

WELCOME TO GO CAT!

A newsletter for people on the go – bringing news, views and issues about transport in the Calne area.



From the Chairman

Events have moved rapidly since our last Newsletter. In preparation for the new Unitary Council, the Pilot Area Board for Area 5 (Calne) has met several times. One of the issues discussed was the problems of traffic congestion along Curzon Street. However, there is no funding available from Wiltshire County Council for any trials or consultations until after the new Council is established. Calne Town Council now has the time to put together a strategic transport and access plan for the town as a whole. A comprehensive long term policy is what CAT has always advocated and we urge the Town Council to pursue this aim.

Improvements to cycle and pedestrian routes in the town, and leading out of the town, need to be debated, and priorities agreed. **How will people safely access the new Sports Centre north of the bypass?** Will everyone from the south and west of the town drive to the site? Would that be Green Transport? A Community Hall will be built beside the Sports Hall. How will the access by foot and cycle be made attractive, and safe, to the old and very young? Daytime and evening: **Has this been debated in the town?**

Economic times are hard and getting harder. It is now that plans should be made in preparation for the good times when they return. All Calne residents should be involved in addressing the key issues when it comes to transport solutions.

CAT intends putting on a Transport Forum in April.

We hope this will start the debate.

BREAKING NEWS:— From reading a recent press release issued by the Passenger Transport Unit at Wiltshire County Council **it appears that the Calne Town Taxi Bus will cease at the end of March.**

The town bus service will continue. "Sadly, we have learned that the National Express service running through Calne will end **due to lack of support**. CAT is not surprised since the "use it or lose it" adage could not be more clear. To make something like this work it requires an effort from both sides. We would very much like to hear why 'You the User,' think that support may have been insufficient. Please let us have your comments. Did you hear any advance warning? {Editor asks} Cannot some way be devised so that operators can afford to run services profitably away from peak-time? Thus, allowing the public an extended time to develop a habit of potential long-term benefit for all.

Concessionary Bus Passes – Do they have a Future?

If you are aged 60+ then you are entitled to apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass.

This useful facility allows you to travel, for free, on a Public Transport bus, on Scheduled routes. The service may well be provided by a Private Company.

At the December meeting of the Calne Area Transport Group {CAT. for short} we had presentations from WCC Passenger Transport Unit together with a Private provider of Bus Route services. From them we heard how the Concessionary Bus Pass operation has been set up by Government. **You may not be happy to learn about practical operating details.** This is how it goes:—

The procedure is: you present your Bus Pass and your journey detail is recorded by the driver; this is so that the Operating Company can be reimbursed from the County Council. **Are you ready for the joke?** The rate of Fare reimbursement paid by CC to the operator is well below the rate paid by full-fare paying customers. Wicked CC do I hear you say? Not a bit of it. Fault lies with the Government grant system which is lumped together with other council funding. The grant is fixed, based on the estimated difference between 'normal

ridership' and 'new pass holder passengers'. But usage is not fixed, thus estimates can leave operators out of pocket. The operator gave this example of one single fare and 42 concessionary passengers on route 43: one full fare @ £3.25 and council reimbursement @ 84p amounted to a loss of over £100. **And that is not all!** In a very short time the imposition of an EU engine standard, relating to their vehicles, is set to cost the operator around £1,000,000. **And:—**

Shortly, all drivers will need to have completed a 37hr. non-practical but expensive course saying that they are competent to drive such a vehicle.

Do you begin to wonder whether there is a future for bus services that can provide much appreciated free transport for the 60+ age group?

What can you do about it?

How about a friendly protest to your MP, and perhaps, also to your local newspaper?

Alan Gray

What does CAT do? Calne Area Transport promotes transport interests for the Calne community area. Sponsors and supporters have included: members of Calne Community Area Partnership, Calne Town Council, Community Aggregates Fund, Countryside Agency, First Great Western, Friends of the Earth Fenella Hibbs Countryside Fund, Government Office for the South West, National Express, North Wiltshire District Council, South West Regional Development Agency, Wiltshire County Council.

