Bus passenger information in Leicestershire in 1991

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Additional Information:

- A Master's Dissertation, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Science degree of the Loughborough University of Technology.

Metadata Record: https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/27958

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Bus passenger information in Leicestershire in 1991

by

Patricia Hubbell BA

A Master's Dissertation, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Science degree of the Loughborough University of Technology

September 1991

Supervisor: Ann O'Brien BA MLIS Dip Lib NUI
Department of Library and Information Studies

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation could not have been written or indeed researched without the help and cooperation of many people. Thanks are due to all the enquiry staff who were kind enough to answer questions about their work and their work methods. Grateful thanks also to Tony Kerk, from Leicestershire County Council, for the generous giving of his time; to Mr Hilditch, Chairman of Leicester CityBus, for granting an interview and access to the control room; to Mr Pointon, Commercial Manager of Midland Fox, for sending materials about his company; and to Mr Pritchard of Leicester City Council, for an instructive interview. Leicestershire County Council, Leicester CityBus and Midland Fox all kindly granted permission to include illustrative materials.

The writer also wishes to thank her supervisor, Ann O’Brien, for her confident support and advice; Goff Sargent, for providing a few leads; and her husband, for his participation in the fieldwork, his general support, and his sanity during a hot summer.
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ABSTRACT


The study examines the provision of bus passenger information in Leicestershire in a national and historical context. Recent transport legislation is analysed and found to affect information provision in that it fails to ascribe responsibility for it. A review of the literature provides the basis for an exploration of information needs, under the headings of users' specific needs and the means available to meet them. Against this background, research was conducted in Leicester and North-West Leicestershire by interview and by a survey of potential information outlets. Overall availability of information is satisfactory, in that there is no essential information which cannot be had; but there is much variation amongst organisations and locations, and the enquirer may have to work hard at getting enough information in time. The quality of information provided also varies: printed material is of a generally high standard, but one operator in particular provides a less than adequate telephone service. In general, the handling and dissemination of information by the operators leaves much to be desired, especially in those areas where the county council has least involvement. The council does a good job of gathering, handling and disseminating comprehensive information, as do some of the intermediaries. It is concluded that the county benefits from having a council which takes its information role seriously and which makes appropriate use of IT. The operators should concentrate on improving their performance within their natural domain. Non-specialist information providers should be fully committed or not participate. A legal framework for local authority action and a rationalisation of the Traffic Commissioners' role are recommended.
I INTRODUCTION

The question of bus passenger information deserves attention not only for its intrinsic interest but also for its relevance to broader transport issues. There is increasing concern about the impact of the private car on the environment, and it is uncontroversial to see maximised use of public transport as a good thing. If people are to be encouraged to turn to the bus to meet their transport needs, the quality and availability of information are obviously crucial, given the inherent independence and flexibility of the motor car.

In terms of the political dimension, the time is now ripe for a study such as the present one, because sufficient time has now elapsed since deregulation for an assessment of the impact of recent public transport policy - the Transport Act 1985 in particular - on information provision. The study will examine the legal framework and the state of the industry, and explore the issue of responsibility thrown up by the 1985 Act.

Users and their needs provide the necessary starting point for a detailed examination of the situation in Leicestershire itself. This case study makes up the bulk of the dissertation; it examines both what information is available and how it is made available - ie a study of the processes by which the information transfer takes place.

Such a study is an ambitious undertaking for one person in the time available, and the writer is aware of certain limitations. The survey is restricted in scope, both geographically and in the number of operators covered. The writer's position is not that of a disinterested observer: as a not infrequent public transport user herself, she hopes that a critical but reasonably impartial analysis from the point of view of the information consumer will be of some value to transport and
information specialists, to policy makers, and to all those involved with or merely interested in passenger information provision.
II CONTEXT: Deregulation and the Bus and Coach Industry

II.1 Legislation

This section is primarily concerned with the Transport Act 1985, whose provisions amount to a programme of deregulation and privatisation of the bus industry. The 1985 Act cannot, however, be viewed in isolation but must be read against a background of previous legislation: the word 'deregulation' means the removal of control and, therefore, implies a pre-existing regulatory control system; as K. Gwilliam (1) points out, a good understanding of this system is crucial to a full appreciation of what is meant by deregulation.

II.1.1 The Regulation Era: 1930-1980

Regulation was introduced in the 1930s (2,3), following a period of intense competition characterised both by unstable rates and services and by potentially dangerous operating practices. It took the form of licensing systems which, taken together, ensured both quality and quantity control of services, and fare control: under the Road Traffic Act 1930, not only did an operator's road staff and his vehicles all require licences, but a road service licence issued by the Traffic Commissioners and specifying "the route, schedule, and fares to which it was permissible to operate" (4) was also required for all scheduled services.

The licensing procedure was geared to the creation of a set of quasi-monopoly franchises (5,6). Where there was more than one existing operator, priority was usually given to the largest; further entry was regulated by giving the established operator priority over any new applicant.
This system of regulation remained virtually unchanged for 50 years—until the 1980 Transport Act. The main provision of this Act was the 'deregulation' of the long distance (express) bus sector, effected by eliminating road service licences for such services and limiting requirements to the possession of an Operator's Licence and the registration of the service with the Traffic Commissioners giving at least 21 days notice (7). The Act also liberalised the licensing of other services, and effectively abolished fare control for local bus services (8). The onus of proof in the licensing system was changed in favour of new applicants (9); conductor and vehicle licensing were abolished, the latter to be replaced by a system of operator licensing.

II.1.2 THE SYSTEM OF OPERATOR LICENSING

The concept of operator licensing introduced in the Transport Act 1980 was set up in the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981. Buses—and more generally Public Service Vehicles (PSVs)—can only be operated by a firm or individual holding a current Operator's Licence (O-licence). There are three requirements for obtaining an O-licence: to be of good repute; to have appropriate financial standing for adequate maintenance arrangements; and to show evidence of professional competence (10,11). O-licences are issued by the Traffic Commissioners, and specify the number of vehicles that may be operated by the base.

II.1.3 Deregulation and the Transport Act 1985

Like the 1980 Act, the 1985 Act sought "to establish the disciplines of a competitive market" (12) — this time in the provision of local bus services. The Act abolished road service licensing for stage carriage services except in Greater London, and replaced it with a system of registration for 'local services'—defined as services on which it is
possible for a passenger to travel a distance of less than 15 miles, at a separate fare (13).

Anyone who holds a valid O-licence may run such a service - unless specifically banned from doing so by the Traffic Commissioner under section 26 of the Act (14). All that is required is to register the particulars of the service - the route and frequency, but not the fares - with the Traffic Commissioner, giving at least 42 days' notice before starting to run (15,16). The same time period is required for changes to services or their withdrawal, except in prescribed cases. The most noteworthy exception concerns timing changes of five minutes or less, where no notice at all is required (17). Changes with reduced notice include timing changes up to ten minutes and holiday period changes. Changes for specific reasons - eg to replace a withdrawn facility, to maintain a connection with other modes, to ease road traffic - may also be with reduced notice, but this is at the discretion of the Traffic Commissioner (18).

Traffic Commissioners may, upon request from the Traffic Authority and after holding a public enquiry, attach traffic regulation conditions on the operation of local services - ie on routes, stopping places, and length of stopping - to prevent danger to road users or reduce severe traffic congestion (19). These conditions are attached to the O-licence and may not be discriminatory against any particular operator.

It should be apparent from the above that the term 'deregulation' is a misnomer: the local bus industry was not so much deregulated as delicensed. What was abolished was the primary constraint on entry, namely quantity control; quality controls, on the other hand, remain essentially intact.
II.1.4 THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE INDUSTRY

Deregulation was accompanied by changes in the ownership structure of the industry: the privatisation of the National Bus Company (NBC), and the transfer of municipal bus undertakings to public transport companies, limited by shares registered under the Companies Act 1985. The nationally owned NBC, set up under the Transport Act 1968, enjoyed a very dominant position in almost all stage carriage service markets, except where municipally owned companies were established. This dominance was seen as a potential impediment to competition - and was accordingly tackled in part III of the 1985 Act (20): the NBC was to be reorganised into smaller operating companies (mainly geographical units), and sold either to management teams or into private ownership. In the event, 72 such companies were formed (21), and all had been sold by 22 April 1988 (22).

Municipally owned operations were another potential impediment to competition. Consequently, the Act required their formation into normal, commercially viable companies, which may still be owned by the local authorities but must be at arms length from them. The terms of transfer of assets into the new companies were closely regulated under sections 59 and 68 of the Act (23). Local authorities can still own bus stations, but must run them on a commercial basis and in such a way as to allow all operators to gain equal access to them (24).

