.00	
Membership subscription - BUUK	15.00	<i>Note 2</i>
Newsletter Expenses	37.29	
Secretarial Expenses	53.16	
Chairman's Expenses	31.20	<i>Note 2</i>
Unattributed items	9.00	<i>Note 2</i>
Sub-total	<b>236.70</b>	
<b>Income</b>		
Subscriptions	245.00	<i>Note 3</i>
Raffle	12.00	
Donation	4.00	
Sub-total	<b>261.00</b>	
Closing balance at 31 Mar 2009		
Current account	354.47	
Project account	7.58	
Total funds	<b>362.05</b>	

Notes:

1 Annual financial statement gives value of 337.17 as at 31 Mar 2008. The bank statement shows a value of 330.17.

2 Items for which there are (apparently) no receipts or records

3 Includes Bedford Boro @ £22, Beds CC @ £27 and Mid Beds D C @ £10

4 There has been no use of the Project Account in 2008-09

# Bedford Area Bus Users' Society



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Bedford Area Bus Users' Society held at Bedford Central Library, Harpur Street, Bedford, on Saturday 10 May 2008

### **Present:**

Colin Franklin – Chairman  
Ian Webster – Treasurer  
Peter G Williams – Secretary  
Alan Hopkinson – Newsletter Editor  
Brenda Jowett – Executive Committee Member  
Simon Norton – Membership Secretary  
David Sharwood – Disabilities Officer  
Stephen Sleight – Bedfordshire Rural Transport Partnership Officer  
John Smith – BABUS Adviser  
Alma Tebbutt – Executive Committee Member

Eleven other members and five non-members signed the register

### **1 Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed those present and introduced the Guest Speaker, Phil Tonks of Bus Users UK. His presentation is reported separately.

### **2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Robin Benians, Peter Blakeman, Anona Hoyle, Leonard Lean (BABUS Adviser), Cathy Moorhouse, Richard Pill and William Tordoff

### **3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 12 May 2007**

The Minutes were accepted as a true and correct record. Proposed by Alma Tebbutt, seconded by Brenda Jowett.

### **4 Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **5 Chairman's Report**

Copies of Colin's Report were circulated. In this he reviewed the work of BABUS over the last year highlighting, in particular, issues concerning withdrawal of financial support for some local authority-supported services and potential developments involving Bedford Midland Railway Station.

The assistance and support provided by Bedfordshire County Council and by Stagecoach was valued and appreciated. Colin said that there were some key areas where BABUS needed new Executive Committee members to cover such responsibilities as vice-chairman and website manager. He appealed for any interested members to come forward and offer their time and skills.

Simon Norton commented on the County Council bus review, which appeared to have been abandoned, and urged BABUS to try and complete this exercise.

Alan Sprod said he was attempting to raise certain issues with his local councillors in Flitwick.

### **6 Treasurer's Report**

Ian Webster introduced his report which showed an increased end-of-year balance over 12 months ago.

He referred to one entry - '*Frank Hendrix expenses*', and apologised, saying that this had caused some embarrassment. It was agreed that this should be amended to '*Frank Hendrix – Expenditure on website etc*'.  
**Action - IW**

### **7 Adoption of reports**

Brenda Jowett proposed that the Reports be adopted. This was seconded by Martin Lewis and carried by a show of hands.

### **8 Election of Officers:**

Colin handed the Chair over to John Smith.

The following Members had been nominated as Officers of the Society and had indicated their willingness to remain in office:

Chairman – Colin Franklin  
Treasurer – Ian Webster  
Secretary – Peter G Williams

There were no further nominations from the floor and the Officers were duly elected on a proposition from Simon Norton, seconded by David Sharwood, affirmed by a show of hand with no objections or abstentions. Colin resumed Chairmanship of the Meeting, thanking John for his business-like assistance.

### **9 Election of Executive Committee**

The following Members had been nominated to serve on the Executive Committee and had indicated their willingness to continue with their respective responsibilities:

Alan Hopkinson - Newsletter Editor  
Brenda Jowett  
Simon Norton - Membership Officer  
David Sharwood - Disabilities Officer  
Alma Tebbutt

In addition, Mr John Yunnie expressed an interest in joining the Committee, subject to some discussion about the role he could play. His offer was gratefully noted by Colin who would make contact outside the formal meeting.  
**Action - CF**

### **10 Any other business**

Stephen Sleight noted the considerable contribution throughout the year, as well as at the AGM, by the Chairman and proposed a vote of thanks; this was approved by acclamation. There was no other business and the Meeting closed.

# Bedford Area Bus Users' Society



**Annual General Meeting of the Bedford Area Bus Users' Society to be held at Bedford Congress Hall\* (Salvation Army), Commercial Road, Bedford, on Saturday 20 June 2009 at 10am**

## AGENDA

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 10 May 2008 (copy circulated)
- 4 Matters arising
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report (copy circulated)
- 7 Election of Officers
- 8 Election of Executive Committee
- 9 Any other business

**Informal Meeting (approx 10.30am)**

**Guest speaker – Mr Chris Pettifer**

**Head of Transport Operations, Bedford Borough Council**

***Bedford Borough Council – a new dawn for Bus Services in the Borough?***

\* Opposite T-K Max. Doors open from 9am, refreshments available on site. The Meeting will be upstairs – please follow the signs