

# Call for Action from the Residents and Businesses of Snape



Objective - To Establish a Regular and Reliable Public Bus Service for the Village of Snape

## Snape Bus Survey Headlines

- ! Concerns - Residents feel isolated with no bus service
- ! Numbers - 76 respondents would use a Snape bus service
- ! Top destinations – Saxmundham, Aldeburgh and Woodbridge
- ! Top reasons for using a bus service – Medical Appointments and Shopping

January 2026

Version 8

# Executive Summary

The Suffolk County Council transport plan for Saxmundham and Leiston envisages these transport nodes being linked to the villages by on demand bus services, where there is no scheduled service route. Currently Snape has no regular daytime bus service suitable for residents and visitors seeking to connect with these neighbouring towns. The on-demand service (Katch) has not worked for Snape residents, as identified in a survey carried out in October 2025.

There is considerable interest in the village for a regular, scheduled bus service. This is strongly supported by the survey which identifies the principal socially necessary routes (ranked in order of importance) as:-

- 1) Saxmundham
- 2) Aldeburgh
- 3) Woodbridge

As it is possible to travel onward by train or bus from Saxmundham to reach most destinations, we request a link from Snape to Saxmundham which is:-

- Regular (twice daily, at least)
- Scheduled (e.g. 10am, 12pm, 2pm, 4pm)
- Reliable
- Well communicated (e.g. electronic head boards at major bus stops)

Such a service could be introduced at relatively low cost on a pilot basis. If broadly successful, it could be fine-tuned and expanded to great social and economic benefit.



***Snape a village with Bus Stops, but no Buses!***

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# 1) Introduction

This summary aims to explain the broader issues to maximise the wider economic, social and environmental benefits associated with the investment in a Snape public bus service. We need to reduce car journeys on local roads and improve air pollution, but this will always prove unachievable without a public bus service.

Many residents of Snape Village have been left isolated for the past seven or so years, since the village lost its public bus service. The recent Snape bus survey (October 2025) clearly demonstrates that 94% of residents and businesses responding to the survey would use a public bus service if it was available.

The importance of a public bus service for economic growth, social cohesion and environmental benefits cannot be overstated.

With twenty businesses operating from Snape, including the World Class Britten Pears Arts Concert Hall and Snape Maltings shops, restaurants and food outlets that attract visitors from far and wide, it is unbelievable we cannot offer visitors a public bus service, serving Aldeburgh hotels / holiday lets and the Saxmundham Railway Station. Snape Maltings has enormous unused potential that could greatly benefit the local economy e.g. employment, keeping Snape's three pubs open, resolving car parking congestion etc.



Without a public bus service Snape Maltings may struggle to reach its full economic and social potential

## 2) Snape Bus Survey Headlines

1. 74 responses were received, representing a **high proportion** of those without access to cars. This is 24% of the surveys issued.

2. Survey Question - Please indicate which of the following destinations should be available on a public bus route through Snape (including return journeys):

67 survey respondents indicated **Saxmundham**

61 survey respondents indicated **Aldeburgh**

53 survey respondents indicated **Woodbridge**

Although Saxmundham and Aldeburgh are only 3 and 6 miles from Snape, they may as well be 30 and 60 miles without your own transport

3. Survey Question - Please indicate the main purposes for which you would use a public bus service for Snape.

a. 71 survey respondents indicated **Shopping** was important to them

b. 66 survey respondents indicated **Medical Appointments** was important to them

4. The survey clearly identifies the **primary socially necessary routes**



### **3) Conclusions and salient issues for further consideration**

- ! Many Snape residents feel isolated and let down by East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council for not providing the village with a proper public bus service.
  
- ! Snape has no affordable supermarket, doctors, dentist or pharmacy and therefore desperately needs a proper public bus service.
  
- ! With the Government tightening eyesight and medical requirements for Driving Licence renewal, many elderly Snape residents are seriously worried about losing their Driving Licence. Government initiates these needed improvements, but where is the co-ordination to help people who lose their driving licence and become isolated?
  
- ! Snape with its twenty odd businesses could add much more value to the Government's growth ambition and tax revenues with investment to improve connectivity, infrastructure and public transport.

## 4) Next Steps

### Snape Campaign Activities in 2026

- ! To engage with East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council.

Depending on progress, the following actions could be considered in parallel:-

- ! To run a Press / Media campaign throughout 2026 to raise awareness that East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council have left Snape residents isolated with no proper public bus service.
- ! To raise awareness that Suffolk County Council's 2025 Transport Plan has failed the village residents of rural Suffolk by not providing a reliable, regular public bus service (*Bus Services Act 2025 – A new legal duty for councils to identify socially necessary routes*).
- ! To make East Suffolk District Council and Suffolk County Council aware that the current On-Demand Community Transport Services (including Katch) does not meet the public transport needs of Snape residents. The author found absolutely no interest or support for the current Katch on-demand service. Interestingly, there was no reference or support for Katch in the recent Snape bus survey. Snape has an ageing demographic and elderly Snape residents should not have to wait around for the unpredictable Katch service in hot or cold weather.
- ! Katch funding (in relation to Snape) should be redirected to provide proper public bus services

# **Appendix A**

## **Snape Bus Survey Outcomes**

### **December 2025**

#### **74 Completed Questionnaires Received**

Our thanks to Jenny Riddell – Carpenter MP for the support, printing and postage of questionnaires and the staff of the Golden Key for the collection and safe keeping of completed questionnaires.

The outcomes and comments are listed below.

66 Please indicate the number of people in your household:

One Person

Two People

More than two People (please indicate number)

67 Please indicate how frequently members of your family would use a regular and reliable public bus service:

Regularly

Occasionally

Never

68 Please indicate which of the following destinations should be available on a public bus route through Snape (including return journeys):

Saxmundham

Aldeburgh

Leiston

Woodbridge

Martlesham

Ipswich

Other – Please see comments received:-

*“Framlingham, Wickham Market, Ipswich Hospital, Wickham Market and Ipswich station, Norwich, Halesworth and Lowestoft, Wickham Market train station, Southwold and Norwich”*

69 Please indicate the main purposes for which you would use a public bus service for Snape.

Work

School/college

Medical appointments

Shopping

Banking

Visits to friends and family

Please see other activities received:-

*“Cinema, eating out, events, library, trains, hair appointments, rail connections, access to mainline stations, leisure activities, leisure and coastal walks at Aldeburgh, swimming, singing classes, eating out, people in the village want access to all these, concerts, theatre, links to trains at Ipswich to*

*midnight weekly, walking seaside and country, cinema Leiston and Aldeburgh, restaurants, connections to more urban areas is important for all ages, to get the train, day tripping, football, eating out, returning from walks”*

70 Please indicate your views. A reliable bus service will help increase visitor numbers and help keep Snape businesses (pubs, restaurants, garage, Snape Maltings etc.) and Jobs more secure

Agree            Disagree

Two respondents did not tick either box.

Please see comments received:-

*“It’s helpful for people who cannot get out, only if regular and more frequent, B&B guests would appreciate a bus from Saxmundham to save having to book a taxi, stops people being isolated, a reliable bus service are essential form of transport in keeping the community, link with Saxmundham is a priority for access to rail connections and other bus routes, unsure, freedom to residents of Snape, it would encourage visitors to Snape Maltings who might support this questionnaire, might help with schools, convenient return times, friends could visit more regularly as the taxi service in the area is spotty, a bus service is a lifeline and social amenity for those who cannot (for whatever reason) drive and especially for the elderly, cannot understand why no bus service in a village like ours and with Snape Maltings, Particularly if connecting to Saxmundham train station, to railway stations in Ipswich and Saxmundham, many older people do not drive and therefore need a bus service, it would enable older people who can no longer drive to get to Snape Maltings”*

71 Please indicate your views. Car parking is becoming more difficult and expensive so using a reliable bus service will reduce car journeys and be good for the environment.

Agree            Disagree

One respondent did not tick either box.

Please see comments received:-

*“And is essential for those with no car or driving licence, a reliable bus service would encourage car-less residents to be more independent, I can drive but many people in the village cannot, great initiative – thank you – this service would be hugely beneficial for my in-laws who are moving to Snape next year, access to Ipswich hospital by bus would be wonderful – I can never park there so need to get a taxi to take me to appointments – this costs me £100 a time (this is a monthly hospital visit)”*

### **On Demand Service (Katch)**

This wasn't mentioned in any responses

At a village coffee morning on 11 September 2025 with over 50 residents present (average age around 70), the question was asked “Please raise your hand if you have used the Katch service?” No-one responded

# Appendix B

## Cornwall Case Study

Cornwall comprises metropolitan, urban and rural areas. At county level, it has a set of successful transport policies. Levels of **bus use per capita** in Cornwall are almost **20% higher** than they were in 2018/19.

