

Introduction

This document is Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group's (BTPG) third response to Wiltshire Council's "Proposed changes to bus services 20 and 22 Marlborough – Bedwyn – Hungerford". Within the latter are two proposed timetables known as Option A and Option B. For completeness these are shown in Appendix 1. Issue 2 of this document dealt with BTPG's response to these two options. This should be referred to as we did not wish to repeat it here. Issue 1 of this document can be disregarded.

This document sets out a rationale against the extensive cuts and lists the objectives required of a new timetable – both those stated by Wiltshire Council (WC) and those BTPG has gleaned by local consultation. Thus the main point of this revised document is to supply an alternative suggested timetable for WC to peruse.

Rationale Opposing the Extent of the Cuts

BTPG understands that WC wishes to save some £80,000 from the Bedwyn bus service by reducing the service from two buses and three drivers to one bus and one driver. BTPG understands that the total savings that WC wishes to make are £260,000 which will cause the Bedwyn bus service to contribute some 31% of the total savings across the entire county.

There is real concern that the cuts that WC are proposing might reduce the service's attractiveness to such an extent that a further review, in the subsequent years, may cause the service to be completely withdrawn.

BTPG understands that a local petition, presented to WC, has gained over 300 signatures opposing the cuts. This reflects the strong feeling regarding the size of the cuts the Bedwyn bus service is being expected to take.

BTPG accept that the rail link is under used but feel that there are good reasons for this and it should be given a chance by providing better connections, better promotion and a review of pricing.

The connections are covered in the 'Objectives' section of this report. Regarding promoting the service BTPG has tried hard (see Appendix 2) but ideally require a paper timetable, for this route only, to be delivered to all houses that can benefit from the service. BTPG are prepared to do this for Great Bedwyn and the immediate surrounding villages (to tie in with the three times a year we do this for the rail timetables). Transition Marlborough's Transport Group is very willing to ensure that flyers advertising the service are distributed to every household in Marlborough, along with either the Marlborough Advisor or Marlborough Town and Country, at regular intervals.

In "Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011- 2026 Public Transport Strategy" it states that "During 2011/12, the council will take the following actions concerning rail: When reviewing and re-designing the bus network, treat bus links to rail stations as strategic network services where they provide access to the rail network for towns and larger villages that do not have a railway station." Given this is a WC core strategy BTPG feels that WC should promote and not extensively cut the Bedwyn bus service.

BTPG understands, from its local consultation, one of the reasons the bus is under utilised is the costs of the fares. It stands to reason if they were cheaper they would be used more and BTPG would urge WC to do some research to ascertain what the ideal fare is to give the maximum income.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of BTPG's proposed timetable:

1. To enhance the Bedwyn Rail Link such that users have a good feeling that they will meet their connection. BTPG is sure that a lot of people have been driven away from the rail link by poor connectivity and unreliability. BTPG feel that for any train met or served the bus needs to arrive 7 minutes before any train departure and depart 7 minutes after any train arrival.
2. To accept that only one bus will be available and target a number of train connections well c.f. a lot of trains not so well.
3. To meet the commitments of the school runs.
4. To meet the needs of rail commuters.
5. To tie in with connections to and from Swindon for teenagers attending college and those working in Swindon.
6. A number of retired and non driving residents depend on the buses from Great Bedwyn to Marlborough. Typically they could cope with a two hourly service with the core hours being between 0930 (Bedwyn departure) and 1530 (return).
7. There needs to be a morning bus from Great Bedwyn to Hungerford and a return giving at least 70 minutes in the town.
8. Children require a bus for returning after school clubs in Marlborough. They are namely the weekday service no 20 at 1620, 1730 and 1830.
9. There needs to be a bus from Great Bedwyn to Marlborough for primary school children's after school activities (e.g. swimming pool).
10. A bus to serve the 1332 / 1330 HST trains in / out of the village. Two HSTs stop in the village (one going east, the other west) within two minutes of one another. One bus could meet four train journey opportunities.

