

Newbold Verdon Neighbourhood Plan

Transport

Reference T7

Bus User Survey

This document is a summary of the survey of bus passengers undertaken over two weeks in June 2017. It has been used to inform the public transport section of the neighbourhood plan. It should also be noted that at the time of undertaking the survey parishioners, independent of the neighbourhood plan, had gained 186 signature to a petition objecting to bus timetable changes.

Transport and Infrastructure Group - Bus User Survey

Introduction

There are two public bus services serving Newbold Verdon: the 153 that goes to Leicester from 5.57 am then every thirty minutes to 9.06 am. Then hourly for the rest of the day from Market Bosworth till the early evening. Due to recent changes to the timetable April 2017 the last bus from Newbold Verdon to Leicester is now 7.38 pm. The return journey finishes at Market Bosworth.

There is also an hourly service to Leicester from 8.39 am till 4.10 pm. from opposite the Swan. With the two journeys, there is a thirty minute service to Leicester from Newbold Verdon till early evening and from Leicester to Newbold Verdon with an hourly service to Market Bosworth.

Since the changes in the timetable the last bus from Newbold Verdon is now 7.38pm with the last bus from Leicester Bus station being 8.20 pm. Which terminates at Newbold Verdon. Before the change the last bus from Leicester was 10.20 pm.

Also the single fare has been increased.

The Saturday service is similar to Monday to Friday but the buses start later in the morning and less buses around early evening.

There is no public bus services on a Sunday and Bank Holidays, except for Good Friday. The 153 Public bus service is provided by Arriva Buses.

The other public bus service is the 159 provided by Roberts Coaches, going to Hinckley with the return journey finishing at Coalville.

The first bus to Hinckley from Newbold Verdon is an hourly service starting at 6.51 am until the last bus from Newbold Verdon at 17.56, Monday to Friday and 16.56 on Saturdays. The return journey from Hinckley is also hourly with the last bus to Newbold Verdon being 18.56 pm., Monday to Friday and 17.56 pm. on a Saturday, this journey finishes up at Coalville.

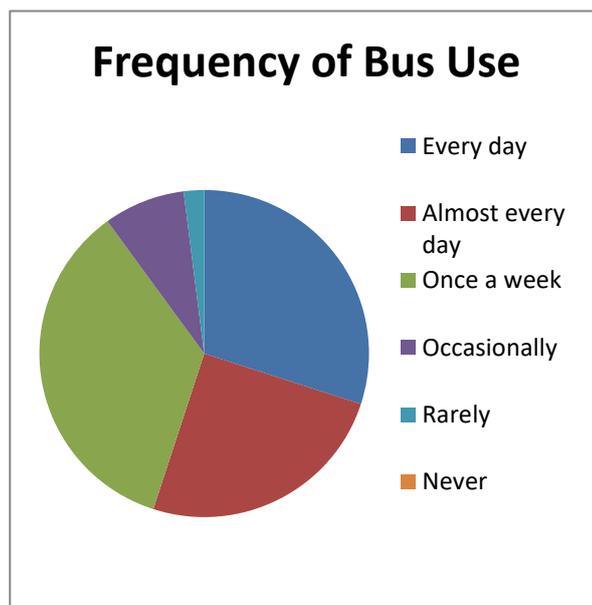
There is no public bus services on a Sunday and Bank Holidays, except for Good Friday.

The Survey

The survey was conducted over a period of two weeks and involved five volunteers speaking with a minimum of 10 bus users each (the final number was 68) at bus stops throughout the parish and at all different times of the day. The majority were using the 153 (Leicester) route but there were many who used the 159 (Hinckley/Coalville) and referred to both services. The split between female and male passengers was 58% (F) and 42% (M).

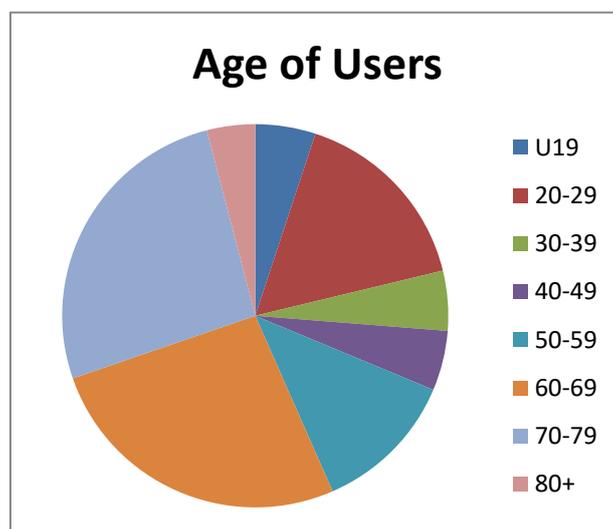
Frequency of Bus Usage

The most common usage was 'once a week' (35%), though those using the service daily (30%) and almost every day (25%) accounted for 60% of bus use and for them it often involved work or education commitments.