To further ensure free competition, the industry's exemption from the restrictive trade practices legislation was also removed under section 115 of the Act (25,26). The particulars of all agreements under which two or more operators accept restrictions on their commercial freedom must be registered with the Office of Fair Trading. This may apply to agreements involving joint timetables, interavailability of fares or through-ticketing arrangements, and joint marketing schemes. If such
agreements are found to contain significant restrictions, they can be referred to the Restrictive Practice Court.

II.1.5 THE CHANGING ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The 1985 Act radically changed the way in which subsidy can be applied to bus services, and brought to an end the local authorities' overall responsibility for the coordination of passenger transport services in their areas vested in them by legislation in the late '60s and '70s:

- The Transport Act 1968 had created Passenger Transport Executives in the major conurbations and given them powers to coordinate all public transport services in their areas, whether directly operated by them or not (27,28). These powers were retained by the Metropolitan Counties upon their creation in 1974.
- County councils had been given the mandatory duty to coordinate public passenger transport within the county boundaries by section 203 of the Local Government Act 1972, which also required bus services operators and the Railway Board to cooperate both with the council and with one another (29). Wider responsibilities for public transport planning came to them under the Transport Act 1978, which required them to prepare and publish five-year rolling Public Transport Plans (30).

Under the Transport Act 1985, all power to plan or control unsubsidised services was removed from local authorities so as to ensure their inability to inhibit the workings of the free market (31). In the area of subsidy, councils are now limited to inviting tenders for the provision of services which cannot be provided commercially but which are deemed necessary for the community (32).

The role of local authorities has therefore changed "from planning and providing a whole network of services to identifying and supporting
only those areas which are deemed to require a service which is not met through the free market" (33). County councils (and PTEs) do, however, retain powers to promote the availability of public transport and the convenience of the public (34). These powers are subject to the duty not to inhibit competition, but may involve the provision of area-wide information systems, and go some albeit limited way towards maintaining service integration. Service integration nevertheless remains the main - some would say the only - casualty of the 1985 Act, which besides abolishing the coordinating powers of local authorities also repealed the duty placed on British Rail and on bus operators to cooperate for the purpose of coordinating passenger transport (35).

The Act modifies but does not abolish the powers of local authorities to establish concessionary fare schemes; it leaves both their duty to provide free transport for certain pupils and their responsibility for traffic management unaffected.

II.2 LEICESTERSHIRE IN THE AFTERMATH OF Deregulation

II.2.1 THE SITUATION BEFORE Deregulation Day (26.10.86)

Two major companies were operating in Leicestershire on the eve of deregulation: the NBC subsidiary Midland Fox, formed in 1981 as Midland Red (East), and the municipally owned Leicester CityBus. Though other NBC subsidiaries - the Derby-based Trent Motor Traction in particular - and a number of independents also operated in the county, Midland Fox enjoyed a virtual monopoly outside Leicester itself where Leicester CityBus was dominant.

Competition between these two main operators began in earnest in 1984 when picking up protection for city services was removed by the Traffic
Commissioners "after a long running battle under the relaxed licensing terms of the (...) 1980 Transport Act" (36). When Midland Fox introduced a network of high frequency minibuses covering most of the town in September 1985, Leicester CityBus responded by expanding its services into areas of Leicester formerly served only by Midland Fox.

II.2.2 INTENSIVE COMPETITION IN THE DEREGULATION ERA

Competition between Midland Fox and Leicester CityBus over city services did not abate following deregulation, but has carried on to the present day. After deregulation, however, the main competitive arena shifted away from Leicester to the north of the county: the town of Loughborough and the Leicester-Loughborough corridor. The "Loughborough saga" (37), which lasted until the end of 1989, took place in distinct phases involving several participants. The following outline is drawn from a small number of sources (38,39,40) which the interested reader should consult for further details.

II.2.2.1 Loughborough town services

Town services in Loughborough had long been provided by Trent when, in July 1987, Leicester CityBus formed a subsidiary company, Loughborough Coach & Bus, and began operating minibuses in the town under the name Trippit. Four months later, Trent had withdrawn from the town and sold its depot to the newcomer in return for a stake in Leicester CityBus.

By the spring of 1989, Leicester CityBus was experiencing difficulties and decided to sell its Loughborough subsidiary (which was contributing to the losses). The sale went through in May, and Midland Fox - which had entered the town earlier that month through its recently acquired subsidiary, Fairtax - emerged as the purchaser.

A number of independents - Barton, South Notts, Kinch - had also come
into Loughborough by that time. Kinch was by far the best established: it had gained a foothold into the town as early as November 1986 when it won the local authority contract for evening services, which Trent had not registered, and taken advantage of Trent's withdrawal in 1987 to increase its operations in the town. The next stage of the 'war' therefore pitted Midland Fox against Kinch. Within one month of the acquisition of Midland Fox by the Drawlane Group on 4 September 1989, Kinch had conceded defeat and pulled out of the town: Loughborough had finally reverted to only one town service operator.

II.2.2.2 The Leicester-Loughborough corridor

At deregulation, four operators had registered Loughborough-Leicester services via a number of routes: Midland Fox went on running services along its traditional route (formerly a Midland Red route) on the A6 main road; Kinch introduced two new services, one on the A6 route in direct competition with Midland Fox, the other to the East via Sileby and Barrow-upon-Soar; Leicester CityBus and County Travel operated a joint service to the West of the Midland Fox route.

Midland Fox responded aggressively to the threat posed by the newcomers and a bitter war was fought, in which fares and times were used as weapons. For seven months, beginning in July 1987, Midland Fox even went as far as to run a direct Loughborough-Leicester service with half price fares: the Midland Wolf operation. Though the independents — and Kinch in particular — proved highly resilient, they were driven out sooner or later. By October 1988, Midland Fox had acquired the bus operations of County Travel, including its share in the joint County/CityBus services; by May 1989, it had completely taken over these services by purchasing Loughborough Coach & Bus, into whose hands the CityBus share had been put; by October 1989, it had finally also taken
over the Kinch routes.

II.2.3 MIDLAND FOX IN THE DEREGULATION ERA

The privatisation of Midland Fox took place on 18 August 1987: the company was bought by its management with the help of the neighbouring independent Stevensons of Uttoxeter who immediately realised its 30 per cent share by taking the Swadlincote premises and routes together with some 44 vehicles (41,42). Stevensons later sold its shares to the Drawlane Transport Group, contributing to the latter's takeover of Midland Fox on 4 September 1989. The Drawlane Group - which already included London Country (South West), Crosville, Midland Red (North) and North Western (43) - now has a fleet of over 2,000 vehicles (44).

The account (2.2.1) of events in the Loughborough area gives a good indication of the overall post-deregulation pattern: similar episodes occurred throughout Leicestershire, usually with the same outcome. The dominant position of Midland Fox has been repeatedly challenged, but usually with little long term success. Indeed, the history of Midland Fox since deregulation is one of consolidation achieved mainly through a series of take-overs after periods of intense competition.

The main acquisitive phase began in 1988 and ended in mid-1989. No less than seven companies were taken over in this period, which also saw the acquisition of the bus operations of County Travel. They are, in chronological order: Wreake Valley Travel of Thurmaston, Heep's of Guildsborough, Fairtax of Melton Mowbray, Bates of Rothwell, Astill & Jordan of Ratby, Shelton Orsborn of Wollaston, and Loughborough Coach & Bus (45). Wreake Valley Travel, Fairtax, and Loughborough Coach & Bus were set up as separate subsidiaries.

Henceforth, the pace of acquisitions has slowed down, no doubt because of a shortage of local candidates ripe for the plucking. A further two
companies operating local bus services in the county were nevertheless added to the list in July 1990: Blands of Stamford and Satin Coaches. Blands of Stamford was incorporated into Fairtax a few months later.

II.2.4 THE LOCAL BUS SERVICES NETWORK IN JUNE 1991

At the beginning of June 1991, 41 operators were providing some 309 local bus services in the county (46). Midland Fox, by far the largest operator, was running 102 services and its subsidiaries a further 24 making a total of 126. Leicester CityBus, the second largest, was running 53, mainly in Leicester and its suburbs. Though no figures are available, it is evident that the share taken by these two companies in terms of passenger miles would be higher still, since it would take the frequency of services into account: no operator besides Midland Fox and Leicester CityBus runs a service described as 'frequent' by the County Council. Indeed, most of the services run by the smaller operators are weekly or irregular (daytime only).

