WinACC
Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis

# Better Public Transport Integration and Connectivity in Hampshire

# A proposal for Hampshire BSIP

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A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, registration number 08013043.
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## Connectivity: a good way to increase bus use

Bus services in Hampshire are struggling to reverse the damage caused by the Covid pandemic, and passenger numbers are still down. This is a proposal to achieve this by improving the connectivity between the different modes of public transport in the Hampshire County Council Transport Authority area.

The proposal focusses on integrating bus and train services, but would also benefit from further work focussing on how Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans could improve access to public transport for walkers wheelers and cyclists.

While once bus and train services found themselves in competition with each other, they are both now threatened by the convenience of the private car. Only by working closely together can they offer in combination a more attractive alternative for most door-to-door journeys. It will take imagination and flexibility to improve the current perception in Hampshire of public transport and achieve a positive image on a par with the Swiss image of easy public transport journeys that involve multiple changes between modes. With improved connectivity, journeys on public transport between a greater variety of places will become viable, and the number of passengers will grow.

## A history of public transport insularity

Historically those who provide bus services have seen themselves primarily in competition with rail services (the "Titfield Thunderbolt Syndrome"). In the early twentieth century this was brutally the case, and bus provision grew at the expense of rail services. Later, in many places the 'Beeching cuts' meant that local rail services gave way to and were replaced by bus services. Privatisation tended to reinforce this change, when private bus companies focussed on attracting passengers to their own services with little regard for meeting unmet community needs, maintaining bus stations, or providing access to rail services. More recently enhanced bus partnerships and bus service improvement plans have been developed to take a broader view of how bus

services can serve the community, but historic mode-specific partisanship persists.

## The recent decline in connectivity

Recently, connectivity between rail and bus services in Hampshire has deteriorated. Some examples:

- The bus station in Aldershot, adjacent to the railway station, was closed.
- In Eastleigh many trains no longer stop in the town near the bus station.
- In Basingstoke only buses to the north and west pass by the railway station, otherwise there is a short walk (6 minutes) between bus and railway stations but in places it is difficult to follow.
- The three-bay Farnborough bus interchange, provided by Network Rail in about 2011, is now used by only three bus services, even though many others pass nearby.
- The bus station in Fareham town has been improved but buses from the north and east terminate there and do not run on to the railway station (including the frequent battery-electric Southsea – Fareham no 3 bus that does not therefore connect with trains to London or Southampton).
- Buses in Fleet were reorganised to exclude the railway station.
- The no 13 Bordon - Basingstoke bus has been diverted away from Alton railway station.
- The Fareham – Winchester no 69 bus no longer serves either Fareham or Winchester railway stations.
- Long distance coaches no longer stop near Winchester bus station, and there are plans to close the bus station and distribute bus stops along city-centre streets
- No attempt is made by buses to serve Havant railway station; it is a short walk from the bus station, but the town centre's signage leaves gaps in the route; the connectivity with trains to Southampton, Portsmouth and London once provided by local trains e.g. from. Hayling Island is not attempted by current-day buses.
- Buses have ceased to serve Whitchurch railway station, resulting in an immediate 20% reduction in rail trips in 2024/5.

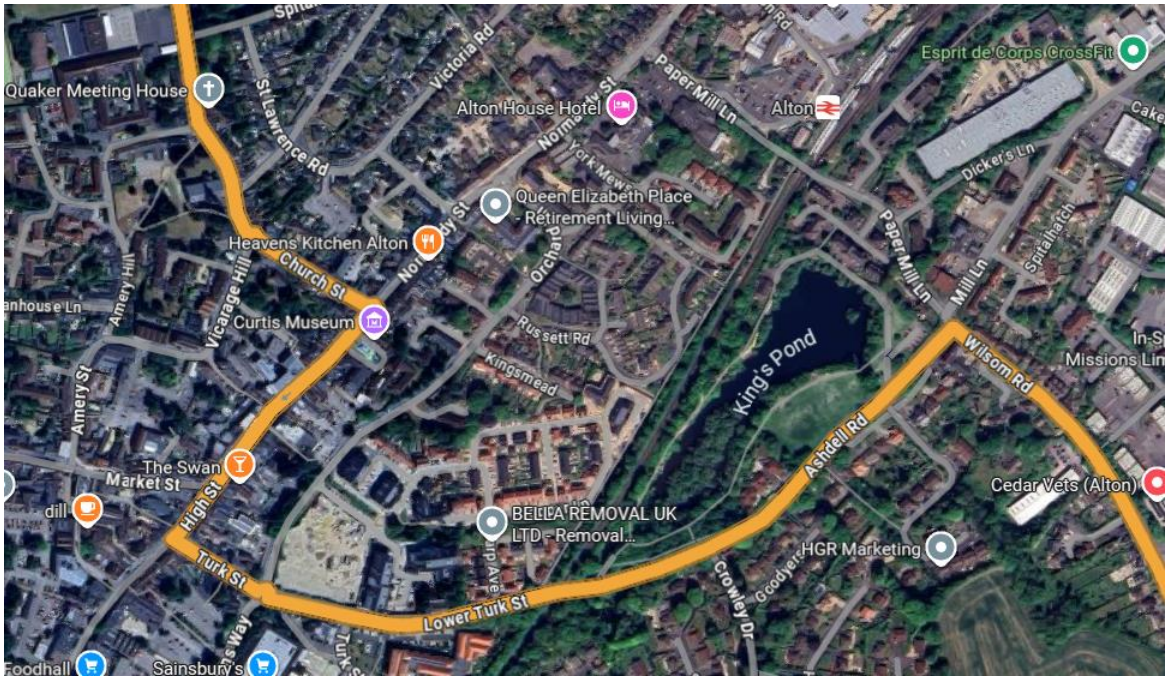



**Figure 1**
**The No 13 Borden – Basingstoke bus route (in yellow)**
**avoiding Alton Railway Station (that could generate half a million passengers a year)**

