

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

BCP Council in partnership with local bus operators



Foreword



Councillor Mike Greene

Portfolio Holder, Transport and Sustainability

Good bus services are essential in keeping the communities of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole connected. Many of our residents rely on the bus network to get to work, attend hospital appointments, go to the shops or simply get out and about. For some, buses are a lifeline. Helping local people feel connected, helping jobseekers find work or keeping family and friends in touch.

The BCP region is one of the most congested areas in the country, which negatively impacts our local economy, our environment and our health. I've no doubt, bus service improvement will play a key role in helping us tackle traffic congestion, when appreciating that a full double decker bus can take up to 75 cars off the road.

We know travelling by bus has health benefits. Walking to the bus stop can aid wellbeing and supports the government's recommended 30 minutes of activity each day. Bus travel can be a lot less stressful than commuting by car, leaving bus users free to read, send messages or catch up on life admin.

More than 40 % of the buses operating in the BCP area meet the Euro 6 standard. Continued investment in bus fleets means that buses are getting cleaner all the time. Euro 6 buses have fewer emissions overall than the average Euro 6 car despite having 15 to 20 times the capacity. The future is electric or hydrogen powered buses which are even cleaner with zero exhaust emissions.

In March 2021, the government published its National Bus Strategy for England: 'Bus Back Better'. This set a clear expectation that local councils and bus operators will work more closely together for the benefit of passengers and putting this relationship on a statutory basis. Working closely with the bus operators isn't new for BCP Council. Local bus operators have been part of a voluntary partnership for more than two decades with a joint aim of supporting bus passengers.

'Bus Back Better' sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services in England, outside of London, through greater local leadership. This Bus Service Improvement Plan is the next stage on our journey. Bus passengers have said what we need to do to make their journeys better and people not currently using local bus services have told us what needs to happen to encourage them to do so. Our aim is to make buses faster, more reliable and more frequent. We want to make them easier to use, better value and more integrated with other modes of transport. Through an Enhanced Partnership, supported by the government grant of £8.9m to fund BSIP Improvements through to 2025, we aim to make buses an attractive transport choice.



Andrew Wickham
Managing Director – Go South Coast

Go South Coast, trading as morebus, have been involved closely in the preparation of the BSIP through regular dialogue and meetings with BCP Council. As the BSIP has been drafted, we appreciate the high level of engagement and openness with the bus operators.

We are pleased that the BSIP shows a high level of ambition for how BCP Council and local bus operators will work together over the coming years to deliver a step change in the quality and reliability of bus services. It is important that we collectively deliver journey time improvements and improve journey times across one of the most congested areas of the South West.

The local bus scene has changed considerably since the first BSIP was published, Yellow Buses ceased trading - the largest collapse of a bus company of that size for some 30 years with morebus stepping in across the majority of the network within 48 hours. This now presents the opportunity for a comprehensive network across the South Dorset conurbation and the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership can reflect this complete network.

We are looking forward to working with BCP Council to achieve a virtuous cycle of sustained bus passenger growth and improving customer satisfaction.





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Executive summary

Following the publication of central government's National Bus Strategy on 15 March 2021, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council has confirmed that it has progressed to developing an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with its local bus operators - Go South Coast T/A morebus, Bournemouth Transport T/A Yellow Buses and First. Bournemouth Transport ceased trading on 4 August 2022 and much of their local bus network was subsequently taken over by morebus. Eastleigh-based Xela Group T/A Yellow Coaches currently operate three of the former Yellow Buses services tendered by BCP Council on an interim basis pending longer-term contracts. Yellow Coaches also operate a number of school services in the BCP area both commercially and with private subsidy. Whilst the loss of Yellow Buses will have some impact on the detailed arrangements set out in the plan, it is not expected this will be significant.

It is a Department for Transport (DfT) requirement that Bus Service Improvement Plans should be revised at least every twelve months to ensure they remain relevant and that the plans within are working as intended. The first **Bus Service Improvement Plan** (BSIP) was published in October 2021. It sets out a high-level ambitious vision to deliver a step change in local bus services through greater local leadership and collaboration between BCP Council, bus companies and our local communities. Through targeted interventions this BSIP will grow bus patronage, both building it back following the COVID-19 pandemic and then increasing passenger numbers at the same time as attracting people away from less sustainable alternatives. The updated plan reflects the loss of one of our major operators, Yellow Buses, and the indicative funding award of £8.9m following submission of our inaugural BSIP.

The **current offer** is outlined firstly through the local context and character of the BCP Council area and immediate surroundings relevant to cross boundary routes. Reducing traffic congestion is the top priority for improvement, identified both by residents and the bus companies. High levels of traffic congestion reduce the area's potential and without significant bus priority impacts on the effectiveness of the local bus network. Public transport is an important part of the visitor economy and supports BCP Council's priorities including the Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

The bus network has been evaluated with consideration of routes, patronage trends and comparisons of BCP to other areas as well as how easily residents can access the three main towns by bus. The impact of an incremental decrease in average bus journey speeds, resulting in longer journey times, is evidenced. The current bus offer includes fare details, information provision, bus fleets and the role of BCP Council including funding of services and individual operator profiles.

Barriers to bus use and growth are described, with information gathered from research and surveys, both from bus users and potential passengers. The most important priorities are identified to encourage more bus use and increase satisfaction. Responses from engagement as part of compiling the BSIP are included. Background to local car parking arrangements is outlined to reflect the national strategy which identifies the influence parking conditions can have on bus use.

Locations where bus services need improvement are identified and the economic, environmental, and social benefits of enhancing bus services are highlighted.

Headline targets are a requirement of the BSIP and these will apply throughout the BCP area.

Targets are proposed for 2024/5 and then 2030. Journey time will be measured as average bus speeds and reliability as the percentage of bus services running on time – classified as within 5 minutes late and up to a minute early from the scheduled, timetabled time. The targets are to increase average bus speeds from a 12 mph baseline to 13.2 mph (10% increase) by 2025 and by 2030 to 14.4 mph (20% increase). For reliability the 82% of buses running on time in 2021 will be increased to 90% by 2025 and 95% by 2030. Increasing passenger numbers is the core aim of the BSIP, with a target of a 10% increase by 2025 from a pre-covid baseline and a further ambitious cumulative 10% year on year increase for 2030 when the suggested actions of the plan are delivered. Average passenger satisfaction will be measured through regular surveys from a high baseline of 93%, to 95% by 2025 and 97% by 2030.

Proposals for improvement detailing targeted actions have been established jointly by the operators and BCP Council to deliver the plan. Where relevant these are given a timeframe for implementation. Some actions are specific to either the council or the operators, but many are combined to reflect the partnership ethos. The actions include proposals for bus priority, making buses easier to use and understand and improvements to facilities to support bus services. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on bus services is one of the reasons why the plan is needed and the immediate priority is to maintain a largely pre-pandemic network and return passenger numbers to previous levels. The £8.9m indicative funding, when confirmed will support the delivery of the proposals set out in the BSIP.

An overview table provides a summary of the targets and proposals for improvements. An **appendix** to the BSIP provides an evidence base for the frequency of bus services and accessibility to the main centres, supported by comprehensive maps. The second section covers population and demographic analysis to develop a greater understanding of the travel needs of the local population, and to guide future service reviews.

This BSIP document, provides the foundation for the Enhanced Partnership, commencing in Autumn 2022. As a living document it will be reviewed regularly and adapted as circumstances change.

Overview

As part of the joint commitment to the National Bus Strategy, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council) and the local bus operators have compiled this Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The plan has been updated for its first annual review for October 2022. The BSIP was one of 31 Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) selected for indicative funding.

The first part on the journey to improving bus services locally is the commitment to enter into an **Enhanced Partnership** (EP) with the main local bus operators, morebus and Yellow Buses. This was confirmed in June 2021 as required through HM Government's national strategy. BCP Council and Dorset Council have benefitted from an existing Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership which has successfully delivered improvements to bus services for residents and visitors. This partnership will continue to operate until replaced by the EP in Autumn 2022.

A draft Enhanced Partnership (EP) with the local bus operators has been compiled considering the likely funding award and the priorities notified as part of the National Bus Strategy. The EP comprises of both an EP Plan based on the BSIP and an EP Scheme covering facilities and measures to be delivered through the partnership. BCP Council and our partner operators have proposed the scheme taking account of the funding allocation and National Bus Strategy priorities.

Full detail is provided in the EP document, this BSIP will include relevant updates where circumstances have changed. At the end of July 2022, one of the two main bus operators involved in the BSIP – Bournemouth Transport trading as Yellow Buses, went into Administration and on the 4 August 2022 the company ceased trading. References to Yellow Buses in this update cover the period when they were still trading. A full re-evaluation of the BSIP will be progressed when the longer-term impact on the network is understood.

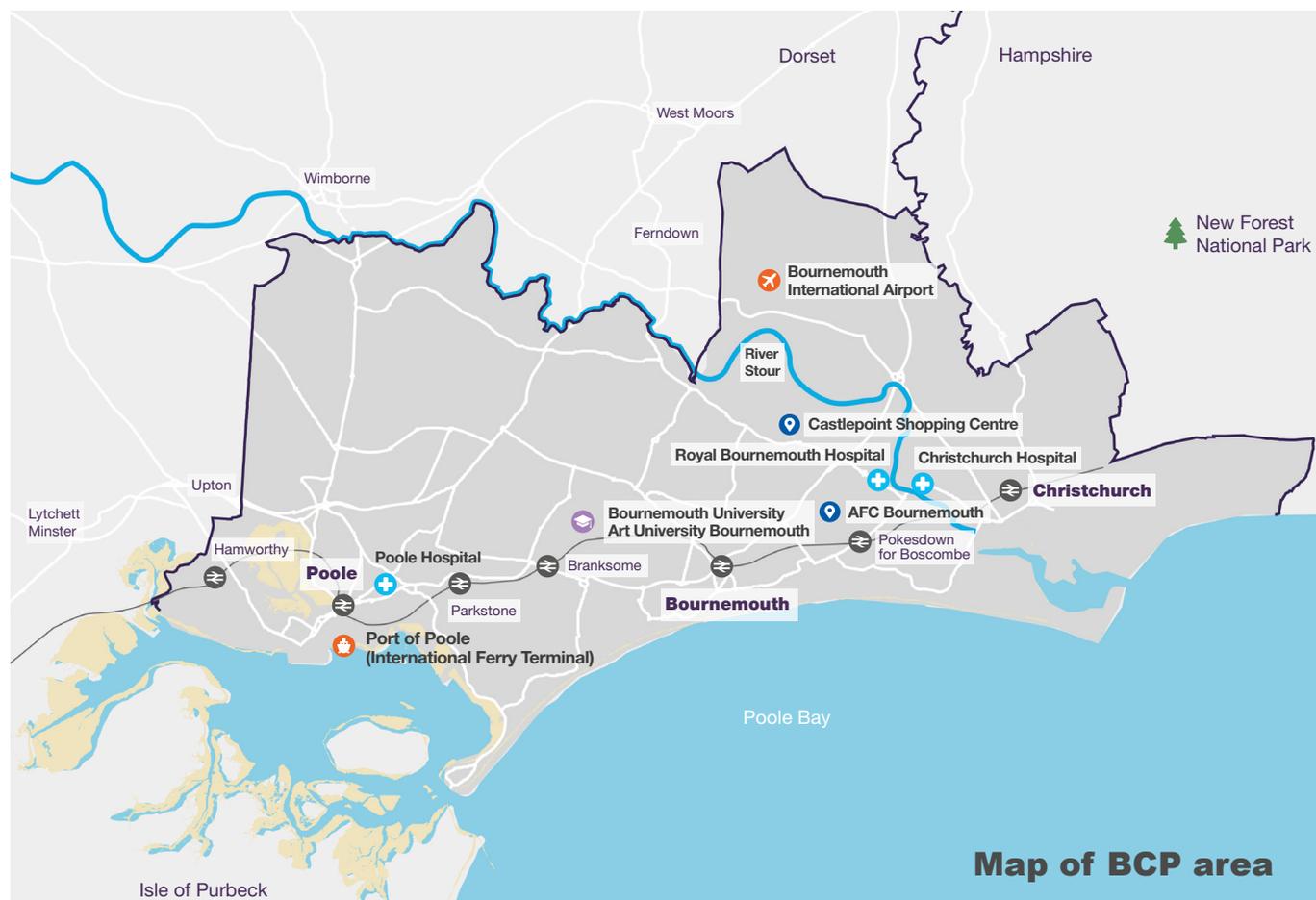
The aim of this BSIP is to deliver improvements to bus services across the geographical area of the recently formed BCP Council through the strengthened partnership and supported by increased government funding. However, as a developing city region, cross-boundary bus services also serve the communities in the areas adjacent to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. We have therefore engaged with our neighbouring councils – Hampshire, Wiltshire and especially Dorset, with which we share a Local Transport Plan and where joint initiatives are already being delivered (most recently south east Dorset's Transforming Cities Fund programme).



Current offer

Local context

On 1 April 2019, a new coastal urban local authority was formed with the creation of BCP Council which brought together the legacy councils that previously served the three historic towns of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole into a single strategic Unitary Authority. The new authority has a population of 395,300 residents, expected to grow by 2% to 403,600 people by 2028.¹ At the time the first BSIP was produced the new authority had a population of 395,300 residents. The 2021 census shows a population of 400,300.



Several key bus routes link the BCP Council area with the wider south east Dorset city region and travel to work area. By 2026 this combined area has plans for 20,000 new jobs and 29,400 new homes. There is growing concern that traffic congestion, resulting in delays and poor air quality, needs to be addressed to prevent this growth being stifled and our local potential not realised. The most recent residents' surveys from the historic councils all ranked **reducing traffic congestion as the top overall priority for improvement** – of all issues, not just transport.

This BSIP is part of the solution and will build on the Transforming Travel programme which includes the successful Transforming Cities Fund bid, Active Travel Fund, Capability Fund and Local Transport Plan elements.

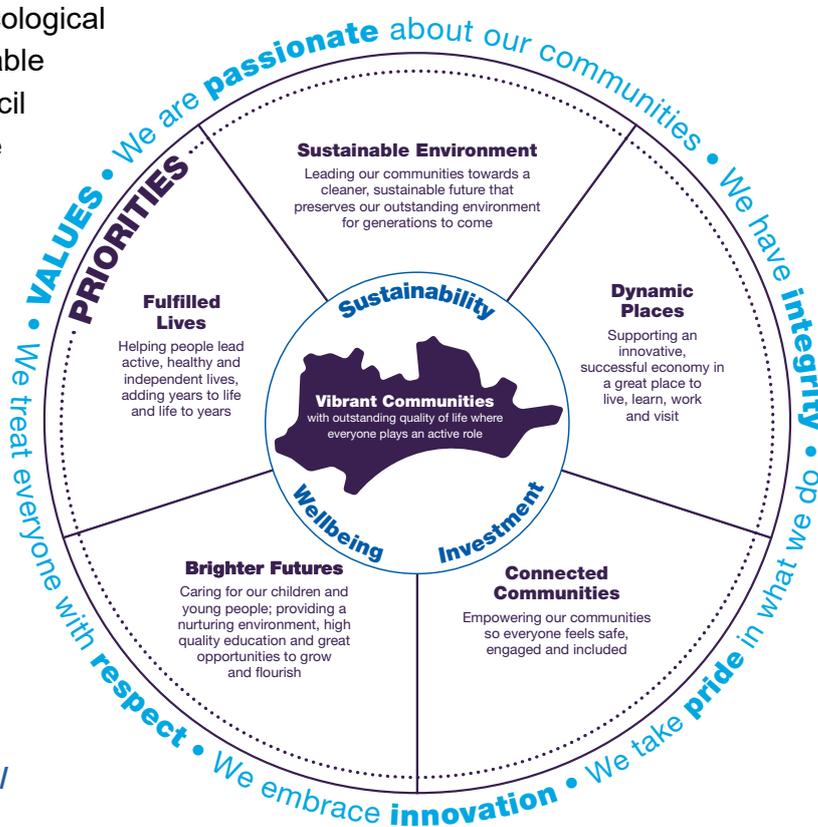
The BCP area is a major tourist destination, with spectacular beaches, parks, gardens, natural harbours, heritage attractions and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. 15 million people visit the area each year.¹ Access to the surrounding scenic areas, including the Purbecks and the New Forest National Park is part of the area's offer but the amenity is often impacted during the high summer months by the high volume of cars. There is a real opportunity for this BSIP to make a significant contribution to sustainable tourism.

