

General notes

LEP / Capital schemes tend to favour road over rail through evaluations / algorithms used.

Annual and differing capital schemes for new station builds make preparation of schemes locally to "shovel ready" risky.

This sheet is an overview, prepared for the Campaign for Better Transport invite to the House of Lords on 13th October 2016. A great deal of further detail and backup data is available – in the first instance please contact the author who will put you in touch with appropriate member(s) of our team. We work through technical knowledge, detailed analysis, and the keen participation of volunteers – over 80 people helped last year alone ...

What should the future bring?

A Bus Services Bill that lets our authority address the issues it faces in trying to provide a joined-up public transport network at a sensible cost. **Putting the customer first.**

The current expansion of the community rail ethos (via ACoRP) into community public transport, bearing in mind that every pound invested in community rail brings £4.20 in benefit to the local economy. **Funding local input to public transport to help it perform better.**

Investment schemes which look ahead by a uniform period of (say) 30 years across all modes of transport and **provide for long term planning and funding** not to varied each time the political wind blows.

A planned, affordable, integrated, easy-to-use, marketed, passenger friendly transport network in Wiltshire – and in other passenger transport areas neighbouring and elsewhere within the UK – should be a government goal. Such a system will bring economic, sustainability and quality of life benefits not only to those who use public transport regularly, but rather to the community in its entirety.

Our thanks to current and previous governments that have already taken a number of steps along these lines; there remains, though, much more that can be done where a little investment of thought, planning, time and money can reap benefits many times in excess of the investment made.

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Supporting **Option 24/7** for a positive bus future in Wiltshire
email: graham@wellho.net ... Web: <http://option247.uk>
Facebook group: option247 ... Twitter: @option247

See also our "Coffee Shop" - <http://gwr.passenger.chat>
public transport forum with almost 200,000 posts!

Public Transport in Wiltshire

Update – prepared 13th October 2016 – by Graham Ellis

Community Rail Officer – TransWilts CRP

and member of the Option 247 community team



Wiltshire's population and its transport use

10 million bus / 6 million rail journeys per annum; 60 million bus miles and 120 million rail miles

Population around 450,000 (plus 210,000 in Swindon)

Some 60% of the 450,000 live in urban (city and town) rather than rural (village) locations

Up to 35% of households in some wards have no car, many others have multiple independent travellers and just one car

Conservative majority on council, cabinet government style, most cabinet members representing affluent rural areas

Public Transport uses – **Education, Employment, Work, Leisure, Senior, Medical, Shopping, Personal Business, Economic, Tourism**, etc

Trains in Wiltshire

Three major east-west lines run through county from London
high through traffic volume

Regional service (Cardiff - Portsmouth cuts corner diagonally)
high through traffic volume

TransWilts runs North - South.
Strategic element in Local Transport Plan to connect county

Campaigning and progress - trains

TransWilts service was just 2 per day each way until December 2013 /
annual journey made around 18,000 = **13 passengers per train**

On sound case, service increased for a trial period of 3 years,
December 2013 to December 2016 to 8 round trips per day

Current numbers over quarter of a million per year = **45 passengers per train**
mostly single carriage trains

THANKS to Local Sustainable Transport Fund grant for seed funding

Service now permanent as part of the franchise

Service has been "designated" so that it's got an official Community Rail Partnership

Community Rail Partnership is community based and already works with council
and well with train operators.

Issues with trains in Wiltshire

Peak trains - and shoulder-peak too - are full and standing and
custom is being put off by conditions

Service has done so well we need extra carriages / services and
further improvements at Melksham Station

Logic is an hourly service Swindon to Southampton Airport, joining up with other
services end on that use similar types of trains already

Other rail services growing too.
Need more carriages / trains or rerouting of some through passengers.

East - West to West Country via Westbury / major flow to Devon,
great concern at possible loss of through services.

We applaud the LSTF grant scheme and other schemes which encourage sustainable (including financially sustainable) growth and more efficient systems than we have at present.

We applaud the commitment of most local councillors and council officers, often in very difficult circumstances, to make the best use of the resources they have available to them, and we acknowledge their skill and dedication to their work.

Buses in Wiltshire

50% routes supported by council subsidy
50% routes commercial (but most have some trips or route parts subsidised)

£5.1 million in subsidy in the last financial year
Council budget requirement to save £2.6 million next (2017/18) year

Consultation brought 11,000 responses in January to April 2016

Cabinet decision in October 2016 to reduce savings to just £500k next year

Also decided to protect evening and Sunday economy and to undertake marketing

Issues with buses in Wiltshire

Current system is disjoint public transport routes, and not a network

Around 18 different bus operators (plus 2 rail operators) in county

Very limited marketing and limited information at stops (and is it current?)

Many bus services start late / end early - cater only for school and ENCTS markets

Connections and through tickets almost non-existent

Operation inefficiencies from small scale of operators and at all the boundaries between them

Opportunities for commercial routes to be tweaked to take in supported routes too

Huge differences in standards and systems between operators

Public perception that buses are slow, old, unreliable and only to be used as a last resort

Operators pull out of commercial routes at short notice, so emergency need for support

Little 'total transport' co-ordination with NHS or bus to rail

Campaigning and progress - buses

Option 24/7 campaign group of users with industry and commercial experience support

Looking at franchising and partnerships with teeth to propose a
cost-saving but more effective transport network

Using the expertise of current commercial operators to provide a joined up service

Bus Services Bill a great encouragement in that it acknowledges the issues that need resolving

Concerns at timescale of availability (but Wilts Council allow for that with next year's decision)

Concern at availability (?) to non-metropolitan / large unitaries

Concerns that concessions (just) granted to Competition and Mergers Authority puts back to commercial companies competing for profits rather than providing a system / network that works for the residents, visitors and wider economy in which commercial bus companies can then compete for contracts.