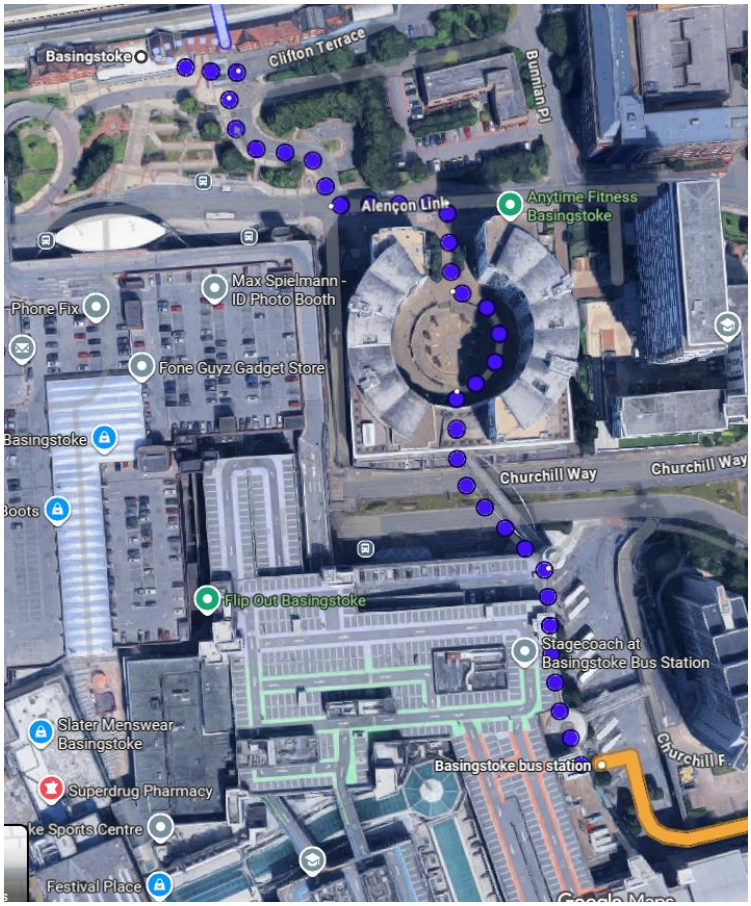



**Figure 2 The short but confusing walk between Basingstoke bus and railway stations**

## Case study of disconnectivity: What happens if somebody who lives in Eastleigh wants to attend an event in East Meon by public transport

To demonstrate how bad connectivity and poor timetabling are the weakest link in bus service provision, we have taken the case study of what would happen if a person who lives in central Eastleigh were to attend an event in West Meon that lasts from 09:00 to 17:30 on a non-school week-day in early January 2026. We assumed it was necessary for them to attend the whole event. We found that:

- Travelling time on public transport is close to travelling time in a car.
- Speeds on public transport are higher than car speeds, but the journey is longer.
- It is the time spent connecting between the public transport journey legs (almost doubling the journey time) that makes public transport particularly unattractive.
- It is especially unhelpful that the No 64 bus does not connect with Winchester railway station and that the first and last No 64 bus journeys do not operate west of Alresford.
- The widely spaced No 67 bus timetable (i.e. intolerable gaps between conference start and end times and bus times) turns the journey into one that only dedicated eccentrics would make.
- Better designed and integrated routes and timetables that cater (even at a low level) for the full day (without the curtailed morning and evening journeys on the No 67 bus) could make the public transport offer really attractive.

| **Eastleigh – West Meon** | | | **West Meon – Eastleigh** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| From/to | Mode | Time taken | From/to | Mode | Time taken |
| Eastleigh rail station to Winchester rail station | train | 06:08 – 06:17<br>11 mins | Leave event and wait for first bus | Wait outside The Thomas Lord | 17:30 - 18:40<br>70 mins |
| Making connection Winchester rail station to Winchester Broadway | walk | 06:17 – 06:33<br>16 mins | West Meon The Thomas Lord to Alresford The Cricketers | Bus No 67 | 18:40 – 18:57<br>17 mins |
| Connect | wait | 06:33 – 06:40<br>7 Mins | Connect | Walk across the road | 18:57 – 19:14<br>17 mins |
| Winchester Broadway to New Alresford Cricketers | Bus No 64 | 06:40 – 06.56<br>16 mins | New Alresford Cricketers to Winchester Broadway | Bus No 64 | 19:14 – 19:30<br>16 mins |
| Connect | Walk across road | 06:56 – 07:20<br>24 mins | Making connection: Winchester Broadway to Winchester rail station | walk | 19:30 – 19:46<br>16 mins |

| Eastleigh – West Meon | | | West Meon – Eastleigh | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| From/to | Mode | Time taken | From/to | Mode | Time taken |
| New Alresford Cricketers to West Meon The Thomas Lord | Bus No 67 | 07:20 - 07:42<br>22 mins | Connect | wait | 19:46-19:49<br>3 mins |
| Wait for event to open doors | Wait | 07:42 – 09:00<br>78 mins | Winchester rail station to Eastleigh rail station | train | 19:49 – 19:59<br>10 Mins |
| Public Transport Travelling Time: 49 mins (28.0 mph) | | | Public Transport Travelling Time: 43 mins (31.9 mph) | | |
| Time spent on connections: 47 mins | | | Time spent on connections: 36 mins | | |
| Time spent accessing event: 78 mins | | | Time spent waiting for first bus after event: 70 mins | | |
| Total time travelling to and accessing event 174 mins | | | Total time travelling home after leaving event 149 mins | | |
| Same journey by car: 40 mins (26.3 mph) | | | Same journey by car: 38 mins (26.2 mph) | | |
| Time Ratio Public Transport : Car **4.35 : 1** | | | Time Ratio Public Transport : Car **3.92 : 1** | | |

