



Proudly supporting bus users in
Brighton, Hove and the
surrounding areas

Brightonbuswatch@outlook.com
website: Brightonbuswatch.org

Find us on Facebook



January 2026

Happy New Year!!!

Christmas services:

Christmas services put on a great show again this year, joined by route 28 on Christmas Day, between Brighton and Lewes. Usage numbers were reported as good, with notable loadings once again on the Coaster route 12.

National Express operated direct from Brighton to Victoria via Gatwick Airport. Boxing Day saw the return of route 13 to Beachy Head and the '28' was extended to Eastbourne. Routes 77, 78 and 79 were also running for a Boxing Day stroll.

New Year night services were increased with extra buses laid on for party goers on all routes- N1, N5, N7, N12 & N25. Although a Boxing day service operated on 700 & 701 (and some purely Worthing routes); there was no service on New Year's Day on any Stagecoach South or South East routes.



Photo courtesy of Nash Travelman

Fares:

Following an annual fare review, coupled with adjustments to the Brighton & Hove City Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding, some fares in the city have been increased. This applies to all Brighton & Hove and Compass Travel buses (16, 37/37B, 47 & 52). The £1 and 2.50 BSIP fares increased in November.

In their simplest form, the new changes are:-

The App. fare for a 60min citySAVER is now £3.50, 24hr citySAVER £6.30 (£3.10 child), networkSAVER £7.30 (£3.65 child) and Metrovoyager £9.20. On bus fares, also rise: The citySAVER to £6.80 (£3.30 child) with a networkSAVER now £8.30. **At the same time, child fares have been restricted to young people until the 31st August, after their 18th birthday.** All children over 14 must now show ID to prove their age- with in-app child verification, Child Key Bus ID, UK passport, Sussex 3-iD card or a Drivers licence acceptable!

Student fares have also increased- to £4.60 citySAVER, £5.00 networkSAVER and 7-day citySAVER to £19.60. Though modest and at quite short notice, Buswatch are yet to express their thoughts on the fare increases. Fare changes are also expected for East Sussex in February, and are likely to be greater, as all BSIP funded bus fare subsidy is being removed. Certainly at least until the new funding year kicks in, in April. In all cases, changes to BSIP fares are because the reduced fares proved more successful than expected!

Brighton & Hove buses is 40!

Brighton & Hove buses celebrate their 40th Birthday this year. On 1st January 1986, Southdown bus routes, buses and garages transferred to Brighton & Hove, bringing back the former Brighton Hove & District Omnibus Company set up, dominant in the area from 1969. **It's not clear yet, how Brighton & Hove will mark the occasion. Buswatch awaits with interest.**

Ed Wills:

Managing Director of Brighton & Hove buses & Metrobus- Ed Wills, has now moved to Managing Director at sister company Go South Coast, based at Poole Dorset; as of 1st January 2016. Among the many notable events through his tenure was the creation of Christmas day services, the controversial rebranding of Brighton & Hove buses, the demise of the bendy buses, two new express routes and Metrobus creating the largest fleet of Hydrogen buses in the UK. Ed has been a fantastic supporter of Buswatch. He has been happy to listen, and has helped work through many issues. We wish him well in his new venture.

Rupert Cox:

Rupert Cox has become Interim Managing Director; with over 20 years of experience, and having led Go-ahead East Anglia. Being interim MD, a search is underway for a permanent replacement. Buswatch looks forwards to working with Rupert over the coming months.

Aquarium Roundabout:

Preliminary work has already started on the removal of the Aquarium roundabout, with the junction to be replaced with four way lights, with pedestrian crossings; north of the Brighton Palace Pier. There will be overnight work (from 8pm) for two weeks from Tuesday 6 January, with road closures in place. During this time, buses are expected to be diverted. Consultation events take place at Jubilee Library on Thursday 8 January 4pm to 6pm and Wednesday 21 January 3pm to 4:45pm. While many concerns remain (especially for disabled passengers), the full impact of the scheme has yet to be felt. In the interim, the 4 way traffic signals risk causing significant delays to buses.

Crawley:

A number of buses from the Brighton & Hove fleet, including a coaster and all three single deck buses, have made their way to Crawley on emergency cover, following a fire on a Hydrogen single decker bus in the town, on 2nd December. All passengers were safely evacuated with no injuries. The cause of the fire is still being investigated, but it is believed to be a battery overheating. The entire single deck fleet was removed from service and stored elsewhere. Some of these unusual buses, have been seen on routes 271, 272 & 273. All buses can be tracked, but not all features on the newer buses are working, given the speed they needed to be pressed into service. Go South Coast, Chaseside, Bluestar and others, have also loaned buses.

Bus names: The latest batch of 44 new buses for Brighton & Hove, used on Coaster, Regency, 1X, 3X, 5 group and unallocated routes, have all now received new names. Among the newest names are 'Jim the Fish', Frank Froést-Carr and **Malvina Sanders**. Most other names have carried over from previous, or long departed vehicles. New name plaques are being applied to the front of existing buses with colour and 'screws' to make them look more authentic.

Next stop changes:

'On bus' information screens have been revised on newer buses for Coaster, Regency and express routes. Buses are now showing just one next stop, number and destination. Usefully there is a new 'Bus Stopping' sign at the bottom of the screen, so bus users know the next stop has been requested. Buswatch warmly welcomes this, and hopes that multi-stop and other useful features will return in due course.

Buswatch meeting:

The next Brighton Buswatch meeting takes place on 21st January 2026 at 16.00 – at Brighton Town Hall, Bartholomew Square, Brighton BN1 1JW. Space is normally limited, but interest is gathering, so please e-mail Buswatch or message via Brighton Buswatch Facebook group if you would like to attend.

Buswatch Newsletter is produced and edited by Brighton Area Buswatch. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome.