

NOTES FROM TRANSPORT MEETING
held 11th July 2016
in the Kimberley Room, Tewin Memorial Hall

Present:

Tim Hayward-Smith, CDA
David Neilan, HCC, Health & Community Services
Keith St Pier, Tewin Parish Council
Kristina Lawson, Tewin Parish Council
Merralyn Sandison, World of Health
Jackie Nash, Datchworth Elderberries
Jane Warehand
Ann Kevis, Over 50's
Pat Badger, Over 50's
P Hay, Over 50's
Ruth Woodroff, Over 50's
Janet Pitman, Over 50's
Ralph Pitman, Over 50's
J Chalkley, Over 50's
Joy Lawson, Over 50's
Mary Rouse, Over 50's
L Southgate, Over 50's
R Powell, Over 50's
Carol Phillips, Over 50's
David Porter

Apologies for Absence

Dr Anne Horsman, World of Health
Margaret Llorente
Pat Fulford
Tina Lord
Mike Pulser

Felix Green will not attend meetings but has offered to set up a website.

1. Welcome

Merralyn extended a welcome was extended to all in attendance and gave a brief description of the background to the meeting. Concern about the cuts to the bus service have been an ongoing issue but, in recent months it has become apparent that resources are being allocated to fund Health and Wellbeing projects, such as For Ever Active, One You Over 50's and grant funding has become available for Community Wellbeing innovative projects. None of these appear to take into consideration the problems of Rural Isolation and the need to be adequately connected to a public transport infrastructure for people without a car to be able to go about the business of daily living.

This is an opportunity for people to tell their individual stories about the impact the cuts to the bus service have had upon their lives and to identify needs which would support a case for an improved bus service: ideally, a partial reinstatement of the bus service.

There is evidence of the health benefits of public transport in the BMA literature as well as from the Transport Select Committee and Total Transport pilot; and examples of operational subsidised schemes in other parts of the country. These issues can be explored in more depth at future meetings.

Community Development Action (CDA)

Tim Hayward-Smith gave a background to the role of the CDA. CDA offers support in relation to core rural issues and community need, working with Parish Councils and village halls. Part of this role is being a member of the Village Hall Network Meeting and at which a discussion April 2016 took place on Rural Isolation. At that meeting Merrilyn highlighted the hidden need for public transport if people were to be able to engage in activities beyond the village of Tewin. This led to subsequent contact with CDA.

Tim explained that CDA is good at “bothering” people and bringing people together to find solutions problems and that things can happen. CDA will support an Action Group for as long as required. He has made contact with EHC Rural Isolation worker and Claudia Flieshmann, Transport Officer, BEHCVS and will invite them to attend future meetings.

HCC Health and Community Services

David Neilan was last in Tewin 8-10 years ago trying to set up an evening community bus for young people. This quickly collapsed as the young people did not want to travel on an “old people’s” bus.

David was clear that he could not comment on the reinstatement of the bus service. He is seconded to the Clinical Commissioning Team and their commitment through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to keep people independent and living an independent lifestyle for as long as possible. He said that it would be hard to set up a transport scheme without support but what might be achieved is a top up to the existing bus service, such as a mini bus with volunteer drivers or paid drivers, set up with the possible support of the Council for Voluntary Service Community Transport scheme.

David recommended thinking about the benefit of sharing journeys and costs when using the CVS community car scheme.

Experiences of those present of the existing bus service

It was agreed that all experiences shared would be anonymous.

- Tewin has been left out of the bus time table
- Not everyone can depend on neighbours
- Willing to pay half fare
- Had to cancel a dental appointment today because CVS had no transport available.
- We have bus passes and cannot use them
- Walk to and from Welwyn Garden City to get to work
- Winter time it is depressing and I feel stuck
- Makes a complicated journey trying to get anywhere and out of term time cannot do things because there is no school bus
- Little joined up thinking on the health side. Allocated slots needed to fit with the shopping bus timetable.
- Whitbread Wonderbus operating in Bedfordshire.
- Fitting in appointments with GP does not work.

- There is no longer a bus which connects with a bus to visit an immediate family member in residential home. Have had to reduce visits from weekly to fortnightly because I cannot afford £30 taxi fare to visit more frequently.
- Cannot go to Hertford on Saturdays to look around the market and catch a bus home.
- For the GP, I catch the school bus to Morrisons but holiday times there is no school bus.
- Loss of freedom.
- Datchworth Elderberries provide a taxi for elders on Wednesdays. From Datchworth congregation, volunteer drivers are listed in the Parish Magazine to take people to hospital appointments, doctors and dentist.
- No family and completely alone. Use the CVS Community Car Scheme to get to medical appointments.
- Want to get out and about on Saturdays and in school holidays.
- Use CVS transport for twice weekly visits to clinic. They wait for me and bring me back but costs £25, sometimes £30, per trip.
- Saturdays, to visit Hertford or Welwyn and get out with disabled husband, it costs £15 for a taxi.
- Had to change my working hours to fit with the school bus but I don't know how I will get to work in school holidays
- Walking is not a safe option, especially in winter and when it is dark
- There is a mental health component.
- Using the on-line journey planner for a Saturday, recommended to travel London on Friday via two different railway stations and use the term time school bus back.

A thank you was extended to all for sharing their experiences.

How to take things forward

Supported by CDA, plan to set up a small steering group to take things forward. Over 50's will decide who will be their representatives.

Date of next meeting

2.30 pm, 8th August 2016, in the Kimberley Room, Tewin Memorial Hall

cc Councillor Ken Crofton