

CALL FOR 'PROACTIVE' APPROACH

Changes to bus services in Dover district area



DOVER AREA

- **Aycliffe** Minor adjustments to route 61 timetable; some poorly-used journeys withdrawn.
- **Buckland** Route 60A to be withdrawn, 62 to have a revised timetable.
- **Kearsney & Temple Ewell** Route 15B to be withdrawn but route 15 to provide a 20-minute service along London Road between Canterbury and Dover. Route 91 journeys will increase to hourly on weekends.
- **Maxton** Routes 100, 101 and 102 will provide a 20-minute frequency along Folkestone Road on weekdays, instead of half-hourly to hourly.
- **River** Routes 15B and 60A to be withdrawn. St Radigund's will instead be served by routes 89, 89A, 90 and 91. This would provide a 20-minute frequency to and from Dover town centre on weekdays and hourly on Sundays.
- **Tower Hamlets & Elms Vale** Minor changes to route 63.
- **Whitfield** Revised timetable for routes 12 and 89. Route 60A replaced by new route 90, between Deal and Dover town centre via Ringwould, Whitfield Hill and River. Minor changes to route 61 timetable. Routes 87 and 88 withdrawn apart from some school journeys.

SANDWICH AREA

- **Staple** Route 14 to go, village gets a schools and shopping service only.
- **Ash, Littlebourne & Wingham** Routes 13, 13A, 14 and 14A to be all replaced by a new route 43. This will provide a 20-minute service from Canterbury to Sandwich via these villages on weekdays and hourly on Sundays.
- **Sandwich** Routes 13, 13A, 14 and 14A replaced by 43 as above. Hourly service to Deal and Canterbury on Sundays. Routes 87 and 88 to be withdrawn. Half-hourly service between Sandwich and Dover via Deal from new routes 80 and 81.
- **Woodnesborough & St Barts** Routes 13A and 14A withdrawn. Hourly service provided daily by 81 going between Sandwich, Deal and Dover.
- **Eastry** Routes 14, 14A, 87 and 88 withdrawn except for some school journeys. Hourly route 81 to link Eastry with Dover, Deal and Sandwich.
- **Betteshanger & Finglesham** Routes 14 and 14A to be replaced by 81, going hourly to Sandwich and Deal.
- **Northbourne & Great Mongeham** Routes 14 and 14A withdrawn, for a schools and shopping service only.
- **Worth** Route 13A to be replaced by 80 going hourly between Dover, Deal and Sandwich.

DEAL AREA

- **Sholden** Routes 13, 13A and 14A to be replaced by 80 and 81 with half-hourly journeys on the A258 between Deal and Sandwich.
- **Deal** Revised timetable for route 12. Routes 13, 13A, 14 and 14A to be replaced by 80 and 81, with two buses an hour between Deal and Sandwich. Routes 15 and 15X to be withdrawn between Sandown and Dover. New routes 80 and 81 going between Deal and Dover via the current 15/15X with two buses an hour. On Sunday the frequency will increase to hourly between Dover and Deal.
- **Kingsdown** Revised timetable for route 82.
- **Mill Hill** Routes 14, 15 and 15X replaced by 80 and 81. Half-hourly frequency between Mill Hill and Deal town centre or Dover town centre.
- **Sandown** Routes 15 and 15X replaced by 84 going hourly from Deal town centre.
- **Upper Deal** Revised timetable for 82 and frequency increased to every 30 for the main part of the day on weekdays.
- **Walmer** Route 13A, 14 to be replaced by 82 and 15 and 15X replaced by 83. Routes 12, 80, 81 and 90 go up to four times an hour between the Thompson's Bell and Deal.
- **Ringwould** Routes 15 and 15X to go. Frequency to and from Deal to go up to four buses an hour through routes 12, 80, 81 and 90.