The BTPG Suggested Timetable

Swindon Bus Station	06:15	07:15	09:10	11:10	12:10	13:10	14:10	16:10	16:40	17:10	18:10
Marlborough High St	06:55	07:55	09:50	11:50	12:52	13:50	14:52	16:50	17:16	17:50	18:50
Marlborough High St	07:05	08:12	09:57	12:12	12:56	14:02	15:35	16:57	17:33	18:17	19:01
Savemake Hospital	07:10	08:17		12:17		14:07	15:40	17:02	17:38	18:22	
Cadley			10:02		13:01						19:06
Burbage			10:09		13:08						19:13
West Grafton			10:11		13:10						19:15
East Grafton			10:14		13:13						19:18
Wilton			10:16		13:15						19:20
Bedwyn Rail Station (A)		08:29	10:24	12:29	13:23		15:52	17:14	17:50	18:34	19:28
Bedwyn Rail Station (D)		08:41	10:38	12:38	13:40		15:52	17:14	17:52	18:34	19:42
Shalbourne			10:44				15:58				
Ham			10:49				16:03				
Froxfield	07:20	08:51				14:17		17:24			
Hungerford Town Hall (A)	07:27	08:58	10:58			14:24	16:12	17:31			
Hungerford Town Hall (D)	07:27	09:07	11:06			14:24	16:12	17:31			
Froxfield			11:13				16:19				
Ham	07:36	09:16				14:33		17:40			
Shalbourne	07:41	09:21				14:38		17:45			
Bedwyn Rail Station (A)	07:47	09:27	11:23	12:29	13:23	14:44	16:29	17:51	17:50	18:34	19:28
Bedwyn Rail Station (D)	07:50	09:27	11:38	12:38	13:40	14:44	16:38	17:58	17:52	18:34	19:42
Wilton		09:35							18:00		
East Grafton		09:37							18:02		
West Grafton		09:40							18:05		
Burbage		09:42							18:07		
Cadley		09:49									
Savemake Hospital	08:02		11:50	12:50	13:52	14:56	16:50	18:10		18:46	19:54
Marlborough High St	08:07	09:54	11:55	12:55	13:57	15:01	16:55	18:15		18:53	19:59
Pewsey									18:19		
Marlborough High St	08:13	10:15	12:15	13:15	14:15	15:15	17:51	18:25		18:55	
Swindon Bus Station	08:55	10:57	12:57	13:57	14:57	15:57	18:26	19:07		19:37	

Meeting the Objectives

The following table describes how the BTPG suggested timetable ties in with the set objectives:

#	Objective	Objective Met?
1.	To enhance the Bedwyn Rail Link such that users have a good feeling that they will meet their connection. BTPG is sure that a lot of people have been driven away from the rail link by poor connectivity and unreliability. BTPG feel that for any train met or served the bus needs to arrive 7 minutes before any train departure and depart 7 minutes after any train arrival.	<p>The following train arrivals, in to Bedwyn, have at least a seven minute connection time with the bus:</p> <p>0834, 1031, 1231, 1330, 1332, 1531, 1745, 1824, 1924, 1935.</p> <p>The following train departures, from Bedwyn, have at least a seven minute connection time with the bus:</p> <p>0841, 1038, 1238, 1330, 1332, 1736, 1935.</p> <p>The following train departures, from Hungerford, have at least a seven minute connection time with the bus:</p> <p>0734, 1443</p>
2.	To accept that only one bus will be available and target a number of train connections well c.f. a lot of trains not so well.	Yes but it'll require one bus and two drivers.
3.	To meet the commitments of the school runs.	Yes.
4.	To meet the needs of rail commuters.	Yes. There are connections to the 0734 from Hungerford, 0841 from Bedwyn and 1824 and 1935 arrivals back into Bedwyn.
5.	To tie in with connections to and from Swindon for teenagers attending college and those working in Swindon.	Yes.
6.	A number of retired and non driving residents depend on the buses from Great Bedwyn to Marlborough. Typically they could cope with a two hourly service with the core hours being between 0930 (Bedwyn departure) and 1530 (return).	Yes – there are departures at 0927, and 1138 with return buses at 1212, 1257 and 1512.
7.	There needs to be a morning bus from Great Bedwyn to Hungerford and a return giving at least 70 minutes in the town.	<p>The 1038 departure from Bedwyn and the 1424 return meets this (giving three hours twenty six minutes in the town).</p> <p>The 1538 departure from Bedwyn and the 1731 departure from Hungerford (giving one hour and thirty three minutes in the town) also meet this.</p>
8.	Children require a bus for returning after school clubs in Marlborough. They are namely the weekday service no 20 at 1620, 1730 and 1830.	Yes.
9.	There needs to be a bus from Great Bedwyn to	Not met.