Two companies - Barton Buses (now a Trent subsidiary) and Stevensons - are running 15 services each. The remaining operators, mainly small independents, rarely run more than five, and often just the one. In the Rutland area (East Leicestershire), the only part of the county apart from Leicester itself where Midland Fox is not dominant, the main operators are the ex-NBC United Counties and the independent Blands of Cottesmore, with eight services each.

A comparison between June 1991 and June 1989 reveals that the number of operators has remained virtually constant between those dates: ten companies who operated in 1989 no longer do so, but they have been replaced by six newcomers.
II.2.5 A REPRESENTATIVE COUNTY?

Post-deregulation developments in Leicestershire fit in well with the trends for the whole of England, as identified by Peat Marwick (47):

- newcomers (usually small coach operators) continue to seek a foothold in the market;
- incumbent operators are proving able to withstand external competition;
- large operators are taking small ones over to strengthen local monopolies;
- companies with fewer than 100 vehicles are proving vulnerable to competition;
- large groups are being built in the private sector.

The rationalisation of the industry was already well advanced by June 1989, when two operators besides Drawlane each controlled a number of ex-NBC subsidiaries: Stagecoach had six, and Badgerline five. Indeed, "of the original 72 companies, one-third [were then] controlled by four corporations or alternatively 25 out of 59 ex-NBC subsidiaries [were then] in seven groups each with an average of 1200 vehicles" (48).

Following deregulation, an increase in bus mileage was accompanied by a slight drop in passenger trips in the county. Leicestershire is yet again representative of other English shire counties in this respect (49,50).
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(2) Ibid., p. 179.


(4) GWILLIAM, ref. 1, p. 179.

(5) Ibid., p. 179.


(7) GWILLIAM, ref. 1, p. 180-181.

(8) WHITE, Peter & Roy TURNER. Overall impacts of local bus deregulation in Britain. Transportation Planning and Technology. 1991, vol. 15, n. 2/4, p. 204.

(9) GWILLIAM, ref. 1, p. 180-181.

(10) HIBBS, ref. 3, p. 56.


(14) Ibid., p. 2283.

(15) HIBBS, ref. 3, p. 56.

(16) PAISANA & GILLINGWATER, ref. 6, p. 13.

(17) HUNTLEY, P.G. Tendering and local bus operation: the practical handbook. 1989, p. 36.

(18) Ibid., pp. 37-41.


(20) Ibid., sections 47-56, pp. 2300-2308.

(21) BEESLEY, ref. 11, p. 95.


(26) DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, ref. 12, p. 32.

(27) GWILLIAM, ref. 1, p. 179.


(29) BIRKS et al, ref. 25, p. 182.


(31) DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, ref. 12, p. 12.


(35) BIRKS et al, ref. 25, p. 228.


(45) MIDLAND FOX LTD, ref. 41, sheet n. 1.

(46) This figure - and others in this section - was calculated from data found in the *Guide to public transport in Leicestershire*, June 1991, published by Leicestershire County Council.

(47) ROBINSON, ref. 44, p. 198.
(48) Ibid., p. 198.

(49) Ibid., p. 197.

III PASSENGER INFORMATION - WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

There are two main bodies who can take responsibility for providing information about bus services: the local authority and the operators. With which of these two bodies the responsibility should ultimately lie remains a matter for debate. Certainly, in Britain at any rate, it has not been clearly assigned to either of the two parties.

On both sides of the debate, the arguments tend to rest on a largely uncontested premise — that the provision of adequate publicity and information about local services is one means by which passengers and potential passengers can be encouraged to use buses. The trend of declining patronage in recent years clearly illustrates the need for such encouragement in Britain today.

This chapter will examine, for each of the potential providers, first the arguments (the theory) and then the reality in the British context (the practice); a brief overview of their relative involvement will be presented in conclusion.

III.1 LOCAL AUTHORITIES

There are two main arguments supporting the contention that local authorities should provide all public information about local services. The first is that this will encourage patronage on all services — which should in turn result in public savings: "if patronage on commercial services is maximised then the number of services supported by Local Authorities will be minimised and the amount of subsidy paid to supported services will decrease" (1). Any substantial increase in bus patronage would also bring other benefits — such as a reduction in traffic congestion — both to the local authority and to the locals
themselves.

The first argument could be described as socio-economic; the second is more practical: local authorities are simply in a better position than anyone else to produce comprehensive, coordinated information on all services (2,3). As tendering authorities, they receive details of all registrations, changes, and withdrawals of services directly from the Traffic Commissioners — and have, therefore, more complete and ready access to information than the operators themselves. In addition, they do not, unlike the latter, have to take considerations of competition into account.

However, whilst local authorities have powers to provide information on all local bus services, they do not have a duty to do so. This distinction is crucial, not least because it means that local authorities "differ widely in their interpretation of the role given them by the Transport Act" (4), and therefore that the extent to which these powers are actually used varies greatly from one area to another.

III.2 THE OPERATORS

The argument for operators providing information about their services is simply that they owe it to their shareholders to maximise their market and hence their profit, just as any other commercial provider of goods or services does. Indeed, bus operators can reasonably be expected to pay greater attention to publicity than the average company, because of the nature of the transport commodity: since transport is rarely if ever for transport’s sake, bus operators are in effect dealing in the utilities of time, place and convenience; in other words, information is an integral part of their product.

The reader should note, incidentally, that the idea that the provision of information will result in increased custom and profit is more than
an instinctive belief: the experiments conducted by Ellson and Tebb (5,6) have clearly demonstrated that the dissemination of information can be a highly cost-effective way of increasing patronage, in particular during off-peak hours when additional passengers are most needed.

Operators, being well aware of this, tend to regard the provision of information about their own services as their proper concern. Even so, the small operator struggling to keep costs down in an industry characterised by narrow profit margins often finds the cost of publicity unjustified by the revenue that increased usage might generate. When it comes to cooperating with each other to produce coordinated information, few operators are prepared to fulfil or even acknowledge their responsibility. This is so even when two operators run the same service (whether in direct competition or not, as when one runs the commercial part and the other the subsidised part), despite the fact that joint publicity would benefit both: "a passenger looking at one operator's timetable may be deterred from making a trip for fear of not being able to make a convenient return, which is in fact covered by another; so both operators lose traffic" (7).

To be fair to bus operators, it must be said that such collaboration is difficult: "Apart from the practical problems of securing up-to-date information from other operators, it may not be in the company's commercial interest to cooperate in this way and indeed such cooperation may be ruled as being anti-competitive by the Office of Fair Trading" (8). Indeed, the current approach of the OFT - to refer any agreement on joint timetables which precludes the parties from running extra buses at will to the Restrictive Practices Court for a judgement on whether it is against the public interest (9) - often acts as a deterrent to those operators who might contemplate cooperating to
produce comprehensive timetables, or simply to run buses along a route at regular intervals rather than bunched.

III.3 THE CURRENT SITUATION

According to H.R. Masey (10), the provision of information about bus services in Britain was split as follows in 1988:

- forty one per cent of local authorities (County Councils, Regional Councils, or PTEs) provided comprehensive information;

- in 45 per cent of areas, provision was split between operators and local authorities;

- in the remaining 14 per cent of areas, it was left entirely to the operators.

More recent figures come from a survey of local authorities conducted by the National Consumer Council in January 1990 (11). Of the 42 shire counties who agreed to take part, 17 provided comprehensive information while a further three planned to do so in the near future; 22 provided a "modicum of information", that is to say mainly or exclusively about supported services, and the remaining three no information at all. Of those County Councils likely to change their position soon after the survey, only one belonged to the last category.

These figures illustrate the lack of a homogeneous approach on the part of local authorities but do not reveal its true extent, since the precise nature of the 'comprehensive information' provided - to say nothing of its form and quality - also varies from one area to another.
REFERENCES TO CHAPTER III


(2) Ibid., p. 453.


(4) Ibid., p. 18.


(6) ELLSON, P.B. & R.G.P. TEEB. Benefits and costs of providing additional information about urban public transport services, 1981.


(8) CAHM, ref. 3, pp. 9-10.

(9) Ibid., pp. 4-5.

(10) MASEY, ref. 1, p. 452.
(11) CAHM, ref. 3, pp. 12-16.
IV INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION AIDS

IV.1 PASSENGER INFORMATION - FOR WHOM?

The use of public transport is dependent on public awareness about the system: the potential passenger must be informed of the available services in order to be able to take advantage of them. Since any resident of or visitor to an area is a potential passenger, there can be only one answer to the question 'who needs information about bus services?': everyone does.

