

Kent Bus Service Changes 2022

(version 1. 07/07/2022)



This note provides details of known and anticipated changes and cancellations to Bus Services in Kent. It relates to services that are provided on a commercial basis by bus operators and also some that are funded by Kent County Council. A summary of all significant changes is shown as the end of this note.

Background

Bus use in Kent, as with rest of the UK has only partially recovered since the pandemic and it is currently estimated that local use of buses stands at around 80% of pre-pandemic levels, with the use in the off-peak being much less than this.

Throughout the pandemic and to date, many services are only being sustained because of the financial support being provided by Government and from KCC, through protected levels of reimbursement on the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme and previously the Kent Travel Saver.

Current Government support in the form of a Local Transport Fund (LTF), is paid to Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and to operators directly. This funding ceases at the end of September and Government have made clear that there is to be no extension or replacement of this financial support. Therefore, all LTAs have been tasked by the DfT, with working with operators, to re-base the bus network to a sustainable level, post funding, taking account of revised patterns of use and the other cost / operational factors.

Bus operators operate in a de-regulated commercialised environment and LTAs are not therefore able to insist that any operator provides any service or service level. The process of the network review has therefore been to survey operators to understand what changes that may need to make from October, from when they will need to operate without any special support and with reduced levels of income and increased costs

of operation. To date around 20 services have already been withdrawn or cancelled and further 40 are expected to be withdrawn from between now and October

KCC position

The financial support of public bus services is a discretionary activity and for this reason, as pressure on Local Government finances have increased, a number of authorities have reduced or stopped funding buses completely. KCC have continued to fund bus services and currently spend around £6m per year on this activity. However, as the costs of providing statutory services has increased, in order to set a balanced budget, the Council has needed to save money in other areas and from the 2022/23 financial year, the budget for the support of public bus services is being reduced by £2.2m.

This is demanding that KCC remove the subsidy which supports the operation of around 40 services which are likely to stop operating in October. With the Council unable to support all of its existing bus service contracts, this also means that we cannot intervene to save those being stopped by operators as the number of services involved would cost millions to sustain.

In the absence of being able to directly protect existing services, Public Transport officers will continue to work with all operators to explore the potential for some to take on routes being cancelled by other providers but this is unlikely to provide cover for the many of cancellations given the prevailing commercial conditions.

KCC will also work with communities, parents and schools to support them if there is an appetite to fund and coordinate local solutions and the department is making available Community Transport funding for things like vehicles for this purpose.

Children who have a legal entitlement to free transport to school will be provided with alternative transport solutions but for other passengers it is likely that no alternative transport will be available.

Summary of known bus service changes

April 2022

Service No.	Operator	Route	Summary of service and implications
4	Arriva	Downswood to Maidstone	Last weekday late afternoon return journey withdrawn.
11	Arriva	Bearsted to Maidstone	Withdrawal of single return journey between Bearsted village and Maidstone.
124	Stagecoach	Egerton to Hythe Road Schools	Service withdrawal.
155	Arriva	Maidstone to Chatham	Withdrawal of Kent section of the route leaving no Monday to Saturday daytime service for Wouldham, Burham, Eccles and Aylesford. Maidstone Schools journeys to be provided by alternative operator.
414	Arriva	Darenth to Dartford	Withdrawal of evening services and early morning Saturday service.
423	Arriva	New Ash Green to Dartford	Major reduction in weekday journeys, meaning last journey from New Ash Green is 13:50 and last return from Dartford is at 15:59. **Service withdrawn entirely from October**

455	Arriva	Singlewell to Gravesend	Complete withdrawal of Monday to Saturday service.
477	Arriva	Orpington to Bluewater	Service to terminate in Dartford and no longer serve Darenth Hospital nor Bluewater. Sunday service between Swanley and Bluewater withdrawn completely. **Service withdrawn entirely from October**
517	Stagecoach	Hythe Road Schools – Knole Lane	Withdraw the 15:15 from Hythe Road due to low usage. The 15:45 departure remains unchanged.
666	Stagecoach	Ashford to Faversham	Sunday and Bank Holiday journeys withdrawn. This is the commercial part of the 666 Monday to Saturday is tendered and will remain.
925	Stagecoach	Stanhope – St Anselms School	Service withdrawn.
15S	Stagecoach	Wye to Towers School	Service withdrawn.
2A	Stagecoach	Tenterden - Ashford	Peak school journeys to and from Homewood School will be covered with one bus, instead of two.