The conurbation is polycentric and there is not one dominant central destination resulting in complex travel and commuting patterns. Census data for employees travelling into the Poole and Bournemouth area for 2011 indicate that 64% of commuters use a car or van to travel to work. 15% of these car/van journeys are less than 2 km; in Bournemouth alone, this equates to 7,000 people. There is scope for many of these trips to be undertaken by other modes to reduce congestion.

The South East Dorset Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership helped deliver a 90% increase in bus use in the area between 2004/5 and 2010/11. This increase was maintained and peaked in 2014/15 with a 93% increase when compared with the 2004/5 base. Recently patronage declined slightly, and the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted confidence in public transport and further reduced the numbers using buses. Encouragingly the bus operators are reporting a recovery in passenger numbers for the BCP area more swiftly than many other UK towns and cities and this BSIP is intended to further take us on this path to recovery.

BCP Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in July 2019. A key Sustainable Environment theme priority for the council is to 'Develop an eco-friendly and active transport network'. This BSIP is very much aligned to the declaration.

The council's corporate strategy recognises that reducing traffic congestion is a priority for residents and developing sustainable transport alternatives is part of the solution.

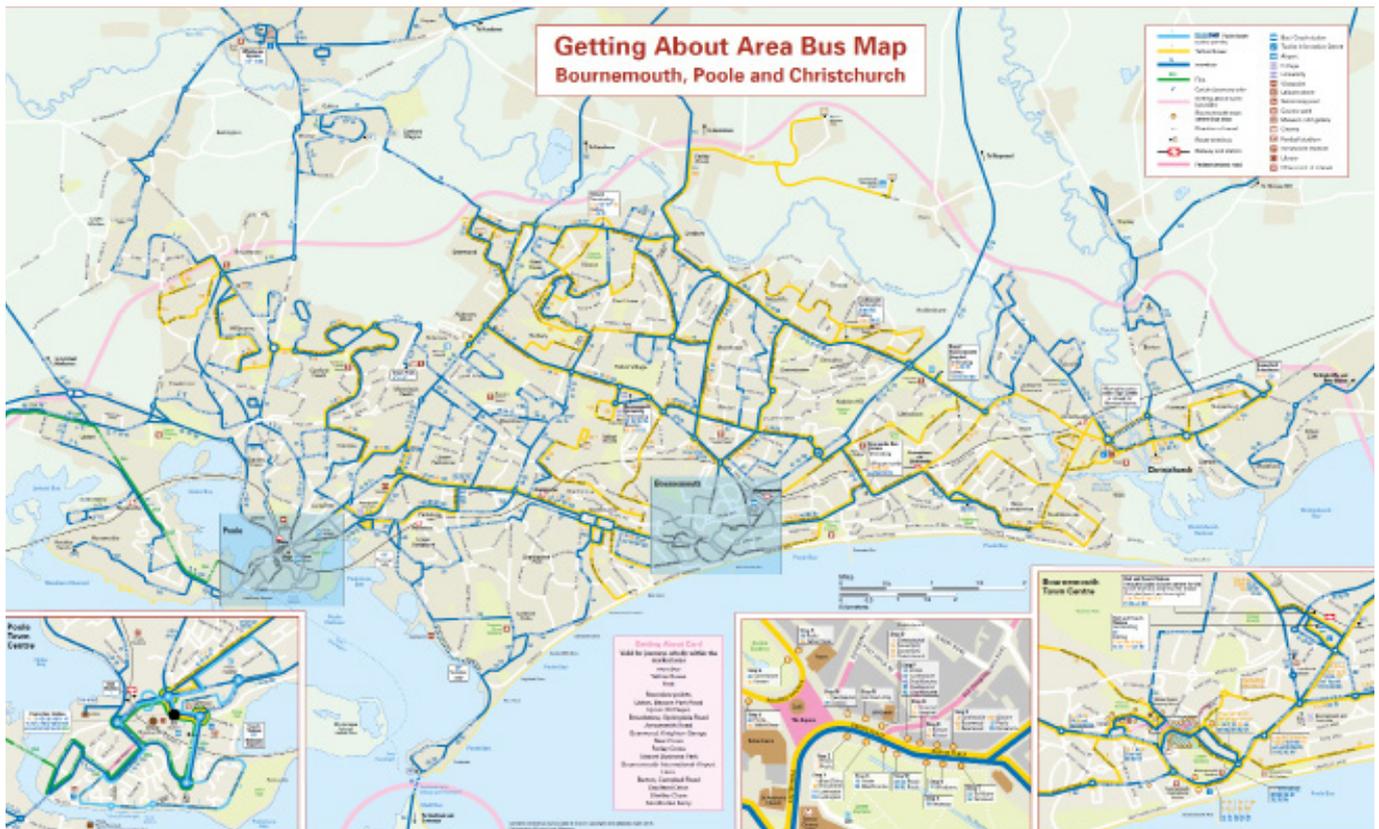


bcpcouncil.gov.uk/About-the-council/Strategies-plans-and-policies/

Bus network

Routes

The BCP area has a relatively comprehensive network of bus routes with around 60 services (including cross boundary). Most residential areas are within walking distance of a bus service and can access the town centres with reasonable journey times. However, there remains scope for significant accessibility improvements for many areas (additional detail is provided in the appendix).



Bus routes may be grouped into five main types flagship/priority, core, non-core, recovery and cross boundary (with additional consideration for other services).

→ **Flagship / priority**

Operate along wholly commercial bus corridors with high or very high frequencies. Some Individual routes have a headway (the time interval between two vehicles traveling in the same direction on the same route) of seven to eight minutes during weekday and Saturday daytimes, 12 minutes during Sunday daytimes and reducing to 30 minutes into late evenings. Pre-pandemic night buses operated on three separate corridors. All flagship routes operate within the BCP Council area only.

→ Core

Most routes fall into this category and would typically have 30-minute frequencies during weekday daytimes, hourly during Sunday daytime and varied for evening provision. Some of these routes require council subsidy on a Sunday or in the evenings. Some of these routes are cross boundary serving destinations outside the BCP Council area.

→ Non-core

Designated as requiring financial support, through tender arrangements with BCP Council. Generally operated on an hourly frequency during Monday to Saturday daytimes with no service for evenings and weekends. These routes are particularly important for residents with concessionary fare passes. These routes are unlikely to become commercial unless there are major interventions.

→ Recovery routes

Services that have become unviable through the pandemic and need short term support to enable them to survive and progress to core or flagship status.

→ Cross boundary routes

Longer distance routes that serve areas surrounding us in Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. They are vital for the travel to work sector and for leisure and tourism both for BCP visitors to access the attractions of the surrounding areas and for people to visit the BCP area as a regional shopping, leisure and healthcare destination.

→ Other

- A network of registered local bus services, both commercial and supported routes, are dedicated to school travel.
- Seasonal franchise open-top sightseeing services operate along the coastal strip, these are an important part of the visitor public transport offer.
- Poole benefits from a town centre circular bus service, initially funded through developer contributions.
- There are several industrial estate and dedicated employee services.
- Community Transport is available (mainly serving older residents unable to use local bus services), but there is not a consistent offer across the BCP Council area, and the scope of services could be improved.

The density of bus service varies throughout the BCP area. Several corridors show very high service levels with turn up and go frequencies during daytimes. Residents within walking distance of these corridors could rely on buses for their total local transport needs. Destinations including both the Royal Bournemouth Hospital and Poole Hospital are served by very frequent services. Bournemouth Railway and Coach Station is connected to Bournemouth centre by a daytime frequency of every two minutes.

Other areas where a commercial service is not viable are served by hourly routes financially supported by the council with buses not usually available during evenings, Sundays, and public holidays. Several bus services in the Poole area operate commercially on Mondays to Saturdays daytime but require council subsidy in the evenings and on Sundays. Most areas of BCP have a core type service with good density of service available during day times but significantly less during the evenings, buses then are less likely to cover residents total local transport needs compared to corridors with flagship levels of service.

For the first year of the BSIP (November 2021 to October 2022), despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the network has remained relatively stable. Continuing government support through Bus Recovery (BRG) funding in addition to BCP Council maintaining ENCTS payments at largely pre-covid levels has maintained routes and service frequencies. Some commercial enhancements, including improved provision to hospitals, need to be set against some frequency reductions elsewhere.

Most of the former Yellow Bus routes have been covered to a large extent on a commercial basis by morebus and there are not any significant gaps in the network arising from Yellow Buses ceasing trading. Continued government support for the bus industry and a commitment by morebus to integrate the vast majority of former Yellow Buses routes into the network pending a review in early 2023, provides some certainty.



Bus patronage levels and trends

Bus patronage data for the BCP council area is only available for three years due to the authority's formation in 2019 and 2020/21 is unrepresentative due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Historic data is available for the legacy authorities of Bournemouth and Poole, but not for Christchurch (previously part of Dorset County Council).

For BCP council in 2019/20 overall patronage was 25.5million. For the COVID-19 year of 2020/21 this fell to 8.8million – a 67% drop. For 2021/22 there was a recovery to 17,040,730, still significantly below pre-COVID levels.

Combined patronage for Bournemouth and Poole almost doubled from 14.9 million in 2004/5 to 28.4 million by 2010/11. A high of 28.7 million was reached in 2014/15 but declined thereafter. In 2018/19 (the last year prior to council re-organisation), the combined patronage was 25.3 million passengers.

The reduction is more pronounced on a per head of population basis given that there has been population growth across BCP.

Local bus journeys per head of population 2019/20

Local	
Bournemouth	78
Poole	60

Neighbouring LTAs	
Dorset	18
Hampshire	21
Wiltshire	19

Comparison local authorities	
Bath	62
Plymouth	68
Southend	39
Torbay	53
York	71

Top three	
Brighton & Hove	167
Reading	137
Nottingham	131

Lowest three	
Rutland	5
Herefordshire	9
Windsor & Maidenhead	9

In England to the year ending March 2021, the number of bus journeys fell by 2.5 billion or 61% - as this covered the first year of Covid.

Local bus journeys per head of population 2020/21

Local	
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	22

Neighbouring LTAs	
Dorset	6
Hampshire	7
Wiltshire	8

Comparison local authorities	
Bath	15
Plymouth	26
Southend	17
Torbay	20
York	17

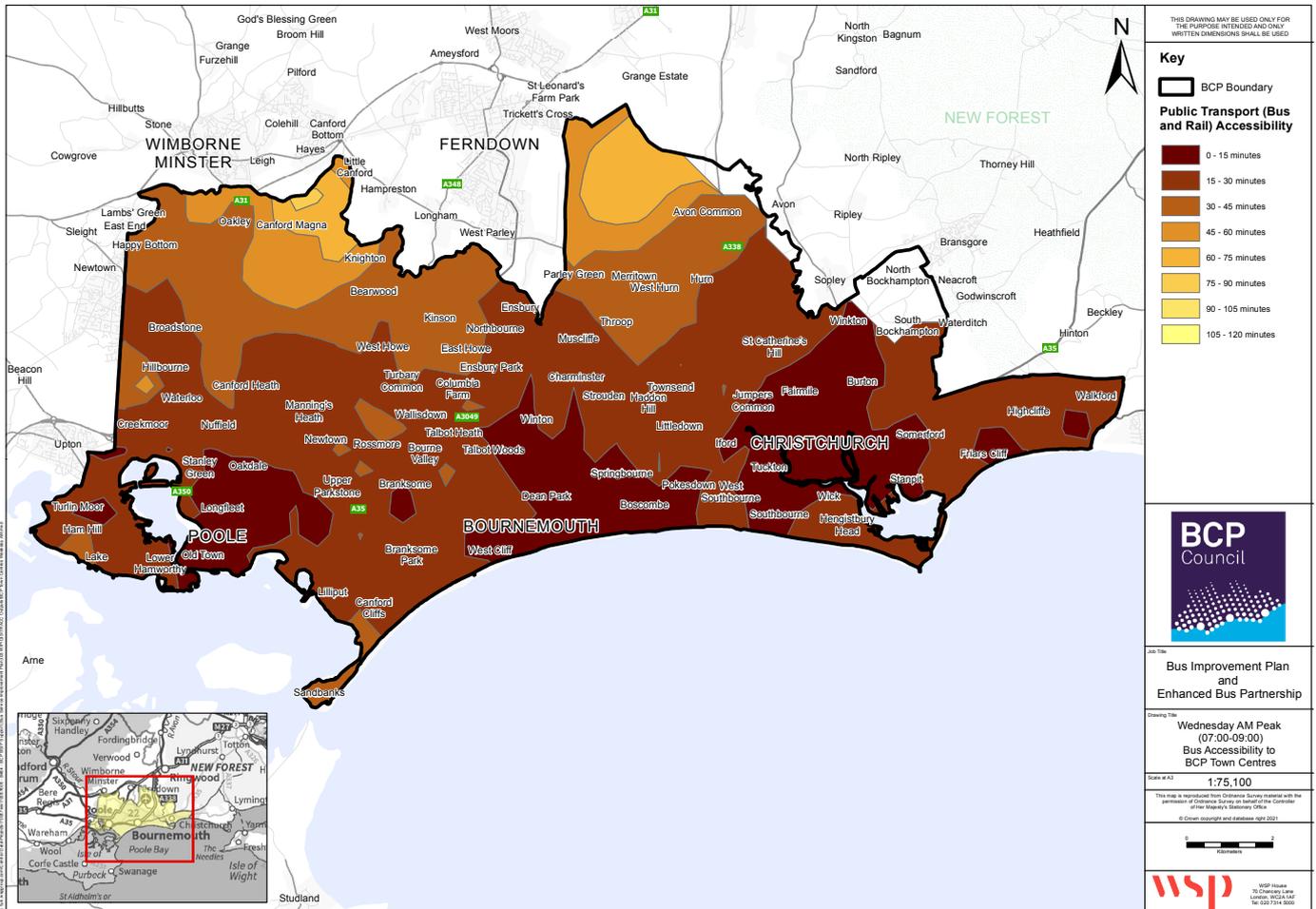
Top three	
Brighton & Hove	52
Reading	46
Nottingham	46

Lowest three	
Rutland	1
Somerset	2
Windsor & Maidenhead	3

Proportion of people within walking distance of a frequent service



A frequent bus service is defined as a ten minute or greater frequency service during weekday daytimes with walking distance set at 400m or less. Detailed analysis and mapping for the BCP area is provided in the appendix. An accessibility map covering the three main centres is shown below.



Fares

Confusingly, bus passengers were previously faced with a range of fare options developed independently by the two principal bus companies. Both operators had different fare structures and zones, as well as choices to how a fare is purchased. There were also specific fare groups applied to some services on a promotional basis, usually where there is competition on a particular route or corridor. As there is now one dominant bus operator running the majority of bus services in the conurbation the fare options have been simplified alongside a single network approach. The outcome of the retendering of the former Yellow Buses contracts will have a bearing on whether this simplification continues or whether there remains a need for joint-operator arrangements.

Most registered local school bus services have fares that are higher than network fares. Also, seasonal routes providing leisure trips tend to have premium fare arrangements.

Fare zones, as they are commercially set, are not linked to local government administrative boundaries. Fares applicable to the travel to work area adjacent to BCP are in more expensive fare zones. This, when combined with high car ownership levels and longer journey times, makes encouraging bus travel more challenging in these areas.

Increasing fuel and labour costs, attributed to global wholesale prices, the impact of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, all mean that the cost of providing bus services is rising, leading to pressure on bus fares, making bus travel less attractive to passengers. External pressures mean that the cost of bus fares continues to rise, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine. Due to the rising costs facing the bus industry, the bus operators increased fares during the period this review covers. Before they ceased trading, Yellow Buses initiated several one-off fares offers with significant discounts available via their app, for limited time periods. Unfortunately, the take-up of these offers and the impact on passenger numbers is not available.