Different groups of people, however, have different information needs. Visitors and other newcomers to the area need information about local places of interest served by public transport, and may require this information in their own language, particularly in tourist areas. Information in several languages will also be required where there are substantial linguistic minorities. Pensioners and the disabled need clearly printed and readily available information about concessionary fares, bus passes, and the times at which they can be used.

The need for information is most pronounced for those who do not yet use buses, or who use them only occasionally; those who are unfamiliar with an area; and those with a handicap. The distinction, however, is only one of degree. For information is necessary for those who already use buses regularly as well as for those who would like to use them: many regular bus passengers will need information for their normal work or shopping trips only if their service has changed; yet, since even regular users of a bus line rarely know more than one or two lines of the network (1,2), they will be in the same position - but for their greater familiarity with the local geography - as any stranger to the area when it comes to unusual journeys.
IV.2 WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED?

A passenger information system has three main functions to perform. It should provide:

(a) general information that tells the potential passenger how to make a trip and where to obtain more specific information about routes, stop locations, schedules, and fares;
(b) specific trip information to ensure the passenger knows where to access the network and how to use it;
(c) real-time information about irregularities in the service, the expected waiting time before the next bus arrives, and alternative services to reduce waiting time and uncertainty at the bus stop and hence improve the confidence of users in the service (3).

Prospective passengers seek information at every step of their journey — in advance of making the journey, to plan their route; immediately before setting out, to check times and connections; and during the journey, to ensure that they are making the right choice at each decision point. The information provided should accordingly cover the entire journey, from the time that the potential passenger is planning it at home until the final destination has been reached (4,5).

The passenger information system must not only be complete in that sense but should also be comprehensive in its coverage of the various modes of public transport available in the area, so as to enable travellers to choose the fastest and most convenient connections. It should further be consistent in its design and implementation, which means that "designations, symbols, colours and names should be used in a consistent and uniform way throughout the system" (6): for instance, the same destination name should be used in the timetable, on the bus stop, and when calling out the next stop on the bus. In fact, the more
repetition the better, particularly for the large proportion of passengers who are nervous about the planned journey and who therefore need reassurance at each stage of the process that what they are doing is correct. Besides helping passengers to know where they are and allaying their fears of getting lost, a consistent system will also help them develop and retain a clear mental image of the network (7,8).

IV.3 SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS ...

IV.3.1 BEFORE THE TRIP: ADVANCE PLANNING
In the planning stages of the journey the prospective passenger must select which service or services to take and, in the process, establish the location of the bus stops, the departure times, the length of the journey, and the fares in operation.

IV.3.2 BEFORE THE TRIP: LAST MINUTE PREPARATIONS
Once the journey has been planned from scheduled information (however obtained, and in whatever form), it still remains for the prospective passenger to establish on the day whether or not the service is running normally. Since services may be diverted or delayed, the need at this stage is for real-time information on stopping points and probable waiting times. The latter is particularly useful to the passenger who can then make a rational decision whether to wait, find something else to do or take an alternative route, should his bus be running late.

IV.3.3 THE BEGINNING OF THE TRIP: AT THE DEPARTURE POINT
The provision of information at the departure point is a crucial link in the information system. This is particularly true, of course, for
those passengers who, for one reason or another, have not planned their trip in any great detail before setting out, but even those who have done so will welcome as much information as possible at the departure point: even when technically redundant, such information is valuable for the reassurance it gives passengers.

The passenger must first find the departure point, whether bus stop or terminal. If the trip starts at a station or some other terminal, the process is twofold: both the terminal itself and the right bay or stop must be located. The information provided at the departure point should at the very least assist users in this process.

At the departure point, passengers need most of all to establish or verify the route taken by the bus, the transfer points on that route, and which connecting services can be accessed at these transfer points. Also needed is information about the time at which the bus is due to leave, or better still the time at which it will actually depart; about the length of the trip or the time of arrival at the destination; about fares (if only so that the passengers can have the right fare ready, as they are so often requested to do). Finally, the passenger must be able to identify his bus when it is coming from information provided on the vehicle itself.

IV.3.4 DURING THE TRIP: ON THE BUS

When on the bus, the passenger needs to know where on the route the bus is at any given time, and when he should get off. Even regular users of a route require this information, since "it can be difficult to recognize one's surroundings at night or in bad weather" (9). There should therefore be, in an ideal world, a means of displaying not only the name of the current and next stops, but also interchange information relating to these stops, inside the bus.
IV.3.5 DURING THE TRIP: WHEN MAKING CONNECTIONS

When changing buses or transferring between another mode of public transport and a bus, the passenger needs information on the location of the stop for the connecting service. He may also need information on the quickest way there, if the change does not take place at a bus station.

Transfer points are but a sub-category of departure points, and call for the same type of information. The important distinction is that between the isolated bus stop and the transfer facility, whether on-street terminal, bus station or intermodal terminal: special attention must clearly be paid to the latter, where the passenger stands a greater risk of being confused.

IV.4 ... AND THE TOOLS TO MEET THEM

IV.4.1 BEFORE THE TRIP: ADVANCE PLANNING

Advance planning is traditionally done from distributed printed information – network and route maps, timetables, faretables – or by telephoning an enquiry office. In an ideal world, all printed material would carry an expiry date. Such information is rarely to be had, however, and only the full exploitation of all means of publicising forthcoming changes – newspapers, radio, leaflets – can begin to compensate for it.

Pre-trip information can now also be brought to the home of the public transport user through new technology information systems based on teletext or videotext. Such home-based systems, which use a VDU screen linked to a database by either telephone line or TV transmission, are usually interactive: "by using a menu format with a small keyboard
users can interrogate the database to extract the information they require" (10). The Teletel service (11,12) in France - where videotext is perhaps in more widespread public use than anywhere else - is among the best developed and most successful of these systems. Teletext or videotext facilities can also be provided in public places - such as libraries or tourist information offices - for the benefit of those who do not have the necessary equipment at home.

More appropriate still for use in public places and on the street are the automatic route-finding systems using stand-alone information dispensers developed in France. Examples are DIGIPLAN, SITU and PLANIBUS which work out itineraries and provide the passenger with a print-out which he can retain for reference during the subsequent journey (13). Such systems can also give information on alternative services and select the route best suited to a given passenger - which could be the cheapest, the fastest, the most direct, or that which requires the least walking, as specified by the individual user. Users specify the information they require by means of either push-buttons or touch-sensitive maps.

IV.4.2 BEFORE THE TRIP: LAST MINUTE PREPARATIONS

Though they can be used to work out itineraries in the advanced planning stage of the journey, route-planning systems are at their most useful immediately before setting out, since the information they provide takes - as a rule - the day and time of the enquiry into account. Very few route-planners in operation today provide real-time as opposed to scheduled information, however.

Information about route changes and cancelled services can usually be obtained by contacting an enquiry office, and may also be broadcast on local radio stations. The need for information about delays, on the
other hand, is rarely if ever similarly catered for by the traditional passenger information system. Such information can nevertheless be provided with a minimum of technology: where buses are equipped with two-way radios, late departures can readily be announced or displayed in the bus station, if not elsewhere.

With the latest technology, however, real-time information can be made much more widely available. A number of real-time systems have now been developed. Some are interactive, and others passive; some bring real-time information to the bus stop, and others to the home; but all rely on operational monitoring of the network by a control centre using Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) techniques of one form or another (14).

Home-based real-time systems can be based on videotext, but most use the telephone as the medium for supplying information. Each bus stop is assigned a different phone number, typically incorporating the bus route number and the number of the stop; when a caller dials the stop number, a computer-generated voice announces the time of arrival at that stop of the next two buses on that route, as derived from the AVL system. Examples of such systems are EASY RIDER in Canada (15) and TELERIDE in the United States (16).

Waiting aid systems at the bus stop are usually passive. They present the passenger with either an estimate of the vehicle’s arrival time at the bus stop or an analog representation of the bus traversing its route. The VIDEBUS system, in Nice, provides both a visual indication of the bus along its route and an estimate of the probable waiting time when a previous stop is reached: these estimates, however, were statistically calculated before the system was installed (17). With other systems — such as TOPALEX in Caen — the estimated waiting time is more reliable, being updated by the minute in function of the actual
position in the bus and of traffic conditions on that day and at that
time (18). The information provided by these systems can be presented
in a variety of display formats, ranging from dot matrix indicators and
other variable signs to VDU screens, and can even be given verbally via
a loudspeaker, using a synthesised voice (19).

