

## Loughborough Pedestrianisation Fact Sheet

---

### Current

- **Over 60,000 a week travel to Loughborough by bus**  
Buses bring more than 60,000 people a week into Loughborough town centre stops. This is more than any other form of transport and equates to 3.1 million journeys every year.
- **Bus users spend £41 per trip in town**  
Greener journeys study<sup>1</sup> into bus use showed that outside of London an average of £41 was spend by bus users on each journey to a city centre. Based on current customer numbers this equates to Loughborough bus users contributing £2.5million to the local economy every week (£128 million in a year)
- **53% of customers use concessionary passes and could go elsewhere**  
53% of customers using local town services in Loughborough are concessionary pass holders. These customers are the most vulnerable being either over 60 years old, infirm or disabled. If they have further to walk this directly impacts on the attractiveness of their journey and the likelihood of them doing it as frequently or finding an alternative destination.
- **182,000 cross town journeys put at risk**  
More than 20% of customers using local town services make their journeys across the town centre. If Option C is chosen the routes will be severed and customers will have to change buses and cross the town on foot to continue their journeys. The vast majority of these trips are made to either;
  - School
  - College
  - Hospital
  - WorkTo mitigate this risk it would cost Kinchbus £450,000 every year (3 additional vehicles) based on current vehicle costs.
- **Increased congestion could strangle hold the town**  
More than 30% of bus customers could make their journey by car (according to DfT figures supported by local research) – they choose not to because the bus is more convenient, removes hassle, is cheaper or a collection of these reasons. Should any of these advantages be removed and buses forced to circumvent the relief road with all other traffic more and more people will get back in their cars. In turn this increases congestion around the town, increases pollution, makes Loughborough harder to get to and less attractive as a destination

### Consultation

- **A unrepresentative and therefore floored response**  
Despite the consultation being wide reaching and extremely accessible less than 2.5% of Loughborough's population responded (just 1,300). This infers that most are content with current arrangements
- **Tiny difference in opinion**  
Only 217 votes separated people in favour of buses to those against. Such vital decisions must not be influenced by such a marginal split in opinion but based on fact.

---

<sup>1</sup> JOHNSON, D., MACKIE, P., SHIRES, J. (Dec 2013) *A survey of expenditure of visitors to city and town centres*. Greener Journeys [University of Leeds]

- **Huge cost to maintain current service levels**  
To account of the addition time needed to re-route the buses maintaining current service levels would not be possible without significant cost. For Kinchbus this would mean five additional vehicles at a cost of around £¼million per year. It would be impossible to absorb this cost commercially and therefore it is likely the council would need to intervene and financially support services.
- **Bus routes will change**  
Bus timetables cannot sustain a 7 to 8 minute increase in journey time. This will inevitably lead to one or more of the following consequences;
  - Frequencies reduced
  - Fares increased
  - Greater need for economic support from local council
  - Cross town links severed
  - Cut out other sections of route
 All of these are unattractive to customers and result in less people visiting Loughborough town centre.
- **Irreversible damage**  
Should Option C be chosen - customers will find alternative means and destinations. When footfall reaches unacceptable levels across the town centre customer travel habits will have already changed and attempting to revert them back would be extremely challenging.

## Option A

- **Over 95% of traffic gone**  
Should Option A be chosen 95% of traffic would be removed from Loughborough's High Street making a vast and dramatic difference to what is currently seen.
- **Supported by major contributors to Loughborough's economy and welfare**  
Huge local employers, educational centres and essential services are supportive of buses moving through the town centre.  
Employers, such as East Midlands Airport, who contribute huge amounts to Loughborough's economy every year by providing jobs, are strong supporters of the benefits buses bring to their staff.  
Educational centres, such as Loughborough University, Charnwood College and Loughborough RNIB college are in favour of bus links being maintained to allow students to continue to access their facilities.  
Essential services, such as Loughborough Hospital, appreciate the necessity for vital links to remain now established.
- **Safety**  
Bus users would be able to catch their bus from the well lit safe environment the town centre offers rather than walk to the poorly lit town outskirts where traffic is moving much higher speed. This is especially dangerous at times of darkness.
- **Modal shift and reduced congestion**  
Buses will gain a convenience advantage over cars when they have greater penetration of the town centre. DfT (department for transport) studies show this would encourage more people to make journeys by bus and lead to fewer cars on the road. Ease of access improves, congestion is reduced and pollution in the town decreases. This is a sustainable solution opposed to option C where cars are encouraged onto an already congested highways network.
- **We continue to support events in the town centre**