The current range and pricing of fares is to be expected in a commercial operating environment, but this can make the network appear less integrated to passengers.

Sample bus fares in the BCP Council and adjacent areas 2022 (2020/21)

	Single	Return	Day ticket
15-minute bus journey on high frequency route	(£2.00) £2.10	(£3.00) £3.10	
60-minute journey from adjacent travel to work area	(£4.80) £5.00	(£6.00) £6.00	
Premium Summer Only service	(£4.00) -----	(£4.50) -----	
Day ticket for high frequency route within BCP area			(£3.70) £3.70
Day ticket for all routes in core central area			(£4.30/4.40) £4.30/£4.40
Day ticket multi operator 'Getting About' – central area			(£5.00) £5.00
Day ticket covering wider travel to work area			(£6.20) £6.30
Day ticket covering all regional routes including travel to Wiltshire and Hampshire			(£9.20) £9.40

Mileage of bus lane

The BCP area has 2.16 miles (3.46 km) of bus lane and this has not changed in the first year review period. Most of this provision is in Bournemouth and Poole. The existing bus lanes offer significant journey time savings to buses on the approaches to busy junctions, albeit they are generally relatively short in length and only offer very localised journey time savings on routes. Furthermore, they only provide reduced and consistent journey times if the route/entrance to the bus lane is clear.

Bus modal share and trends

From the 2011 census the travel to work mode share by bus was 10% compared with 64% by car or van¹ – this is marginally higher than the national average figure of 63%. 15% of these car/van journeys are less than two kilometres in length. In Bournemouth alone this equates to around 7,000 people driving less than two km to work each day.

An extensive local travel survey was conducted by pre-existing BCP Councils between October 2018 and January 2019. 60% of people surveyed had travelled by bus in the last 12 months. This was higher than for cycling (33%) but lower than people who had driven (83%). 24% of people travelled on a bus at least once a week, compared to 80% who drove. Evidently, if a car is available it is likely to be used regularly. The survey showed significant variations in travel patterns depending on where people live in the BCP area, linked to variations in car ownership and density of bus services.

For travel to school, based on survey information from 2019, 3% of primary aged children and 24% of secondary age in the BCP area regularly travelled to school by bus. The 2014 national travel survey showed 5% and 29% respectively, demonstrating that in the BCP area fewer children travel to school by bus compared to the national average.

Average bus speeds and how they affect bus operation and use

The Partnership agrees that improvements in bus speeds in the BCP area should be a priority objective of the BSIP. Both locally and nationally bus speeds are declining in urban areas. Greener Journeys identified that in urban areas UK bus journey times are rising by almost 1% per year (The Impact of Congestion on Bus Passengers, Greener Journeys). Locally, buses are being rescheduled as a reaction to reduced average speeds. Bus running times between Poole and Bournemouth in recent years have increased during peak times from 29 to 40 minutes and from Poole to Castlepoint from 53 to 67 minutes. Bus operators are aware of the relationship between increasing average bus speeds and passenger numbers – a 1% increase in speed is considered to deliver a 1% uplift in passengers (Greener Journeys).

The variation in operating speed throughout the day and for days of the week can result in disjointed timetables, making them more difficult to understand and reducing passenger confidence to use them. Recovery time is often scheduled into peak hour timetables but not required at other times of the day when services may need to wait at timing points to get back on schedule. The operators have also reported the need for additional running time on Sundays due to traffic congestion.

As well as scheduling challenges for operators, progressively decreasing speeds impact on passenger numbers. If bus journey times had been maintained during the growth in congestion, there would arguably be, between 48% and 70% more fare paying bus passenger journeys today (The Impact of Congestion on Bus Passengers, Greener Journeys). Congestion, which causes the decrease in bus speeds, is also stifling economic growth and recovery from the pandemic. A core aim of the Transforming Travel programme is to alleviate congestion, by persuading more use of active travel and bus journeys, thereby freeing up the flow of traffic on the area's road network.

Focus on increasing bus speeds will help deliver significant passenger growth. This BSIP sets out options to achieve this, including the enforcement of bus priority measures and Traffic Regulation Orders.

Availability of information

The way society obtains information is continually evolving and information relevant to bus services are part of this. It is important to ensure that such information is inclusive, available, and usable for all existing and future passengers, considering their wide variation in requirements.

The local area has benefitted from excellent bus operators with a good customer focus. Competition between bus operators over recent years has ensured high quality information has been provided. The bus operators' marketing and social media presence has raised the profile of buses in the local area. Although some activities do promote buses generically, it is inevitable in a commercial environment that the profile of the individual operator has been the main desired outcome for their marketing activity.

Morebus operate a town centre enquiry office at Poole Bus Station and Yellow Buses previously provided a similar arrangement in central Bournemouth. Printed timetables remain available in recognition of these still being the preferred media by many passengers. BCP Council has an enquiry office at Bournemouth Rail and Coach Station which uniquely in the area provides information about all operators, advising all options available for journeys. BCP Council produces an area bus map which details all operators' bus routes in the conurbation. The area bus map will be updated in 2023 in light of the recent changes to the network.

The bus companies provide comprehensive websites and apps with detailed information about their services and general provision. Separate apps provide ticket options and real time information. The value of being able to find details for all operators' services has long been recognised and all local bus service operators, together with BCP Council, are members of National Public Transport Information Ltd (NPTI), which produces public transport information, principally through the website www.travelinesw.com but also through a call centre.

High quality information is provided at all bus stops in the BCP area and separate information is provided by each operator. During the summer months there are two seasonal open top sightseeing services in operation resulting in four separate sets of information at some bus stops. Through this BSIP, solutions will be developed to address how information can be provided at bus stops without causing passenger dissonance. Both morebus and Yellow Buses have traditionally offered timetable books for their services. Following the integration of the former Yellow Buses network, morebus issued a new winter timetable book covering all services to every house in the BCP area in October 2022. This will be replicated in the spring revision.

BCP Council (and its predecessor authorities) has installed high numbers of real time passenger information displays, mainly at bus stops and, through partnership working with the bus operators and NPTI, the system is well maintained and provides accurate information.

The National Bus Strategy highlights the importance of a local passenger representative body. There is often confusion amongst the public with regards to some bus-related matters, whether it is the bus operator, local authority or central government that is responsible. The establishment of an

appropriate local passenger group through the partnership would provide an independent channel to support the resolution of any issues. A local group will be established towards the end of 2022, following the completion of the EP.

Size and age of fleet

The size of the combined fleet operating in the BCP area is around 230 buses. This includes vehicles that cover cross-boundary services to and from the neighbouring areas. This is a significant reduction from the previous year due to the loss of Yellow Buses fleet.

The age of the fleet varies considerably, the Local Sustainable Travel Fund supported Three Towns Travel project between 2012 and 2015 delivered over £20m (including local contributions) of public transport enhancements along the A35 Poole – Bournemouth – Christchurch corridor. As part of this, the operators committed to future investment in their fleets. Currently around 50 buses in the area are less than five years old though there remains a range on vehicle ages.

Modern buses, which mainly operate along the high-frequency/flagship corridors, provide amenities to passengers including Wi-Fi, next stop audio and visual announcements and at-seat device chargers. The availability of these facilities is usually standard for the high-frequency/flagship routes, but less so for other route types.



Joint ticketing

A multi-operator day ticket was introduced in 2010 enabling bus travel in the then separate council areas of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch. Originally only available as a paper ticket, this then progressed to become a smartcard in 2014 with revenue re-imburement to the operators based on journeys undertaken. The ticket is branded '**Getting About**' with bus operator reimbursement undertaken by BCP Council and technical back-office support provided through Smartcard Applications Management Ltd. A weekly Getting About ticket was introduced in 2018.

The ticket is sold at a small premium, currently around 20% higher than a single operator day or weekly ticket. The ticket supports passengers making journeys within the BCP area involving more than one bus operator and provides a more cost-effective overall journey. Unfortunately, use has been low at around 0.05% of all passenger trips.

Sales of the multi-operator day ticket 'Getting About' smartcard experienced an uplift in use because the differential between its price and one operator equivalent tickets has reduced. Operator fares have increased but the 'Getting About' has not had a price increase. The premium is now 11% which has reduced from 14%. With Yellow Buses ceasing trading, the value of a multi operator ticket will need reviewing depending on the longer-term operator environment and in particular the outcome of planned local bus contract retendering.



When compared to other commercial ticketing formats available, it is evident that the Getting About smartcard requires updating. A Getting About on Mobile Phone trial was successfully completed but with virtually all of the commercial network now operated by morebus there is not currently a case for wider roll-out.

The Getting About ticket is a multi-operator ticket with revenue re-imbursed to the operators according to use. This is an example of where existing partnership arrangements have delivered passenger benefits. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the bus operators successfully worked together to provide joint ticketing to local keyworkers.



It is proposed to extend multi-operator ticketing to include other transport modes. This includes bike-share (and E-Scooter share should these become permanent following on from the current pilot scheme, as well as the proposed E-Bike share). The bikeshare and trial E-Scooter service are operated by Beryl in the BCP Council area.

In recognition of the importance of bikeshare as part of a sustainable journey and looking towards the implementation of mobility hubs, both principal bus operators show Beryl bike parking bays on their network maps. A further proposed development is to include local rail journeys in the integrated ticket, building on the success of the PlusBus ticket (PlusBus is an add-on ticket that can be purchased with national rail train tickets to allow unlimited bus travel at participating destinations).

Morebus launched Tap on Tap Off (TOTO) in June 2021, with a daily cap based on the value of a day ticket. The BCP area was one of the national trial areas for 'Project Coral' to develop multi operator tap on tap off (MOTOTO). A trial was underway commencing in July 2022, with a daily cap applied to both morebus and Yellow Buses. A TOTO scheme applied both to:

- each individual operator – morebus and Yellow Buses with single fares and capped all-day fares at each individual operators' rates for travel where travel applies to one operator only.
- both operators as a joint scheme where daily travel is capped at the set £6.00 cost reflecting the convenience and ease of use compared to other tickets.

The demise of Yellow Buses meant the premature ending of the trial.

Partnership and co-ordination arrangements

The South East Dorset Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (VQBP) was formed in 1999 and was refreshed in 2009. The partnership was instrumental in almost doubling the number of bus passenger journeys in Bournemouth and Poole between 2004/5 and 2010/11 and maintaining this level until 2014/15. Quarterly meetings steered the Partnership, and a prioritised list of interventions was maintained. The Partnership enabled effective and open communication between the councils and the bus operators with mutual understanding and respect.

A draft EP Plan and EP Scheme was compiled as part of a required submission to government following the indicative funding award for the BCP Council BSIP. Partnership arrangements have continued in the development of the EP Plan and EP Scheme and the facilities and measures contained within the EP. The EP will be finalised and the statutory partnership 'made' in Autumn 2022.

Through both council and operator involvement in third party delivery organisations (e.g., National Public Transport Information Ltd and Smartcard Application Management Ltd), effective partnership working resulted in high quality public transport information and integrated ticketing respectively for residents and visitors. The council and operators are both well represented on the Boards of both companies.

The proactive approach of the bus operators to good publicity and marketing has meant the council has only needed limited intervention in this area. Co-ordination exists through the Getting About multi operator ticket, the area bus map and Real Time Passenger Information.

Operator information and split between operators

There were no significant changes in local bus operators until Yellow Buses ceased trading in August 2022. Morebus became the predominant operator in the BCP area and now operate almost all of the commercial network services (the exception is the First bus route X54 operating between Poole and Weymouth). Some registered school services are operated by other companies. Following Yellow Buses ceasing trading, the three network routes operated under contract to BCP Council were re-tendered and a 6-month interim contract awarded to the Xela Group T/A Yellow Coaches.

Go South Coast is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Go-ahead group, which operates buses in many parts of England. Locally, Go South Coast, operates across central southern England with its core networks based in Southampton, Poole and Bournemouth, Salisbury, Swindon and the Isle of Wight, as well as serving the rural communities of Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. In the BCP Council area Go South Coast operates as morebus.

Within BCP and Dorset, **morebus**, the Go South Coast brand, is one of the main operators in the south east Dorset conurbation with routes extending through to Blandford, Weymouth, Wimborne, Ferndown, Verwood and Dorchester. Rural services to the west of the BCP area are operated by Damory.

Around 50 services operate which include inter-urban, local town and conurbation wide services as well as the prestigious contract to operate buses on behalf of Bournemouth University, 'Unibus'.

Go South Coast has a history of working with public and private sector partners in developing initiatives in new vehicle technology. In the BCP area it has invested heavily in a modern fleet, which is largely Euro VI standard, including over 40 buses recently introduced on the main cross conurbation flagship m1 and m2 services, representing an investment of more than £6 million.

Morebus is a multi award-winning bus operator as part of the Go South Coast group and were bus operator of the year in 2017 and 2018 and take pride in the growth enabled by a stable enlarging network.

Morebus interiors are designed to be dementia friendly with drivers trained as dementia friends.

First South, trading as **First Wessex**, operate the Jurassic Coaster X54, between Poole and Weymouth. This service provides local travel for the Hamworthy area of BCP. It also links the communities and attractions in Dorset of Upton, Sandford, Wareham, Wool, West Lulworth, Lulworth Cove, Durdle Door, Winfrith, Osmington and Weymouth to the BCP area. Local Wessex buses operate in the Dorset Council area. With a selection of simple, attractive and value for money fares, First Bus in Wessex cover beautiful Dorset.

Xela Group acquired Yellow Coaches following Bournemouth Transport ceasing trading.

They currently operate three BCP Council tendered routes on an interim basis (these routes were previously operated by Yellow Buses). Yellow Coaches also operate a number of commercial and privately funded local bus routes and contracts to/from schools. The fleet size operating in BCP is around 25 vehicles.

Damory Coaches, part of Go South Coast, operates one tendered route in Poole. This is the council-initiated Poole town centre circular service – Route ONE, introduced through developer contributions and operated by Go South Coast with council-owned vehicles.

During the summer season a local company **Discover Dorset**, operates a City Sightseeing open top route for tourists. For the 2022 season **Golden Tours** also ran an open top sightseeing service operated locally by Yellow Coaches. There are several local coach companies, some of whom have previously operated registered local school bus services, usually under tender arrangements.

The BCP area is a prominent coach destination for visitors served by both National Express and Megabus. These operators also provide services from the BCP area to London as well as other UK destinations.



Branding

Morebus is the local branding in the BCP area for the Go South Coast services. Local registered routes operated with open top services when weather allows are branded Breezer.



BCP Council has developed a Transforming Travel brand focused on sustainable transport which now incorporates the BSIP and the developing Enhanced Partnership. There is also established local transport information branding as part of Getting About which is under review.



