

## REPORT ON THE LOCAL BUS SERVICE

Prepared by Cllr Julian Mann

The 'bus service 78 has been performing well apart from a few occasions noted below. In each instance, I contacted First Eastern Counties for an explanation and to assist them in preventing a repetition:

- 1 occurrence - Failure to follow the correct route (both ways) missing out the Sainsbury's stop. I was informed that this was due to a relief driver's unfamiliarity with the 78 route. If a non-regular driver is assigned, they will be informed of the routing required.
- 1 occurrence – Failure to operate due to a fault with the 'bus at Red House Walk (AM journey). Fortunately there were no intending passengers in Levington when David Pryke checked both 'bus stops. I was informed that there was no spare 'bus available.
- 1 occurrence – Failure to follow the pre-planned diversionary route AM (via Stratton Hall thence normal route). Driver simply turned round at the Bridge upon finding the road closed and returned to Ipswich, re-joining correct line of route at Nacton Crossroads. Driver had failed to read the notice posted at the garage before taking the 'bus out. Driver reminded to **always** check for change notices.
- Several occurrences – Failure to depart from the advertised stand 'B' at Ipswich Old Cattle Market 'bus station (PM). Often the stand was occupied by another 'bus but the driver didn't check for would-be passengers when leaving from another stand. The simple solution was to instruct drivers to ask any passengers waiting in the vicinity of stand 'B' to board at the replacement one.

Whenever alterations due to roadworks are found (note that advance notice is not always given), I have placed a poster within the timetable case at the village hall and alerted the regular users by email. The PC's clerk ensures that a notification is also placed upon the two websites relating to the village.

I routinely check the times and routing of the 78 route to ensure conformance and am always pleased to hear of any issues that villagers find when they use the 'bus, so that, as with the above, I can find a solution in conjunction with First Eastern Counties to prevent a reoccurrence.

The two 'bus shelters at the northern end of the village were given their regular clean by Marian Rose and her merry band of helper, Andrew Abram, Chris George, John Ross and Robert Fisher. Thanks again to them for keeping things tidy. Any issues with damage should be reported to me for action.

Suffolk County Council's bid for "Bus back better" funding (i.e. the Bus Service Improvement Grant) from central government was unfortunately unsuccessful. However, SCC is creating a working group for something called an "Enhanced Bus Partnership" which I will be attending. At this time, no details are known but once the group's remit has been finalised I will write a piece in the village newsletter.

At this time, there is no information about any changes to any 'bus services that serve Levington (this includes the main route to/from Felixstowe). Any such alterations are likely to be made known to us no earlier than August 2022. Again, any changes will be notified via the village newsletter.