6A	Arriva	Hale Street / East Peckham - Tunbridge Wells	Service withdrawn.
71A	Arriva	New Hythe to Maidstone	Service withdrawn.
B Line	Stagecoach	Kennington – Town Centre - Bridgefield	Frequency reduction on Mondays to Saturdays from 15 to every 20 minutes.
G Line	Stagecoach	Godinton Park – Town Centre - Orbital Park	Service reduces to hourly but peak service maintained.
Knights Park Shuttle	Compaid	Knights Park to Tunbridge Wells	Service withdrawn.
360 361	Chalkwell	Leysdown to Sheerness (Monday to Sunday) Sheerness to Rushenden (Monday to Sunday)	The 360 and 361 services will have a revised timetable Monday to Friday.
367	Chalkwell	Sheerness to Warden Point (Monday to Saturday)	The 367 service will be slimmed down to operate one return journey between school times only (0930-1400 approximately). Saturday service withdrawn.

June 2022

Service No.	Operator	Route	Summary of service and implications
X4	Stagecoach	Canterbury to Maidstone (Monday to Saturday)	Service withdrawn
7	Stagecoach	Canterbury to Herne Bay (Monday to Saturday)	Withdrawn except for off peak & Saturday service between Herne Bay Station Station-Hillborough-Altira Park.
27	Stagecoach	City Centre to Rough Common (Monday to Saturday)	Service withdrawn
901	Stagecoach	Herne Bay to Canterbury (Schooldays)	Withdrawn and replaced by an extension of 917
915	Stagecoach	Yorkletts to Canterbury (Schooldays)	Afternoon journey withdrawn.
920	Stagecoach	Canterbury High School to Broad Oak (Schooldays)	Service withdrawn

922	Stagecoach	Whitstable to Spires Academy (Schooldays)	Service withdrawn – replaced by alternative 922 service operated by Regents' Coaches.
953	Stagecoach	Canterbury to Canterbury Academy Feeder (Schooldays)	0820 withdrawn (Capacity on other shuttles)
954	Stagecoach	Canterbury to Archbishops School Feeder (Schooldays)	0810 withdrawn (Capacity on other shuttles)
955	Stagecoach	Canterbury – St Anselms and Simon Langton Girls Schools Feeder (Schooldays)	955 0828 withdrawn (Capacity on other shuttles)
956	Stagecoach	Spring Lane to Spires Academy	Reduced to one bus.
991	Stagecoach	Swingfield Minnis to Dover Christchurch Academy (Schooldays)	991 withdrawn, 992 diverted to serve Hawkinge

UNI 1	Stagecoach	Canterbury to University of Kent (Monday to Sunday)	Uni 1 The extra journeys that start variously at either Canterbury East/Westgate Towers are withdrawn (0837,0843,0929) and in the opposite direction from campus (1305 & 1705). Uni 2 1515 ex-Canterbury withdrawn. Evening service extended to Hales Place with one per hour to run all year in replacement of 22A evening service. Main daytime Saturday service withdrawn as this largely duplicates Uni1 and only runs as far as Darwin.
UNI 2		Canterbury to University of Kent to Hales Place (Monday to Sunday)	
S11	Go-Coach	Wilmington to Sevenoaks (School days only)	Service withdrawn
403	Autocar	Otford to Tonbridge (School days only)	Service withdrawn
Canterbury Park & Ride	Stagecoach	Sturry Road - Canterbury	Service Withdrawn