Local transport authority and operator relationship

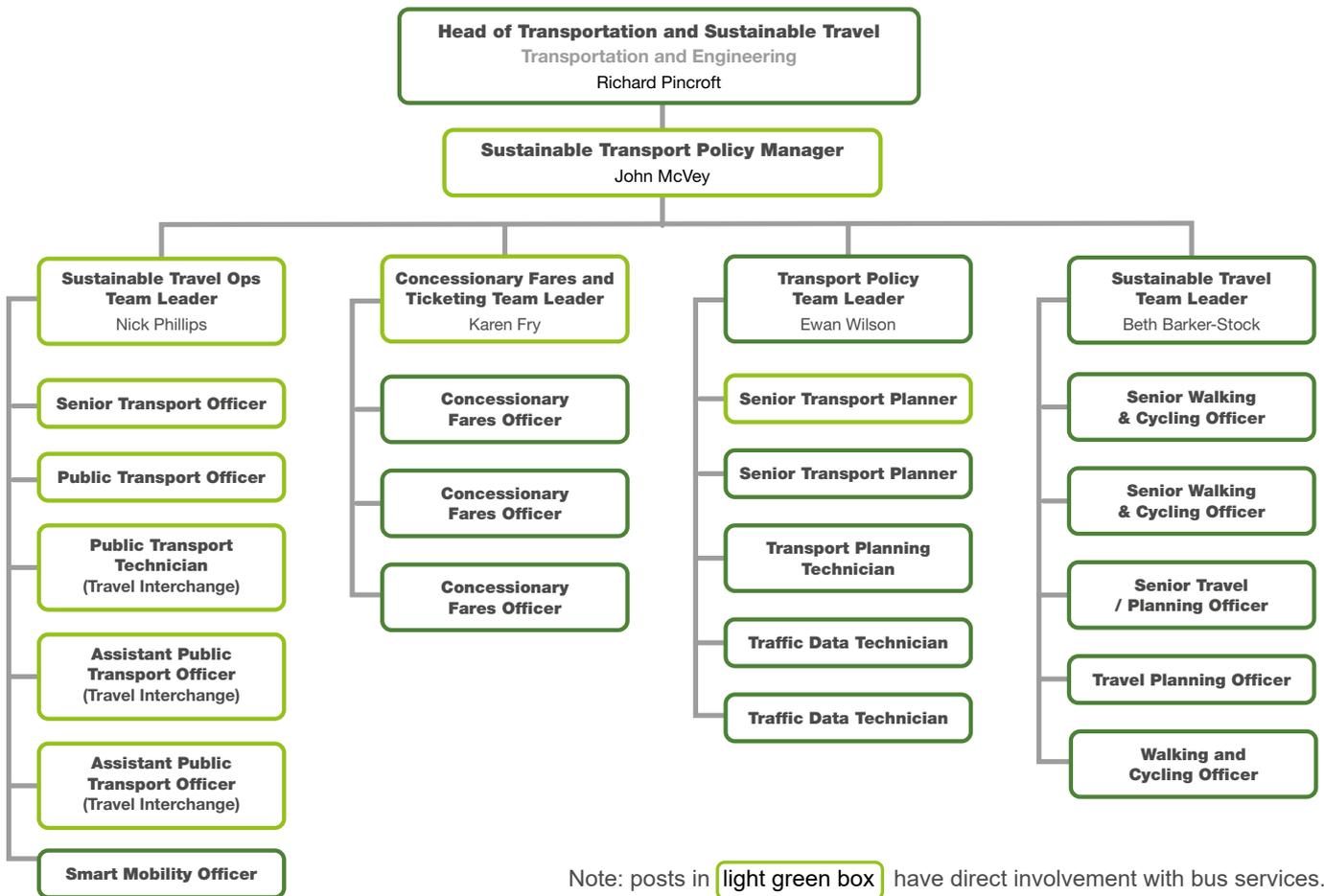
Through the existing Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership, there is a constructive and purposeful relationship based on mutual understanding. There are also relationships in other areas including school transport and tourism partnership groups. This relationship provides the opportunity to air contentious issues, for example, the impact of some highway schemes on bus operation. BCP Council's Cabinet Member for Transport and Sustainability acknowledges that local bus services have a particularly important role for both our residents and tourists.

Staff in local authority, numbers roles and seniority

Co-ordination of public transport is undertaken within BCP Council's Transport and Engineering Directorate. The staff structure of BCP Council is evolving following the creation of the new authority in April 2019.

BCP Council's Sustainable Transport Policy Manager leads a section covering both operational and strategic public transport activity, so both areas are within the same overall team. The concessionary fares service, including bus pass eligibility and bus operator reimbursement, is also within this team. There are three senior roles focused on buses and a further six roles with a bus involvement including staffing of the travel office at the Bournemouth Rail and Coach station. A role in the transport policy team is focused on development and progression of the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership.

BCP Council's Transport and Engineering Directorate



Other roles supporting bus services include the Director for Transport and Engineering; Head of Transportation (including Sustainability); Transport Network Manager (the statutory role of Traffic Manager); Parking Manager; Transport Development Manager; Head of Engineering; Transport Improvement Manager; and the respective supporting teams that provide traffic management and enforcement, communications support, maintenance of bus stops, capital improvements and bidding.

The Passenger Transport Section manages education and social care transport, with significant numbers of students travelling to education on the local bus network. The Engineering Service delivers highway schemes including the TCF funded Transforming Travel where improvements to public transport are a significant feature. Colleagues in Urban Realm and Economic Development service areas are involved with development projects requiring liaison with bus companies to determine any impact on services.

Funding levels for supported services

The BCP Council annual spend on supported services is approximately £1m (off-set by £270,000 Bus Service Operators Grant).

Since the creation of BCP Council in April 2019, despite budget pressures the network of supported bus services has been maintained. Most services are provided by longer term tender arrangements and the supported network is stable.

Service No.	Route description	Operating days/times
4	Poole – Broadstone – Merley – Wimborne	Evenings
4	Poole – Broadstone – Merley – Wimborne	Sundays
5	Poole – Canford Heath	Sundays
6	Poole – Canford Heath – Tower Park	Evenings
8	Poole – Creekmoor – Upton	Evenings
8	Poole – Creekmoor – Upton	Sundays
10	Poole – Sterte – Wessex Gate – Lytchett Matravers	Monday to Saturday
11	Poole – Kinson	Sundays
14	Poole – Bourne Estate – Wallisdown	Evenings
16	Poole – Bourne Estate – Bournemouth	Evenings
16	Poole – Bourne Estate – Bournemouth	Sundays
18	Bournemouth – Broadstone (West Way)	Monday to Saturday
20	Poole – Bournemouth / Bournemouth – Castlepoint	Monday to Saturday
23	Burton – Christchurch – Somerford	Monday to Sunday
25	Merley – Corfe Hills School	Schooldays
32	Bmth Sq – Merley – Poole	Monday to Saturday
33	Bournemouth – Bournemouth Hospital – Christchurch	Monday to Saturday
36	Talbot View Estate – Bournemouth – Kinson	Monday to Saturday
46	Throop – Avonbourne Academies	Schooldays
81	Charminster – Avonbourne Academies	Schooldays
448	Old Town/Hamworthy – Parkstone & Poole Grammar Schools	Schooldays
744	Baiter/Old Town – Oakdale Junior School	Schooldays
7A /7B/7C	Talbot/Bloxworth – Upper Parkstone – Tower Park	Monday to Saturday
Route One	Poole Town Centre Loop	Monday to Saturday

Role of local authority in information provision

The professionalism of the bus operators has resulted in high quality information to support bus users including printed timetables, websites, social media and at stop information. The real time information signs at bus stops and interchanges are local authority funded and maintained with involvement from the operators. The council produces a printed area bus map showing all operators and occasional bus promotional information. Bus information data is created and maintained to ensure journey planning systems and real time information feeds are kept accurate.

The information office at the Bournemouth rail and coach station provides details of all public transport services and travel advice, particularly to visitors to the area.

Other initiatives

To support bus services and enhance the comfort of passengers, the BCP area benefits from a high proportion of stops with shelters, bus stop clearways and raised boarding kerbs. There are 1,324 bus stops in the area, 678 of which (51%) have shelters and 257 Real Time Passenger Information displays. Additional new high specification bus shelters will continue to be provided as funding allows. This may be from Local Transport Plan funding, through highway scheme improvements or developer contributions. Between publication of the inaugural BSIP and this update 24 shelters were either newly provided or upgraded within the BCP area.

BCP Council is currently delivering working bus priority at over 40 of the busiest junctions across its area. This is via 'hurry calls' to the traffic signals servers generated by the electronic ticket machines (ETMs) on the bus. At present, morebus has funded the software upgrades to its ETMs and is benefiting from the bus priority. This BSIP will set out the case for additional funding to include other operators and additional junctions.



Barriers to bus use and growth

The **South East Dorset Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership** has delivered improvements to the bus offer throughout the conurbation and has generated impressive passenger growth and high levels of passenger satisfaction. Recent surveys and views of the business community clearly convey that congestion in the area is impacting quality of life and economic potential. According to the Tom Tom traffic index of 2021, Bournemouth was the fifth most congested city region in the UK.

At the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership conference in May 2019, **'Transport infrastructure and congestion' was voted the top main external constraint to business growth.** Gains made through the current partnership are being eroded by the impact of congestion on bus services. Bus running time between Poole and Bournemouth in recent years has increased during peak times, from 29 to 40 minutes and from Poole to Castlepoint (shopping centre) from 53 to 67 minutes. Continued increases in journey times will make the bus progressively less attractive to users and erode the financial viability of services as operators need to put more resources in to maintain existing frequencies or alternatively stretch headways and suffer passenger loss. Operators remain concerned that a constrained road network and proposed developments will make the bus less attractive to users and consequently undermine the passenger growth objectives of the BSIP. With motor vehicle trips predicted to increase and some existing transport initiatives not implicitly delivering bus priority, the proposed BSIP-funded measures are essential to restore passenger confidence.

Morebus made a timetable change in May 2022 to improve reliability, which required additional drivers but not vehicles. This indicates that focus is needed on bus priority to avoid significant additional resource requirements to maintain timetables.

Congestion in the area is also prevalent at off peak times, especially during weekends and weekdays in the peak summer months when the weather is good. Running bus services to published timetables whilst taking account of significant variations in congestion resulting from good weather is highly challenging. The variation in journey times reduces confidence in bus travel as well as the willingness of passengers to take journeys where the bus could be part of the solution. Passengers being held up in traffic and not supported by any evident priority is considered unlikely to encourage use. Based on information from operators, for the 2022 summer season traffic congestion continues to have an impact on bus service punctuality and it has been necessary for operators to amend services accordingly – notably in the Sandbanks area.

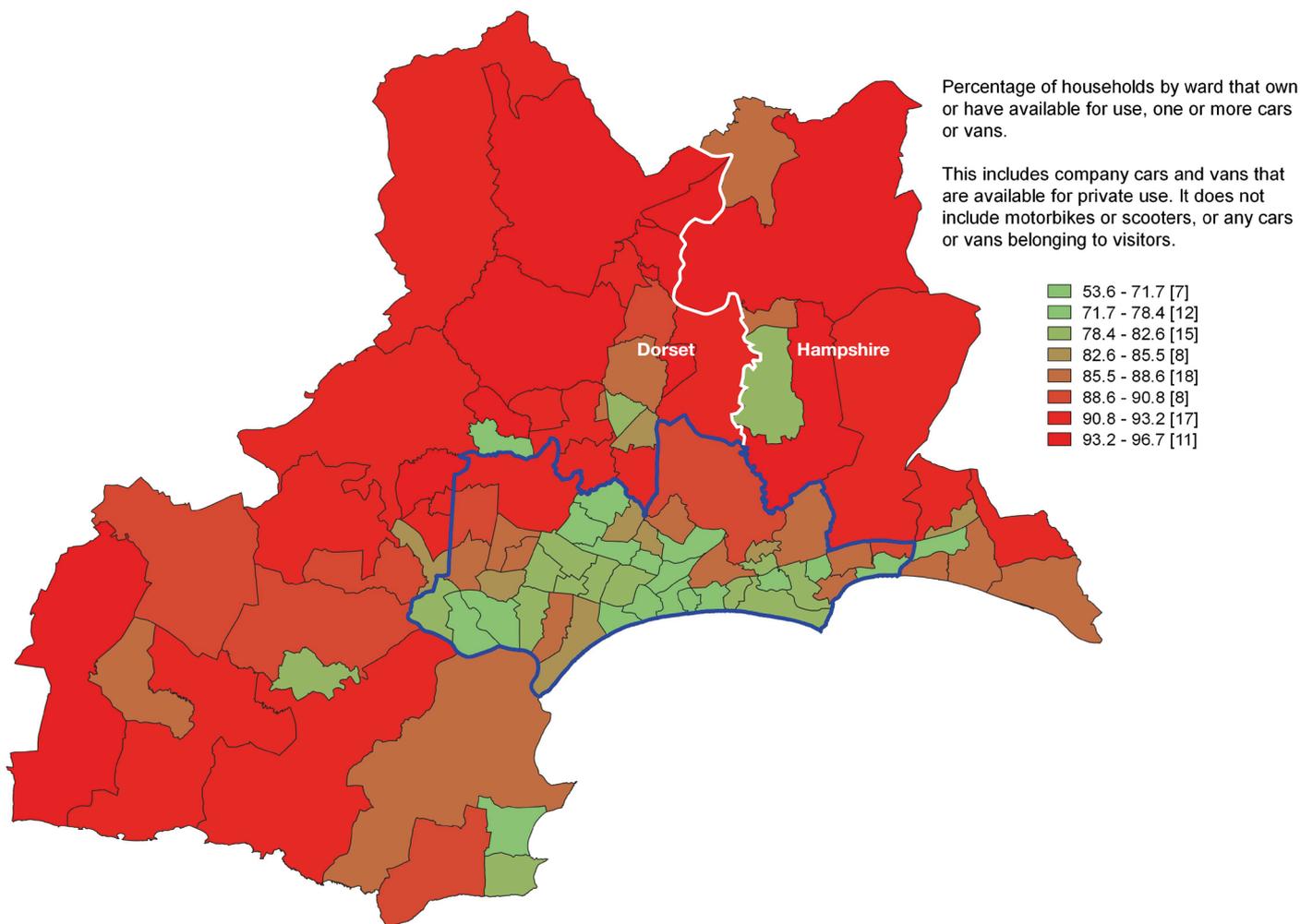
Interventions to date to solve congestion have had limited impact. Bus priority has historically been fragmented due to the approach of the three different council areas that existed prior to BCP Council forming as a unitary authority in April 2019. So far, interventions of the scope required to improve the reliability of services are yet to be developed and this BSIP intends to address this.

The BCP area is polycentric with many of the local district centres having on-street parking. The bus operators have consistently identified the **adjustment or removal of on-street parking** in these areas as a priority to improve punctuality and reliability. A review of parking and loading arrangements on 'Quality Bus Corridors' was proposed in Local Transport Plan 3 though progress to date has been limited.

The requirement for consultation to modify Traffic Regulation Orders can result in challenges from Local Trader's Associations and public who often perceive that the viability of a local shopping area predominantly depends on free car parking. This BSIP has to present other perspectives and means to progress parking reviews in local district centres to deliver better operational conditions for buses and their passengers. These can also include corresponding public realm and environmental benefits to provide wider appeal.

A variation in the demographics and character across the area influences the level of bus service provided. **East Dorset, part of the wider travel to work area, has the highest level of car ownership in the UK** with 90% of households having access to at least one car. Both the tendency for residents to use their car(s) and the linked contribution to congestion makes providing attractive bus services particularly challenging.

Map of car ownership in BCP and surrounding area



Source: 2011 census data

In BCP area, 78% of households have access to at least one car or van which is above the England and Wales average of 74% (from 2011 census data). Other smaller areas considered at council ward level in central Bournemouth and Boscombe have much lower levels of car ownership, with some approaching half of households not having access to a car.

Significant investment between 2012 and 2015 in the Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch corridor (**Three Towns Travel programme** linking the three town centres along the A35) achieved a 7.5% increase in patronage over three years². This provided local evidence that investment in bus stops, real time information and combined measures on a corridor can deliver passenger growth. Improving facilities along a corridor can draw attention to other areas where improvements have not been prioritised and the passenger experience in the same council area can be inconsistent.

Other areas, most notably north-south and orbital corridors, require enhancement in line with the Three Towns Travel corridor. The complexity of addressing the bus operating environment and cost of providing new shelters in Bournemouth town centre resulted in the central area being excluded from the Three Towns programme. **This is the top priority to address with a substantial bus priority scheme and facilities improvements for the centre of Bournemouth.**

Parking charges in the BCP area can be less than a return bus fare. Added to this, 80% of commuters who drive to work do not pay for workplace parking. The relative ease of using a car in the BCP area when compared to other cities with equivalent populations does not encourage modal shift. Brighton and Hove and Cardiff are our nearest conurbations in terms of population and their transport environments are more supportive of public transport in favour of cars. The biggest city, Bristol, in the same Western Gateway sub national transport body as BCP, has progressed with bus priority schemes, contributing to higher bus use per head of population.