Age Profile

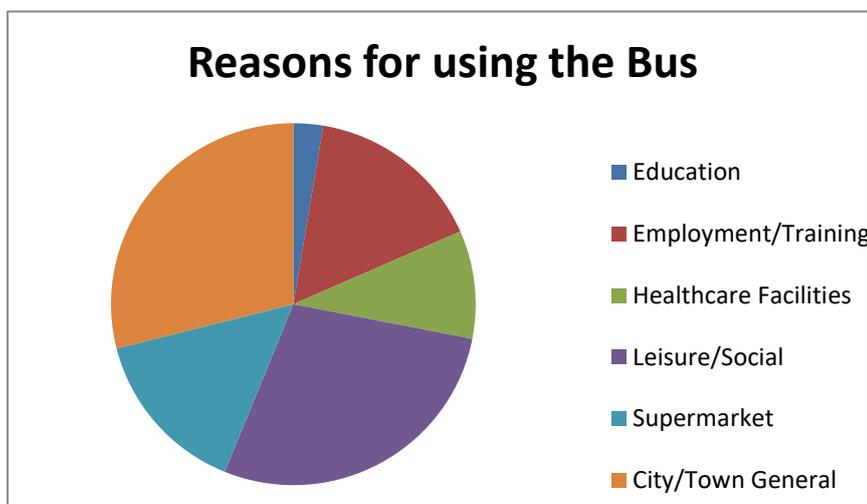
The pie chart illustrates the age profile of users, and whilst the majority (56%) were from the 60+ age-range, the buses were being used by all ages except the very young, many of whom would have been in school during the dates of the survey.



Reasons for Using the Bus

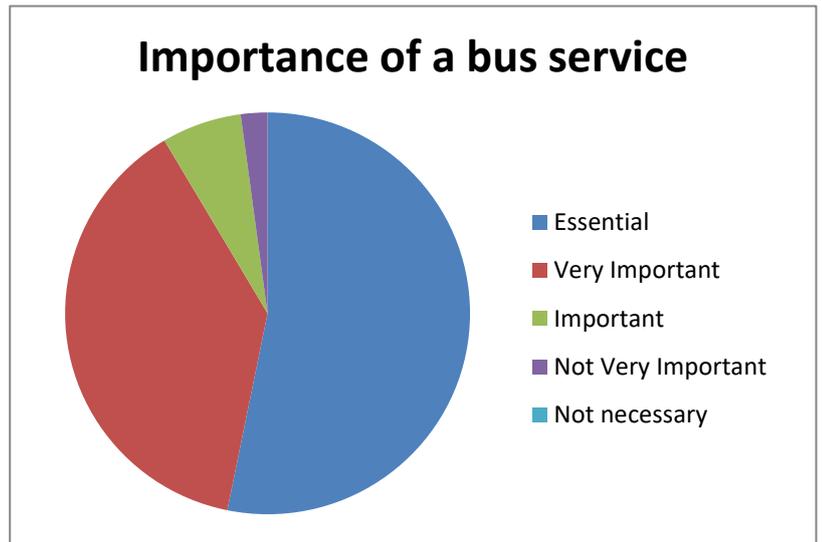
Dominating the reasons for using the bus (49%) were social/leisure and supermarket shopping. Town and City could be interpreted as an extension of these two reasons. Employment (18%) and Education (3%) accounted for 21% of bus journey reasons, with several people commenting on how vital (see Appendix A) the bus was for getting to work.

Leisure and Social use (32%) was also very important to people, especially many in the older age brackets but also those who could not drive. It was seen as a very important in helping maintain contacts with friends and family outside of the parish.



Importance of the Services

56% regarded the bus as essential and 36% as very important to them. These statistics were reinforced by many of the comments people made (App A) where they described how and why the bus service was important. Even those who did not use the service every day still regarded the service as needing protecting.



