

Public Statements to the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body Board

Board Meeting 28 June 2023

Agenda Item 4 - Public Participation

Statement from Linda Snelling

I am writing to you because I believe there are discussions being held about the future of both bus and coach networking across the west. and a regional bus and coach study being carried out

I come from Yeovil area, and lead of Yeovil bus users group, and part of Somerset bus partnership. And I am writing to know what can be done to bring coaches services back into the Yeovil bus and coach station? and how We can reinstate services across this lower quadrant of Somerset.

We used to have national express and other companies enabling passengers the possibility to connect to places like Salisbury Poole Bournemouth Exeter Plymouth, Bristol and up the country. But over the last decade this region has suffered severely with majority of both bus and coach services being withdrawn. meaning this area of Somerset has no option but to go by car, or use train ~ even this causes problems due to the limited bus rail link and public transport as we have No evening , Bank holiday or Sunday services!

This town and its fellow neighbouring rural villages and smaller towns are extremely restricted which causes a multitude of issues locally!

We are the second largest town in Somerset it is appalling that residents in south Somerset are being failed.

All that is available in this area is Berry's Coaches superfast 2 which takes us to London via Wincanton .. But Wincanton is the last stop before London! . I have often wondered why berrys has not developed a second service via Salisbury?

We are unable to reach places of interest that are fairly local Like Salisbury, Bristol by direct coach/ bus it is infuriating, when the northern side of Somerset Taunton Bridgwater and wells are served. We do not even have a regular service to the coast!. and We are unable to support tourism, hospitality leisure business and industry. Unless we juggle a multiple of different methods of traveling to get to one destination.. however the timetabling does not flow together making connectivity and integration impossible.. It is really stressful and off putting!

We even have a bus and coach station and it is potential travel integration hub, it there funding for development for this station and the local stops?

we are on the boarder of Dorset so this makes it ideal for cross boarder routes enabling access Sherborne Dorchester, Bournemouth Poole as well as Bridport, and also connections to Plymouth Exeter and Salisbury as we are on the A30/ A303 a main trunk road.

With the push by government and local councils for the public to use a more sustainable travel it is high time that governing bodies address the large disparagement in this lower quadrant of Somerset region and begin to look at levelling up, to allow us the same opportunities as other areas the freedom to travel! And I ask for your help!

So what is being done to asses the needs of this area of Somerset and and how to address the lack of service!

I also want to raise the accessibility of disabled passengers regarding the railway and interchanges because at present the public bus rail link we have is not reduced mobility friendly, the Somerset council run bus is a small 14/16 seater which makes it at time impossible to board! And customers have been turned away unable to commute to the only link we have to exeter and other stations on route up to london? Yeovil junction is inaccessible by foot or by mobility scooter, as the road is narrow and dangerous!

I believe that peninsula transport is also looking at network links and are you working unitedly together approaching express services like national express, Berry's mega bus etc to see that improvements are carried out

I hope I have managed to convey what it is like living rural areas and how much we are being held back! Wish that you may give consideration to the lack of services.

Kind regards
Linda snelling

Lead of Yeovil Bus Users Group, Taunton Bus Users Group.
Member of Somerset Bus Partnership.