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c.c. Catherine Sweet (Transport co-ordinator Longparish Parish Plan)  
Paul Jarrett (Clerk Longparish Parish Council)

Dear Rod,

Last years (Nov 2005) HCC transport reps meeting was very productive.

I suggested getting some or all of the evening 76 bus services (Andover / Basingstoke / Andover) diverted through Longparish as per about 15 yrs ago. Buses would go from Andover via the A303, Longparish and Hurstbourne Priors to Whitchurch and vice versa.

The manager of Stagecoach South (Mr Andrew Dyer) seemed receptive to the idea, as was the HCC Transport Officer North West (Mrs Jane Gray), I have been asked to suggest which would be the most suitable times to route the 76 through Longparish.

Some of the evening 76 bus services are already subsidised by HCC, there could however be an additional subsidy required for the extra 2 miles / 5 mins to take in Longparish. However the increased patronage should increase the profit on the unsubsidised journeys (beneficial to Stagecoach) and make an increase in subsidy un-necessary on the subsidised ones.

Both HCC and Stagecoach place a high priority on the primary town to town routes such as Andover>Swindon, Andover>Newbury, Andover>Salisbury and indeed Andover>Basingstoke, their policy is to maintain these routes and increase patronage.

If the bus were to be diverted through Longparish it would miss out stops at Fox Farm, Harewood Peak and the residential caravan park near Harewood Garage. These stops are seldom used and serve a very small population in comparison to Longparish (300 House-holds, population 700). It is hoped a small low cost housing development will soon be built in the village, this would increase the number of low income families that rely on public transport.

As most of the youth and young adults of the village attend or attended Testbourne School, their friends and social life tend to be based towards Whitchurch, Overton or Basingstoke, they become isolated from all the evening events and social contact enjoyed by the youth of Whitchurch and feel penalised.

I can see this helping with the youth issues the Parish Council and Community Association are trying to address i.e.: -

Lack of suitable activities in Longparish

Transport back to Longparish following after school clubs.

Return from afternoon lectures at St Mary's College or BCOT in Basingstoke.

Transport to Whitchurch Youth Club, or just to visit / hang around with schoolmates in Whitchurch.

Scouts / Guides in Whitchurch.

Army Cadets in Overton.

Leisure Centre in Basingstoke. (Bowling / Ice Rink / Cinema)

Transport for the youth of Andover, Whitchurch, Overton or Basingstoke to visit friends and attend events in Longparish.

My children had the benefit of this service and it would be excellent if it could be re-instated for the current younger generation.

It looks as though a huge benefit to our community could be achieved for little or no additional cost, no extra buses and no extra drivers. It could be a win / win situation for Longparish and Stagecoach.

Whilst I have concentrated on uses in the Whitchurch direction it may also be possible to get an early evening bus to Andover and a late bus back from Andover diverted through the village.

Evening buses would also benefit the adult community, I know of people without private transport who would like to visit friends and relatives in Andover and Whitchurch in the evenings. These buses would also provide the opportunity to leave the car at home and not have to worry about who drives when visiting a pub or restaurant. When this service existed previously the whole darts team used the bus when they had away games against Whitchurch teams, no one had to drive and the use of three cars was avoided.

On Friday and Saturday evenings there are now two very late services on the 76route:

Andover	22.40	23.30
Basingstoke	23.34	00.24
Basingstoke	23.35	00.25
Andover	00.22	01.12

These late services are ideal for young adults wishing to go out at weekends clubbing etc, we may be able to get these re-routed through Longparish.

If we could get Longparish re-connected to the local communities in the evenings it would be fantastic, local businesses in the village would also get the benefit of more visitors, I have experience of walkers being stranded in the village in the afternoons and evenings (last bus to Andover C4 is at approx 15.20 hrs) and others don't end their walks here because of the lack of public transport.

The most useful 76 bus services to divert through Longparish would be:-

Andover	-----	18.10	19.10	-----	22.40	23.30
Basingstoke	-----	19.03	20.03	-----	23.34	00.23
Basingstoke	17.30	19.10	-----	22.30	23.35	-----
Andover	18.34	20.02	-----	23.22	00.22	-----

Regards Phil Harris.