All bus companies in the town have supported and continue to support events in the town centre. We have previously worked in partnership to help promote town centre

## Option C

- **Lack of evidence**

No evidence has been provided to show that removing buses from the town centre will increase footfall
- **Thousands of loyal shoppers at risk in search of growth**

We are at risk of alienating a huge number of loyal and regular customers in search of new users. We should build on our current customer base rather than look to attract new customers at their expense.
- **Fact – inconveniencing bus users reduces footfall in the town**

During the recent roadworks in Loughborough (while the inner relief road was built) patronage on town services reduced by -6.5%, as a result there were less people in the town centre. Out of town services saw patronage increase by +1.7% (despite the Loughborough journeys being depressed journeys to Derby, Leicester and Nottingham increased significantly resulting in a net increase)
- **More evidence – disruption stops people travelling**

When previously inconvenienced patronage fell by 12% over an 8 week period compared to the 4 weeks before and after the disruption.

  - This was when Kinchbus 2 was diverted and customers had to transfer onto a dedicated shuttle bus to continue their journey (this is more convenient than the changes that will be made as a result of Option C)

If the same reduction should happen 375,000 journeys a year are at risk at a possible cost to the economy of £15.4million

When Arriva asked customers at stops their opinion, should bus services be re-routed, on average;

  - more than 30% of customers said they “may use the service less”
  - 69% said the alternative proposed stops would not be convenient
- **National statistics supports local examples**

Greener Journey’s study<sup>1</sup> showed that reducing bus services in an area resulted in;

  - 16% of people not making the journey
  - 24% of people finding an alternative location
  - 4% of people using the internet or telephone as alternative
  - 45% changing mode of transport (likely to be back into a car)

This study reflects the outcome of option C.
- **Reduced accessibility**

If buses are not allowed through the town centre bus users will be inconvenienced

  - Either by longer journey times
  - Having to walk further to their destination
  - Having to change buses when previously had through journeys
- **More dangerous and longer walk across a busy relief road**

Should Option C be chosen pedestrians and shoppers would be dropped off on the wrong side of the inner relief road, have to cross it, then make their way into the town centre. Loughborough RNIB has expressed their view that they would prefer to alight in the town centre rather than navigate their way to the out of town relief road.
- **If Loughborough is to be successful**

Clear aims must be defined. If the aim is to improve the attractiveness of Loughborough as a destination then it is essential that accessibility is held with the upmost importance. Making the town difficult to access will deter shoppers from coming.
- **Huge cost to maintain current service levels**

---

<sup>1</sup> JOHNSON, D., MACKIE, P., SHIRES, J. (Dec 2013) *A survey of expenditure of visitors to city and town centres*. Greener Journeys [University of Leeds]

events in and out of Loughborough. It beggars belief that the town should be closed all year for the small number of events that are likely to take place.

- **No risk**

Option A maintains Loughborough's current bus patronage and footfall levels across the town allowing us to build on a solid foundation and reducing almost all risk of declining footfall.

- **A tale of two towns**

There are two examples of what can be achieved with and without buses in town centres within 25 miles of Loughborough.

**West Bridgford** – Bus only town centre

A bustling town centre filled with shoppers day and night. West Bridgford attracts big name stores and independent shops alike as well as weekly farmers markets and occasional town centre events. Buses run through the town centre in both directions and allow people to get on and off in the heart of the activity. No other vehicles are allowed access. The town has grown from strength to strength and almost all retail units are full.

**Ilkeston** – Buses only allowed around the perimeter

Less than 10 years ago buses were removed from the town centre and forced to only serve the town's perimeter. Now, day and night the town centre is dead. The number of vacant retail units is increasing and major brands and retailers continue to move away. Every morning bus services carry thousands from the town to the neighbouring city of Derby and this flow is reversed in the afternoon/evenings.