#	Objective	Objective Met?
	Marlborough for primary school children's after school activities (e.g. swimming pool).	
10.	A bus to serve the 1332 / 1330 HST trains in / out of the village. Two HSTs stop in the village (one going east, the other west) within two minutes of one another. One bus could meet four train journey opportunities.	Yes.

Adding in Devizes

BTPG understands that the Bedwyn Rail Link bus is garaged in Devizes. BTPG therefore request that the following is considered:

- 1) The bus departs Devizes at 06XX, stops next at Marlborough (0705) then arrives into Hungerford at 0727 in time for the 0734 fast train to London.
- 2) At some point in the day the bus does a run from Marlborough to Devizes to swap drivers. The outward and return journeys would connect with trains at Bedwyn so Devizes people can use it to connect with the trains.
- 3) The final journey of the day departs Bedwyn at 1942, Marlborough 1959 arriving in Devizes at 20XX – this means commuters can use the 1833 from Paddington which is a very fast service back to Bedwyn.

The advantages of this are:

- 1) Devizes can connect into the cheaper rail fares (c.f. Pewsey) that Bedwyn and Hungerford enjoy.
- 2) It allows commuting from Devizes to London and a midday leisure connection too.
- 3) It gives a fledgling Devizes/Marlborough service that keeps coming up as a request.
- 4) It gives the bus a greater purpose and could lead to it becoming more affordable.

Other Consultation Points

Here follows a list of consultation points that BTPG wish WC to consider that have not been covered above.

1. If it is impossible to run with one bus and two drivers BTPG request that existing buses, on other services, divert to meet the needs to commuters. This would require buses (from Marlborough) to arrive at Bedwyn Station at 0640 and 0834. It would also require the following bus departure times from Bedwyn to Marlborough: 1831 and 1942. It has been suggested that the 0545 Swindon to Ludgershall bus could divert via Great Bedwyn to arrive in Bedwyn around 0640. The evening trains could be served by the 1743 and 1843 departures from Ludgershall.
2. Saturday mornings from Bedwyn to Marlborough at 0927 and returning to Bedwyn in the afternoon at 1335, 1510, 1615 and 1715 are popular with teenage children.
3. Teenage children use buses on a Saturday to visit friends in other villages.

Conclusions

From BTPG's research and consultation we urge WC to only reduce the service from two buses and three drivers to one bus and two drivers. The resulting service would need to work as per the 'Objectives' section of this report. In return BTPG and Transition Marlborough will combine forces to promote it.

Appendix 1: Options A and B from Wiltshire Council's "Proposed changes to bus services 20 and 22 Marlborough – Bedwyn – Hungerford".

Marlborough Area – Bedwyn services

Possible alternative weekday timetables using one bus and driver (plus Wilts & Dorset service 21)

Marlborough – Bedwyn – Shalbourne – Hungerford – Marlborough										DRAFT	Option A
	W&D 21						SJ				
Marlborough, High St.	--	07:16	08:50	09:55	11:55	12:58	14:05	15:35	16:55	17:33	
Savernake Hospital	--	R	R	10:00	12:00	--	14:10	15:40	17:00	R	
Cadley	--	--	--	--	--	13:03	--	--	--	--	
Burbage	07:10	--	--	--	--	13:10	--	--	--	--	
West Grafton	07:12	--	--	--	--	13:12	--	--	--	--	
East Grafton	07:14	--	--	--	--	13:14	--	--	--	--	
Wilton	07:16	--	--	--	--	13:16	--	--	--	--	
Great Bedwyn, Square	07:22	--	--	--	--	13:22	--	--	--	--	
Bedwyn, railway station	07:25	--	--	10:12	--	13:25	14:22	15:52	17:12	17:50	
Shalbourne, The Plough	--	--	--	10:18	--	--	14:28	15:58	17:18	--	
Ham, Crown & Anchor	--	--	--	10:23	--	L.Bedwyn	R	--	--	--	
Froxfield, A4	--	07:26	09:00	--	12:07	13:43	--	--	--	--	
Hungerford, Town Hall	--	07:33	09:07	10:32	12:14	--	14:42	--	17:27	--	
Hungerford, Town Hall	--	--	09:07	10:35	12:17	--	14:42	16:16	17:30	--	
Froxfield, A4	--	--	--	10:42	--	--	14:49	--	--	--	
Ham, Crown & Anchor	--	--	09:16	via	12:26	--	--	R	R	--	
Shalbourne, The Plough	--	--	09:21	L.Bedwyn	12:31	--	--	16:30	17:44	--	
Bedwyn, railway station	07:25	07:53up	09:27	10:52	12:37	13:35	--	16:36	17:50	17:50	
Great Bedwyn, Square	07:26	--	09:28	10:53	12:38	13:36	--	16:37	17:51	17:51	
Wilton	--	--	--	10:57	--	via	--	--	--	17:55	
East Grafton	--	--	--	10:59	--	Froxfield	--	--	--	17:57	
West Grafton	--	--	--	11:01	--	--	--	--	--	17:59	
Wilton	--	--	--	11:05	--	--	--	--	--	18:03	
Burbage	--	--	--	11:07	--	--	--	--	--	18:05	
Cadley	--	--	--	11:12	--	--	--	--	--	to	
Savernake Hospital	R	--	R	--	R	R	R	R	R	Pewsey	
Marlborough, High St.	07:42	08:10SJ	09:44	11:19	12:54	13:55	15:01	16:53	18:07		
		Break		Break		Break					