The growth has arisen through partnership working between the authority and operators. Building on the platform created as part of its Growth Deal, Cornwall County Council has developed a common Transport for Cornwall brand and implemented a vision and strategic approach for the provision of quality bus services, including continued investment in supported services.

Their policy objectives offer a wide range of economic, social and environmental initiatives including improvements to local bus services that contribute to achieving policy objectives. These objectives relate to economic growth and the distribution of economic growth, the strengthening of communities through the provision of new housing and the promotion of individual health and wellbeing, and the reduction in strategic and local environmental emissions. These policy objectives have been supported by strengthening economic connectivity and social accessibility and maximising the benefits from investing in bus networks and services.

### Footnote

A Snape resident visits family in Cornwall frequently and uses their excellent bus services, rarely using his own car once in the county. From the resident's own experience, Cornwall **bus services are well used, frequent and reliable**. Bus timetables at bus stops are very easy to understand. For small villages and hamlets, smaller single deck busses are used for environmental benefit and cost effectiveness.

# Appendix C

## Government Press Release

### December 2025

#### **Better buses, more services: £3 billion boost for millions of passengers**

Multi-year funding gives local authorities the funds they need to provide passengers with lower fares, more frequent and reliable services and safer journeys.

- ! after years of decline, better buses are on the way - billions of funding will support local authorities across the country, improving journeys for millions of passengers
- ! multi-year funding will give councils the long-term certainty they have called for
- ! services will be cheaper and more reliable so more people can better access jobs and opportunities, growing the economy

Millions of passengers across the UK are set to benefit from faster, cheaper and more reliable buses after the government announces a £3 billion boost for services and infrastructure.

Multi-year funding will give councils the freedom to spend their allocations in whatever way they see fit, whether it is lowering the prices of fares, introducing new routes and zero emission buses or creating safer bus stops.

See [local authority bus grant \(LABG\) allocations](#) for more information.

For years, local authorities have been held back from making long-term investments, but multi-year settlements will finally give the much-needed certainty to develop and drive forward plans that cater to the needs of their communities.

This landmark funding follows the [Bus Services Act](#) becoming law in October 2025, which for the first time gave local authorities the power to run local services how they see fit and provides greater protection to socially necessary routes.

*Transport Secretary, Heidi Alexander, said:*

“After years of decline, better buses are finally on the way. Our £3 billion investment will give local authorities the long-term funding they need to deliver lower fares, more frequent services and the reliable transport that communities depend on.

We've already extended the £3 bus fare cap to help people with their everyday journeys and now we're backing this with the funding councils need to transform their local services.

This is part of our wider plan to make public transport cheaper across the country – we've frozen rail fares for the first time in 30 years and we're building Great British Railways to deliver better value for passengers.

Whether it's the bus to work, the train to see family or getting to a hospital appointment, affordable transport is essential to bearing down on the cost of living and growing our economy”

*Minister for Roads and Buses, Simon Lightwood, said:*

“For too long, passengers have been let down by unreliable services, sub-standard bus stations and over a decade of routes being cut.

This £3 billion boost will change this, providing passengers with lower fares, more frequent and reliable services and safer journeys – helping both ease the cost of living and making it easier for people to get to work, hospital appointments and social plans, boosting the economy.

The allocations bring together various bus funding streams into one source. Almost £700 million of funding will be allocated to local authorities every single year up to 2028 to 2029 and can be spent however they want.

It means local leaders, rather than Whitehall, will decide how bus services should be run, continuing the government's commitment to ensuring services are run for people, not profit.