IV.4.3 AT THE BUS STOP

The bus stop sign is a simple yet reliable means of alerting the
passenger (or the passer-by) to the location of a stop, all the more so
when sign-boards are standardised throughout the system. Sign-boards
need to display "information not just about bus-numbers (which are
meaningless unless you have a map or timetable with you) but also about
where buses go to from that stop" (20). Both the final destination and
one or two intermediate ones would ideally be provided. As important
as the name of the destination, if not more so, is the name of the bus
stop itself, which all sign-boards should carry. A relevant place-name
should be chosen, whenever possible, so as to give a better idea of the
stop's location. The names of the operators and their phone numbers
would ideally also be displayed on the sign-board.

Additional information at the bus stop should appear in display cases,
so as to keep the sign-board as uncluttered, and hence legible, as
possible. A route description — preferably a strip map, though a list
of stopping places would do — is a must, while a map of the network is
desirable to inform users of connecting services. Transfer points and
connecting services could alternatively be indicated on the route map
itself. A network map using a road map as a base is better, though, as
it can also be used by the passenger to find his way from the bus stop
to his goal at the end of the trip.

Information about departure times is best provided by means of a
real-time waiting aid system, but where no AVL system exists (as yet) printed timetables or lists of departure times can be used instead. Where the information takes the form of lists of departure times, whatever the medium used, it will need supplementing with a display of typical trip lengths. Comprehensive fare information can only be given in a faretable, but a display of a few representative examples may be preferable where space is in short supply.

IV.4.4 AT THE TRANSFER FACILITY

Multi-route facilities require information aids designed to direct the passenger to the appropriate bay or bus stop. Two main traditional tools are available for this purpose: the diagram of stands in the bus station (or its equivalent, the 'where to board your bus' plan of the city centre), and the destination board.

In its basic version, the destination board is little more than a compilation of printed signs listing some of the destinations served from the terminal and giving the bay or bus-stop number, and perhaps the operator of the service, for each. Since not all possible destinations can be listed, some criterion of selection is needed. It is common practice for all final destinations (ie those that can be reached from the terminal without transfer) to be included, together with a few intermediate ones (usually places thought to be of particular interest). Because destination boards are not exhaustive, they need supplementing with a map of the network so the user can work out which destination to look up should his own not be listed. This task will be made easier if printed maps are accompanied by an index of places served, and easier still if electric push-button maps are provided. Internal directional signing can help the passenger find his departure point once he has identified it.
More advanced destination boards use variable character displays or VDU screens as their medium of presentation. When these are linked to a computerised database, modifications are relatively straightforward to incorporate, and additional information such as the departure times of the next buses scheduled to leave for the destination can readily be included. When they are linked to an AVL system, real-time information can be provided. Electronic destination boards can also carry messages, which means that they can be used to inform passengers of cancellations even when real-time information is not generally available. Such information can alternatively or additionally be given via a public address system.

The interactive equivalent of the electronic destination board—the route-finding system—could supplement or replace it. Route-finders should be preferred for an on-street terminal, where there is often no obvious place to put a destination board.

Information about journey lengths and fares is best provided at the bay or stop, by means of timetable and faretable displays.

A final source of information that should not be overlooked is people: many passengers rely heavily or exclusively on oral information because they have difficulty in using other information aids, or simply for the reassurance of person-to-person communication.

IV.4.5 ON THE VEHICLE

At least two items of information need to appear on the bus: the route number and the destination name. Both are usually displayed on the front on a traditional blind, or by means of electronic signs using dot matrix or LED displays. Whatever method is used, it is important that the destination sign be large enough to carry both the main destination and an intermediate one and still be legible at a distance. Passengers
will benefit if a graphic description of the route is also displayed low down the nearside where it can easily be read from the bus queue (21), and if the destination and route number are repeated on the back of the bus.

**IV.4.6 INSIDE THE BUS**

Nothing more elaborate than a strip map is needed to give passengers some indication of the location of the bus on its route at any given time. This alone would go some way toward reducing the uncertainty of knowing when to alight. To eliminate this uncertainty altogether, the name of the coming stop must be announced in the bus. This could be done by means of pre-recorded tapes turned on and off by the driver, or with a computerised on-bus system, whether automatic or driver-controlled. Such systems use variable signs or TV monitors instead of, or sometimes in addition to, the spoken word. They can do more than just give warning of the next stop, and are often used to convey other transport-related information (eg connecting services or the name of nearby streets), or information on leisure activities in the area. If the medium used is a TV monitor, as with VISIOBUS, they can even be used to broadcast short cartoons to entertain passengers during their trip (22).

**IV.5 A FINAL WORD ABOUT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The emergence in the eighties of 'telematics' – ie the interaction of telecommunications with information technology and computers – has been accompanied by a veritable explosion of information technology applications in the field of transport (to which, hopefully, the previous section testifies). These new developments have been well
received by passengers, and what evidence is available suggests that they can generate extra custom - but it is, as yet, too early for their cost-effectiveness to be reliably assessed. Some caution would not, therefore, go amiss.

With so many different systems available, choosing the right one requires a careful assessment of local needs and priorities. Broadly speaking, route-planners are best suited to larger towns where various modes of public transport coexist, whereas home-based systems are perhaps at their most useful in the rural context. It is no coincidence that the latter were first implemented in North American suburbs "where low frequencies and severe winters imply potentially long waits at bus stops" (23). Waiting aid systems at the bus stop are by far the most expensive, so it is hardly surprising that "information needs for management and operational purposes are the primary motive for investing in AVL equipment" (24).

It is worth stressing that IT and more traditional information methods are not mutually exclusive but complementary: they can be successfully combined, as when "conventional leaflets are used for planning journeys in advance" and electronic systems "to reinforce travel options in the course of a journey" (25). Information technology can furthermore be harnessed to improve various aspects of the traditional passenger information system. Databases can be used to produce printed materials systematically and cost-effectively (because the information can easily be updated). They can also speed up the work of enquiry clerks, and ensure the consistency and accuracy of the information they provide. A computerised or computer-assisted telephone system brings similar time savings, and hence a better utilisation of telephone lines. Used in such ways, IT can reduce operating costs (by requiring less manpower), whilst making better information available more quickly to the public.
REFERENCES TO CHAPTER IV


(4) HOLMBERG, ref. 2, p. 32.

(5) GIANNOPoulos, ref. 1, p. 292.

(6) Ibid., pp. 292-294.

(7) Ibid., p. 294.

(8) HOLMBERG, ref. 2, pp. 33-34.

(9) Ibid., p. 42.


(13) Ibid., pp. 32-33.

(14) SILCOCK, ref. 10, p. 486.

(15) Ibid., p. 488.

(16) FRUIN, John S. Passenger information systems for transit transfer facilities. 1985, p. 29.

(17) LAMY, ref. 12, pp. 33-34.

(18) Ibid., p. 488.


(21) Ibid., p. 316.

(22) LASSAVE & MEYERE, ref. 11, pp. 41-42.

(23) SILCOCK, ref. 10, p. 488.

(24) Ibid., p. 487.

The publication in 1984 of the White Paper 'Buses' (later to become the Transport Act 1985) prompted much debate. Fears were expressed, in particular, that the new legislation would leave passengers bereft of information. Indeed, some commentators were far from convinced by the assurances given by the government and other proponents of the Bill that bus operators would want to publicise their services to attract passengers: many voices echoed Leicester City Council's warning that "it is unlikely that many private operators will issue printed timetables and they are hardly likely to be able to maintain City Centre premises" (1). The main fear, however, was that comprehensive information would no longer be made available if no single agency was given the official duty to provide it. Were such fears justified? Did deregulation sound the death-knell of comprehensive public transport information provision? Did it in fact affect either the quantity or the quality of passenger information and, if so, in what direction and to what extent? These are the questions which this chapter seeks to answer.

V.1 The Case of Information Technology

Because information technology has but recently appeared on the scene, it would serve little purpose to compare its use before and after deregulation. Yet the post-deregulation take-up rate of IT would be indicative of the direction in which passenger information provision is moving in Britain and of the extent to which the providers take their task seriously. Moreover, IT has an important application in improving both the retrieval and the dissemination of information about
integrated transport systems - interchanges between one bus service and another, and between bus and train (or ferry, or air) services - and so cannot be ignored where shortcomings are expected to relate primarily to comprehensive information.

Steve Tarry (2) - the only source on the subject identified by this writer - paints a bleak picture of the situation. His recent research reveals that new technology is used "only by the larger operators who can afford it in order to give themselves a market advantage" and that, as a result, the introduction of computerised systems is usually left to the local authority (3). Local authorities often fail to rise to the challenge, though, because they are often short of funds and because they have no obligation in this domain. The contrasting experience of most other Western European countries, where the lead has unambiguously been taken by the authorities, merely confirms the suspected weakness of the current British system.