In the most recent National Highways and Transport survey, Bournemouth and Poole came **highest for satisfaction with bus information**. This may suggest that focus should be elsewhere for interventions with a view to increasing patronage. Operators' continued investment in bus fleets has resulted in modern buses operating in the area and the quality of vehicles helps to encourage use.

One benefit following the loss of Yellow Buses has been a more simplified, largely single-operator, bus network. There remains work to further simplify the network and some service renumbering to remove duplication will support this. **Tourism** is an important part of the BCP economy and a simplified approach to the presentation of the network could generate passenger confidence and deliver growth.

Visitors from abroad that are used to fully integrated public transport, often find different companies with separate timetables and fares difficult to comprehend. Most residents were aware that this was the historical situation and understand why. A largely one-operator network has significantly reduced this barrier. A lack of integration with other forms of transport, notably local rail services where combined tickets are not easy to develop, is also a barrier to the local public and active travel offer.

This BSIP will examine the current network. **'No direct route/too many changes'** is the top reason given in a local transport survey as a barrier to bus use. Options include increasing the frequency of existing core routes or providing new direct but less frequent routes. Facilitating improvements to the commercial bus network through the Enhanced Partnership will also be explored.

With the exception of the Getting About multi-operator ticket, **bus fares** are a commercial decision for the bus operators. A reduction in fares would be welcomed by passengers, however, addressing journey time and punctuality are higher priorities for existing bus users with fares considered more important to non-users. Fares are more expensive for longer journeys, for example, to places outside the BCP area where there is also less competition. The residents in areas with a high car ownership and are less likely to use buses, do not benefit from promotional fares available on high frequency corridors. The limited scope and price premium of the multi operator Getting About ticket has resulted in extremely low use compared to individual operator products.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has had a significant impact on bus services and it is unclear how they will recover in the future. There remains a lack of confidence for many to use bus services following the easing of restrictions. Concessionary journey numbers are now starting to recover, helped by a publicity campaign during the summer of 2022, though remain below pre-pandemic levels. Without a strategic national campaign to re-assert bus use, passenger numbers will be slow to get back to pre-COVID-19 levels. There is also the impact on travel patterns with uncertainties around future commuting.

BCP car parking arrangements



There are 18,537 spaces under council control in the BCP area with 127 different locations, including on-street provision. The precise number of private spaces is not known.

Tariffs for council car parks based on a daily rate varies from £5 to £17.80. The highest rates are charged seasonally in car parks closest to the beach. A £5 daily rate is available for some peripheral car parks in town centre and business districts. By comparison the cost of return bus travel within the BCP area is £4.20-£4.40. For travel from the surrounding travel to work area this rises to £6.00.

Some car parks are time limited, usually up to four hours and there are seasonal variations for car parks near the seafront, in some cases with three separate tariffs applied depending on the time of year.

To support summer preparedness, **park and ride** arrangements were provided for the second time during summer 2022 to Boscombe beach. Numbers increased to over 7,000 passengers during this second season. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a pre-Christmas Saturday only park and ride service operated in Poole (this remains suspended due to the site being used for COVID-19 testing). In addition, a park and ride bus and bikeshare service operated in Bournemouth for the 4 days of the annual Air Festival.

Parking can be used as a method of managing demand through availability, pricing and restrictions as all car journeys begin and end with parking. The link between parking costs and bus fares is part of the demand management influencing modal shift. As of 19 September 2022, parking charges in BCP seafront car parks and the adjacent on street areas were increased by 10% and the council is continuing to review.



Areas of opportunity

Bus services link residential areas, employment centres, shopping, leisure and healthcare destinations across the BCP area. Service levels have been considered across the BCP area and accessibility to buses is generally good. One exception is the residential area of Branksome Park in Poole which lacks bus services though has a low population density and a high car ownership level.

The **Port of Poole** (International Ferry Port) is not currently served by any direct bus services and as such there is not currently a link to Poole Railway station from the port. If the port develops as a cruise terminal, more transport options could reduce car dependency for access.

Bournemouth International Airport and its Aviation Business Park are served by a single bus service from central Bournemouth including the railway station. The airport and the business park have different public transport requirements and the current bus service needs significant improvement to provide comprehensive public transport access. Development at the site should enable significant improvements to the bus service.

The **Wessex Fields** development adjacent to the Royal Bournemouth Hospital provides an opportunity to improve bus services in the area but any services need to properly access the new development to be viable. Industrial estates, for example Nuffield in Poole, tend to be less well served by buses partly due to difficulties accessing the estate and poor pedestrian filtration from bus stops to the places of work.

A small number of employers have initiated their own bus or coach services, but as these services are only available for colleagues of individual companies, they reduce the viability of public routes on the general network.

Routes focused on leisure have potentially more of an opportunity for earlier development than travel to work if trends evident from the pandemic continue. Services that allow visitors to access surrounding destinations like the Purbecks and the New Forest National Park could generate demand. With 15 million visitors to the area each year, improving the public transport network regionally in conjunction with neighbouring authorities should achieve early benefits. By encouraging more local tourism trips by car or other sustainable transport modes, seasonal traffic congestion could be reduced.

The bus offer for **travel to school** varies with some schools well served by network routes and others relying on a patchy network of dedicated school services, some of which require council funding to run or needing premium fares to be commercially viable.

As a result of HM Government 'Better Buses' funding a significantly improved bus service was provided to the Burton area of Christchurch. Following introduction of the route in November 2021 around 100 daily trips were made, by August 2022 this had increased to 180 trips.

During this review period one of the two main morebus flagship routes – the M1 was extended from Castlepoint Shopping Centre to **The Royal Bournemouth Hospital**. This has significantly improved transport provision to the hospital.

Routes focused on leisure have potentially more of an opportunity for earlier development than travel to work if trends evident from the pandemic continue. Services that allow visitors to access surrounding destinations like the Purbecks and the New Forest National Park could generate demand. There has been an increase in such routes for summer 2022. One tourist route was withdrawn as a result of Yellow Buses ceasing trading, but this route has been partly covered by a replacement heritage route 12 operated by morebus.

Evidence of the benefits of improving services

Economic

Congestion is confirmed by the local business community as the main external constraint to economic growth. Local residents have also stated this is their top priority for improvement. The cost of congestion in the area is estimated at £270 million in 2017 ¹.

The physical geography of the area with coastline to the south, the River Stour to the north, New Forest National Park to the east and the Purbecks to the west, does not lend itself to road building. More efficient use of the local road network is considered the only tangible way to resolve local congestion. Measures prioritising bus travel and other sustainable transport modes will impact on road capacity for other road users. However, improving provision will encourage more bus use with some modal shift from car journeys, resulting in lower congestion levels on the wider network.

For local organisations, attracting and retaining talented people can depend on their sites being accessible by a range of transport options. A location poorly served by public transport will exclude some employees and customers. With some parts of the area having low levels of car ownership, it is important that transport provision allows **all members of the community** to contribute to the local economy through bus routes being available to as many residents as possible.

The bus operators are also local businesses, and there are direct benefits to the BCP economy through the expansion of local companies and the employment provided.

Environmental

BCP Council declared a **Climate and Ecological Emergency** and as part of the Corporate Strategy Sustainable Environment objective there is a commitment to ‘**Develop an eco-friendly and active transport network**’. This BSIP will consider options to increase both the number of bus passengers and improve the modal share of journeys by bus. Increasing the number and proportion of bus journeys, especially through modal shift away from the car, results in environmental benefits, including carbon reduction.

Progress with clean diesel bus technology has dramatically exceeded diesel car technology. **Euro VI buses** demonstrate a 95% reduction in nitrogen dioxide emissions compared to a Euro V bus. Funding available to retro-fit buses to Euro VI standards would be beneficial in reducing harmful emissions. With bus fleets progressively being cleaner, a switch from car traffic to sustainable modes including buses is likely to result in an improvement in air quality.

BCP Council will work with the bus operators and energy suppliers with a view to decarbonising the local bus fleet with the ultimate goal of a zero-emission bus fleet.

As businesses the bus operators have established environmental targets. Their main activity of providing public transport delivers environmental benefits when public transport takes car journeys off the road. De-carbonising bus fleets, reducing the negative impact of air-quality from operations, cutting water use and reducing waste are all company activities delivering environmental benefits.

Social

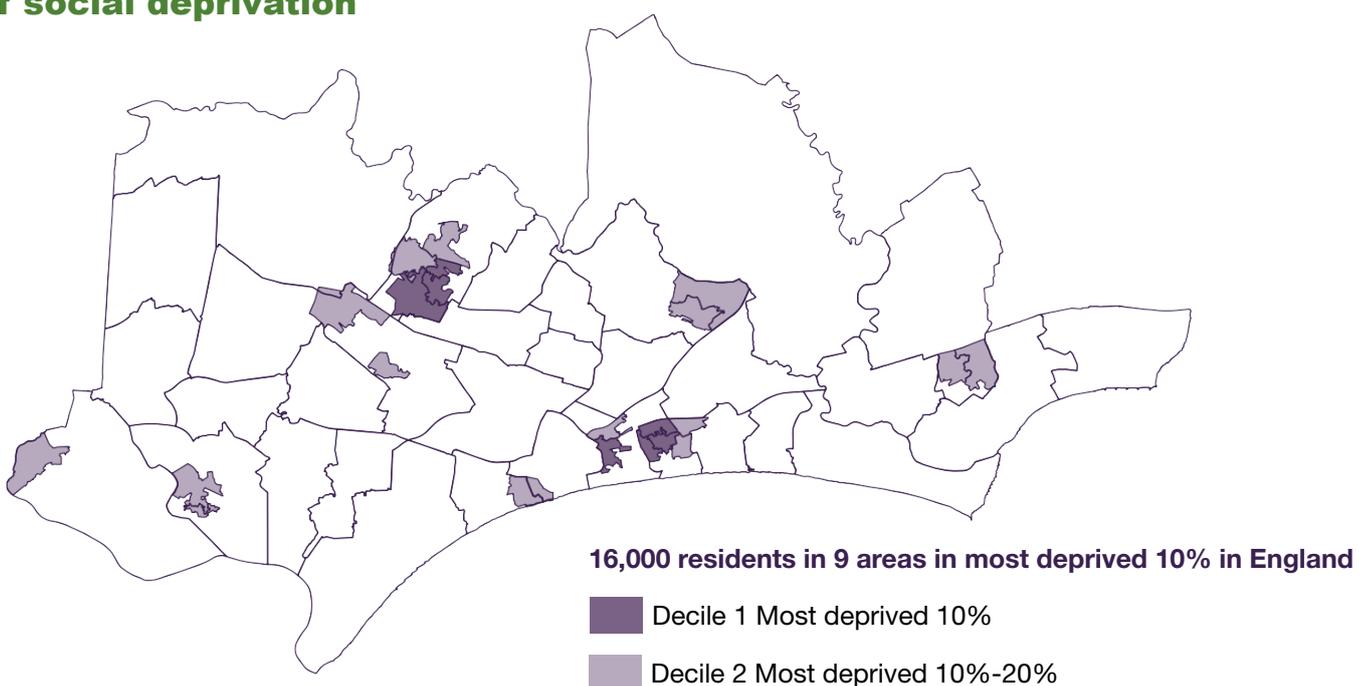
Bus use is particularly common for younger people aged 17-20; older people aged over 70; for women and girls; and most ethnic minority groups and people on lower incomes (National Audit Office – Improving local bus services outside London, 2/10/20). The 2018 BCP Council travel survey showed that **people with a disability were more likely to travel by bus than those without**. Based on the profile of people that use buses, improving the offer has equality benefits, particularly considering the Public Sector Equality Duty to ‘Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don’t.’

The BCP travel survey showed that in areas of BCP with higher levels of **social deprivation**, car ownership levels were lower and bus use higher compared to less deprived areas. The less prosperous communities are more reliant on public transport and improvements through the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership will be beneficial to residents, in a local levelling up context within the BCP area, giving better access to employment and other opportunities.

The general perspective of non-locals is that the BCP area is relatively prosperous, with high profile locations such as Sandbanks noted for having some of the highest property values in the world. Data¹ shows that **there are nine areas within BCP within the 10% most deprived rankings in England**. Working towards improvements to bus services is likely to provide benefits to residents in these areas by developing a more inclusive transport network.

The value of the **English National Concessionary Fares scheme** in reducing social isolation for elderly and disabled people is well documented. Developing the local bus network will help further in reducing social isolation, as many of the more vulnerable residents rely more on bus services. A continuously improving bus network provides a more inclusive transport network allowing all residents and visitors full participation in the community, irrespective of whether they have access to a car.

BCP Council ward boundaries showing areas with higher levels of social deprivation



Views of passengers and third parties

There are a number of locally commissioned surveys which provide useful information regarding the current offer of the local bus network. **Stakeholder engagement** was carried out as part of the BSIP development process. A summary of the likely BSIP content was presented, and responses were sought on whether the outcome of existing research is supported, or other priorities considered more relevant. Engagement was undertaken with a wide scope, including MPs, equality groups, business organisations, tourism partners, transport user groups and other transport providers.

The previous Bournemouth and Poole councils received **Better Buses funding** in 2013/14. This incorporated detailed local research to guide the desired outcome of encouraging existing bus users to increase their number of journeys undertaken, to gain new bus users and to ensure they have a positive experience to encourage future travel.

Findings from the research included

- There was an emotional pull of journeys by car compared to buses in terms of aspiration, control, security and comfort.
- Bus use was often driven by necessity (no car available) rather than by choice.
- Some journeys were less likely to be made by car – nights out, local shopping and to the beach. Journeys to and from school were most likely to be made by car.
- Locally people were more likely to use buses on a Saturday and later in the evenings than at other times/days.
- The main reasons that people did not use buses was that they are not convenient enough, they preferred car travel and found bus fares too expensive.
- 62% of respondents said they do not think too deeply about their travel habits, they just did it.
- Priorities to address for bus users included, more reliable and punctual services; reduced fares and promotions; and the availability of real time Information. Routes and frequency were lower down the list.
- Priorities for non-bus users were, reduced fares and promotions; and more reliable and punctual services.

The research concluded that it would be much easier to persuade existing regular bus users to use them more than to persuade those who do not use buses to any extent to use them, especially if they have access to a car. There is also scope to target an increase in bus use for **specific travel scenarios** rather than a blanket all travel approach. By focusing on the destination purpose for some activities, travel by bus can clearly be seen as a better option than the alternatives.

The local bus operators and BCP Council supported a **Transport Focus** bus passenger survey during autumn 2019. Locally, the satisfaction levels were high overall but value for money and punctuality were lower than other indicators. People were asked what their top priorities were.

They were:

- Making buses more reliable and punctual.
- Making buses more frequent.
- Improved bus shelters and real time information.

Bournemouth and Poole Councils also undertook a comprehensive **local travel survey** between October 2018 and January 2019 with a large sample size. This provided some useful local demographics and equality perspectives.

- 60% of respondents had travelled by bus in the previous 12 months (compared to 33% who had cycled.)
- 24% of people travelled by bus at least once a week. This figure was significantly lower for south east Dorset and Christchurch compared to Bournemouth and Poole. 80% of all respondents drove at least weekly.
- Residents in more deprived areas were significantly more likely to travel by bus frequently compared to people from less deprived areas.
- For those that travelled to work by car, 69% had a parking space at their workplace, with 76% of those having free car parking and for 4% their employer covered the cost.
- 25% of people had travelled to work by bus in the previous 12 months with 21% doing so five days a week or more. For journeys to/from school the number was much lower at 13% with 10% regularly travelling to school and 11% from school.
- Factors preventing use of public transport:
 - No direct route/too many changes 61%
 - Total time taken – 57%
 - Cost 47%
- Personal safety, lack of suitable tickets and lack of available information were much lower, all at 14%.
- Cheaper public transport fares; more reliable services; and additional bus routes were considered to be the most effective as sustainable travel initiatives. Higher parking fees/fewer car parking spaces were not favoured as options.