Concerns

These ranged from individual to individual, but a subject referred to by many was the recent reduction in services for early and late buses; 17 of the 38 who commented, referred to these changes. This concern was also underlined by a petition, independent of our survey, organised by parishioners calling for the reinstatement of the lost bus services (see Appendix B).

Cost was also an issue for some; affecting their work prospect as well as their generally frequency of using the service. One comment referred to the lack of flexibility in pricing for regular, if not daily, users.

Appendix A

Comments

1. *The recent loss of the late bus means my friend's daughter has to get a taxi back in the evenings from her place of work.*
2. *I wouldn't stay in this village if there was no bus service.*
3. *If there was no bus I wouldn't get out. I have no transport of my own.*
4. *We are from Barlestone. We drive in our car to Newbold because there is a more frequent service.*
5. *We use the bus for lots of things including going to the football at the City. The loss of the late bus has affected us.*
6. *We have lost opportunities to go to Barlestone and Carlton now the bus service has been reduced.*
7. *I think it is a great service. We could do with the Sunday Service back.*
8. *I don't drive, so I need both the 153 and 159.*
9. *Bring back the Sunday bus and Late Bus.*
10. *Let's have the Sunday bus back every hour or two hours,*
11. *It mostly a good service but there is none on Sundays which is needed even if it is hourly. It is very important to have buses regular to reduce more cars on the roads.*
12. *I absolutely hate that the 153 has cut the 10p.m. service.*
13. *It's good. However, around 3p.m. it is never on time.*
14. *Sunday and Bank Holiday service and the late buses.*
15. *Would like the late as well as Sundays and Bank holiday services.*
16. *We need a bus on Sunday. There is nothing for the young people at weekends.*
17. *Good service with what we have, but could do with an evening service.*

18. *Could do with a Sunday service.*
19. *The 159 is expensive. 5 X £5.20 per week. No discounted tickets.*
20. *153 used to be great. Cuts to this service are shameful. Last bus 8.30p.m., and 6.30p.m. to Bosworth. No Sunday Service. Average taxi fares are £20.00. Low income families who can't afford a car are deprived of social life, further education, evening classes, cinema, theatre, evening exercise classes and sports events. Teenagers can't travel independently. The lack of service severely restricts work opportunities for those relying on public transport. How often do I sue the 153? Not often because it is inadequate!*
21. *Extremely limiting especially after 6p.m. and Sundays which makes it impossible to work or be sociable on these days/times.*
22. *The infrequency of the bus services in the evening which will have a domino effect on other businesses eg pubs*
23. *Cutting the last bus which impacts on social life which causes more expense in taxis.*
24. *Cutting the last bus which impacts on social activities.*
25. *Shame there is no bus service on Sundays and reduced the bus service after 6p.m.*
26. *Good service in the daytime every ½ hour.*
27. *Too expensive for short journeys. Prices don't make sense.*
28. *Some buses always late. The bus driver never has any change. Awkward to get back from work early mornings.*
29. *I would like to see the cut backs returned back to normal times. Supposed to be a bus service but it is not.*
30. *Very good and useful service.*
31. *If I didn't have a bus I would not be able to go out because I don't drive. I have not got any close family and not many friends who drive.*
32. *We need the buses: we don't drive. X2*
33. *It provides a vital link to neighbouring towns and villages, and by going to Hinckley gives access to other bus routes and to its train station, also the local hospital. Hinckley has rejuvenated its shopping area around the bus station and it now has a delux cinema and new leisure centre, all accessible because of the 159 bus service.*
34. *It is an extremely vital service (153) to the community, and providing a direct link to Leicester city and the other travel networks (city buses and train etc). The cutting out of the 10.25p.m from town has impacted on if we go into town for a night out because of the financial implications.*
35. *I believe the 153 bus service is a crucial transport artery for getting into and out of Leicester. I also believe it is essential for helping with Leicester city's carbon footprint.*
36. *An essential facility for people without cars. Also supports reduction in carbon emissions.*
37. *I don't drive so need the service to visit elderly relative.*
38. *The 153 is now reliable. The cost and pricing strategy threatens my usage. A monthly saver ticket is too expensive when I only work 2/3 days per week; single fares are too expensive. There is no '10 ticket saver' available.*

Appendix B – A petition to Arriva and the County Council

A total of 189 signatures were collected by resident and a campaign to reinstate the lost service was led by county and district councillors. This is currently ongoing.