

June Armstrong  
Community Transport  
Hampshire County Council  
The Castle  
Winchester  
SO23 8UD (please forward if post code incorrect)  
Hants

Mr P. C. Harris  
Longparish Bus Representative  
1, Mayfield Villas  
Longparish  
Andover  
SP11 6PF  
cango Registration No 0034  
sarah\_phil@tiscali.co.uk  
20th November 2006

c.c.            Mr R.Parsons.            Re: Test Valley Transport Forum  
                 Mr P. Jarrett            Longparish Parish Council (Clerk)  
                 Mrs C. Sweet            Transport Co-ordinator Longparish Parish Plan

Dear June,

Thank you for answering my queries re the cango service in Longparish at Saturday's Annual Meeting of Parish Transport Representatives.

As promised I have now securely re-fixed the time table carrier to the cango post at the Plough, the one outside 2, Mayfield Villas, not the one opposite the Plough. It is ready to accept the new time table (Aug 14<sup>th</sup> Version), I took out the obsolete one. Unfortunately the grey plastic fittings at the top and bottom of the two panels have been damaged, I have fudged it so they are just about useable but it would be better if they were replaced.

The general feeling of bus users in the village is that the HCC money would be better used subsidising the Stage Coach 26 service through the day, as previously, than on the cango. You are paying Stage Coach to operate the cango buses, many taxi journeys when the cango is out of action or fails to collect due to administrative mistakes and having to staff your call centre. We do not get the benefit of runs to the Whitchurch or Andover Rail Stations where there are major parking problems, this could also get people out of their cars and save them parking costs. I am not aware of any Longparish residents (elderly or disabled) that use the roam zone option. The flexibility of cango has decreased since its conception, it is no longer possible to book to Whitchurch, the same bus will not visit both the out of town Tesco and the Hospital and due to government rules we now have to book from Andover bus station to both Longparish stops.

I would hate to deprive any elderly or disabled villagers of the cango advantages; i.e. lowered access, wheel chair facilities, personal pick-up / drop of point etc, can you please provide me with details of anyone using these facilities (numbers and roads would be sufficient), I will also be putting an article in January's Parish magazine requesting feedback from users..

Many of the bus users in Longparish are elderly but use the two book-able stops, the low access is helpful to them, particularly if they have shopping trolleys, however despite this they would prefer a proper scheduled bus service. I would have thought Stage Coach would be legally required to provide disabled access on their buses in this day and age, most other facilities have to.

Some of the Stage Coach drivers, initially carefully selected for the cango, seem to have been replaced with less suitable ones. One nick named Harry Potter (re quidich stick operator) by the users, regularly pulls away before passengers are seated and "slings the bus around corners", although the seat belts are used, this can still cause bruising and pain to frail elderly passengers. I believe that the drivers will no longer strap prams, push chairs and shopping trolleys to the wheel

chair fixing points, this again causes wrist and arm strain to the elderly and infirm as they try to stop their trolley sliding around the bus during their journey.

As I mentioned at the meeting there have been complaints made to the Parish Council about the C4 more frequently using the Southside Road route to and from Barton Stacey and using Mill Lane, these are narrow lanes, the bus forces on-coming cars to drive over and damage mown verges or go up roadside banks. Please confirm if these routes are being used for personal pick-up / drop off purposes or just for the convenience of the bus operator. . It would be preferable if the cango would use the B3048 where possible.

Sorry to whinge on, but these are the issues I am facing on a regular basis from your users. I hope we can sort something out as I believe cango is a noble idea in principle and I was a firm supporter when it was introduced.

There is the same problem with the route taken by the Testbourne school bus, this is scheduled to stop at the Plough and at North Acre. Until this term it used to come from Barton Stacey, along the A303, enter Longparish on the B3048 and stop at a safe place outside the Plough.

Now most of the drivers enter Longparish via Southside Road, stopping next to the junction with the B3048 to pick up the children, holding up traffic behind them and then turning right on to the B3048 (This is a tight right angled junction on a blind corner!). On the afternoon return trip the bus pulls over to the right hand (wrong) side of the road and stops, letting the children disembark into the middle of the road, so that it has enough road to swinging left around this corner into Southside Road. Apart from the issue of the Bus using Southside Road, a narrow lane in places, parents are concerned for the safety of their children from the bus pulling out across a blind corner and from dropping the children off in the middle of the B3048 on this blind corner.

The children started off waiting at the Plough as per last year, but with the bus repeatedly coming down Southside Road and stopping at the junction with the B3048 so they had to run 50 metres across the road to get on it, they have now been programmed to wait at the junction for it.

I believe the operator is Black & White Motorway, they have one lady bus driver that takes the correct route and uses the correct pick up and drop off point.

I think this may be the responsibility of your colleague Anne Dark if so please relay this paragraph to her.

Yours truly,  
Phil Harris