

What does the future hold for traffic movement in Milton Keynes during the next 50 years?

It is a question that is taxing the brains of many people at this time. What is expected is that the population of the city will rise to possibly 400,000 plus by 2050. This will make Milton Keynes amongst the larger UK cities. So can the existing road system cope? What kind of transport options will need to exist? Will MK be at gridlock? Can we bring even more cars to MK roads? And so on.

As reported in the summer issue, Local Transport Plans (LTP) have come and gone over the last 15 years with limited progress. Now there have been a large number of documents produced to debate the next 30 years, and these include Plan MK, MK Future 2050 and the newly published document **'2018 - 2036 Mobility Strategy'** launched by Milton Keynes Council Transport Group. It can be found on the Council website -[www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways and transport hub](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways-and-transport-hub). Then click on box **'Highways and transport policy strategy'** section. The consultation documents are listed. Alternatively you can request the document from the Council Transport section.

The new 'Mobility' Strategy covers the short term (2018 - 2024), medium term (2025 - 2031), and long term (2032 - 2036) planning. It sets out the Council's ambitions for developing the transport network in Milton Keynes to accommodate growth and harness new innovation.

The 58 page document has many statistics, but what really interests us is the short term plans, because if they are not right, then the future planning will not succeed. The document also outlines the need to look at innovations such as autonomous vehicles, pods and mass transit options.

Our main comment initially, is the need for short term investment in infrastructure and for public transport to be prioritised as soon as possible to ensure our grid road system doesn't come to total gridlock, (signs of which we have already seen developing at peak times). Passengers are mainly concerned with bus frequency and reliability of service, and although these subjects can be addressed by 'Quality Partnerships' with Bus companies, and bus priority schemes, the use of the car remains dominant. Many of the journeys in cars are less than 5 miles in length and are single occupancy, so we agree with the documents reference that new incentives are needed to encourage the greater use of public transport in the next phase of transport planning.



Steve Hayes, the new Head of Transport, issued the following statement to us after initial discussions, and comments *"What we have tried to do is set out a long-term vision that will hopefully remain relevant for many years to come and that can then be supplemented by shorter term delivery plans that meet the more immediate challenges and can adapt as funding streams come and go. Technologies advance more rapidly than we can currently imagine and regulations evolve. Bus services form a crucial element in commencing that long term vision."*



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We plan to refresh our partnership with bus operators, supplementing the previous work that was done in creating the Charter with some additional commitments and work streams that will help support our long term strategy. The purpose of this is to consolidate a core network of profitable commercial bus services that will give operators confidence to invest and transform bus travel in Milton Keynes, ensuring attractive public transport options are available for all those who live and work in the city.

It isn't intended to be a detailed delivery plan. There is too much uncertainty in the industry to set that out in a plan for the next 18 years! Part of the reason I think that previous plans have not been delivered fully effectively is because in the fast changing, politically charged discipline that transport is, it is very difficult to balance the short term 'wins', with the longer term objectives in a single document that stays relevant.

We absolutely need to include MKBUG in formulating the deliverables within this partnership so that we can ensure that what we are working on meets the expectations of passengers around this. I hope this provides some assurance that the Council is serious about improving bus services in the city."

The feedback from the consultation ends on February 12th and will help to shape the transport plans for the future which recognises the need for important changes



Does that mean we dont get nagged we arent driving correctly.

SPECIAL MEMBERS MEETING

FRIDAY 26th JANUARY 2018

From 2pm to 4pm

ACORN HOUSE, MIDSUMMER BOULEVARD

'2018 - 2036 MOBILITY STRATEGY'

A CHANCE TO UNDERSTAND AND INFLUENCE THIS IMPORTANT STRATEGY AND ITS EFFECT ON FUTURE TRANSPORT PROVISION IN MK, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

MEET THE COUNCIL TRANSPORT OFFICERS WHO ARE EAGER TO HEAR OUR MEMBERS VIEWS ON THE STRATEGY

BUS NEWS

From 15th January until 22nd September, Marlborough Gate from Campbell Park Roundabout on Silbury Boulevard to Midsummer Boulevard will be closed. The reason is building work continuing on the new multi-storey car park and the construction of a third lane for cars entering the car park. As there are level differences between the road surface and area currently used as a coach park, there is a need for extensive landscaping. As a result all buses will turn right and most routes will travel down the right side of Campbell Park.