This will be to help mayoral combined authorities with the costs of franchising their bus services, a model which has already seen success in areas like Greater Manchester with its Bee Network”

*Graham Vidler, CEO of the Confederation of Passenger Transport, said:*

“The time for buses is now. With multi-year funding finally in place, local transport authorities must get moving and invest in what matters most to passengers: more buses, faster buses and more reliable buses. Operators stand ready to work closely with authorities across the country to turn this funding into real improvements for the communities we serve”

*Lydia Horbury, CEO Bus Users UK, said:*

“Passengers have faced years of cuts and uncertainty, so long-term funding for buses is extremely welcome. Giving local authorities the stability to plan ahead and invest in the services their communities rely on is essential if we're to reverse decline and rebuild confidence in bus travel.

We particularly welcome the flexibility for authorities to prioritise what matters most to passengers, whether that's lower fares, more frequent services, zero emission buses or safer, more accessible infrastructure.

To deliver meaningful change, it's vital that this funding translates into buses that are reliable, inclusive and designed around the needs of every passenger. We look forward to working with local authorities and operators to help make that a reality"

*Jason Prince, Director of the Urban Transport Group, said:*

"This funding emphasises the importance of bus as the backbone of our local transport networks. The multi-year settlement and the additional Bus Franchising Fund is an endorsement of transport devolution, providing local leaders with the certainty they need to plan and invest in better bus services to meet the needs of local communities"

The package represents a continued commitment to improving bus services and delivering on the ambitions of the Bus Services Act.

Alongside this multi-year funding, and following the start of the bus franchising pilots across the UK, the government is also announcing a £3 million Bus Franchising Fund.

Today's (5 December 2025) announcement is part of the government's wider commitment to making public transport cheaper and more reliable, bearing down on the cost of living for working people.

Freezing rail fares for the first time in 30 years will save commuters on more expensive routes more than £300 per year, meaning they keep more of their hard-earned cash.

The government is also reforming the railways through Great British Railways, which will bring fares and ticketing into the 21st century with tap-in-tap-out and digital ticketing, delivering better value for money for passengers.

# Appendix D

## Daily Mirror News Report

### December 2025

## *Better buses finally on the way after years of decline says Labour transport chief*

**Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander announced £3billion of funding for bus services - giving councils more freedom to bring in new routes, lower fares and make bus stops safer**

Better buses are finally on the way after years of decline, the Transport Secretary said as she announced a £3billion funding boost.

Heidi Alexander said millions of passengers will benefit from cheaper and more reliable services. The new cash means councils will be able to make long-term decisions - including bringing in new routes and improving safety at bus stops

"This is part of our wider plan to make public transport cheaper across the country – we've frozen rail fares for the first time in 30 years and we're building Great British Railways to deliver better value for passengers."

The Department for Transport (DFT) said the announcement gives local authorities the long-term certainty they have called for. They will be free to lower fares, introduce new routes and invest in zero-emission buses.

Roads and Buses Minister Simon Lightwood, said: "For too long, passengers have been let down by unreliable services, sub-standard bus stations and over a decade of routes being cut.

It comes after the Government extended the bus fare cap until March 2027 and passed the Bus Services Act in October to protect important services.

# Appendix E

## Snape Bus Survey – Questionnaire Form

Please use this questionnaire to share your views on this important issue

We are putting together a business case for a reliable public bus service for the residents of Snape and visitors to the village. Names and addresses are not required. Please tick the appropriate boxes and return as below.

Please hand your completed questionnaire to a member of staff at the Golden Key Public House before 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – Thank You

1. Please indicate the number of people in your household:

One Person                  Two People                  More than two People (please indicate number)

2. Please indicate how frequently members of your family would use a regular and reliable public bus service:

Regularly                  Occasionally                  Never

3. Please indicate which of the following destinations should be available on a public bus route through Snape (including return journeys) Please tick all that apply:

Saxmundham                  Aldeburgh                  Leiston                  Woodbridge                  Martlesham

Ipswich                  Other (please identify)

4. Please indicate the main purposes for which you would use a public bus service for Snape. Please tick all that apply:

Work                  School/college                  Medical appointments                  Shopping                  Banking

Visits to friends and family                  Please add any other activities

5. Please indicate your views. A reliable bus service will help increase visitor numbers and help keep Snape businesses (pubs, restaurants, garage, Snape Maltings etc) and Jobs more secure.

Agree      Disagree      Comments

6. Please indicate your views. Car parking is becoming more difficult and expensive so using a reliable bus service will reduce car journeys and be good for the environment.

Agree      Disagree