

## **Public transport report for Parish Council meeting 4 November 2024**

### **Bus services:**

Bus users may have noticed in the recent Budget that the bus fare cap, previously due to expire on 31 December 2024, has been extended to 31 December 2025. However, the current £2 single fare will rise to £3 from 1 January 2025. This will still represent a significant reduction on 'normal' fares & cheaper than many car park fees.

Those of state pension age can obtain a pass from Suffolk County Council to allow free bus travel. You can use your free travel bus pass:

- from 9:30am to 11pm, Monday to Friday
- all day on weekends and bank holidays
- anywhere in England on local bus services only.

First Bus, who operate the 75 & 77 service between Ipswich & Felixstowe, have recently introduced a system on their buses to show the route & 'next stop' on a screen & also a loud speaker announcement. This is particularly useful now that the darker days are with us as it can sometimes be tricky to work out where you are on a country route where there are no street lights to help.

Their app is also a useful aid for those with a smart phone. It shows you where the buses are on your route & when they are expected to arrive at your stop (though it is not infallible so should not be relied upon 100%).

Residents who follow the local news may be aware of a scam doing the rounds. This apparently offers a Smartcard which purports to offer six months' travel on Ipswich Buses for just £2. I think this comes under the warning that if something sounds too good to be true then it probably is!

Residents who are unwilling to walk to the Old Felixstowe Road may wish to consider leaving their car in the big layby & then catching the bus. Some of us do this already & find it useful, especially if planning a journey after dark.

At the last PC meeting, I asked the Council for help in getting the hedgerow & verge along Bridge Road cut back as it has become dangerous for pedestrians. Angie tells me that she has reported this to both East Suffolk District Council & Suffolk County Council. To date there has been no response.

### **Train services:**

As with buses, it is possible to get rail discount cards:

16-25, 26-30, Senior, Two Together, HM Forces, Veterans railcard and Disabled Persons Railcard holders can save 1/3 on First Class and Standard Advance tickets. Family and Friends Railcard holders can save 1/3 on all Standard Advance tickets. Greater Anglia Club 50 cardholders can save 20% (online) or 10% (at stations) on First Class and Standard Advance tickets.

Although Greater Anglia's Autumn Hare Fare sale has finished there are still good offers to be had via their website & thereby enjoy a journey more relaxing than travelling by car.

Marian Rose

4 November 2024