

## Transport, Energy and Environment - Bus Service Improvement update

### Introduction

There have been a series of meetings that have taken place with the **Bus Strategy Group** which is supported by Hope Valley Climate Action Travelling Light. Two of the CPC Cllrs were invited to attend the **Bus Strategy Group** and as members of the **Better Buses for Castleton Group**.

A proposal to improve connectivity from the village to Hope Station was discussed. This relates to a demand for a linear bus that also integrates with the trains and allows better access to Castleton. Our concern is why is there such poor integration of rail and v bus services in the Hope Valley despite the need to reduce car volumes. We want to know what can be done to address this with support from local communities particularly Castleton.

These proposals were included in a meeting with Derbyshire County Council (DCC) in November that HVCA Travelling Light facilitated. One of the Cllrs met up as a member of the Bus Group and the CPC, with the DCC Head of Public Transport and her colleagues. This was a very positive meeting despite being told that DCC had limited funds in the current economic climate. There is the possibility of additional Bus Service Improvement funds, and the creation of an **East Midlands Mayoral Authority in 2024** may offer the opportunity to take a more strategic view and access to Central Government funding for integrated transport. The need for improved links with Travel South Yorkshire and Greater Manchester were also emphasised. DCC were keen to hear more about ideas for bus service improvement and connectivity.

Some useful information was provided which included **Real Time Information (RTI)** being installed at Bamford Sicklehome week 20 November, and Castleton will follow in the new year. Discussion also took place on the need for RTI for rail and buses, at Sheffield Midland Station and the Sheffield Interchange. There is also the possibility of trialling shopper serves to Buxton/Chapel on a fixed route or using **Demand Responsive Travel (DRT)**. We heard about the data HVCA has generated on customer aspirations via their online platform Commonplace, and community engagement activities such as the recent event **Build Better Buses for Castleton**. DCC has access to bus operator data but nothing on local/visitor requirements.

The community engagement event in the village hall led to an Action Group being formed in Castleton to try and maintain the momentum and lobby for improved public transport.

Additional information is that one of the bus operators where there are increasing number of complaints, has led to an extra customer services person being recruited to deal with this issue. We also heard that the Peak National Park are also interested in Park and Ride as a long term measure. Finally, The proposal to improve bus/rail connectivity will be an agenda item at the December **Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP)** led by DCC. A member of the CPC will attend.