V.2 THE SITUATION BEFORE AND AFTER DEREGULATION

Both the National Consumer Council and BusWatch have conducted surveys of bus passenger information provision before and after deregulation: the NCC in 1985 (4) and 1990 (5), and BusWatch in 1986 and 1989 (6). These surveys are not ideal for comparative purposes (partly because of differences in methodology, and partly because of a lack of consistency in the areas covered), but they provide the only data gathered at the national level on which comparisons over time can be based.

What emerges very clearly when the results of the earlier surveys are compared with the 1989-90 findings is that deregulation has made very little overall difference. Details are best given under three headings which correspond to those areas where meaningful comparisons can be made:
(a) Availability of information in public places -

Some bus information was available in half the libraries surveyed in 1990, as opposed to a third in 1985 (7). By contrast, railway stations were less likely to have bus information in 1990 than in 1985: such information was found in half the stations visited in 1985, but only in a quarter of those visited in 1990 (8). As for tourist information offices, the situation recorded in 1990 is similar to that in 1985.

(b) Availability of information at bus stops and bus stations -

The availability of timetable information at the bus stop has increased: 35 per cent of bus stops surveyed in 1986 carried such information, compared with 52 per cent in 1990 (9). On the other hand, the proportion of bus stations offering information about more than one operator has dropped from a half in 1985 to only a third in 1990 (10).

(c) Availability of information on bus destination boards -

The level of information on bus destination boards has improved slightly. Of the vehicles surveyed in 1989, 92 per cent displayed the destination, 84 per cent the route number, and 20 per cent the name of at least one intermediate stop: the equivalent figures for 1986 are 91, 85, and 10 per cent respectively (11).

Whilst there have been gains in some areas and losses in others, so that it might seem that passenger information provision has hardly been affected by deregulation, a closer look at the evidence shows this to be a misleading over-generalisation. What improvements have occurred here and there cannot seriously be said to compensate for the reduced availability of bus information at railway stations and multiple-operator information at bus stations (the only two categories compared which can be said to be of a 'comprehensive' type).
In any case, national averages cannot but present a distorted picture, since they obscure the fact that the level of information provision is far from uniform throughout the country. Whether the provision of comprehensive information — and hence of passenger information in general — in a given area has deteriorated, stayed much the same, or improved since deregulation largely depends on the attitude of the local authority concerned: in so far as it allows the local authorities' involvement to be minimal or even non-existent no matter what the local operators are doing, the Act has indeed failed passengers.
REFERENCES TO CHAPTER V


(3) Ibid., p. 17.

(4) NATIONAL CONSUMER COUNCIL. Catching up with the bus: a review of passenger information – and how to improve it, 1985, pp. 19-28.


(6) Ibid., pp. 19-23.

(7) Ibid., p. 35.

(8) Ibid., p. 35.

(9) Ibid., p. 36.

(10) Ibid., p. 35.

(11) Ibid., p. 23.
VI PASSENGER INFORMATION PROVISION IN LEICESTERSHIRE

VI.1 METHODOLOGY

The research carried out by this writer had two related yet distinct objectives: to see how far the needs of bus passengers are being met in Leicestershire; and to determine the ways in which information about local bus services is gathered and disseminated in the county, so as to establish where the system breaks down and why. To attain both of these aims, a survey of the information made available to the would-be bus traveller was supplemented by formal interviews with some of the providers.

VI.1.1 THE SURVEY (1)

The survey was conducted mostly in June/July 1991 and was restricted, for practical reasons, to North-West Leicestershire. The writer observed and recorded what information was provided on buses and at bus stops, at bus stations and intermodal terminals, at bus enquiry offices, and in public libraries and tourist information centres. As much attention was paid to the quality and currency of the information available as to the extent to which different types of information were provided at these points. To complete the survey, the local press was scanned and the main local radio station monitored so as to discover what kind of information was provided via these media. The fieldwork was carried out by the writer, except for some observations made by her husband on his daily work journey in the Oadby area.

A total number of 135 bus stops were examined, along routes (or rather portions of routes, since no route was surveyed in its entirety) served by several operators running both commercial and tendered services.
The stops were chosen so as to ensure that different types of location - such as a city centre, a suburb, a town, a village - were represented in the sample. The breakdown is as follows: thirty-two stops were examined in Loughborough, 39 in central Leicester, and the remainder mainly between Loughborough and Leicester (along the A6 corridor route) and between Leicester city centre and the suburbs of Glenfield and Oadby.

Some of the bus stops examined - such as those at Haymarket (Leicester city centre) - would perhaps be more aptly described as the stands of an on-street bus station. Two proper (ie off-street) bus stations were also visited (St Margaret's in Leicester and Loughborough bus station), as were such intermodal transfer facilities as the Loughborough and Leicester railway stations and the East Midlands International Airport at Castle Donington. In each case, all the bus-related information on display was recorded, copies of all the available leaflets and timetables were collected, and staff at enquiry points were approached to find out what additional information (if any) was available upon request. This procedure was followed in the other places visited as well.

Practical constraints prevented the writer from visiting the main enquiry office of all or even most operators, let alone secondary ones. In the circumstances, it was felt that a thorough study of the information provided by the two major operators at their city centre premises would reveal more about potential failings than a wider yet more superficial survey. Only two enquiry offices were therefore visited, both of them in Leicester: the main Midland Fox enquiry office in Gravel Street (opposite St Margaret's bus station), and the Leicester CityBus 'Riders Travel Shop' at Haymarket. Both were in fact visited on several occasions, each providing an opportunity to observe
the interaction between staff and public. On one occasion at least, the writer 'posed' as a customer and asked specific questions to which the answer was already known or easily verified, to check the accuracy of the information given; on another, general enquiries were made about the types of information provided.

Similar tactics were used when telephoning enquiry lines to find out what information was available from them. Real-time information was most particularly sought at this stage, but specific questions about routes, schedules and fares were again asked to test the reliability of the information provided. Of the three enquiry lines surveyed in this way, two were provided by operators (Midland Fox and Leicester CityBus) and the third by Leicestershire County Council.

To compensate a little for the bias toward the two largest operators, a further six companies were contacted by phone in early August, though this time general enquiries only were made. Small operators for whose services no printed information had so far been gathered were targeted for this purpose.

Other potential sources of bus information visited were:

- four public libraries, of which three were in central Leicester and the fourth in Loughborough, and the Pilkington Library at Loughborough University of Technology.
- three tourist information centres (one in Loughborough, one at St Margaret's bus station, and another in Leicester city centre);
- five travel agencies (three in Loughborough, and two in the centre of Leicester);
- the council offices at County Hall;
- one Loughborough estate agent (Armstrong).

A record of the information displayed on 90 vehicles was made. Most of these buses belonged to Midland Fox or Leicester CityBus, but seven
other operators were also represented in the sample: Stevensons, South Notts, Barton, Woods Coaches, Hylton & Dawson, and the two Midland Fox subsidiaries, Loughborough Coach & Bus and Wreake Valley Travel. The writer also recorded what information was provided inside 14 buses on which she (and her assistant) happened to travel in the survey period.

As for the local media, cuttings were collected (or the tenor of any relevant article simply noted) from six local newspapers. All were scanned throughout the months of May and June of this year, and all but one — the weekly Loughborough Echo — for longer periods: the monthly Leicester Link between June 1990 and July 1991; the daily Leicester Mercury between January and July 1991; and the Mail, the Echo Extra, and the Herald and Post (all free Loughborough papers published weekly) between May and July 1991. Finally, BBC Radio Leicester was monitored over the last week in June and at various times in July. Additional information about their bus news broadcasts was obtained by phoning the station.

VI.1.2 THE INTERVIEWS

The interviews conducted fall into two broad categories: 'on the spot' interviews with enquiry clerks and others whose job involves answering queries from the public, and more formal interviews with senior bus company and local authority employees who could be asked more probing questions about the policies and practices on information provision of their respective organisations.

In the first type of interview, the questions focused on the source(s) of information, the process by which it was obtained, the form in which it was received, and the ways in which it could be accessed to answer specific queries. Other questions related primarily to the number of enquiries received and their nature, and to the proportion that could
not be answered but had to be referred to some other agency. Six such interviews were conducted: with enquiry clerks at the Midland Fox and Leicester CityBus offices, at the Loughborough Coach Centre and at the East Midland International Airport; with the tourist information officer in Loughborough; and with the librarian in charge of community information at Loughborough.