A summary of the recent stakeholder engagement includes:

- There was evident support for measures to improve bus priority including mention of 'Red Routes'. Where parking is considered for removal from district shopping areas, alternative provision should be made for disabled people.
- The bus network should focus on improving journeys away from the town centres to improve connections to local shopping districts, out-of-town retail and healthcare needs.
- Noting that improvements have been made to east-west services, priority should be given to north-south routes.
- More express routes should be trialed.
- School bus services need to be reviewed to provide a better offer.
- Multi-modal ticketing, especially involving local rail, would be welcome.

'Bus Back Better' Public consultation – November 2021 to January 2022

Following publication of the BSIP, a detailed public consultation was carried out between November 2021 and January 2022 to seek views on the actions required to deliver the BSIP. Full details of the consultation can be found on the [BCP Council website Engagement HQ page](#).

Summary of findings:

- There were 497 responses to the survey. 92% of respondents were BCP residents (182 Bournemouth, 118 Poole and 60 Christchurch). 24 respondents lived outside the BCP area.
- 77% were bus users and over 55% were people who travel through the BCP area for work, school, leisure or for other reasons.
- 37% of respondents said they had an English National Concessionary bus pass with 91% of those saying they had used it in the last 6 months.
- Respondents said the most important actions in the BSIP were:
 - Making bus services more frequent (60%)
 - Making buses faster and more reliable (54%)
 - Making fares lower and simpler (43%)

Interventions to deliver these actions (relative importance)

Making bus services more frequent

- Increase the frequency of hourly services (87%)
- Introducing bus priority measures (77%)
- Targeting bus operator investment' (75%)

Respondents' comments emphasised the importance of prioritising bus priority measures, the frequency of buses and the accessibility of buses particularly in more remote areas.

Making buses faster and more reliable

- Prioritise improvements to bus lanes, bus only routes and expansion of traffic signal bus priority (79%)
- Reviewing on-street parking on busy bus routes (76%)
- Considering longer distance express bus routes' (74%)

Respondents' comments emphasised the importance of prioritising improvements, reviewing on-street parking and adding longer distance express bus routes.

Making fares lower and simpler

- Explore fare promotions/initiatives that could encourage more people to try the bus at peak times to help reduce congestion (76%)
- Identify where fares initiatives can deliver passenger growth and develop funding bids (72%)
- Add a 'tap-off' facility to enable a daily 'cap' on fares for contactless payments on all of the local bus operator's services (67%)
- Develop and introduce a standardised young person's fares offer applicable to all local bus service operators (66%)
- Make the 'Getting About Ticket' on Yellow Buses and morebus services available via mobile phones (63%)

Respondents' comments emphasised the importance of ensuring that any technological advancements considered older people who may not find this accessible. Respondents felt a Transport for London Oyster-style travel pass across all types of transport could be a useful addition.

The priorities indicated by the BCP Council Bus Back Better survey are broadly comparable to similar priorities identified nationally by Transport Focus with making buses more frequent/buses running more often common to both as the most requested improvement. Transport Focus identified buses going to more places as the second priority, this was less evident as an outcome in the BCP survey, with passenger engagement needed to prioritise where if funding is available, which additional destinations should be served.

The outcome of the survey did not show any major surprises and the work to date of the South East Dorset Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership aligned with the priorities. Many responses highlighted safety and security concerns particularly at interchanges and bus stops. it's likely that the pandemic has heightened these concerns with less footfall at some locations which were much busier before.

Transport Focus Passenger Survey – June 2022

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, were one of three areas where Transport Focus trialed new methodology for their Bus Satisfaction surveys. The research was primarily intended to evaluate new research methods, but some findings were available for local bus services in the BCP Council area.

- 89% overall were satisfied with their journey
- 51% overall were satisfied with the value for money of their bus journey
- 76% overall were satisfied with the length of time to wait for the bus
- 81% overall were satisfied with the punctuality.

51% said their main reason for travelling by bus, was that they didn't have the option of travelling by other means; only 6% stated that travelling by bus was more convenient than the car.

There was little variation in satisfaction within and between different age, gender and disabled/ nondisabled people. Satisfaction was slightly less for journeys at weekends at 82% compared to 89% overall. This could be linked to seasonal traffic congestion affecting reliability of bus services at weekends. There was little variation in satisfaction linked to journey purpose or ticket type.

7% of people at the bus stop and 8% on the bus indicated that other passengers behaviour made them feel worried or uncomfortable during their journey.

Worldline – Transport Markets survey

This UK wide Passenger Transport Survey undertaken in 2022 gave some insights into post pandemic views about public transport and how these can be used to improve the offer. Although 22% of respondents said they would use public transport less, 34% indicated they would use it more. The environmental benefits of public transport only rated seventh in terms of priorities.

Cars were regarded as convenient, comfortable and safe, with public transport as expensive, crowded and dirty. Other concerns were poor reliability, inconvenience and lack of comfort. There was though evidence of poor experiences of driving for motorists, likely linked to high fuel prices.

Suggestions to improve the public transport experience were:

- Improve frequencies
- Increase reliability
- Improve personal safety
- Reduce overcrowding
- Make travel more joined up
- Reduce prices.

The two highest ranked suggestions are the same as locally following the 'Bus Back Better' consultation.

Conclusions

The information from the surveys and engagement can guide recommendations for measures in the BSIP to improve bus travel locally and increase patronage.

Overall, it is considered easier to travel around by car within the BCP area, certainly when compared to some other coastal communities – Brighton and Hove for example. With so many employers providing free parking at work, significantly increasing bus travel to work would be challenging without major interventions. Similarly, for travel to school, the local bus offer has potential for improvement.

Unless reliability and punctuality are addressed, route and frequency enhancements will not deliver significant passenger growth. The cost of fares is mentioned in all surveys as a barrier, so this BSIP needs to consider ways to address this. Even people that do not use the bus mention punctuality and reliability as reasons, showing that bus priority measures need to be visible and effective to convince motorists.

With 60% of people already using buses there is potential to encourage greater use. Interventions in Christchurch and east Dorset (through co-ordination with Dorset Council's BSIP) will give more scope to increase overall passenger numbers. The Transport Focus survey showed that local shopping was the highest journey purpose for concessionary fare travel. The business community will need convincing that increasing bus travel is positive for local shopping areas.

High quality bus shelters in as many locations as possible combined with real time information provision are important for passenger confidence and to grow the market.

Sources

1. Key Facts 2021 – State of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole report – June 2021.
[State of BCP](#)
2. Three Towns Travel Local Sustainable Travel Fund (LSTF) Annual Outcome Monitoring Report years 2 and 3.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

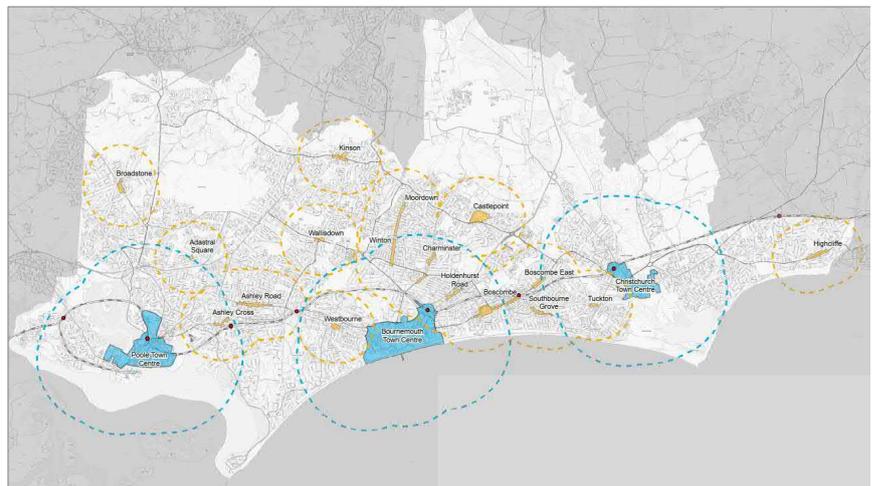
The BCP Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is the long term plan for delivering the infrastructure required to provide a fully connected cycling and walking network that gets people where they want to go; providing genuine, safe and sustainable options for shorter journeys.

The BSIP and LCWIP share the intention that a car will not be necessary to enjoy our world class environment. The plan mentions the importance of increasing the number of cycling and walking journeys to reduce congestion citing the impact of congestion on bus services as well as motorists.

The LCWIP logically focuses on cycling and walking but set within the context of wider transport provision, including public transport. Recognising that public transport journeys begin and end with walking or cycling, improving links to and from bus (and train) journeys contributes to an improved sustainable transport offer. Through providing Core Walking Zones walking routes between public transport facilities and local shops and services will provide a better environment for walking.

Core Walking Zones

are defined as areas where many walking trip generators are located close together – including main and local rail stations and bus interchanges. Changing between bus services, where sometimes a walk is required, will also be easier and safer when located in a Core Walking Zone.



Neighbouring councils

Our adjacent authorities, Dorset Council and Hampshire Council, did not receive any BSIP funding. BCP Council also shares some cross boundary services with Wiltshire Council, who again were not awarded BSIP funding. BCP Council will, however, continue to liaise with neighbouring authorities to improve bus services. Go South Coast has subsidiaries in surrounding council areas and shared management expertise. It is likely that one of the routes intended for enhancement, following confirmation of the indicative award, will have benefits for parts of Dorset.

Headline targets

The targets included here will be for the entire BSIP area which corresponds with the BCP Council administrative area. The bus network serves all three of the constituent towns, with the baseline and targets set for the entire area. Where the Enhanced Partnership details improvements in specific areas, detailed targets for individual initiatives will be set based on additional data available. The baselines and targets outlined have been jointly agreed by the bus operators and BCP Council.

Overview of targets in BSIP

Measure	Baseline	2022	2025	2030
Average bus speed across BCP network	12 mph	12 mph	13.2 mph 10% increase	14.4 mph 20% increase
Percentage of all bus services operating on time	82%	88%	90%	95%
Passenger numbers	25,575,893	17,040,730	28,133,482 10% increase from baseline	45,309,254 10% yearly cumulative increase from baseline
Average passenger satisfaction	93%	89%	95%	97%

Journey time and reliability

For journey time, the average bus speeds across the network originally provided by each of the two operators, morebus and Yellow Buses, will be used to set the baseline value, with the overall figure an average of both. The 2021 baseline is set at 12 mph. The 2022 figure will solely cover morebus following the collapse of Yellow Buses. The target for 2025 is to increase this by 10% to 13.2 mph and for 2030 to increase it by 20% to 14.4 mph. The 2022 BSIP update figure remains constant with the baseline 2021 figure at 12 mph.

For reliability, the % of all bus services across the BCP network operating on time according to the Traffic Commissioner's guidance (within one minute early and five minutes late) will be used with data provided by the operators and an average overall figure provided. The 2021 baseline will be used at 82%. The target by 2025 is to improve to 90%, and 95% by 2030. For the 2022 BSIP update there has been an improvement from the baseline to 88%.

Passenger numbers

The baseline of 25,575,893 as the 2019/20 figure will be used due to distortion of more recent numbers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The figure for 2021/22 was 17,040,730 – still substantially below pre-covid levels. The target for 2025 was a 10% increase from the baseline to 28,133,482 passengers. From 2025 to 2030 the target is more ambitious, reflecting that many measures in the BSIP and a mature Enhanced Partnership will deliver a significant increase in passengers. From the 2025 value, a 10% cumulative increase each year gives a target of 45,309,254 passengers.

Average passenger satisfaction

Establishing average passenger satisfaction should include people that use local buses and are aware of improvements resulting from the BSIP. Residents' surveys and the National Highways and Transport surveys provide useful information, but these are not exclusively the views of bus passengers. There are detailed local Transport Focus surveys available and the baseline has been agreed at 93% overall satisfaction from the most recent survey. The target is to increase this to 95% by 2025 and to 97% by 2030. Transport Focus selected the BCP area as one of their locations for a trial of a new survey methodology in March 2022. Overall satisfaction with bus services came out at 89% - a slight drop from the baseline.



Proposals for improvement

Overview

Vision

Within BCP the council and bus operators recognise that the bus has enormous potential to cater for a larger share of everyday journeys through a programme of co-ordinated and sustained investment. Over the next decade we aim to deliver a renaissance in bus passenger travel, which will see the number of journeys made by bus increase year on year.

This BSIP will be a catalyst for bus passenger growth, across the whole of BCP, by creating the conditions to achieve a virtuous circle of investment and passenger growth. This will be a process of positive sustained change. Growing bus use will contribute to a wide range of other policy objectives, such as de-carbonising travel, reducing inequality and better use of road space.

The following measures and proposals,

based on national and local context, are intended to improve local bus services in the area and increase the number of people using them.

The proposals should improve service punctuality and increase passenger satisfaction, which are the core monitored outcomes of the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership. The measures originate from the 2021 BSIP and have been updated as appropriate.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to shifts in travel behaviour, including more home working and some journeys previously made by bus are either now being made by car, cycle or not undertaken at all. Solutions are needed to build back better from the pandemic whilst restoring confidence to use buses and improving the bus offer further.

More frequent

Faster and more reliable

lower and simpler fares

Easier to understand

Easier to use

Integration as a single system

Modern buses and de-carbonisation

Passenger voice

Safety, security and passenger facilities

Demand responsive and socially necessary services

Bus rapid transit aspirations

More frequent

Making bus services more frequent was the highest ranked requested improvement from the BCP Local Survey and second highest ranking in the Transport Focus Survey. Key to improving frequency is attracting extra passengers to justify additional trips in a route timetable. Effective bus priority will speed up journey times making services more attractive, improve operating efficiency and enable frequency improvements.

The partnership has committed to review and categorise all routes to determine where investment in a particular corridor or route will deliver the greatest increase in frequencies to serve both new and existing markets. This will be based on data analysis which is currently being undertaken.

For hourly non-core and cross boundary services, increasing the frequency to half hourly will significantly improve the ability of these routes to meet passenger needs. This will require funding to implement on a kickstart/pump priming basis. With other measures in the BSIP it is anticipated over a longer period that some of the enhanced half hourly frequencies will become commercially viable.

Concentrating investment in bus priority measures on high frequency/flagship routes/corridors will benefit the highest numbers of buses and bus passengers. This will allow vehicle capacity to be released through journey time savings to improve frequencies in other locations with identified potential for growth.

BSIP actions to make bus services more frequent

- Allocate bus routes into four categories to support the analysis of the bus network – flagship / priority; core; non-core; and recovery; through the existing partnership by end December 2021. **All bus routes were allocated into categories, however with Yellow Buses ceasing trading in August 2022, further review is now needed and this will be undertaken during 2023.**
- Ensure at least 75% of new capital and vehicle investment is related to the flagship network and economically important tourist services annually.
- Vehicles released as a result of bus priority gains will be re-deployed in other areas with potential for growth to bring them up to flagship status (ongoing). This will be evaluated and delivered through the Enhanced Partnership.
- Identify the funding required to increase the frequency of services which currently operate hourly to enhance to half hourly and other route improvements by April 2023. **Funding was identified to enhance several services in the revised request following the outline BSIP award.**

Making buses more frequent will contribute to the targets of passenger growth and increased satisfaction with bus services as increasing frequencies, based on research is a high priority for improving bus services. Attracting additional passengers, with a corresponding reduction in car journeys will also improve the reliability and punctuality due to anticipated reductions in congestion. The BSIP funding is substantially directed at significant bus priority including an improvement scheme **from Bournemouth station to the main bus interchange in Bournemouth town centre**. The funding also covers five neighbourhood bus priority schemes in Branksome, Westbourne, Southbourne, Christchurch Bargates/High Street and Purewell.

Faster and more reliable

Delivering effective bus priority has been identified as the most important improvement to be achieved through partnership working. The Better Buses research and Transport Focus surveys both showed that making buses more reliable and punctual was the top priority for bus users.

The Better Buses research also identified that non-bus users cited this as a reason for not using public transport.

The first stage is to develop coherent plans for bus priority focused on main corridors but ensure proposals complement each other resulting in combined time savings benefits.

