



MATT RODDA MP  
Member of Parliament for Reading East



07 August 2018

Dear Resident,

### **Changes to bus services in Caversham and Emmer Green**

Last week, I held a public meeting about changes to local bus services. I am writing to update you on this issue:

#### **Timetable changes by Reading Buses**

- The 22 bus will cease to run directly to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Sunday services will be reduced from once an hour to once every two hours.
- The frequency of the 23 and 24 will be reduced to half hourly.
- The weekday off-peak 25 service will be reduced to hourly. The 25 will run once every two hours on Sundays.

#### **Concerns raised at the meeting**

Over 250 residents attended the meeting, together with councillors, residents' associations, and community groups. The following points were discussed:

- Buses are a lifeline for many people in our community, particularly older residents, disabled people, young families, and commuters.
- Several residents explained just how important frequent services were to them. Many residents do not, or cannot, drive for medical reasons.
- The CEO of Reading Buses said that services were making a loss and that cuts were needed to help the company cover the cost of losses in Caversham and Emmer Green.
- Traffic congestion has a major impact on the bus company, causing expensive delays and draining resources.

#### **Action being taken to protect our bus services**

I want to protect existing services and reinstate those that have been cut. I am working with Reading Buses, local councillors, residents' associations, and community groups to find ways of doing this. I am reflecting on the following:

- Better marketing and ticket offers to encourage more bus use.

- Alternative sources of income to fund services. These include a levy on parking spaces in larger businesses, or the possibility of a congestion charge in Reading. Money raised in this way could be reinvested in public transport.
- Fundraising through infrastructure payments made to Reading Borough Council by local developers.
- Action to reduce the effects of congestion. For example, introducing enhanced priority for buses at junctions.

I would like to hear your views on these issues. Please email me or write to me to raise your concerns, or to make suggestions.

Yours faithfully,



**Matt Rodda MP**