The two most in-depth interviews were conducted with a representative of the County Council and with the chairman of Leicester CityBus. The latter was kind enough to take the writer to the control room after the interview proper, thus giving her the opportunity to supplement it with an informal chat with the senior inspector in charge. A Leicester City Council employee who had been closely involved with the design of the new St Margaret's bus station was also interviewed.

Three more interviews had been planned but did not take place for one reason or another. Midland Fox declined to grant an interview, perhaps because of bad timing on the writer's part since they were contacted at the beginning of the holiday fortnight. The clerk to the Traffic Commissioner has not replied to the letter sent to him. The manager of St Margaret's bus station replied promptly to say that he was far too busy at the time but that he would get back in touch; he never did, though, and the writer decided not to pursue the matter because of time pressure and because most of the information had already been obtained from other sources.
VI.2 THE FINDINGS: WHAT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

VI.2.1 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION IN PUBLIC PLACES

The term 'public places' refers here to places where information is made available to the public, but which are not directly connected with public transport. Such places are often the first port of call of the would-be bus traveller in quest of information about the network, particularly if he is a newcomer to the area, and are therefore a logical starting point for this exposure. The estate agency surveyed has been included in this section because it is another potential point of first contact.

VI.2.1.1 Libraries

The *Guide to public transport in Leicestershire* (3) is prominently displayed in Loughborough public library; both recto and verso are visible. The guide is current: the June 1991 issue was on display within one week of its publication. Also on display are the two most recent issues of *Leicestershire bus news: a weekly summary of changes in county bus services* (4) affecting services in and around Loughborough. Concessionary travel leaflets (which give details of the various schemes for the disabled, the elderly, and the unemployed respectively, and include an application form) and timetables for new or newly revised services are provided in a rack by the display where people can help themselves. Other timetables are kept at the information desk and can be consulted on request. These cover most of the services in the area (from all operators) and can be taken away if there is more than one copy; if only one copy remains, a photocopy will be made at no cost to the enquirer. All the timetables are up to date. Though provision of bus information at Loughborough library is clearly
good, all is not perfect. For some reason, five timetables dating from July 1989 are still on display on the notice board; four of these are now out of date, whilst the fifth refers to a service that no longer exists. Fare information (other than details of concessionary fares) is not provided, and no holiday fortnight timetable booklets were available.

The standards of provision in the other libraries surveyed are much inferior. At Leicester main reference library, provision consists entirely of the Guide (recto and verso displayed in the hall, with additional copies to take away) and the concessionary travel leaflets. As one might expect, no bus information whatsoever is provided at the main lending library, just round the corner. Far worse is the case of the Goldsmith library (the music library), where the information provided is hopelessly out of date: the January 1990 issue of the Guide was still on display in July 1991, as was one issue of Bus news dated 30 July 1990; and of the four timetables found, two were no longer valid. In the Pilkington library, provision is limited to three timetables available for consultation, of which two were out of date.

VI.2.1.2 Tourist information offices

Neither the Guide nor Bus news are permanently displayed in any of the information offices visited. Since these are the only two printed sources of comprehensive bus information available in the county, this means that one cannot count on finding such information in tourist information centres. Some copies of the latest Guide (to take away) were found at the St Margaret's bus station office on each visit made; copies were also found at the Loughborough office, but supply had run out for the whole of June, and when the rack was restocked in July it was with the out-of-date January issue; none at all were found in the
other information office in Leicester (St Martins Walk).

Concessionary travel leaflets were available in all three offices, and leaflets about Midland Fox Faresavers in the two Leicester ones. No other fare information was available.

The provision of timetables varies widely. None are provided at the main Leicester office. The only timetables available at St Margaret’s are those issued by the council for some tendered services. Provision is far more extensive at Loughborough, where timetable information is available for 24 of the 33 commercial and tendered services in the area, and where no operator fails to be represented. Most, but by no all, the timetables provided were up to date.

VI.2.1.3 Council offices

A mini-library which only council employees can join, but where queries from the general public are answered, is housed in the reception area of County Hall. The last two issues of Bus news are displayed. The Guide is not, but copies to take away were found on each visit, as were concessionary fare leaflets. Numerous timetables were also available. The vast majority – about three quarters – related to Midland Fox commercial services. Apart from three CityBus timetables, no information was available about the commercial services of any other operator: all other timetables provided referred to tendered services. Not all of the timetables issued by the council were available, however. Indeed, incongruously enough, there were fewer of them here than at the St Margaret’s tourist information office. Many timetables were found to be out of date, including some of those issued by the council for tendered services; furthermore, in two instances where current issues were available, the previous ones had not been removed from the rack. Fare information was yet again lacking.
The visitor to County Hall who fails to obtain the timetables he needs from the reception area can make his way to the Department of Planning and Transportation offices, where comprehensive fare information and photocopies of all current timetables are available; but this service is not advertised.

VI.2.1.4 Estate agencies

No bus information was available at the estate agency visited.

VI.2.2 The Availability of Information in Travel Agencies

Only two of the five travel agencies visited had any information about bus services: Tourmaster and the Coach Centre. Both are located in Loughborough.

Tourmaster is a Midland Fox agent involved primarily with the leisure side of the business (coach excursions and express services). Bus timetables were however found for almost half of the MF commercial services operated in and around Loughborough. All were up to date.

The Coach Centre is an agent for 13 coach companies, most of them from Leicestershire and adjacent counties. Four of these also run local bus services: Barton, South Notts, Paul Winson Coaches, and Midland Fox. Timetables are provided for all the services run by these operators, whether commercial or tendered, in the Loughborough area. A few non-local MF timetables were also found. Most local timetables were up to date, but the non-local ones often were not. Most of the non-current local timetables related to tendered services. Sometimes, the latest issue was provided, but copies of the previous one had not been removed from the rack. Two faretables (for the two commercial South Notts services) were found. Except for these, no fare information on local bus services is available at the Coach centre. Copies of the latest
Guide are provided, but a three week delay from the time of publication was observed.

VI.2.3 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION AT COMPANY TRAVEL OFFICES

VI.2.3.1 The Midland Fox enquiry office (Gravel Street, Leicester)

Distributed information

The latest edition of the Guide, timetables, and various leaflets about concessionary fares and MF saver tickets are available from racks.

Timetables were found for all MF services - though on one occasion, one was out of stock - and for all but four of the services operated by its subsidiaries. Some of the timetables issued by the county are also provided, but usually only those relating to tendered services operated at least in part by Midland Fox or its subsidiaries: only one referred to a service run by another operator, namely Midland Red South. This means that information about other operators' services is not available except when these services are run in conjunction with Midland Fox under an agreement registered with the Office of Fair Trading. Only six such agreements have been concluded - two with Midland Red South, and one each with United Counties, Stevensons, Leicester CityBus, and Barton. Incidentally, in only one case did the other operator's name appear prominently on the front of the timetable.

All the timetables for commercial services were found to be current, but a third of those for subsidised services were not.

Information about services providing onward connections from places served by Midland Fox is available, but if these services are run by another operator, details have to be sought from that operator or from the council, whose telephone numbers MF provides. Information on
connections with other modes of public transport - eg trains - is not available.

Information about temporary service changes (MF services only)

Information about temporary route changes (due mainly to road works) is provided on posters and window bills, since the company is usually aware of them in time to get the information printed. Information about short notice cancellations is also offered, but only on request.

Other information

Posters giving details of forthcoming changes to MF services are on display in the office. Fare information is available on request, but not in the form of fare tables which passengers could take away.

VI.2.3.2 The CityBus enquiry office (Haymarket centre, Leicester)

The Riders Travel Shop is another place where copies of the latest Guide and of the concessionary travel leaflets can be picked up. Further information is provided only for the CityBus services, all of which are commercial. The timetables contain no information about connections, nor can such information be obtained from the staff. Fare information is available on request but not in printed form. Details of forthcoming changes - both temporary and 'permanent', insofar as any service change can be said to be permanent - are displayed on posters. Information about short notice changes - eg cancellations and delays - can be obtained on request. A large 'where to catch your bus in the city centre' display (covering LCB services exclusively) is also provided.
VI.2.4 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION BY TELEPHONE

VI.2.4.1 Telephoning bus companies

*Midland Fox (including subsidiaries)*

Midland Fox provides information by telephone, but only during office hours: evening or weekend calls are simply not answered, not even with a recorded message. On five out of nine occasions when calls were made during the day, the lines were engaged or the call simply ignored. In the latter case, the writer waited fully five minutes before giving up.