## People find intermodal connections difficult

The importance of good intermodal connectivity is likely to be highlighted in government proposals for a new integrated national transport strategy. IPPR funded research in the summer of 2025 to explore people's attitudes to this (see Everyday concerns: What people want from transport | IPPR and Everyday-concerns-SLIDEDECK-Aug-25.pdf). One slide in particular demonstrates how important it is to overcome fears people have about intermodal transfers between buses and trains.

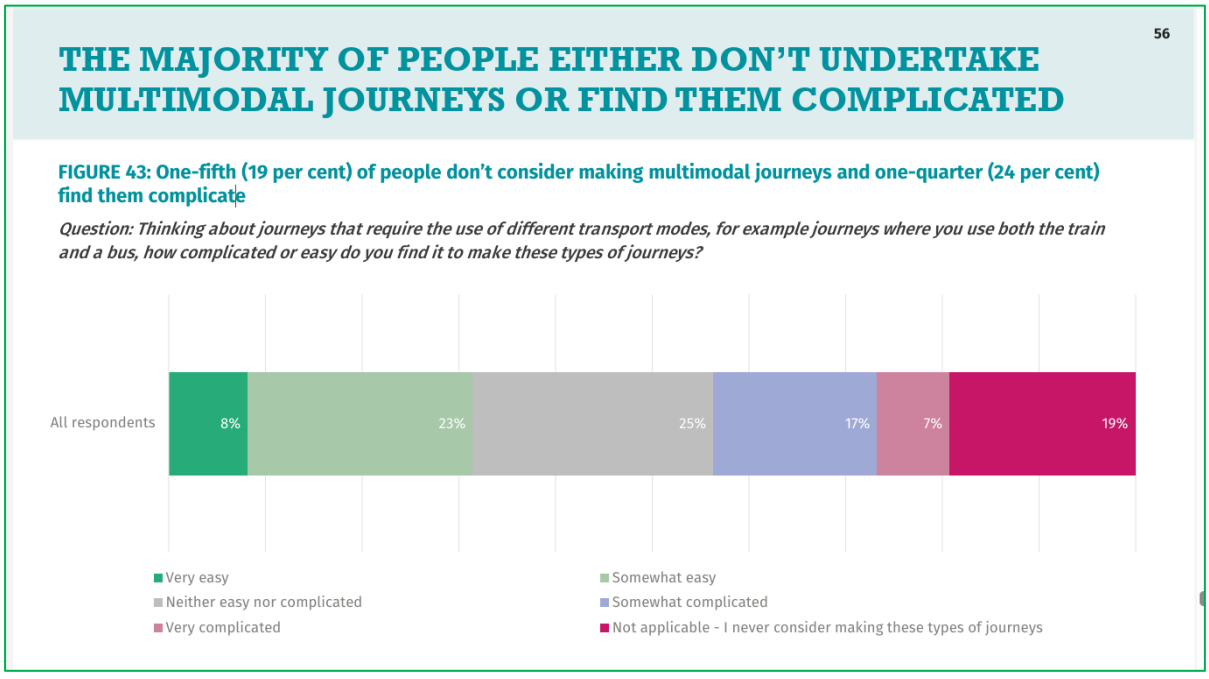
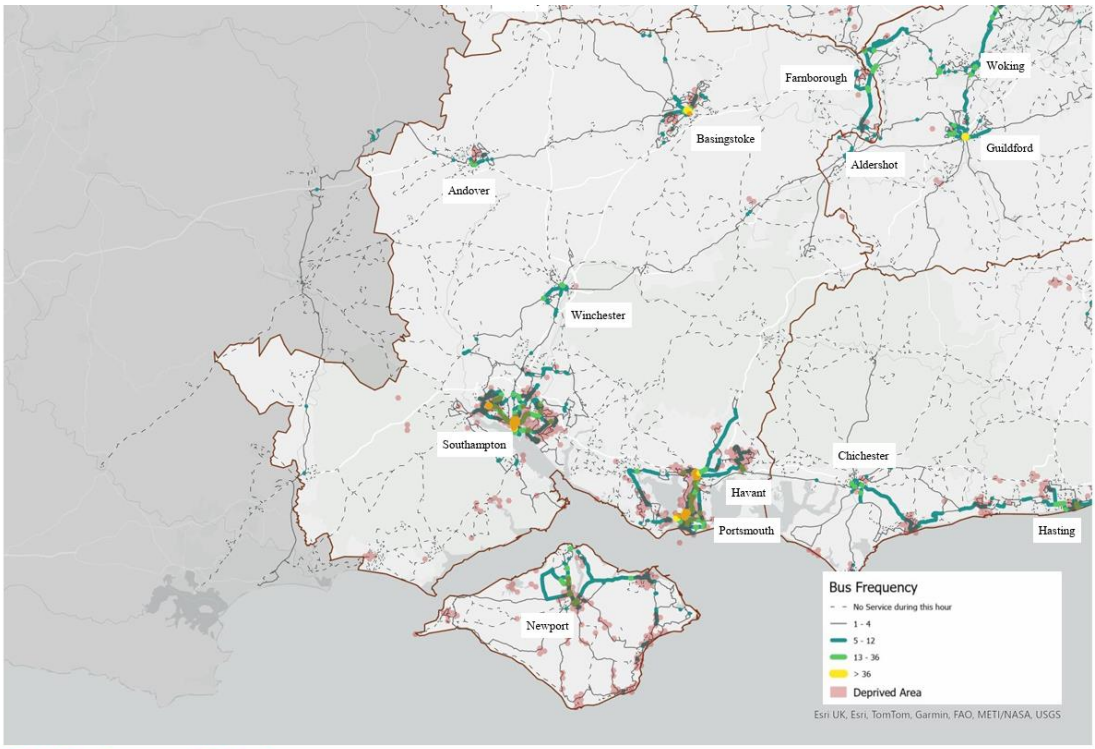



