

About Bus Services

Introduction:

There are two types of public bus services within Hampshire; around 70% are operated by commercial bus companies from which they expect to make a profit. The second type of public bus service are those which are funded in whole or in part by the local authority, normally Hampshire County Council, as they are not commercially viable but fulfil a social need.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who funds non commercial bus services?

In Hampshire most supported bus services are funded by Hampshire County Council, although sometimes the local district or borough council will put money into a service.

How do I find out which bus services are supported by Hampshire County Council and which are commercial?

Timetables that are published by the County Council and bus operators usually show which journeys or services are supported by the Council.

How does Hampshire County Council decide whether to support a bus service?

The County Council plan and pay for bus services that people need to use to get to key services (e.g. shops or health) or for travel to work or to school. Some services are supported in the evenings, on Sundays or in more rural areas, when fewer services are commercially profitable, but only if enough people use them to give good value for money. Sometimes a service will be provided more economically by using a minibus or a shared taxi.

What is the process for tendering Hampshire County Council supported bus services and what consultation takes place before changes to routes start?

The supported bus services are normally retendered every four years. The process takes six months from the planning stage to the new/revised bus services running. During this process we consult with parish councils, district councils, passenger transport forums, and commercial organisations as widely as possible.

Do commercial operators have to consult with the public or give any notice before a commercial bus service is changed or withdrawn?

Bus companies do not have to consult with the public before a commercial bus service is changed or withdrawn. They do have to give the Traffic Commissioner's Office a minimum of 56 days notice, for any changes to a registered local bus service, but they can ask for a shorter period if there are special circumstances.

Why are large buses used in rural areas?

People sometimes ask why large buses need to be used in rural areas when there are few people on them.

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Why are large buses used in rural areas?

This is often because a bus starts or finishes its journey in a town where it becomes much busier, and it needs to provide enough seats at peak times or takes a large number of pupils to school. To have extra smaller buses just for quieter periods would cost more and would mean extra mileage (and use of fuel) so that the buses involved could be swapped over when necessary.

How are bus routes and frequency determined?

Most bus routes are provided by commercial operators who decide on the route and frequency which they think will earn a return on their investment. Many have been operating for several years, and are based on local needs. Any proposed changes to an existing bus route and / or frequency is based on information collected by the bus companies and the County Council's bus survey team. Other circumstances such as new housing developments or industrial estates may also result in a route changing.

What is a Quality Bus Partnership?

A Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) is a partnership between various stakeholders which can include county councils, local district councils, bus operators and sometimes other parties. The local authority improves bus stop access and information, and the bus company improves vehicles and timetables. 27% of journeys in Hampshire are on QBP routes.

What is a Transport Hub?

A transport hub is a location where passengers can change on to other bus services, or other types of transport such as rail, ferry or air.

How are bus fares determined and how do I find out the price of a journey before travelling?

Bus fares are normally set by the bus company operating the services. It is best to contact the bus company before you travel.

Who should I contact if I leave something on the bus?

Call the bus company and ask to speak to the Lost Property Office. You can find contact numbers for bus operators in Hampshire on our website.
www.hants.gov.uk/passengertransport

Where can I find bus timetable information?

Traveline has the bus, coach, ferry and rail timetables for Hampshire. They can also help you to plan your journey. Their contact number is 0871 200 22 33 or visit www.traveline.info. Calls to Traveline cost 10p a minute plus a network charge.

What is the National Concessionary Bus Pass and how do I apply for a pass?

The concessionary bus pass is available to anyone aged 60 or over and those who meet certain disability or mobility criteria. Pass holders can travel free between 9.30am and 11pm Mon - Fri (residents of some districts may be able to travel at extra times) and all day at weekends and bank holidays. The pass is issued by your district or borough council. See our website for contact details.

For the latest information on bus services in Hampshire visit:

www.hants.gov.uk/passengertransport

**Hampshire County Council -
Passenger Transport general enquiries**

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