

Note for Kingstanding Ward Committee – from National Express West Midlands

Please accept our apologies that we are unable to attend the meeting on Wednesday 28th October due to other commitments. We have not been advised of particular services that people wish to discuss so this is a rather general note.

Recent changes in the Kingstanding area have included changes to the 33 timetable. At the beginning of September we had extra time and buses into the schedule to try and combat late running caused by traffic issues in the city centre, delays we encounter at Perry Barr and the delays we experience at Hawthorn Road due to the problems with traffic signals there. Looking at the data this has improved timekeeping on the service considerably and we will continue to monitor the service.

We also added extra buses to the 65 schedule earlier this year to combat the congestion that occurred due to the closure of the Aston Road bridge across the Aston Expressway into Lichfield Road. This bridge has been closed for over a year now and the latest advice is that it will remain closed until early 2016. The problems in the area were made worse by the lane restrictions on the Expressway due to the M6 works being undertaken by Highways England.

The other changes we made in September were to the 66, 66A, 115 and 914 services. These changes were made because of the extra time buses needed due to the delays mentioned above. Service 66 had extra time added and now runs much more reliably.

The change to the 66A has not worked well with its replacement services (15A and 15C) suffering from delays. The service was changed to provide a direct link through Sutton to Good Hope Hospital and replace the 115 along Penns Lane. The reduced frequency reflected the level of demand for the services although we realise this is will have inconvenienced people. We are not happy with how the service is running and realise that many of our customers have an unsatisfactory service currently. We apologise to any customer who has waited longer than they should for the bus.

We are looking at ways to improve the service. Buses are taking much longer in the peak periods to get through the traffic than they did last year and even earlier this year. They are struggling to keep to their schedules because of the slower traffic which is much worse than we expected. We will introduce new schedules as soon as possible to improve the situation.

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