**Figure 3 IPPR Research August 2025**

## Buses need to break out of their isolation

A series of maps on pages 131 to 138 of Devolution and Bus Governance Transport for the South East show how focussed Hampshire bus services are on individual towns, and how difficult it is to use buses to travel outside and between these towns. We chose the map of routes at 20:00 hr, because this is when people returning from journeys further afield (such as a day's work in London, a business trip to Birmingham, a day out in Weymouth) are likely to want connecting bus services to take them home.




Hampshire and Solent - Bus Frequency on Weekday 8pm

**Figure 4**

This map of bus routes alone shows how little sense there is in not including railway routes. Only a comprehensive approach to coordinating bus and train routes and timetables will make many door-to-door journeys by public transport possible,

## Understanding the journeys people want to make

Bus service strategic planners would benefit from surveys of the car journeys made across Hampshire (now readily to be commissioned). The resultant maps would indicate the journeys people want and need to make, be indicative of the how public transport routes across Hampshire should be changed to reflect people's travel needs, and help plan the routes that would be most successful in

attracting an increase in passengers. Programs exist that would optimise the grouping of the journeys indicated by the survey.

### Opening up new possibilities

Better connections between bus es and trains would make it easier to travel by public transport between places not currently well connected e.g. Bishops Waltham and Andover, Hayling Island and Southampton, Alresford and Totton, Hursley and Basingstoke. Better integration of existing bus and train services would make these journeys far easier by public transport.

## Moving beyond a captive market

The current lack of public transport integration and the focus of bus services on individual towns condemns bus users to living their lives within a limited geographic area. In practice it has forced people to buy cars and abandon public transport. Bus services are now left with only a small captive market. Restoring integration would be a low-cost way of reversing this decline.

### A focus on the captive bus market leads to empty buses

By steadily downgrading and ignoring connections between bus routes and between buses and trains, and by focussing almost exclusively on local journey priorities, bus services in Hampshire now serve a very limited market. There is little sign of underlying passenger growth:

- Before Covid there was a slight decline in ridership after a high point in 2013/14, and
- after the Covid low point in 2020/21 passengers have yet to return even to the levels of 2010.
- In contrast rail ridership was steadily growing before Covid, and
- is now recovering more strongly.

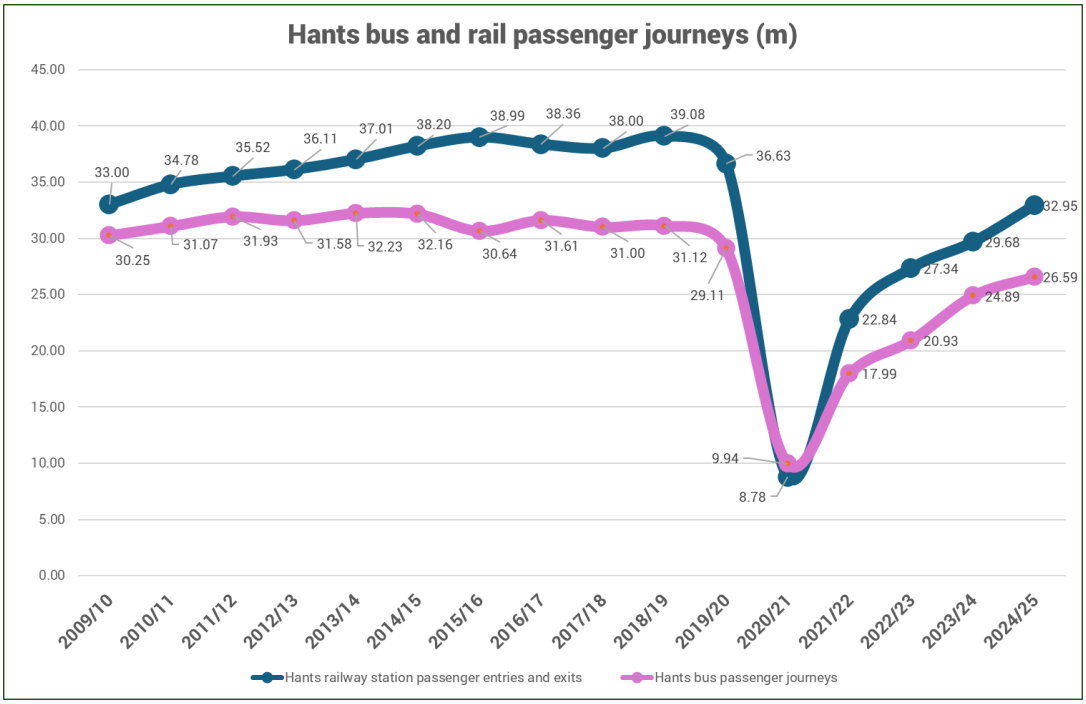



**Figure 5**

## Rail passengers are a very large market (mostly unserved)

To maintain the bus network there is a major need for buses to open up new markets and carry more passengers. The largest single underdeveloped role is to support the rail passenger market. It is a huge potential market, with 24% more journeys by rail than the total of journeys by bus in Hampshire (Based on the 2024/25 difference between ORR data on rail journeys and 2024/25 DfT data on bus journeys, as shown in Figure 5).