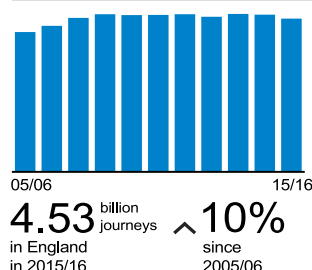
DATA PROTECTION CHANGES

Due to changes in the Data Protection Act, any membership organisation will have to get consent from its members for it to continue to hold personal details. In the next issue a separate consent form will be included.

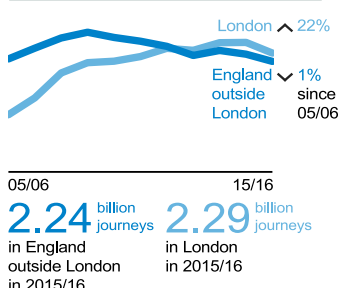
The latest Department of Transport Statistics are shown below and they indicate a drop in bus use. What they don't seem to take into account is the loss of many routes, particularly of subsidised services across the UK. This accounts for the majority of the lower bus use. The figures are also affected by the change in shopping habits to more on-line purchases.

Local bus statistics England 2015/16

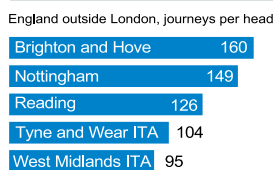
Bus use in England



Over half of bus use in London

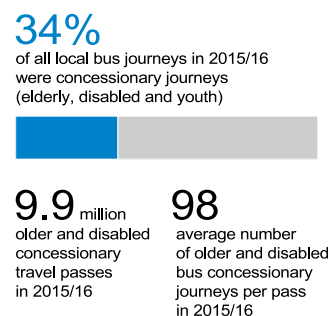


Top 5 LAs for bus use -

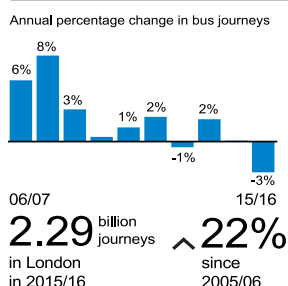


49 bus journeys average for England outside London in 2015/16

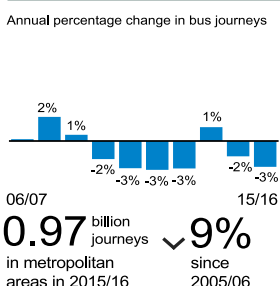
Concessionary journeys -



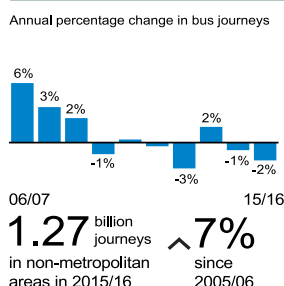
Bus use in London



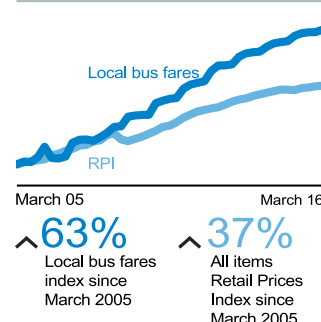
Bus use in met areas



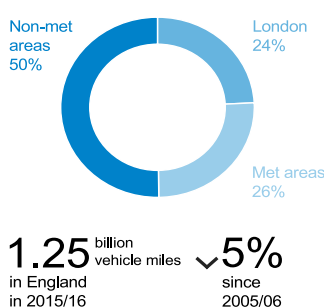
Bus use in non-met areas



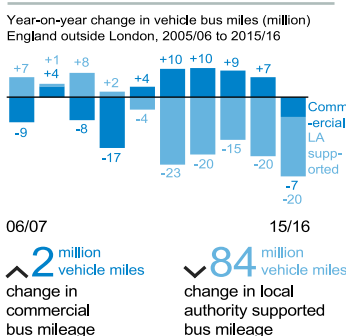
Local bus fares index



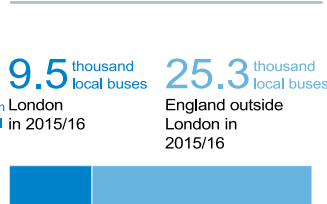
Bus mileage in England



Change in bus mileage by type

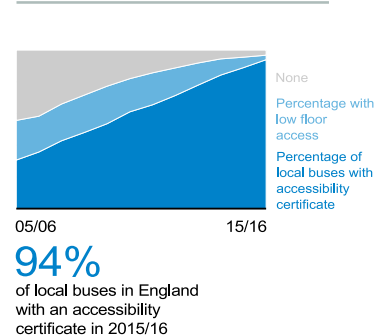


Number of buses

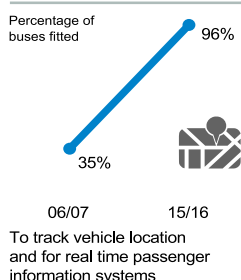


7.6 years average age of a local bus in England

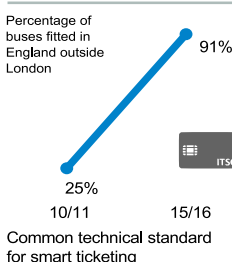
Bus accessibility



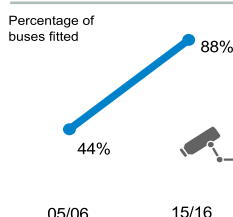
Automatic vehicle location



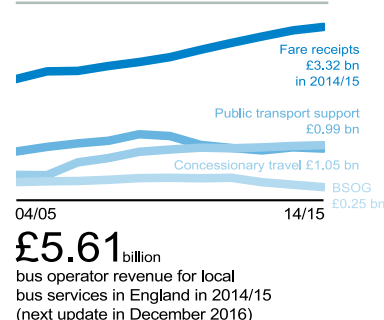
ITSO smart enabled buses



CCTV on buses



Operating revenue for local bus



EDITORIAL

From the Chair and Editor

I hope you have had a good Christmas break and we extend our best wishes for the New Year.