Contributions to the NL are welcome! — E-mail to info@gocalne.org.uk — Visit our website www.gocalne.co.uk

By post, please mark material "For Publication" and send to The Editor, CAT c/o Vailima, The Quarry, Calne SN11 0BX

Mr B W Nicholson, of Calne, wrote concerning the proposed traffic re-routing, in Calne Centre, saying:—

I do support your suggestion for all traffic to enter the Pippin and exit at Peddlers bike shop.
 May I suggest a "Keep Left" sign be put at Peddlers so we have all traffic going one way on the A4'.
 I feel the Post Office should be informed of the change as traffic will now be leaving the A4 down Curzon towards Wood Street making Curzon Street one way.
Ed: This is an important topic with many potential complications. Thus it is equally important that the people of Calne have a voice on this matter.
Please let us hear your ideas.

Have your say! Hustings to give new Wiltshire's candidates their chance too. **Saturday 25 April at Marden House.** Details to be confirmed. **Book this date in your diary.** Please contact the Editor, see note at the bottom of the previous page, so that we may estimate likely attendance.

Introducing your new Editor — Alan Gray

Photo:— Me, on Holiday.
 I call it 'Mirror, Mirror'.
 Photo opportunity spotted and executed, by my wife.
'Just do as you are told.'
 She said.



Young people at CAYPIG, Calne, air their views to Stagecoach — Sally Isley reports

Young people from Calne have raised the following issues about transport, at their CAYPIG (Calne Area Young People's Issues Group) meetings over the past 6 months. The members of CAYPIG come from all over Calne and surrounding villages, so there are lots of different points of view and varied representation.
 The first issue concerned bus fares that under 16's were being charged when using number 55, Stage Coach bus routes from Calne to Chippenham and Calne to Swindon, including accessing Lyneham and Wootton Bassett. Young people have been asked to prove that they are under 16 and if they can't then they are being asked to pay adult fares if they want to travel. This has caused a lot of arguments on buses and excluded some young people from travelling. The director of Stage Coach, Swindon came to CAYPIG in November 2008 and said that this should not be happening but that it is difficult for some drivers to find out how old some young people are. He suggested that a young person's citizen card be produced and this is now being looked into through CAYPIG adult members

and will be discussed at the March 2009 meeting. Young people feel that the fares are overpriced and the director told them that pricing structures come from advice through Wiltshire County Council Passenger Services Team, The director has been invited to CAYPIG but has been unable to attend to date. Young people thought that a meeting between them and local transport providers would be good as it would be exclusive to transport issues and give more time. It was suggested that CAT could help arrange this meeting?
 Other transport issues raised were the lack of services in the evenings and the routes that they run. Young people want to be able to get around in the evening but can't because of the lack of late services and unsuitable bus routes. **They want to be able to access Calne Leisure Centre, Calne Youth Development Centre, Calne Town Council Drop-in and the library, as well as each others houses but many are not allowed to walk about late at night so need a bus service on these routes.** The suggestion was that the transport meeting would enable discussions about this too.

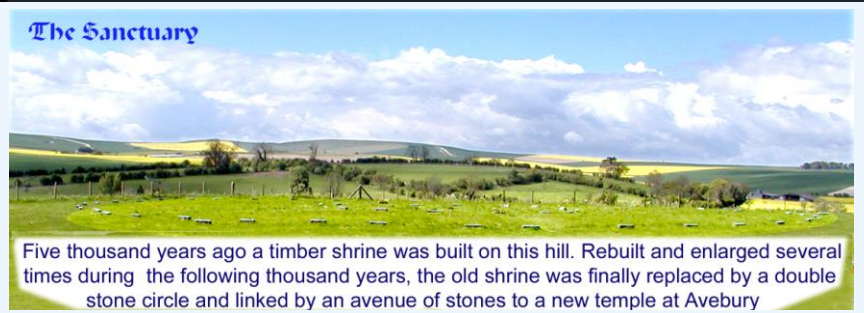
Is Wiltshire undermining a World Heritage Area?

Jugglers Lane proceeds from Cherhill towards Yatesbury. A part of the Sustrans Route 4 National Cycle route. Rain damage has ensured that: Jugglers Lane is now impassable!



Which Image does Wiltshire Want Visitors to Remember?

Jugglers Lane leads to a World Heritage Area
 Avebury Windmill Hill Kennet Long Barrow
 Silbury Hill The Sanctuary Numerous Tumuli
 Occasional, individual Standing Stones The Stone Avenue
The historic, ancient, Ridgeway Right-of-Way Over the magnificent Downs. Plus Hill Fort, Monument & White Horse



Five thousand years ago a timber shrine was built on this hill. Rebuilt and enlarged several times during the following thousand years, the old shrine was finally replaced by a double stone circle and linked by an avenue of stones to a new temple at Avebury

Alan Gray