Marlborough – Bedwyn – Shalbourne – Hungerford – Marlborough										DRAFT	Option B
	W&D 21						SJ				
Marlborough, High St.	--	07:16	08:55	10:03	11:03	11:58	12:58	14:25	15:35	16:55	17:33
Savernake Hospital	--	R	R	10:08	--	12:03	--	14:30	15:40	17:00	R
Cadley	--	--	--	--	11:08	--	13:03	--	--	--	--
Burbage	07:10	--	--	--	11:15	--	13:10	--	--	--	--
West Grafton	07:12	--	--	--	11:17	--	13:12	--	--	--	--
East Grafton	07:14	--	--	--	11:19	--	13:14	--	--	--	--
Wilton	07:16	--	--	--	11:21	--	13:16	--	--	--	--
Great Bedwyn, Square	07:22	--	--	--	11:27	--	13:22	--	--	--	--
Bedwyn, railway station	07:25	--	--	10:20	11:30	--	13:25	14:42	15:52	17:12	17:50
Shalbourne, The Plough	--	--	--	10:26	--	--	--	14:48	15:58	17:18	--
Ham, Crown & Anchor	--	--	--	10:31	--	--	--	R	--	--	--
Froxfield, A4	--	07:26	09:05	--	--	12:10	--	--	--	--	--
Hungerford, Town Hall	--	07:33	09:12	10:40	--	12:17	--	15:02	--	17:27	--
Hungerford, Town Hall	--	--	09:12	10:40	--	12:17	--	15:02	16:16	17:30	--
Froxfield, A4	--	--	--	10:47	--	--	--	15:09	--	--	--
Ham, Crown & Anchor	--	--	09:21	--	--	12:26	--	--	R	R	--
Shalbourne, The Plough	--	--	09:26	--	--	12:31	--	--	16:30	17:44	--
Bedwyn, railway station	07:25	07:53	09:32	--	11:36	12:37	13:35	--	16:36	17:50	17:50
Great Bedwyn, Square	07:26	--	09:33	--	11:37	12:38	13:36	--	16:37	17:51	17:51
Wilton	--	--	09:37	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17:55
East Grafton	--	--	09:39	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17:57
West Grafton	--	--	09:41	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17:59
Wilton	--	--	09:45	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18:03
Burbage	--	--	09:47	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	18:05
Cadley	--	--	09:52	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	to
Savernake Hospital	R	--	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	Pewsey
Marlborough, High Street	07:42	08:10SJ	09:59	10:59	11:53	12:54	13:52	15:21	16:53	18:07	

Appendix 2: About Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group

Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group was formed in 2006 to protect and improve the Bedwyn rail service. As part of our activities we have worked with Wiltshire Council (WC) and First Great Western (FGW) to improve the interoperability of the train and bus services. Our notable achievements have been:

Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group – Bus Consultation Response

- We formed a working relationship between ourselves, FGW and WC to correct, where possible, the drift between the train and the bus timetables. This had resulted from the council and FGW not communicating for a number of years.
- We successfully campaigned for the buses to be shown on the FGW printed timetables. E.g.