As we enter 2018 there will be many new challenges the city will have to face. As the lead story in this issue outlines, the city has some hard choices to make, and there will be considerable debate on many of the possible solutions.

What is needed more than anything is to move from a 'we have always done it this way' attitude, and hanging on to the past. We need to put politics on one side and work in a non-political way to achieve what is necessary for the continued success of the city.

In planning the future we must take care that any new building blocks that are made ensure the free flow of transport, and take into account the potential of Milton Keynes being one of the larger cities in the country. Amongst the biggest challenges will be for the city to be ready for new modes of transport.

So it is vital that new investment in transport infrastructure is put in place over the coming years, to complement what has been achieved so far. The status quo is not an option, and as a fast growing city we must not only attend to the future but also attend to today's transport needs.

MK Bus Users Group is not advocating the wholesale movement to public transport alone, but would like to see a move to change the ratio of cars to public transport from 90% cars / 10% buses to more like 60% cars / 40 % buses. This is called 'modal shift', which is something that has been proposed in transport strategy plans for many years.

The mission for MKBUG will always be to champion the needs of bus users and that will continue to be our priority.



BUS JOKES

What would you get if you crossed King Kong with a skunk? *I don't know but it could always get a seat on a bus!*

Driver, do you stop at the Savoy Hotel? *Not on my salary!*

What is the difference between a bus driver and a cold? *One knows the stops, the other stops the nose.*

Q: What is a bus ? *A bus is a vehicle that runs twice as fast when you are after it as when you are in it.*

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E Mail: under review.

Facebook: under review

Twitter : under review

Website: being reconstructed

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