## First and last leg of longer journeys

Occasionally, buses still, despite the recent lack of commitment, provide the first and last leg of some journeys that include rail. Much more can be done to expand this role. The decline in interchange facilities needs to be reversed, and timetables need to be revised to serve the needs of people on longer journeys who start their journeys earlier, and finish their journeys later, than people making local journeys. Many bus routes and local networks need to be realigned to provide a supporting role for key railway stations.

## Key interchanges

The table below shows numbers of passengers starting or finishing their rail journeys at stations in Hampshire. To increase the number of bus passengers, it would be most effective to focus on connectivity at the busiest railway stations. However, it would be useful to do a **connectivity review** at all Hampshire stations

in order to identify where the local circumstances and geography could catalyse major increases in bus passengers by implementing proportionate changes.

| Hampshire Railway Station Passenger Entries and Exits | |
|---|---|
| Station name | Apr 2024 to Mar 2025 |
| Basingstoke | 4,793,820 |
| Winchester | 4,593,936 |
| Farnborough (Main) | 2,235,212 |
| Havant | 2,082,866 |
| Fareham | 1,740,046 |
| Southampton Airport Parkway | 1,444,254 |
| Fleet | 1,400,680 |
| Aldershot | 1,371,112 |
| Petersfield | 1,221,202 |
| Eastleigh | 1,191,848 |
| Andover | 1,141,420 |
| Brockenhurst | 986,394 |
| Liphook | 608,654 |
| Alton | 590,922 |
| Swanwick | 562,910 |
| New Milton | 555,078 |
| Hook | 487,728 |
| Farnborough North | 483,280 |
| Romsey | 456,802 |
| Hedge End | 402,116 |
| Blackwater | 383,848 |
| Portchester | 366,574 |
| Emsworth | 362,368 |
| Liss | 308,448 |
| Grateley | 281,170 |
| Bramley (Hampshire) | 264,730 |
| Lymington Town | 242,040 |
| Winchfield | 229,000 |
| Totton | 216,312 |
| Whitchurch (Hampshire) | 200,976 |
| Overton | 174,202 |
| Chandlers Ford | 157,796 |
| Botley | 154,578 |
| Shawford | 140,042 |
| Hinton Admiral | 134,158 |
| Rowlands Castle | 132,580 |
| Micheldever | 131,552 |
| Bentley (Hampshire) | 109,846 |
| Ashurst New Forest | 108,328 |
| Lymington Pier | 100,770 |
| Hamble | 89,658 |
| Netley | 82,450 |
| Sway | 81,398 |
| Bursledon | 68,028 |
| Warblington | 34,634 |
| Mottisfont and Dunbridge | 28,832 |
| Beaulieu Road | 19,838 |

## Each interchange is different

The nature of the most effective changes will vary according to local circumstances. At Basingstoke (see Figure 2 The short but confusing walk between Basingstoke bus and railway stations) and Havant, for example, a well-

lit, well-signed and inviting walking and wheeling link could be built between the closely located bus and railway stations. In addition it would help to revise the timetables of less frequent district routes to align with the railway timetable.

In Winchester and Fareham, on the other hand, where bus and railway stations are much further apart, new transport interchanges and fundamental redesign of bus routes and traffic systems would be necessary. Elsewhere simpler changes could boost patronage of local bus services, but timetable and route revision would reinforce the impact of any changes.

Farnborough Main railway station benefitted from a new interchange in about 2011, but it is currently served by only three routes towards Camberley. Better use could be made of this by transforming the three pick up bays into a more fully formed interchange with buses serving all directions, given the volume of rail passengers that could attract onto the buses.

## Things to do to develop an excellent interchange (Interchange Checklist or IC)

IC1. Improve signage so people arriving by train can find the bus they need for reaching their destination. They will need to find their bus stop and know which bus goes where. Do not assume people know anything about local bus route geography or local abbreviations. A mix of finger posts, other signage, maps, and timetable information would need to be adapted. Transport for London "spider maps" are an excellent model for maps.

IC2. Include the railway station on as many buses routes as possible, and review the design of all routes to simplify the inclusion of the station.

IC3. Obtain data on when people board trains in the morning, and alight from trains in the evening. Adjust the bus timetable to ensure connecting buses are available for passengers to connect to most morning departing train passengers and from most evening arriving train passengers.

IC4. On all routes with a frequency of once every 30 minutes or longer, adjust the timetable so that buses depart seven minutes (depending on the station design) after the arrival of the train most likely to be carrying passengers who would want to change onto the bus. E.g. trains coming from north or east are most likely to carry passengers wanting to catch a bus south or west. In some cases careful judgement may be necessary. Any increase in staffing costs is likely to be balanced by an increase in passengers.

IC5. On all routes with a frequency of once every hour or longer, make arrangements to hold the connection when the incoming journey is delayed.

