

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS – SEPTEMBER 2023

Dear Parish Clerks,

Bus services

I arranged a public meeting in Ridgewell yesterday with officers from ECC passenger transport. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the DaRT3 minibus service that operates in this area. It became clear in the meeting that most people would like a timetabled bus service, even one that operates once or twice a week, rather than a "demand responsive" service that does not seem to be able to provide a bus when people need it.

ECC are currently carrying out a consultation on bus services which expires on **5th October**. It is very important that we get as many people as possible to respond to this consultation, effectively stating when they wish to travel, where they wish to go and for what purpose. The hope will be that ECC can then design a service which fulfils people's needs and is used by enough people to make it viable. We are also looking at whether it will be possible to introduce a regular route between Hedingham and Haverhill.

I attach a poster advertising the consultation plus a poster for the existing DaRT3 service. I would be very grateful if you could promote the consultation by whatever means possible, particularly targeting those most likely to use a service, probably older people and young people who do not drive or have access to a car.

This is the link to the online consultation <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/iptu/2023/consultation/subpage.2023-06-16.4450127625/>. I also attach a PDF of the survey for those who cannot access the online survey. This can be sent back by post to ECC.

The survey is designed to cover all bus services in Essex so the questions are rather hard to answer for those in the rural areas with no/limited bus services. I have spoken to the passenger transport team and this is how they suggest we answer the questions:

- First select Braintree and DaRT3 on the online survey or put Braintree/DaRT3/Table 3 on the paper survey.
- Question 1 - select "less than once a month"
- Question 2 - tick the day and time you would like to travel
- Question 3 - tick the main purpose for which you would use a bus service
- Question 4 - tick "I disagree with the proposed changes" and "I could not make necessary journeys without this service" and in the box, please list all other information e.g. where you would like to go and for what purpose.
- Question 5 - tick the relevant boxes and in the box marked "other" put all other relevant information unless already set out under question 4.

Any questions, please do get in touch with me.

Verges

BDC is in year 2 of a 3 year trial under which verges are only cut once a year in the autumn. I know the overgrown verges are causing some concern for residents, especially the inability to see round corners and whether there is a safe place to pull off the road on single track roads.

Some parish councils have entered into their own agreement with ECC under which ECC pays them a fixed sum of money based on the length of roads in the parish and the parish council organises for the verges to be cut as they think fit. If you parish does not already contract direct with ECC, this is something the parish council might like to consider. The sum of money received probably does not cover the whole cost but it may sufficient to cover the most important areas.

Kind regards

Iona Parker