July 2022

Service No.	Operator	Route	Summary of service and implications
230	Autocar	Tunbridge Wells to Tonbridge	Service withdrawn
5A	Hams Travel	Staplehurst to Cranbrook	Service withdrawn
295	Hams Travel	Hawkhurst – Sandhurst – Benenden – Homewood School (SDO)	Service withdrawn
208A	Autocar	Tonbridge – Pembury (Mon-Fri)	Service withdrawn.
TW1	Go Coach	Kemsing – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
TW3	Go Coach	Shoreham – Bennett Memorial School	Service Withdrawn

TW4	Go Coach	Westerham – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
TW6	Go Coach	Knockholt – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
TW7	Go Coach	Sevenoaks – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
TW8	Go Coach	Edenbridge – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
S1	Go Coach	Westerham – Knole Academy	Service Withdrawn
S33	Go Coach	Chelsfield - Knole Academy	Service Withdrawn
S41	Go Coach	Edenbridge – Sevenoaks Schools	Service Withdrawn

S8	Go Coach	Sevenoaks Bus Station – Sevenoaks Schools	Service Withdrawn
T13	Go Coach	Wrotham Heath – Tunbridge Wells Schools	Service Withdrawn
T3	Go Coach	Knockholt – Tonbridge Schools	Service Withdrawn
001	Farleigh	Peter’s Village - Malling School	Service Withdrawn

Autumn 2022 (Expected Commercial Bus Changes)

Service No.	Operator	Route	Summary of service and implications
477	Arriva	Dartford – Swanley - Orpington	Service Withdrawn
423/433	Arriva	Dartford – Nnew Ash Green	Service Withdrawn

224	Autocar	Tonbridge – St Margaret Clitherow School	Service Withdrawn
235	Autocar	Tonbridge – Tunbridge Wells	Service Withdrawn
287	Autocar	Tunbridge Wells – Mascalls School	Service Withdrawn
558	Nu-Venture	Addington -Maidstone Schools	Service Withdrawn
11	Stagecoach	Canterbury - Westwood	Service Withdrawn
33	Stagecoach	Margate - Ramsgate	Service Withdrawn
37	Stagecoach	Margate - Broadstairs	Service Withdrawn

83	Stagecoach	Deal Town Service	Service Withdrawn
88	Stagecoach	Sandwich - Dover	Service Withdrawn
90	Stagecoach	Dover - Whitfield	Service Withdrawn
96	Stagecoach	Dover - Chillended	Service Withdrawn
103	Stagecoach	Folkestone - Lydd	Service Withdrawn
104	Stagecoach	Cheriton - Lydd	Service Withdrawn
293	Stagecoach	Lydd – Homewood School	Service Withdrawn

948	Stagecoach	Thanet Schools Service	Service Withdrawn
949	Stagecoach	Thanet Schools Service	Service Withdrawn
80B	Stagecoach	Tower Hamlets - Kingsdown	Service Withdrawn
81A	Stagecoach	Deal – Sandwich Schools	Service Withdrawn
81B	Stagecoach	Sandwich – Deal Whitfield (PM)	Service Withdrawn
82A	Stagecoach	Deal – Kingsdown (Schools)	Service Withdrawn
88A	Stagecoach	Sandwich - Dover	Service Withdrawn

92/92A	Stagecoach	Dover - Elvington	Service Withdrawn
96A	Stagecoach	Aylesham - Dover	Service Withdrawn

Autumn 2022 (Changes linked to KCC Bus Subsidy Reduction)

Service No.	Operator	Route	Summary of contract / service and impact of withdrawing subsidy	Estimated saving
5	Arriva	Maidstone to Sandhurst	Withdrawal of Monday to Saturday evening service between Maidstone and Sandhurst. The 18:44 from Sandhurst and all later journeys would be cancelled. Day time services are not covered by this contract.	£59,601
6	Arriva	East Peckham to Tunbridge Wells	This contract provides for the diversion of the Sunday 6 service through Pembury, the remainder of the service operates on a commercial basis.	£11,700
6/645	Stagecoach	Herne and Broomfield in to Hillborough School	The 08:19 journey from Herne to Hillborough School via Broomfield and the return journey in the afternoon would be withdrawn.	£27,659
8	Chalkwell	Sittingbourne to Kenilworth Court / Conyer	Withdrawal of six off peak journeys, Monday to Friday operating between Sittingbourne, Borden, Kenilworth	£313,698

