

## Oxfordshire consultation on Bus services, 29 July 2014

**To Councillors Kevin Bulmer & David Nimmo-Smith, Parish Councils @ Checkendon, Goring Heath, Woodcote and Whitchurch.**

Bus Service No.142 operates on a 2-hourly frequency to/from Reading serving Checkendon, Goring Heath, Woodcote, Crays Pond, Whitchurch Hill, Whitchurch-on-Thames and Pangbourne and is subsidised by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Currently this service is being diverted via Goring due to the long term closure of the toll bridge across the Thames at Pangbourne. Technically this service is only subsidised by OCC between the Oxfordshire villages and Pangbourne but it does then continue to Reading in conjunction with Thames Travel service 133 to form an hourly headway service between Pangbourne and Reading under contract to West Berkshire Council.

The Toll Bridge is due to re-open in late September and West Berkshire Council and OCC are jointly reviewing services 133 and 142 – West Berkshire with a specific requirement to save money – to radically overhaul the service provision to coincide with the re-opening of the bridge and adjust the service level to match demand.

Currently services 133 and 142 utilise two buses and therefore the proposal is to reduce the service to use one bus. The level of service between Reading and Pangbourne will be reduced to 2-hourly, including the peak hours, with a diversion via Whitchurch village and a loop around Whitchurch Hill. This will mean that service 142 is withdrawn from Crays Pond, Woodcote, Checkendon, and Goring Heath. However Woodcote has an hourly bus service to Wallingford and Reading with Checkendon having a service to Henley.

This does mean that both Crays Pond and Goring Heath lose their only “mainstream” bus service but patronage figures show little or no passengers boarding in these communities. In the whole of the week 12-16 May this year no passengers were recorded as boarding in Crays Pond or Goring Heath with only one passenger boarding in Checkendon (in a whole week) and three in Woodcote. Looking back at our last round of on-bus surveys undertaken in 2011/2012 in 22 journeys surveyed across the whole day no passengers boarded in Goring Heath and only one in Crays Pond.

If you have any comments on these proposals please let me know as soon as possible.

Best wishes

Allan

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