OTHER VILLAGES

- **Alkham** More route 91 journeys, going every hour on weekdays to and from Folkestone.
- **Aylesham** Hourly service on 89 and 89A to and from Dover and half-hourly to and from Canterbury at weekdays.
- **Coldred & Shepherdswell** Routes 88 and 88A going except for some school journeys. Increased service between Canterbury and Dover via 89A, going every two hours on weekdays. Reduced service on Saturdays.
- **Eythorne & Elvington** Routes 87 and 77 going except for some school journeys. Hourly service between Dover and Canterbury on weekdays, less service on Saturdays.
- **Nonington & Snowdown** Hourly 89 and 89A service between Dover and Canterbury for weekdays, fewer buses on Saturdays.
- **St Margaret's Bay** Route 15 replaced by 81 going between Dover and Sandwich via St Margaret's Bay and Deal every hour.
- **Tilmanstone** Routes 87 and 88 to be withdrawn, schools and shopping service only.

Council united in tackling decision to cut bus routes

by Sam Lennon
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Councillors want to put up a united front to fight bus service cuts.

They want Dover Town Council (DTC), as a whole organisation, to write directly to Stagecoach to oppose reductions in services.

It is thought that this would carry more weight than responses from individual members.

Cllr Keith Sansum told a full council meeting last Wednesday: "We should be stating what we feel. Stagecoach needs to know DTC does not support this and we represent the people of Dover."

"I believe that DTC should be responding as a body."

Cllr John Ward said: "Stagecoach have not considered the geography of Dover, the hilly terrain and the fact that there are a lot of elderly people."

Cllr Sue Jones said: "Cllr Sansum is right. We need to be a little more proactive."

"This council is on the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) but does not have a vote."

Cllr Pam Brivio added that because Stagecoach is a private company the town council is not even a formal stakeholder.

Cllr Callum Warriner sits on the JTB, a transport group represented by all local authority tiers.

He told the town council that at the last Dover JTB meeting, on June 15, members had voted to write to Stagecoach complaining about the shortness of the consultation periods, which was only from June 13 to July 3.

That letter also said that the JTB believed there was a lack of detailed information provided on the proposed changes to services and a poor level of publicity given to the consultation.

The town council heard Stagecoach had reportedly decided to implement its changes, review after some months and make any changes necessary.



Cllr Keith Sansum, left, said Dover Town Council should be responding as a body, a view echoed by Cllr Sue Jones, right

Stagecoach consultation 'meaningless'

Stagecoach has also been accused by MP Charlie Elphicke of not heeding the concerns of passengers in its consultation.

The company has now confirmed it will stick to its original proposals. But the Dover and Deal MP says this could lead to some villages losing their only regular service.

Mr Elphicke had met the company's South East managing director, Philip Norwell, on June 30 to discuss the problem.

He has written again to Stagecoach urging the firm to listen to the concerns raised by residents.

Mr Elphicke said: "I feared Stagecoach's consultation would be meaningless, given how ludicrously short it was. Sadly that has been proved correct."

"The whole consultation is a shambles. If Stagecoach thought

Kent County Council (KCC) could take over some services, why was this not sorted out a long time ago? I urge everyone to keep up the pressure on Stagecoach and make their voice heard."

The changes to the routes and timetables begin in September.

In general, poorly-used Dover town routes will be withdrawn and there will be a reduction in frequency on most Dover local routes on Saturday afternoons.

Stagecoach says its plans reflect detailed analysis of passenger usage and journey patterns and takes into consideration increasing traffic congestion.

Mr Norwell said: "The vast majority of bus services in east Kent run by Stagecoach are commercial services - that is they do not receive any subsidy. "Some services do not cover

their costs and for our part we will always look at innovative ways of being able to provide these, but they cannot run at a loss."

"We've listened to the responses we had to the consultation. While some people expressed concern, others are excited about the new journey opportunities that these changes will bring."

He added: "As I discussed with Charlie, KCC already subsidise another operator in the area that could cater for these villages."

Stagecoach say that full details of new routes and bus times will be on their website by mid August. They also point out that they have expanded the area in which their £4 'dayrider' tickets are valid for a trial period - allowing one day's unlimited bus travel across the entire Sandwich, Deal and Dover area.

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