



## **Response from Bus Users UK to Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership: Making Connections 2022 Consultation**

**6 December 2022**

Bus Users UK welcomes the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership's strategy, Making Connections 2022. We particularly welcome the vision for faster, cheaper, more reliable bus services and the introduction of a Sustainable Travel Zone for safer cycling and walking.

We also agree that encouraging and supporting modal shift and reducing cars in the city centre is the most effective way to achieve these aims.

Bus Users UK would be happy to take a closer look at the priorities given to different road users in the city centre and how that space can be shared and used equitably for all.

### **1 Transforming the bus network**

Bus travel is convenient, with bus stops relatively near to many people's homes and destinations. As a result, the loss of services has had a major impact on passengers and communities. Areas currently without buses or most in need of them should be the priority when it comes to reinstating services.

Increasing capacity on public transport will aid modal shift, but operators need to be fully involved in decisions about how and when this is done.

The pandemic transformed commuting habits and the mix of office and home working means a flexible approach is now needed to travel. Ticketing also needs to be flexible and multimodal so regular passengers can get good value tickets, however often they travel. It's also vital that people without access to smart phones or the Internet can secure the best value tickets and have access to up-to-date service information.

### **2 Investing in other sustainable travel schemes**

Cars have dominated our town and city centres for too long, creating congestion and pollution. To encourage people to switch to more sustainable and active travel choices, we need to reexamine how these spaces are used and accessed, with priority given equitably to buses, pedestrians and cyclists. We also need multimodal travel hubs and ticketing, secure bike storage and fully accessible buses and stops.

### **3 Creating a Sustainable Travel Zone**

We need to understand and address the reasons for car dependency because the most effective way to reduce congestion in the city centre is to reduce the number of private cars on the road. This will speed up journey times making buses more reliable, punctual and therefore more attractive to car users.

Reducing car parking and pavement parking will also aid this process and make buses, cycling and walking safer and more viable options.

Rather than offering clean air exemptions to low income drivers, for example, sustainable travel options should be prioritised, with reduced price park and ride offers and discounted bus travel.

Coaches and minibuses should be included in the clean air exemption to encourage the switch to sustainable travel as well as support the tourist and educational economy of Cambridgeshire.

### **General comments**

The design of roads, junctions and pavements will need to be reexamined to support a switch from private cars to public, shared and active travel. Rules around road and pavement use need to be clarified and enforced to protect all road users and encourage modal shift.

- Currently, the nearside lane of larger roads is often seen as a space in which to cycle or park a car, rather than a place in which moving vehicles have priority.
- Cycle lanes are often poorly designed and hazardous, with cyclists preferring to take their chances in mainstream traffic. Junctions are also a problem and often don't allow sufficient space or priority for cyclists to get away smoothly before the traffic starts around them.
- Parallel crossings are unpublicised and drivers will not generally know that cyclists have priority here unless a national campaign is mounted.
- Shared use lanes for cyclists and pedestrians, and pavements that cross a cycle lane are particularly difficult for blind and visually impaired people to navigate, so clarity is needed around who has priority.
- Traffic light sequencing does not always give sufficient time for less mobile pedestrians to cross. At some junctions, pedestrians are not considered at all in the sequencing of lights.

### **About Bus Users**

Bus Users is a charity that campaigns for inclusive, accessible transport. We are the only approved Alternative Dispute Resolution Body for the bus and coach industry and the designated body for handling complaints under the Passenger Rights in Bus and Coach Legislation. We are also part of a Sustainable Transport Alliance, a group working to promote the benefits of public, shared and active travel.

Alongside our complaints work we investigate and monitor services and work with operators and transport providers to improve services for everyone. We run events, carry out research, respond to consultations, speak at government select committees and take part in industry events to make sure the voice of the passenger is heard.

Bus Users UK Charitable Trust Ltd is a registered charity (1178677 and SC049144) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (04635458).

### **Bus Users UK**

22 Greencoat Place  
London SW1P 1PR

Tel: 0300 111 0001  
enquiries@bususers.org  
www.bususers.org