Operator	Notes	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW	GW
Facilities		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Plymouth	d	0853	-	-	-	-	1044	-	-	-	1255	-	-	1323	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exeter St Davids	Ⓢd	0958	-	-	-	-	1155	-	-	-	1358	-	-	1501	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tiverton Parkway	d	1013	-	-	-	-	1209	-	-	-	-	-	-	1515	-	-	-	-	-	-
Taunton	d	1028	-	-	-	-	1224	-	-	-	1423	-	-	1530	1523	-	-	-	-	-
Castle Cary	±d	-	-	-	-	-	1245	-	-	-	1444	-	-	1551	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frome	±d	-	-	-	-	-	1242	-	-	-	1441	-	-	1555	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bristol Temple Meads	Ⓢd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford-on-Avon	d	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trowbridge	d	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Westbury	d	1105	-	-	-	-	1305	-	-	-	1503	-	-	1608	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pewsey	±d	-	-	-	-	-	1321	-	-	-	-	-	-	1625	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marlborough High St	Ⓢd	-	1105	-	-	-	1230	-	1415	-	-	-	-	1620	-	-	1730	-	1830	-
Bedwyn	±d	-	1138	-	1238	-	1332	-	1438	-	-	1536	-	-	1644	-	1736	1755	-	1903
Hungerford	±d	-	1143	-	1243	-	1339	-	1443	-	-	1541	-	-	1639	1649	-	1741	1800	-
Kinbury	±d	-	1148	-	1248	-	-	-	1448	-	-	1546	-	-	1654	-	1746	1805	-	1913
Newbury	a	-	1155	-	1255	-	1348	-	1455	-	-	1553	-	-	1648	1703	-	1753	1812	-
Newbury	d	-	1155	1213	1303	1313	1348	1413	1455	1513	-	1553	1613	-	1648	-	1713	1753	1813	1853
Newbury Racecourse	±d	-	-	1215	-	1315	-	1415	-	1515	-	-	1615	-	-	-	1715	-	1815	-
Thatcham	±d	-	1200	1220	1308	1320	1355	1420	1500	1520	-	1558	1620	-	1655	-	1720	1758	1820	1858
Midgham	d	-	-	1224	-	1324	-	1424	-	1524	-	-	1624	-	-	-	1724	-	1824	-
Aldermaston	d	-	-	1228	-	1328	-	1428	-	1528	-	-	1628	-	-	-	1728	1804	1828	-
Theale	±d	-	1208	1233	1316	1333	1404	1433	1508	1533	-	1606	1633	-	1704	-	1733	1809	1833	1906
Reading West	d	-	-	1240	-	1340	-	1440	-	1540	-	-	1640	-	-	-	1740	-	1840	-
Reading	Ⓢa	1150	1217	1245	1327	1345	1415	1445	1519	1545	1550	1616	1645	1649	1715	-	1745	1821	1845	1916
Slough	Ⓢa	-	1239	1309	1414	1409	1439	1509	-	1609	1624	1639	1709	1724	1739	-	1814	1854	1909	1947
London Paddington	Ⓢa	1223	1252	1329	1409	1429	1444	1524	1554	-	1624	1657	-	1724	1754	-	1846	1854	1931	1954
Train continues to																				

- We deliver the FGW printed timetables to all houses in Great Bedwyn, Little Bedwyn, Chisbury, St Katherines, Durley and Crofton. This is to promote the bus and rail services.
- We successfully campaigned for the buses to be shown on the Internet station screens. E.g.

Trains Last updated: 12/05/2012 12:14:09							
From	Timetabled Arrival	Expected Arrival	Platform	To	Timetabled Departure	Expected Departure	Operator
London Paddington	1231	1235	1	**Terminates**			First Great Western
Bedwyn				London Paddington	1307	On time	First Great Western
London Paddington	1329	On time		Taunton	1330	On time	First Great Western
Exeter St Davids	1332	On time		London Paddington	1333	On time	First Great Western

Buses Last updated: 12/05/2012 12:14:09						
From	Timetabled Arrival	Expected Arrival	To	Timetabled Departure	Expected Departure	Operator
Bedwyn		Bus	Marlborough (Bus)	1218	Bus	First Great Western
Marlborough (Bus)	1257	Bus	**Terminates**		Bus	First Great Western
Bedwyn		Bus	Marlborough (Bus)	1300	Bus	First Great Western