



Consultation on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Bus Network Proposals

To: consultations@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

From: Great Wilbraham Parish Council and Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom Parish Council

Date: 28 July 2026

Thank you for this opportunity to feed back on the CPCA's bus network proposals. As the consultation form is suitable only for individuals we are responding by direct email as two Parish Councils. The response has been shaped by questionnaire responses from 130 individuals and households in Wilbrahams and Six Mile Bottom following a successful engagement exercise run by the Parish Councils in May and June 2026. It is a representative snapshot of residents in these two rural communities, many of whom have used the bus over the last 12 months.

We take this opportunity to comment first on the way the consultation has been undertaken. There seems to have been limited advertising by the CPCA - in particular, we noted:

- no information about the consultation on the buses themselves or at bus stops
- no evidence of direct engagement with key affected institutions such as Sixth Form Colleges, schools and health service facilities such as the Addenbrooke's Biomedical Campus.

We were also disappointed at the absence of consultation with our Parish Councils as democratic bodies able to represent a wide range of divergent opinions within our three villages (in contrast to the AtoB1102 community interest group, with which the CPCA has chosen to liaise, and some of whose meetings we have attended), but welcome the opportunity to meet officers and the Mayor on August 4th.

a) The T4 service through Great and Little Wilbraham

The T4 in its current form is generally supported and our residents' experiences have been positive - 87% rated it good or great. Not all residents are fully supportive of the service and will have expressed this in individual responses, but a clearly significant number have noted it has been transformational for the villages compared with the previous almost non-existent service. It has reduced isolation and provided genuine modal choice (in line with the CPCA's ambitions). It has increased independence, especially for young people,

older people and households with no or only one car. Access to Addenbrooke's Hospital, Hills Rd / Long Rd Colleges, Netherhall School, Bottisham Village College and Newmarket is especially welcomed. Many families rely on the service for school and college travel, while others value avoiding expensive hospital parking.

Key challenges identified:

- Reliability - cancellations of services with long waits if a bus is cancelled
- Punctuality - various reports of poor timekeeping
- Last buses too early (especially travelling from Cambridge towards Wilbrahams and beyond)
- Lack of bus stops in convenient locations a missed opportunity - e.g. Fulbourn High Street (frequently mentioned in our engagement)
- Poor connections, eg to railway stations or Cambridge city centre and often long waits at connecting points such as Addenbrooke's, which especially makes return journeys from the city centre unreliable.
- The inconvenience to residents, particularly in Little Wilbraham, of buses turning in confined spaces and bus services meeting in narrow roads. This will be a matter for better timetabling and for more training of drivers.

Addressing these issues would likely increase uptake and make the service more viable and therefore at a lower cost to the taxpayer.

b) Response to the T4 proposals

In our survey we asked about specific aspects of the proposed new T4 and other services.

- There was significant concern about the proposed cuts to the Little Wilbraham service with local residents considering that this would have only a marginal impact on overall punctuality (adding c.3-4 mins to the journey) whilst discouraging use in the village.
- There was concern about loss of connections to Hills Road, Sixth Form College, a frequent destination for existing users. The college day is structured so that young people come and go throughout the day and after main school hours for extracurricular activities. A change of bus could be a deterrent to users, particularly if the return journey connections were fragile.
- There was a need for options to transfer tickets, and residents expressed frustration that potentially good links, such as at Fulbourn or Addenbrooke's Bus Station, could be used to get people quickly to other destinations but this is very expensive if there is no ticket transfer option (similar to the hopper for T4 / T5). There is also a high risk of missing the bus connection on the return journey due to Cambridge congestion, with then a long wait for the next T4 and no amenities to support those waiting.
- The proposed later bus is welcomed - but this doesn't go far enough in providing a viable evening service, which would make the service more attractive.
- The opportunity seems to have been missed to serve wider destinations that could drive usage - e.g. Cambridge South, Cambridge railway station, Fulbourn Tesco, Cambridge North
- There was little evidence that an onward journey to Trumpington Park and Ride would be useful and overall much concern about the impact this would have on punctuality.

c) Suggestions for specific changes to proposals

- Little Wilbraham residents would like to retain the service which goes down the High Street to Manor Close
- Addition of an evening service to help people who leave work later, or need to return later from City activities
- The Trumpington link should not be added to the T4 service, and the Hills Road section of the route should be retained
- The bus stops in Fulbourn should be reviewed to enable people to use shopping and amenities in the centre of the village and to connect with buses to and from the city. Specifically, there should be a stop in Fulbourn High Street.

d) Further general comments and suggestions

Beyond our response to the specific proposals to the T4 service, we would like to make some more general comments that we believe would increase uptake of the service and be of greater use to our residents.

(i) Enhancing connectivity, particularly to the city and railway stations: whilst we accept that small rural communities will not have the same level of service as those closer to the city, we emphasise that connecting to more frequent urban services is crucial. We include in this genuine connectivity (with appropriate timetabling) between the T4 service and the routes that serve the city and rail stations. It is also a matter of real concern and disappointment that there is still no connectivity between our villages and Cambridge North, the closest rail station: we have campaigned for this for some time, and it is an obvious point of connection for public transport. The same can be said concerning the lack of connectivity to Cambridge South station; and connectivity to Cambridge main station. Our villages have no useful bus connections to any rail station.

This connectivity should be supported and enabled by through-ticketing.

(ii) Consider subsuming school services into T4 to drive usage and increase viability. The introduction of the T4 provides an excellent opportunity for the CPCA to work closely and collaboratively with the County Council's school transport service. There could be work done towards possible removal of the school buses and coaches which serve Bottisham Village College (BVC), and which run on the same route as that covered by the T4. This collaborative approach would save public money, would protect the roads from excessive bus use, would ensure that those going to BVC had a greater choice of when they travelled both at the start and end of the school day and after school, and enable the wider public could also use these services.

(iii) A service for Six Mile Bottom: the various services proposed still do not serve Six Mile Bottom, which is included in one of our parishes. Although situated on the A1304 and on a direct route between Newmarket and some of the main south Cambridge science parks, this is an isolated community in terms of public transport, with only one bus a day serving the village, at hours of the day that do not suit the majority of residents. It must surely be possible to have better connectivity for Six Mile Bottom, working with services from Newmarket or including the nearby villages of West Wratting, Weston Colville and Westley Waterless.

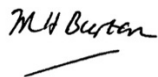
(iv) **The No 18 once-a-week service:** this service is currently run by the AtoB bus company; it is a lifeline for those in our villages who are not able to drive for whatever reason. It provides a much-valued opportunity for shopping in Newmarket and for movement between several villages. It is a significant point of human contact for many.

We are aware that the subsidy for this service is not negligible, but it is a social service as well as a bus service, and we ask that it continues. The T4 does not replace this service either in terms of the route or in terms of the social support it offers, just for once each week.

e) Conclusion

In conclusion, our two Parish Council welcome the new T4 service, which has transformed life for many individuals and families in our village. We are keen to work with the CPCA to ensure that the service is optimised so that more residents use it – and the service continues to be viable.

As part of this response, we carried out a survey of residents and received 130 replies from bus users and non-bus users. There was a high level of satisfaction, but many suggestions about how the service could be improved to ensure higher levels of uptake.



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