Where road space is available, bus lanes will be considered to give priority at existing congestion hot spots. Existing bus lanes will be reviewed and where appropriate consideration will be given to extending their extent and duration if they are not already 24 hours.

Where space is not available, consideration will be given to providing a series of **bus gates** which will permit through travel for buses but exclude other motor vehicles. Where bus lanes or bus gates are not appropriate, traffic signal priority will be considered, expanding the number of junctions already providing this.

Bus lanes and bus gates will require **enforcement** to be effective. BCP Council expects to take up the powers to enforce moving traffic offences under the Traffic Management Act when these become available. The impact of on-street parking on bus punctuality along flagship bus corridors, particularly in local district centres is an on-going issue for the operators. Targeted enforcement will continue to be undertaken in liaison with the bus operators.

The Under Secretary of State for Transport, Baroness Vere, has stated that high streets need to be more bus friendly rather than being given over to car parking. Buses can be part of the recovery of the nation's high streets.

A recurring response in consultation and engagement is to increase the number of **express bus routes** available. Introduction of express routes combined with effective bus priority will deliver substantial time savings making buses far more attractive to residents in the travel to work area – where bus use is currently much lower.

BSIP actions to make buses faster and more reliable

- Maintain the current scheme list from the existing Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership then continually develop including ranking criteria at regular Enhanced Partnership meetings. This will guide investment to deliver faster and more punctual services, where most needed (ongoing).
- Undertake a review of on-street parking and enforcement throughout high frequency bus corridors by September 2022. **The five neighbourhood priority schemes, scoped as part of the outline funding will progress this action in the relevant locations.**

- Develop a prioritised delivery programme for bus lanes, bus gates and expansion of traffic signal priority according to suitability of location. With focus on increasing patronage through improved journey times by December 2022. **This will be focused on the Bournemouth station to town centre scheme and the 5 neighbourhood locations as part of the outline BSIP funding.**
- Investigate the feasibility and funding of express routes to improve commuting times, especially for the wider travel to work area by April 2023.

Delivering effective bus priority, resulting in more punctual and reliable services, will address the main current concern of bus passengers and operators. Potential bus passengers are also evidently aware that congestion affects bus services based on the local 'Better Buses' research. Improved bus priority will directly improve punctuality and reliability targets and as this is a high priority for passengers, also increase overall satisfaction and attract more people to use buses.

Lower and simpler fares

Advances in technology have enabled more ways to pay for bus travel. **Better value for money and easier to understand available fares are a priority.**

Currently, young people's fares vary in terms of age brackets and level of discount between the operators. The partnership is committed to align these differences to provide a consistent and simplified offer to younger residents and visitors. Work is currently underway to identify a standardised reduced fares offer for young people applicable to the BCP council area. Aligning this fares offer will require external funding due to differences in the applicable ages of fares reductions between operators.

Contactless fares payments have been identified as a significant benefit for bus passengers as well as reducing dwell times at bus stops for bus operators. In recognition of the benefits of contactless fares payments, the bus operators in the BCP area were amongst the first in the country to introduce the technology. A further development of this is 'tap-on, tap-off' which adds the functionality of daily capping of fares. Locally all operators in the BCP Council area participated in 'Project Coral' as one of three trial areas to deliver multi-operator price capping. This was delivered in August 2022 but discontinued following Yellow Buses ceasing trading.

Daily **fares capping** via contactless payments would be more attractive to bus passengers that wish to make multiple journeys and in particular visitors to the area, many of whom may be from overseas and may not be familiar with local bus fares. It would be beneficial for there to be a multi-operator daily cap and ultimately multi-modal to include bikeshare and rail. Stakeholder engagement has identified multi-modal ticketing as being particularly beneficial.

It is understood that there are proposals for a government procurement of a back-office system to support multi-operator fares capping which is welcomed.

Fares initiatives will also be investigated and implemented with BSIP funding to encourage mode shift on key corridors as an incentive to try the bus at peak times and as a tool to reduce congestion as well as supporting the local economy.

The predominance of one bus operator following Yellow Buses ceasing trading, will influence the need for multi-operator solutions. Morebus and Yellow Buses participated in 'Project Coral' as one of three trial areas to deliver multi-operator price capping. This was successfully implemented in July 2022 and demonstrated that the pilot was viable and worked. Unfortunately, circumstances resulted in the end of the trial, but the foundations are there if the bus operator geography changes.

The BSIP funding allocation will deliver substantial fares reductions on specific routes, to stimulate bus use and evaluate the degree to which fare changes impact passenger growth.

BSIP actions to make fares lower and simpler

- Enhance the scope of the Getting About multi operator ticket following a trial on mobile phones during autumn 2021. **This action is currently on hold due to the changes in bus operator environment but will be reviewed in early 2023.**
- Multi-operator tap on tap off fares with daily capping to be introduced in the BCP Council area by April 2022 as part of an area trial of the 'Project Coral' national initiative. **This was delivered in July 2022, but then unable to continue due to the collapse of Yellow Buses.**
- Develop and introduce a standardised young person's fares offer applicable to all local bus service operators by autumn 2022. **A standard offer has been achieved by default as there is now one main operator. Future need will depend on funding and the operator environment.**
- As previously stated, fares' initiatives will also be investigated and implemented with BSIP funding to encourage mode shift on key corridors as an incentive to try the bus at peak times and as a tool to reduce congestion as well as supporting the local economy.
- The partnership initially to identify where fares initiatives can deliver passenger growth and develop business cases. This will enable bids for relevant funding to introduce any initiatives by September 2023.

Reducing fares is the top priority for people who are not currently bus users. Therefore, achieving better value fares is likely to increase overall passenger numbers. This will help to reduce congestion and will improve bus journey times. There will be consequential punctuality and reliability improvements and there are likely to be corresponding increases in satisfaction with bus services.



Easier to understand

Before the collapse of Yellow Buses, the bus network was seen as two sets of operators' services, with some areas of overlap where there is competition. Bus services need to be viewed as part of a **co-ordinated network** to achieve the aims of the National Bus Strategy, noting that Enhanced Partnerships need to respect commercial considerations.

The bus network will be evaluated using available information to identify the types of bus services that will encourage patronage growth and mode shift. Outcomes are expected to include higher frequencies on existing routes as well as new routes providing direct links for the first time.

Bus **route numbering** will be reviewed across the network to remove any duplication likely to cause passenger confusion.

Similarly, the consistency of route numbers and locations served throughout the day and days of the week will be reviewed to simplify the network and support passenger confidence.

Reducing the number of **timetable changes** each year provides more stability to the network, particularly if all operators make changes at the same time. Information sources including printed timetables and real time displays are more likely to be current if the number of changes is reduced.

Under current arrangements, where more than one operator serves a stop, each company has a separate timetable display and at some stops served by sightseeing tourist services, four sets of information are provided. This is confusing to passengers, particularly those that are not local, and can on occasions require the council to intervene so each operator is able to display their services. Progressing towards co-ordinated timetables to ensure services are easier to understand is considered essential. To improve the clarity of **bus stop information**, operators of tourist services will be included in the roadside publicity requirements of the Enhanced Partnership.

The bus operators have a good record of liaising with **major employers** to offer bespoke arrangements for employees including fares discounts and flexibility taking advantage of the latest technology available. This encourages and supports those less familiar with using buses.

Changes in the operator environment have resulted in almost all commercial bus services provided by morebus. This delivers a much more co-ordinated network. Duplication of bus route numbering remains to a certain extent though these will be eliminated as the network develops. The morebus timetable book now includes the tendered routes currently operated by Xela Group T/A Yellow Coaches for the wider benefit of bus passengers in partnership between BCP and morebus.

BSIP actions to make buses easier to understand

- The original BSIP proposed that by April 2022, two windows per year will be identified where timetable changes (other than emergency timetables, those services operated under contract such as school/university related services and seasonal summer uplifts) are made. It is suggested these are timed for March/April and September/October. **This will be publicised by both the Local Authority and operators. Currently with one dominant bus operator this action is less relevant.**
- Develop a media campaign to promote bus services for visitors to the region for the summer 2022 season. This will include liaison with the BCP area Transport Tourism Group to encourage sustainable transport for tourists for their journey to, and for local travel around, the area. **This was not progressed to the extent envisaged due to a lack of funding, however, it will be considered for summer 2023.**
- Operators of summer only sightseeing services to be included in publicity protocols for the Enhanced Partnership so the tourism bus offer is clearer – for the summer 2022 tourism season. Partnership so the tourism bus offer is clearer – for the summer 2022 tourism season. **This was not progressed to the extent envisaged due to a lack of funding, however, it will be considered for summer 2023.**
- Identify all incidences where services share common route numbers and agree a strategy to amend these by September 2022. **Duplication of bus route numbering remains to a certain extent despite there being one principal operator. However, this historical anomaly will be dealt with as the one network is revised in early 2023.**
- Develop a 'How to use the bus awareness and information programme aimed at teenage children and young people, jointly with bus operators to help promote and explain what travel by bus entails in simple to understand steps – by September 2022. **Due to the collapse of one of the major operators the priority was to ensure the network was maintained, so this was not progressed and will be re-visited for 2023.**
- By April 2023 all publicity materials produced by the local authority and operators will clearly indicate other operators' services within the relevant areas.

As bus services become easier to understand, more people, both locals and visitors to the area, are likely to use buses, boosting the numbers relevant to passenger growth targets. More tourists using bus services will help reduce the seasonal congestion suffered in the BCP Council area, restoring confidence in using the bus network to travel at all times of the year.

Easier to use

Passengers find using a particular operator's services relatively easy to use as each operator is very skilled at marketing its own services. Using the bus network as a whole can be more challenging for some due to the differences in approach. With the majority of services now being provided by one operator by default a largely one-network approach is being presented.

To help address this, improved co-ordination of ticketing arrangements will support the network being viewed as more **'joined up'**. There is already an established local multi-operator ticketing arrangement which provides a good foundation to be developed from the current smartcard format and improving usability.

During this BSIP review period morebus introduced tap-on-tap-off ticketing with a daily fare cap.

Integration with other transport modes makes local use more convenient and there are advantages to buses through increased use of other sustainable transport that help reduce congestion. There is already expertise through local private sector companies and integration has been progressed between buses and the local bike/scooter rental scheme. Rail is also a priority for integration, but progress with railway ticketing can be challenging.

Protecting and developing **transport interchange** facilities encourages confidence in the network. Within the BCP area there are a range of facilities including bus stations at Poole and Boscombe; High Street interchanges in Bournemouth and Christchurch; a major multi modal interchange (rail bus and coach) at Bournemouth Railway Station; and a dedicated bus hub at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital. These facilities, as a minimum, will be maintained and kept safe and secure. Where new developments are created effective bus access will be identified at the start of the process and delivered accordingly.

Mobility hubs, providing interchange between different modes including bus, bikeshare, and car clubs are part of the Mobility as a Service concept. Opportunities will be identified and taken to encourage and support interchange between sustainable modes.

BSIP actions to make buses easier to use

- Improve liaison with other transport providers, (including rail, bike share, car club) to provide a more integrated approach and improve partnership working by April 2022. **Liaison is on-going with a neighbouring regional scheme and NPTI.**
- Progress multi modal ticketing and integration initiatives for a multi-modal app based scheme by March 2023, delivered jointly with the Transforming Travel programme. **This will be introduced with BSIP funding.**
- Continue to maintain and enhance, subject to funding, the transport interchanges in Bournemouth Square (Gervis Place), Poole Bus Station, Boscombe Bus Station, the Lansdowne and Christchurch High Street. **BSIP funding will deliver significant improvements to Bournemouth Square and Poole Bus Station.**

Stakeholder engagement has identified the need for improvements in multi modal ticketing similar to those being developed in other areas of the country. Developments in technology, combined with local developments, are expected to result in better scheme opportunities and progress towards improved passenger numbers and satisfaction targets.



Integration as a single system

The bus operators have long-standing local brand identities, and the initial priority will be to restore patronage to pre COVID-19 levels and return services to commercial levels. Wider consideration of combined local branding will further contribute to building back the network and customer confidence. The **Transforming Travel** programme includes promotion of sustainable travel. There is the opportunity to link with the BSIP to deliver a coordinated approach including bus travel.

Combining initiatives provides the opportunity to consider the bus network more holistically. The information gained from local research will be used to target promotional campaigns to increase awareness of bus services locally.

The BCP area is a focus for bus travel from the surrounding area for commuting, leisure, shopping and health. Outbound travel from the area is also focused on leisure visiting the adjacent scenic areas including the New Forest, the Purbecks and Cathedral city of Salisbury. In conjunction with BSIP's from neighbouring authorities, there is the opportunity to promote a **regional network**.

At a recent National Public Transport Information (NPTI) meeting, it was suggested that a regional campaign in the South West of England be undertaken to promote public transport when confidence to use buses has increased from its current level. The benefits of sustainable tourism, considering the importance of this to the economy in the south west is a likely focus.

Initiatives to support bus passengers and operators have already been delivered through existing partnership arrangements (for example real time passenger information). Combined initiatives can be promoted to give a clear vision of partners working together to improve the bus network.

Measures already detailed include ticketing improvements. Progress towards more integrated publicity and better links with other sustainable transport are part of developing a single network system.

With most of the network currently provided by one operator a single system has evolved following the collapse of Yellow Buses. Where tendered routes are provided by other operators these services need to be viewed as part of the network and the routes will be included in the timetable booklet provided by morebus.

Accessibility improvements will help people who may not be able to fully use the bus network as easily as others. These need to be consistent across the network and include both physical interventions at bus stops, on bus audio/visual improvements and inclusive information.

Integration also needs to include transport that people without access to cars rely on in certain circumstances for example, for hospitals, social care, community and education purposes. Progressing a total transport approach through liaison with other partners is a priority.

BSIP actions to improve integration

- Improve liaison with other transport providers, (including rail, bike share, car club) to provide a more integrated approach and improve partnership working by April 2022. **Liaison is on-going with a neighbouring regional scheme and with NPTI.**
- Progress multi modal ticketing and integration initiatives for a multi-modal app- based scheme by April 2023, delivered jointly with the Transforming Travel programme.
- Working with adjacent BSIP areas, consider the wider regional bus network to increase awareness of regional journey opportunities, particularly around leisure and tourism, for summer 2022. **This was not achieved for summer 2022 and will be considered for summer 2023.**

Providing multi-modal travel opportunities and improved integration of the bus network will make travel both by bus and other sustainable ways more viable. This will deliver higher passenger numbers and improve satisfaction as the transport network will be focused on overall delivery of sustainable mobility.

Modern buses and de-carbonisation

Modernising bus fleets delivers benefits to passengers through improved quality of vehicles which provide a more comfortable journey with amenities including wi-fi, audio and visual announcements, device chargers. Longer distance cross-boundary routes may also have seats arranged around tables which support passengers wishing to undertake work or leisure activity on the journey.

BCP Council declared a **climate and ecological emergency** on 16 July 2019, committing the organisation to being carbon neutral by 2030 and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole by 2050. Investment in improved vehicle technology can support this objective by delivering benefits in both air quality and de-carbonisation. The BCP area is fortunate not to have the same poor air quality issues endured by other cities. However, lower emissions remain a priority and an option is to retrofit fleets to Euro VI standards. Buses need to be at the core of an air quality strategy, with policy interventions needed to focus on reducing emissions per passenger with encouraging modal shift from car to bus being the means to improve air quality.

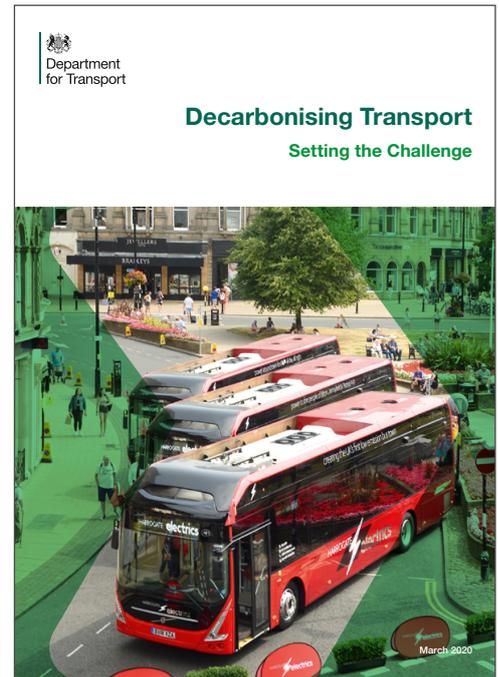
One operator has already made a reduction in absolute carbon emissions by 22% with an aim to achieve a zero-emission bus fleet by 2035. Further progress to cut water use and reduce waste are part of the overall strategy.

BCP Council will work with the bus operators and energy suppliers with a view to de-carbonising the local bus fleet with the ultimate goal of a zero-emission bus fleet.

BSIP actions for modern buses and de-carbonisation

- BCP Council will develop a minimum Euro VI emissions specification for all future tenders for supported services by April 2023.
- Identify costs to retro fit Euro V and older vehicles with Euro VI engine technology by April 2023.
- Commission specialist support to work towards zero-emission vehicles to become standard for BCP bus fleets by 2030 with support to commence in 2022/23.

Passenger satisfaction is expected to improve with an increasingly modern fleet of buses operating in the BCP area. An increasing awareness of environmental issues, linked to the impact of transport on climate change and the contribution of buses to de-carbonisation, will also increase the environmental profile of buses. This should be reflected in the numbers of people travelling as sustainability becomes increasingly relevant in travel choice.





Passenger voice



Travelwatch Southwest provides a regional passenger voice but there is not currently a BCP specific bus users or public transport forum.

The **BH Active Travel forum** is a group of people with an interest in promoting better environments for cycling and walking. The arrangements for this forum provide a basis to initiate a separate local public transport forum or Bus Advisory Board and this will be explored through the partnership.

Existing customer service is well developed by the individual operators, but the Partnership is committed to introducing a new improved customer charter for all bus operators that run services in BCP. This will cover provisions of punctuality, vehicle cleanliness, percentage of service kilometres operated and information.

BSIP actions for passenger voice

- Support the establishment of a representative Bus User Group or Bus Advisory Group to commence for the start of the EP in April 2022. The group will include prospective bus passengers to identify measures needed. **Due to the EP's likely autumn 2022 start date, participants in the bus advisory group are being sought to align with the start of the partnership.**
- Develop a Partnership-wide Customer Charter for all bus services that operate in the BCP area by September 2022. **Due to the EP's likely autumn 2022 start date, the Customer Charter will be progressed to align with this.**

Giving passengers a greater role in the provision of local bus services will lead to beneficial changes through constructive representation, resulting in increased satisfaction.

Safety, security and passenger facilities

Bus passengers need to feel safe and secure, both when travelling to and from bus stops or bus stations, waiting for the bus and during the bus journey. It is often perceived dangers of using public transport that deters travel as the number of reported incidents against passengers is small.

On-bus CCTV providing passenger security is currently on 90% of buses within BCP and this will be increased as older vehicles are replaced.

Closer partnership working with police, community and Neighbourhood Watch groups in areas with high incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour will help support passengers to feel safer.

Research from Transport Focus has shown that a high standard of bus shelters with real time information can help attract and retain bus passengers. The Partnership will continue to roll out high standard bus stop infrastructure with facilities including high specification, well-lit shelters, real time and printed information and CCTV appropriate for the level of stop use.

Bus shelters in the BCP area that are fitted with **Real Time Passenger Information** displays also incorporate CCTV with recording. It is intended to develop this system to enable live streaming to the council's control room for the security and protection of bus passengers.

A regular maintenance schedule for stops will be provided to ensure the road surface is suitable and kept up to standard. Routes to and from the boarding and alighting stop also need to be safe and accessible, including vegetation clearance.

The BCP Council 'Bus Back Better' consultation identified concerns about safety and security at interchange points. Following likely award of funding significant improvements will be delivered. At Poole bus station CCTV will be installed throughout linked to the central council monitoring facility. At other well used bus stops CCTV will be integrated into the shelter, again linked to central monitoring.

BSIP actions for safety, security and passenger facilities

- By April 2022, agree a specification for a minimum level of bus stop infrastructure and maintenance for all bus stops (i.e., better accessibility, perception of safety, CCTV, lighting etc.) depending on different types of stops with a view to gaining external funding to upgrade the network to be complete by 2025. **A specification has been progressed and with some funding confirmed, then a proportion of stops can be upgraded. 10 new high specification shelters will be provided as part of the funding award together with 50 new Real Time Passenger Information displays.**
- Poole Bus Station will benefit from new passenger information displays, which subject to funding, will be installed by April 2022. CCTV cameras will also be incorporated, with footage live streamed to BCP Council's CCTV control room. **Following confirmation of funding, this action will be delivered using existing contracts/arrangements.**

- By April 2023, subject to funding, provide livestream CCTV at 250 of the busiest bus stops in the BCP area. **Following confirmation of funding, this action will be delivered using existing contracts/arrangements.**
- All local buses within BCP will have on-board CCTV by December 2023.

The importance of passenger facilities including bus shelters with real time information has been highlighted by passengers as being very important in local surveys undertaken by Transport Focus. Improving the offer in the BCP Council area will lead to improved passenger satisfaction and is also likely increase the number of passengers. The planned information and security enhancements at Poole Bus Station early in the Enhanced Partnership will significantly improve safety and security at a location where there has been some anti-social behaviour.

Demand responsive transport and socially necessary services

The BCP public transport network is supported by **community transport** operators. These offer door to door supported services for elderly, disabled or otherwise vulnerable members of the community who are unable to access the mainstream public transport network. Previous investigations have concluded that the local offer is underdeveloped for the latent demand in the local community. Parts of the BCP area have high numbers of older people, many with mobility problems resulting in a need for bespoke transport arrangements.

The local supply is a combination of voluntary sector and local authority direct provision. The development and expansion of services has been inhibited by a number of challenges.

- A significant challenge has been a lack of sustainable Community Transport funding and this pressure has increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The formation of BCP Council brought together three very different community arrangements from the previous authority areas. A standard approach is required for BCP ensuring support is equal across the area.
- Insufficient staff resources to effectively represent and champion the local sector both within the local authority and existing and potential suppliers.
- Volunteer recruitment can be difficult, and the pool of potential volunteers has reduced with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Legislative changes to the not-for-profit sector licensing regime have restricted opportunities for community transport groups to operate some commercial routes to cross-subsidise loss making services.
- Cultural, whereby community transport is tolerated at the margins but attempts to expand may be perceived as threatening by the commercial sector.

Community transport services can provide an important contribution to meeting overall bus transport needs and the BSIP should reflect this.

BCP Council provides support through its Bus Subsidy budget for local bus services considered to be required to meet **social need** but are not commercially viable. These have historically been reviewed to ensure good value for money and that the subsidy is appropriately targeted. The annual spend on supported services is approximately £1 million (off-set by Bus Service Operators Grant). The majority of tendered services will need renewing from April 2024 and a full review will be undertaken prior to this.

BSIP actions for demand responsive transport and socially necessary services

- By September 2023, undertake a detailed review of community transport provision across the BCP area; identify how community transport can better contribute to the overall public transport provision and identify funding opportunities to deliver improvements.
- By September 2023, undertake a detailed performance review of subsidised services due for renewal in 2024.

Bus rapid transit aspirations

BCP Council recently commissioned a feasibility study on the potential for a mass, rapid transit system in the BCP area. In general, the study found that relatively low population densities in the proximity of potential corridors; a lack of a distinct central business district; the area having three town centres; a lack of dominant radial corridors for trip flows and multiple spatial constraints; strongly suggests that a mass rapid transit system such as light rail or tram is not economically viable. The total number of passengers forecast to use a rapid transit system is lower than would be required to make a scheme commercially viable and would likely require a significant subsidy. The study proposed exploring if bus can achieve some of the same objectives of a light rail or tram system. By maximising the opportunities for bus priority similar outcomes could be achieved.

The report concludes and recommends:

- Light rail/tram based rapid transit is not considered for further development based on the current position and planned future growth.
- Future work is undertaken to understand the spatial constraints and compromises with respect to road space and parking to be overcome to develop the existing bus network, in order to provide similar positive outcomes to rapid transit based on our unique geography and transport network conditions.
- The opportunities provided by the National Bus Strategy and Enhanced partnerships are maximised.

Post COVID-19 challenges

Buses and public transport in general remains impacted by the legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact on passenger numbers and on effective operation of bus services due to staff sickness undoubtedly was a factor in the collapse of Yellow Buses.

Passenger numbers continue to recover but this varies according to sectors of the population. With concessionary trips slower to recover. Working from home patterns look set to remain for many businesses. The cost of living crisis could also have an impact on public transport, which is not yet known but provides continuing uncertainty.

With recent extension of national support for the bus industry until March 2023 the network should remain stable leading towards the summer period when passenger numbers increase due to seasonal demand. This should establish longer term commercial viability.

BSIP post COVID-19 challenges action

→ The Local Bus Operators will be supported as they seek to respond to the challenges of short-term inflationary pressures and the need to increase revenues by attracting back customers who have stopped travelling by bus during the pandemic. This is likely to require short-term targeted revenue support to retain current frequencies to provide a strong platform achieving the shared ambitions for long term sustainable passenger growth (on-going until bus patronage has fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels). **Continued government support until March 2023, will provide network stability. Measures and facilities delivered through the allocated funding as part of the EP will improve the bus operating environment going forwards.**

Maintaining the existing network is essential to restore passenger numbers to pre COVID-19 pandemic levels alongside consideration of developing the network from its current level. If the network shrinks, passenger number targets will be severely impacted.

BSIP overview table

Name of Authority	Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership	Enhanced Partnership
Date of Publication	31 October 2022
Next publication	October 2023
URL of Published report	www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/busserviceimprovementplan

Delivery – does your BSIP detail policies to ...	yes / no	Explanation – 50 words
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
More frequent and reliable services		
Review service frequency	yes	A review will categorise services, following targeted investment to frequent routes, capacity will be released to improve frequencies elsewhere. Likely funding will be used to enhance several hourly services enabling them to be more attractive to passengers. Any subsequent funding award will also consider enhancing additional routes from the original award. Overall actions in the BSIP will increase passenger numbers, further justifying more frequent services.
Increase bus priority measures	yes	A targeted delivery programme for bus priority measures is underway which will include an existing joint scheme list from current partnership arrangements, to be enhanced through the future partnership. Indicated funding will be used to implement a substantial priority scheme in Bournemouth and at 5 other neighbourhood locations. The BSIP commits to a review of on street parking and enforcement to contribute to bus priority.
Increase demand responsive services	yes	A detailed review of community transport will be undertaken across BCP Council, including consideration of holistic links with other public transport provision. Funding opportunities will be identified to deliver better demand responsive services through community transport.
Consideration of bus rapid transit networks	yes	A 2021 feasibility study considered the potential for mass rapid transit in the BCP area. The conclusion is MRT would not be economically viable. The opportunity to improve the existing bus network and use the framework of the BSIP – to deliver similar outcomes to mass transit is highlighted by the study.

Improvement to planning/integration with other modes

Integrate services with other transport modes	yes	Local rail is identified as a priority, with a need for ticketing solutions not yet developed on a local level, progress will require a strategic rail industry approach. A multi modal journey delivery platform will be developed through the Transforming Travel programme, including cycle/scooter hire schemes and the car club.
Simplify services	yes	Measures to make buses easier to use and understand will help simplify services, including – expansion of multi-operator ticket, tap-on-tap off fares, standardising young people's fares offer, coordinated timetable change dates, joint publicity arrangements and awareness and media campaigns targeted at both residents and visitors. Prioritising these measures will depend on the market share of local bus operators, standardising the young people's fares offer may require additional funding.
Review socially necessary services	yes	Due to Yellow Buses ending trading re-tender of several routes is underway. A more detailed review is anticipated when there is clarity of the network going forwards. This review will need to take account of the commercial viability of the network following delivery of some initial BSIP measures, but also the longer-term impact of COVID-19.
Invest in Superbus networks	yes	The high-frequency/flagship network will be progressed over a longer timescale – likely after 2025 to realise Superbus status.

Improvement to fares and ticketing

Lower fares	yes	Lower fares will be targeted to deliver the highest increase in passengers, this requires further evaluation and understanding of the likely national low fares pilot. The indicative funding is also intended for specific fares initiatives. Progressing the standardised young person's fare offer will likely lower fares for some in that group, but this may depend on funding.
Simplify fares	yes	A commitment to introduce a standardised young persons' fare offer will simplify arrangements for that group as existing arrangements vary considerably between operators. Actions to expand the scope of multi-operator, multi modal ticketing and tap-on-tap off fares will additionally simplify fares. Progress on these measures will depend on the outcome of tenders and bus operator market share.
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport	yes	The bus operator environment will influence the requirement for integrated ticketing and its anticipated that national developments will improve rail integration. An information and multi-modal delivery app scheduled for 2023 will considerably improve integration.

Make improvements to bus passenger experience

Higher specification buses

Invest in improved bus specifications	yes	Improved bus specifications will include, subject to funding retrofitting to ensure higher emissions standards. All local bus services are anticipated to have CCTV by 2023 and incremental enhancements to wi-fi, device charging and audio-visual announcements will continue.
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	yes	Improving bus services generally, is inclusive as they benefit people without access to cars. Through other funding sources next stop audio and visual announcements will likely become fleet wide across the BCP Council area. Progress with improvements to Community Transport will enhance accessibility for those unable to use other services.
Protect personal safety of bus passengers	yes	CCTV is intended to be provided linking 250 bus shelters with the BCP control room. At Poole bus station, an upgrade of CCTV provision will improve personal safety at an important location where some adverse behaviour can occur. These improvements will be provided quickly when the anticipated funding is received. Bus fleet improvements, including additional buses with CCTV, will also enhance safety.
Improve buses for tourists	yes	Operators of summer only sightseeing services will be involved in publicity initiatives as part of the Enhanced Partnership to deliver clearer to understand information. A media campaign will be considered for summer 2023, to promote bus services to visitors to the area to encourage sustainable tourism.
Invest in de-carbonisation	yes	Increasing the modal share through BSIP delivery, will help de-carbonise the transport environment. A feasibility study is intended within the first 3 years to establish requirements for de-carbonised fleets and supporting depot infrastructure. This ensures future bids for funding deliver the requirements of both local and national de-carbonisation targets.

Improvements to passenger engagement

Passenger charter	yes	A bus user or bus advisory group will be established for the start of the Enhanced Partnership anticipated by the end of 2022. A partnership wide Customer Charter for all bus services that operate in the BCP Council area is currently being drafted to coincide with the start of the formal partnership.
Strengthen network identity	yes	Through the actions of the BSIP the profile of bus services and their ability to meet local transport needs will be strengthened. A more integrated approach and joint media campaigns will further raise the overall bus network through a combined approach.
Improve bus Information	yes	Existing provision from operators provides a foundation to improve understanding of bus services for both existing and new passengers. Progressively information will be reviewed at bus stops to show awareness of all services. The morebus winter 2022/23 timetable booklet for the first time includes tendered routes operated by a different operator – so all bus services in the BCP area are contained in one publication. Investment in updating real time information at stops and interchanges, together with on bus announcements delivers improvements.

Other

Other	Yes	Liaison with our neighbouring councils will enable improvements for cross boundary services which are needed to ensure the wider travel to work areas benefit from improved services. A regional approach, including the strategic Western Gateway sub-national transport body will ensure bus services form part of the delivery of regional transport policy.
		The bus companies in the partnership will contribute to development of BCP Council transport and planning policies so the requirements of both passengers and operational conditions of buses are provided to ensure new housing or organisational developments maximise the opportunities to increase passengers.



bcpcouncil.gov.uk/TransformingTravel

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Compiled by BCP Council Sustainable Transport Policy Team in partnership with local bus operators. **October 2022.**