			Court, Bapchild and Teynham plus the 15:20 from Sittingbourne Community College to Teynham.	
9	Chalkwell	Sittingbourne Town service	Withdrawal of the whole service, which operates on Mondays to Saturdays for Kenilworth Court, Bell Road and Northwood Avenue.	Included above
343/344/345	Chalkwell	Newnham, Doddington, Lynsted, Teynham, Bapchild and Conyer to Sittingbourne	Withdrawal of all three services in their entirety. The service operates Monday to Saturday providing the only public transport for rural parts of Sittingbourne including journeys for schoolchildren.	Included above
13	Nu-Venture	Hollingbourne to Maidstone	Withdrawal of the current Saturday service operating between Hollingbourne and Park Wood (for connections to Maidstone) via Leeds and Langley. Monday to Friday service continues unchanged.	£25,391
17	Stagecoach	Folkestone to Canterbury	Withdrawal of four journeys operating Monday to Saturday evening between Folkestone and Canterbury starting with the 19:40 from Folkestone. Daytime services not covered by this contract.	£46,613
24	Autocar	Sandhurst to Maidstone	Withdrawal of Tuesday only 09:30 journey from Sandhurst to Maidstone and the return journey at 13:20 from Maidstone.	£15,469
58	Nu-Venture	Addington, Ryarsh, Trottiscliffe, Birling to Maidstone (Mondays to Saturdays)	Withdrawal of the whole Monday to Saturday service which provides the only public transport for villages to the west of West Malling, including journeys for schoolchildren.	£84,915

59	Nu-Venture	Grafty Green, Ulcombe, Kingswood, Chart Sutton to Maidstone	Withdrawal of the whole service which operates Monday to Saturday between Grafty Green and Park Wood (for connections to Maidstone). Service 89 School journeys from the same area are not covered by this contract.	£126,000
61/61A	Stagecoach	Aycliffe, Dover Town Centre, River to Whitfield	Withdrawal of three Monday to Saturday evening journeys starting with the 18:18 from Whitfield. Daytime service not included as part of this contract.	£33,477
70	Nu-Venture	Borough Green, Platt, Offham to Larkfield	Withdrawal of all journeys on service 70 which provides eight off peak journeys for Borough Green, Platt and Offham.	£61,851
502	Nu-Venture	West Malling to Wrotham School	Withdrawal of the 502 service from West Malling to Wrotham School.	Included above
88	Nu-Venture	Maidstone to Kings Hill	Withdrawal of the commuter service operating Monday to Friday from Maidstone to Kings Hill via Barming and Wateringbury providing one journey in the morning and two journeys in the afternoon.	£30,444
90/61/61A	Stagecoach	Aycliffe, Dover Town Centre, River to Whitfield	Withdrawal of Sunday evening service including the 18:28 journey from Aycliffe and all later journeys. The rest of this service before this time and other days of the week is not covered by this contract.	£10,296
111	Stagecoach	Ashford to Folkestone	Withdrawal of Thursday only service also operating via Mersham, Aldington, Lympne, West Hythe and Burmarsh.	£13,007

