

**TEXT OF MESSAGE TO MARTIJN GILBERT CEO READING BUSES - 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2018**

The CADRA committee wishes to express serious concerns about the introduction of the revised Caversham bus services - particularly the 22 route - introduced a month ago on 19 February 2018. While recognising some initial issues with roadworks and poor weather, we are disturbed that these issues were added to by:

- \* numerous vehicle breakdowns
- \* inadequate staff training
- \* inconsistent and inaccurate information on the tracker, text service and bus stop displays.
- \* cancelled services with no replacements
- \* buses not running to timetable

The service has been unpredictable and thus unreliable for people to reach school, work, the station and the hospital. Buses are regularly full, early on the route and thus large parts of Caversham Heights have no service. We are aware of numerous concerns about the vehicles used, where a greater number of people are forced to stand, those with disabilities or young children experience major problems and there is no longer information about the next stop.

We recognise the financial pressures and would like to help promote use of the service. However, with the catalogue of problems and the consequent loss of public confidence, we feel unable to do so at present. We would urge a significant review. It is in nobody's interest for people to feel obliged to resort to driving across Reading with the impact on congestion and on air quality. And the toll on individuals who would like to, or are obliged to, use the service is substantial. It is so disappointing that an award winning bus company should fail so badly with the 22 service.

We look forward to working with you.