IC6. Ensure buses arrive seven minutes (depending on the station design and ticket issuing time) before the departure of the connecting train.
IC7. On incoming buses, display train departure information.
IC8. Arrange electronic displays of connecting departing buses on the station platforms and ensure that at least one "spider map" is clearly available on each platform and at the railway station exit.
IC9. (Where necessary) Invest in high quality transport interchanges at railway stations and redesign the local traffic system to enable buses to serve the railway station without cumbersome deviations.
IC10. Develop through ticketing and/or zonal ticketing systems to reduce the time taken on and expense of re-booking.

## Applying the checklist to a specific example: Winchester

In Hampshire, Winchester is a close second to Basingstoke in terms of numbers of passengers using the railway station. However Basingstoke bus station is relatively close to the railway station, and an improved footway might provide a sufficient connection if enhanced by better information and signage for bus services that call at the front of the railway station. However this will not be possible in Winchester where the bus station is a 16-minute walk away from the railway station. A comprehensive and more complex connectivity plan will be necessary.

### IC1 Signage and Maps

Much needs to be done to improve the current lack of basic information on where to catch buses for anybody wishing to connect from a train onto a bus.

There are many bus routes nearby to complement the few routes at the front of the station but there are no finger posts or signs pointing towards nearby bus stops showing where the buses go to. Neither are there any surface markings to show people the way. Step-free standards for wheeling routes are ignored.

At the railway station, posters about bus services are hard to find, out-of-date, and are consistently less than comprehensive or accurate. The only up-to-date map is in one place only, and not easy to find. Unfortunately it is also of limited use because it is about bus departures from the bus station (16 minutes' walk away) and gives no information about closer departure points. The panel in the centre showing bus route numbers obscures the area by the railway station, and it is not possible to see which buses pass close to the railway station (see

Figure 6 Bus map on display at the railway station).

The electronic indicator at the front of the railway station should include routes that pass nearby (3, 6, 7, 16, 64, 67, 75, 77, 86 pending amendments), in addition to the routes that use Station Hill.

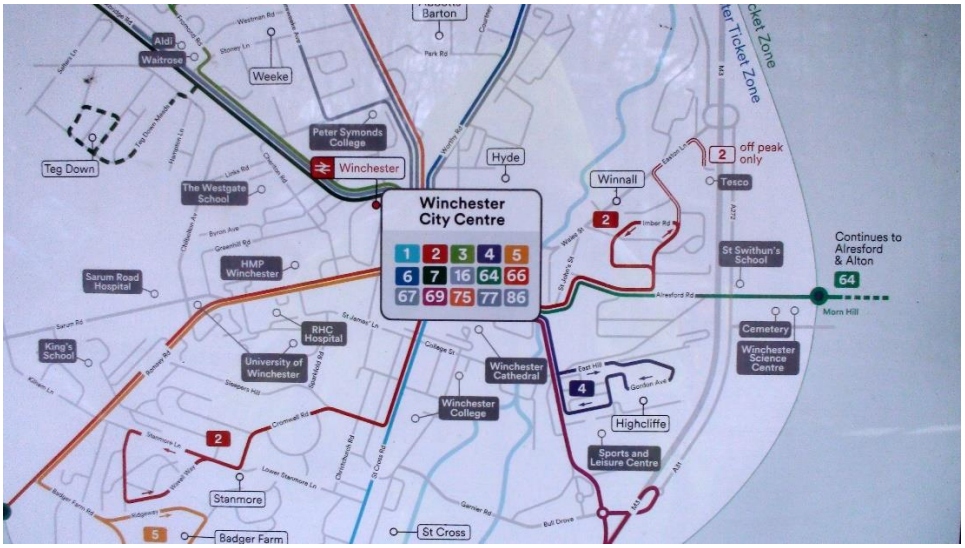



**Figure 6 Bus map on display at the railway station**

A more helpful map would be in the style of a Transport for London "spider map." The map of the many bus routes around Waterloo is clear and contains the information a passenger would need in a readable form, good both for finding out where buses run to, and for locating the right stop.