123	Stagecoach	Biddenden to Ashford	Withdrawal of the whole service operating Monday to Friday to Ashford from Smarden, Pluckley, Egerton and Hothfield, including journeys to and from Ashford schools.	£85,627
222	Autocar	Wrotham, Ightham, Borough Green, Shipbourne to Tonbridge	Withdrawal of four journeys Monday to Friday and all Saturday journeys. Other Monday to Friday journeys, including those at school times will continue.	£40,500
255	Autocar	Benenden to Tunbridge Wells	Withdrawal of three day a week (Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) service between Benenden and Tunbridge Wells via Hawkhurst, Flimwell and Lamberhurst.	£23,034
266	Autocar	Kilndown to Maidstone	Withdrawal of Tuesday only service between Kilndown and Maidstone via Horsemonden, Claygate, Laddingford and Nettlestead.	£11,115
277	Arriva	Henwood Green to Tunbridge Wells	Withdrawal of one early morning journey operating Monday to Friday leaving Stone Court Lane at 06:37.	£6,281
292/299	Autocar	Tenterden to Sandhurst and Tonbridge to Tenterden	Withdrawal of the 292 Tenterden to Sandhurst and 299 Tonbridge to Tenterden services which provide one return journey each operating on Fridays only.	£14,498
293	Autocar	Tunbridge Wells to Rye	Withdrawal of Thursday only bus service to Rye operating via; Lamberhurst, Kilndown, Flimwell, Hawkhurst, Benenden, Rolvenden and Appledore.	£15,498
296	Autocar	Paddock Wood to Tunbridge Wells	Withdrawal of the 296 service which operates on Monday, Thursday and Saturday between Paddock	£25,720

			Wood and Tunbridge Wells via Horsmonden, Brenchley and Kippings Cross.	
332	Chalkwell	Stockbury, Yelsted to Sittingbourne schools	Withdrawal of school day only service to Sittingbourne schools.	£43,055
360	Chalkwell	Leysdown to Sheerness and Queenborough	Withdrawal of the whole Sunday service operating between Leysdown and Sheerness. The Monday to Saturday service is not covered by this contract.	£31,779
433	Arriva	Bluewater, Longfield, Hartley to New Ash Green	Withdrawal of the whole Sunday service. The Monday to Saturday service is not covered by this contract.	£34,005
489	Arriva	New Ash Green, Southfleet, Longfield, Gravesend	Withdrawal of the whole Sunday service. The Monday to Saturday service is not covered by this contract.	Included above
474/5	Go Coach	Bluewater to Longfield	Withdrawal of the whole service which runs Monday to Saturday, operating a circular service between Bluewater and Longfield via Bean, Betsham, Southfleet and New Barn.	£114,847
541/542/544	Regent's Coaches	Dover, Deal, Sandwich to Canterbury	Withdrawal of all 541, 542 and 544 journeys which operate on different days from Monday to Saturday for these rural parts of Dover. This includes the cancellation of the 541 journey to Adisham Primary School.	£81,270
662	Chalkwell	Teynham to Faversham schools	Withdrawal of school day only service.	£62,069

664	Chalkwell	Conyer to Lynstead Primary School	Withdrawal of school day only service.	Included above
666	Chalkwell	Faversham to Sheldwich School	Withdrawal of school day only service.	Included above
634	Regents Coaches	Studd Hill to Beltinge	Withdrawal of shopper service which operates between Studd Hill and Beltinge on a Thursday only.	£14,281
954	Regents Coaches	Birchington to Sandwich schools	Withdrawal of school day only service.	£47,500
Detling Shopper	Compaid	Detling to Maidstone	Withdrawal of Monday to Friday shopper bus from Detling Village to Maidstone.	£37,469
E1	Go Coach	Edenbridge Town Service	Withdrawal of the whole Monday to Friday circular service around Edenbridge.	£141,363
HC3	Clarks Minibuses	Dunton Green to Hugh Christie	Withdrawal of school day only service.	£43,700
HS7/HS8	Chalkwell	Charing to Homewood School	Withdrawal of school services from Charing, Pluckley, Smarden and Biddenden into Homewood School.	£121,450
Sandwich Connect	Britannia	Staple, Sandwich, Northbourne	Withdrawal of the Sandwich Connect service which operates Monday to Friday to Sandwich from Northbourne, Staple and Ash.	£51,657

Tenterden Hopper Service	Tenterden Social Hub	Tenterden Village service	Withdrawal of the Tenterden Hopper Service which operates Monday to Friday and on four different routes to various villages just outside of Tenterden.	£50,934
TW9	Go Coach	Langton Green to Tunbridge Wells	Withdrawal of school day only service.	£38,170
X1/X2	Arriva	Kings Hill to Maidstone	Withdrawal of the whole Monday to Friday service linking Kings Hill with Maidstone and West Malling Station including an express link for students attending Maidstone schools.	£207,721