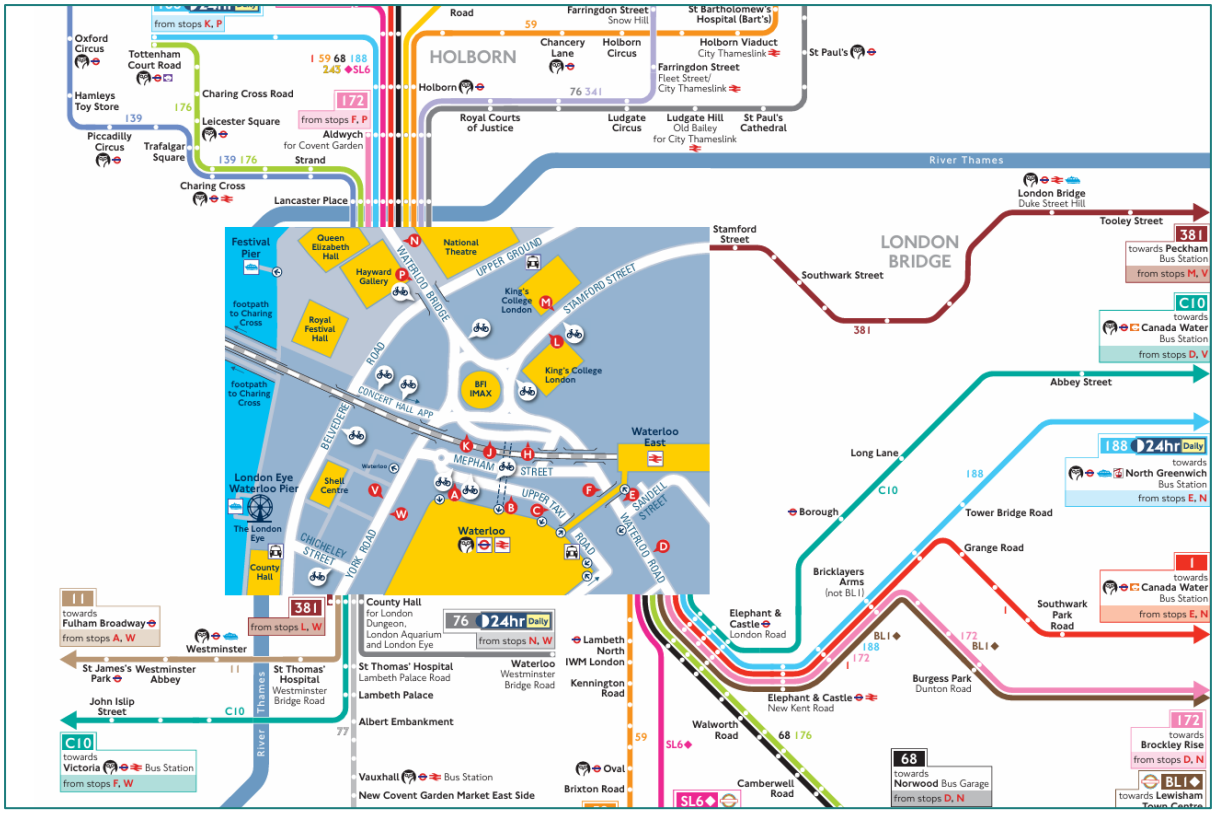



**Figure 7 TfL Spider Map**

In addition at all bus stops, it gives an alphabetical index of destinations showing which bus stops to use for each destination.

The Winchester park-and-ride service has maps similar to the TfL spider maps. It would be useful to add all Winchester bus routes to the park-and-ride bus map and create a Winchester version of a spider map using the Winchester central bus stop reference letters.




**Figure 8 Park-and-ride bus map**

## IC2 Amend bus routes to serve the railway station

This will be easier when the traffic circulation system in central Winchester is amended, possibly once the Winchester Movement Strategy is implemented. Meanwhile, bus routes can be changed so that all bus routes serve both the railway station and city centre.

| Route | Possible Change |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Inbound**: At the end of Jewry Street turn left into City Road and terminate at the railway station. Most buses run relatively empty beyond the ARC and most passengers alight for the centre at St Thomas Church or the ARC. An additional more central stop could be created in Jewry Street.<br><br>**Outbound**: Buses could run from the railway station along City Road, North Walls, Eastgate, Friarsgate, Middle Brook Street, and pick up the current route in St George's Street.<br><br>This would enable good connections at the railway station, and serve the centre as well as currently. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **2/3/6** | These routes could be reassembled either side of the centre so that<br>The No **2** northbound could run from Stanmore, and follow the current No 6 route from Jewry Street to Springvale. On return southbound it could run along North Walls, Eastgate, Friarsgate, Middle Brook Street, and pick up the current No 2 route in St George's Street<br>Bus No **3** could be rejoined to the Winnall (east) end of route 2. |
| **4, 64, 69** | All these could be extended to the railway station in both directions. Those no. **64** buses that serve Peter Symonds College could be diverted to the railway station, since college students use the railway station for most other journeys they make by public transport. |

These changes would let all bus routes terminate at the railway station, or pass by, or close to, the railway station.

**IC3 Adjust Timetables for frequent bus routes** (mostly town services). For most parts of the day these routes are unlikely to cause long waits for connections because of the short gaps between buses, but even bus routes no.s 3 and 5 would need to adjust their timetables in the early morning and evening to reduce waiting times when the gaps are more extended. Increasingly passengers connecting from trains are the main traffic on route no. 5 in the evenings, and better signage could make this similarly the case for the no. 3. It seems currently that mid-evening departures at 40 minutes past the hour pick up returning commuters from both London and Southampton, but research could identify which trains deliver most passengers likely to want to change onto buses for the last leg of their journeys. In the mornings, buses need to be timetabled to arrive in time for passengers to transfer on to the most popular early morning trains. Bus timetables may need to be extended in the evenings to cater for railway passengers completing longer railway journeys or staying late at the office.

**IC4/5/6 Adjust timetables for less frequent routes** that run every half hour or less. Often this may require revised arrival times at the railway station to arrive seven minutes before the departure of the trains that passengers are likely to want to connect with, and to depart from the railway station seven minutes after the arrival of trains their passengers are likely to arrive on.

Generally passengers will want to continue in the same general direction. For example, passengers on buses from and to Andover and Alresford are likely to connect into trains going south, and out of trains arriving from the south. Similarly passengers on buses from and to Bishop's Waltham, Chandler's Ford

and Romsey are likely to connect into trains going north and out of trains arriving from the north.

Bus arrivals and departures serving the same direction are likely to **cluster at the same points every hour** to connect with the same trains, so sufficient bus bays would need to be provided for several buses arriving, laying over or departing at the same time. All buses are likely to need to connect with the same trains, since usually trains arriving from one direction become departing trains for the other direction. Currently, for most of the day trains from the south arrive at 17, 24, 30, 47, and 51 minutes past most hours and depart north shortly after (apart from the 24 minutes past the hour that terminates). Trains from the north generally arrive at 04, 21, 26, and 32 minutes past most hours, and depart south shortly after, with an additional departure at 49 minutes past. Good connections would result only from timetables that reflect this train timetable.

Where buses like the no. **66** pass the railway station (rather than terminate there) they could be timetabled to pass towards the city centre 7 minutes before the train they want to connect into, and the later return journey from the city centre could pass 7 minutes after the train they want to connect out of.

### IC7/8 Intermodal information

Train departure information is widely available and can easily be fed into bus electronic information systems to display to passengers before arrival at the railway station. Specifications for upgrading on-bus information screens could easily be written to include this capability. Even better, voice announcements could be included. Railway departure information could be added to bus stops in Stockbridge Road and City Road for passengers alighting from buses to connect onto trains.

Bus departure information outside the railway station could easily be repeated on both station platforms. Protocols for voice announcements could be agreed with South Western Railway. All bus services serving Stockbridge Road and City Road as well as the railway station should be added to the railway station electronic information board.

### IC9 Invest in a transport interchange and revise the traffic circulation system in Winchester

This would be the most expensive and difficult aspect of a transport interchange. All the preceding stages would be valuable and bring significant results on their own, but without IC9 transport integration would not be complete.

The recent bus facilities built close to Bath Spa railway station suggest the scale of the interchange facilities needed in Winchester:



**Figure 9 Bath public transport interchange: 16 internal bus bays, 3 street stops, layover spaces and departure hall adjacent to railway station with 6.5m rail passengers per year**



**Figure 10 Bath Bus Interchange street entrance**

Winchester railway station is just over 70% as busy as Bath Spa railway station. A proportionate interchange for the volume of railway passengers in Winchester would require about ten bus bays and waiting accommodation of about two thirds the size of the Bath facility. Fortunately there is an opportunity similar to the recent opportunity in Bath with the current proposed redevelopment of the Winchester railway station area. Gladstone Street Car Park could offer much of the space necessary but the owners (Winchester City Council) would require firm expressions of interest.

If the land is redeveloped in other ways the opportunity to transform connectivity here will be lost forever and buses will clutter up Station Hill.

Inexplicably, bus companies have so far shown no interest in the idea. It would be a wasted opportunity to wait for the new combined authority's Mayor to develop such a scheme.

To achieve full functionality, a transport interchange would benefit greatly from **a revision of transport circulation** in Winchester City Centre. The recent Winchester Town Forum "Vision for Winchester" [Winchester Vision 2030 - Winchester City Council] recommended considerable reduction of traffic volumes. This could take the form of reserving some streets for buses, pedestrians and cycles. One side-effect of this would be to enable buses more easily to serve both the railway station and the city centre more directly. It would help bus services if the Winchester Movement Strategy produced a "bus friendly" traffic circulation pattern. This is a suggestion for what this could look like:

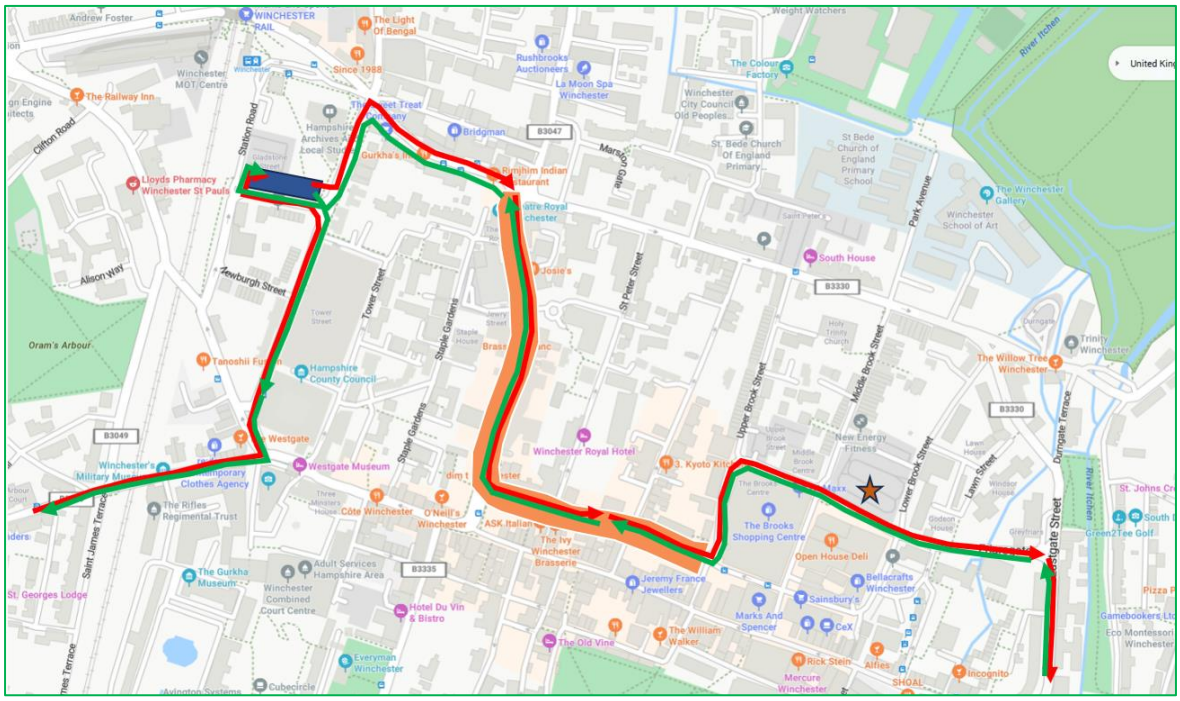



**Figure 11**

Key

Public transport interchange
Bus interchange point

Eastbound
Westbound

Bus only zone

## IC 10 Through ticketing

This needs more development. For local passengers in the Winchester Area there needs to be a single ticket for bus and rail travel, irrespective of operator. Similarly tickets should be available on the bus for all rail destinations.