Specific information – about schedules, fares, and stopping points – is provided for MF services only. Queries about journeys not served by MF are answered by referring the caller to the county council's Busline. For journeys involving a connection with another operator's service, the caller is given that operator's number.

Information about service cancellations and temporary route changes is provided. Information about delays is also provided, but only if they are due to mechanical failure.

*Leicester CityBus*

The line is open as long as LCB buses are running: evening and weekend calls are diverted to the depot where schedules and faretables are kept and where staff constantly monitor operations. On no occasion did it take more than a few minutes for the writer to get through.

Service information is limited to LCB services. The caller enquiring about journeys not served by them is referred to the relevant operator or to Busline (if the service in question is known to be tendered).

Information about cancellations and delays of five minutes or more (whether due to breakdowns or to traffic jams) is also provided.

*Other operators*

The writer failed to get through to two of the six companies surveyed.
The other four answered the phone in a minute or less. All four give timetable and fare information about their own services. They do not refer callers to other enquiry lines because they hardly ever have any enquiries about other operators' services. All but one – the largest – give information about short notice changes. It is no coincidence that the exception is Blands of Cottesmore, with eight services: the others have to keep track of only a few vehicles, which run on routes where unexpectedly heavy traffic is rare.

VI.2.4.2 Telephoning the county council

Busline is open during office hours. An answerphone is switched on at evenings and weekends: callers are told that the council will come back to them if they leave their name, query, and a phone number at which they can be contacted between 8.30am and 5.00pm on weekdays. Such calls were returned on the next working day, and daytime calls answered very promptly.

Busline is the only telephone service from which comprehensive transport information can be obtained. Timetable and faretable information is available for all bus services operated in the county. Multi-stage enquiries (ie enquiries about journeys involving the services of two or more operators) are readily answered. Busline receives many calls of this nature, which are often referrals from the major operators. The council also has details of local train services, and intermodal alternatives are suggested whenever appropriate.

Information about temporary route changes is provided; information about short notice changes is not, unless they are caused by a major road accident.
VI.2.5 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION IN THE LOCAL MEDIA

VI.2.5.1 Local radio

BBC Radio Leicester broadcasts a weekly bus news bulletin (at 4.20pm on Fridays). The information provided is restricted to Midland Fox and CityBus services: a representative from each of these companies gives details of all forthcoming service changes and of road works entailing route changes. An overview of holiday services is also provided when appropriate. Listeners wishing to obtain revised timetables are directed to the company enquiry offices in Leicester, whose addresses are given. Both operators also take the opportunity to publicise the numbers of their respective information lines.

Information about bus services is not usually included in the regular travel bulletins put out throughout the day. Information concerning disruptions caused by poor weather conditions is broadcast on rare occasions, at the operators' request.

VI.2.5.2 Local newspapers

None of the newspapers surveyed provides bus information on a regular basis. Information about timetable changes appeared occasionally, but no logical pattern was discernable. Non-informative advertisements were found with greater frequency.

VI.2.6 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION AT BUS STOPS

Bus stop signs (flags) are uniform in design throughout the county because the county council owns them all: they were taken over two years ago in an attempt to combat misinformation. The stops are readily identified by the words 'Bus Stop' and by a pictorial representation of a bus. All but two of the stops surveyed had a flag: the two that did
not (both in Loughborough) had a shelter instead.

All flags displayed the Busline telephone number. All but one carried the name of all the operators whose services used the stop. The exception was at Market Place in Loughborough, where the name of only one out of four operators using the stop was displayed. The telephone numbers of the major operators were almost always displayed as well.

Bus stops outside Leicester were not named, except for the two that had no flag (the name was displayed on the side of the shelter). All 39 stops surveyed in central Leicester were named, but only about a third of those surveyed in outer Leicester were. When a stop was named in outer Leicester, its equivalent in the opposite direction was not.

Ninety five per cent of the stops surveyed in central Leicester displayed route numbers. Forty four per cent displayed the final destination of some of the services using the stop, but only 30 per cent gave the final destination of all services. Intermediate destinations were given on 28 per cent of the stops, but for only 25 per cent of all services. These proportions drop sharply as one moves away from Leicester city centre: less than five per cent of the stops surveyed in outer Leicester displayed either route numbers or destinations, and only two stops were found to have such information outside Leicester (and then, only for some of the services using them).

Fifty seven per cent of the stops surveyed in central Leicester displayed timetable information for all services using the stop, and a further 28 per cent displayed bus times for some of them. This means that 15 per cent of these stops carried no timetable information at all. Here too, the situation is far worse elsewhere in the county: of the other stops surveyed, only 11 per cent carried comprehensive timetable information, and 76 per cent carried none at all.

Where timetable information was provided, it was not always current:
of the timetables displayed, 10 per cent were out of date and a further 30 per cent carried no date so that the writer does not know if they were current or not.

All the timetables on display were copies (sometimes enlarged copies) of those that are distributed to the public, which do not list all the stops along the route. This means that when a timetable is provided, it does not necessarily give departure times at that particular stop.

All but a few of the timetables included a route description. Strip maps were much rarer: they were found only for some three quarters of the LCB services, and for the odd MF service. No bus stop had a map of the entire network.

Most of the timetables found were for Midland Fox or CityBus services, as one might expect, but the writer found that other operators are on the whole just as likely to display the times of their services at bus stops. Provision does not seem to be greatly affected by the nature of the services (ie whether they are commercial or tendered).

Fare information was found in two instances only: the cost of a South Notts Loughborough-Nottingham return ticket was stated at one Loughborough bus stop, and a complete South Notts Nottingham-Loughborough fare chart was provided at another.

Notices warning of forthcoming (extensive) revisions to LCB services were found at ten stops in Leicester city centre.

VI.2.7 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION AT BUS STATIONS

VI.2.7.1 Loughborough bus station

Hardly any information is provided: there is no map of the network, no destination board or plan of the station, and no staff to assist the would-be bus traveller. Stands are numbered, but to little purpose in
the absence of a destination board, particularly since the stand number is stated in the distributed timetables of only one of the ten services using the station. Three of the nine stands carry both route numbers and destinations and a fourth carries route numbers alone. Shelters are provided, but all are in a state of advanced disrepair – so much so, indeed, that the passer-by could easily think that the station has long been disused.

Information at the stands themselves is hardly better: timetables were found for the services of only four out of seven operators using the station, and only two of those available were dated (both were current).

VI.2.7.2 St Margaret's bus station, Leicester

The facilities provided at St Margaret's are far superior. Among them is a computerised information system introduced in 1985, when the new station building was opened. This system is passive, and is best described as a multi-screen electronic destination board. This means that any number of people can use the system at the same time. Four items of information are provided for each destination listed: the service number, the name of the operator, and the times of departure of the next four buses due, together with the number of the bay from which they leave.

The destinations are listed in alphabetical order. They include many intermediate stops, including places of interest such as hospitals, the railway station, and County Hall. The system does not provide a full picture of city services, but covers only those which visit the station. A copy of the Guide is on display elsewhere in the station, so that users can find out how to get to locations not served by these services. Unfortunately, this copy is not always current: the January
issue was still on display three weeks after the publication of the June edition. Furthermore, only one side of the Guide is visible: that which does not include stopping points in central Leicester.

Information about bus departure times is constantly updated: a floppy disc is loaded each morning (there is one disc for each day of the week), and the information on the screens scrolls forward as time goes by. The system does not provide information about journeys at other times or on other days, and so cannot be used to plan later trips. The disc files are compiled from timetables, and cannot always be updated in time since timetables are sometimes not published until the last minute (particularly when changes of under five minutes are made). The system was switched off during the holiday fortnight, when timetable changes affected most services.

Real-time information is not provided, even via the public announcement system (which is used exclusively by coach operators to warn of delays to their long-distance services).

The destination board also features one screen that gives details of imminent departures. Three more 'imminent departures' screens are also provided: one at the other end of the station, one in the waiting room, and the third in the coffee-shop. There are 'destination' screens in the last two places mentioned, but they are no longer working (5).

The station is well signposted and logically organised: all services going to one place leave from the same bay.

Timetables are displayed for about a tenth of the services using the station: where they are not provided, passengers can enquire about journey lengths at the Tourist Information Office. Fare information is not available.
VI.2.7.3 Leicester city centre viewed as an on-street bus station

The information provided at bus stops in the city centre has for the most part been treated above (VI.2.6) but the contrast between St Margaret's and the city centre deserves further mention. Boarding a bus at St Margaret's is easy; doing so in the centre of Leicester can be a very stressful experience. Passengers who carry a copy of the Guide (and who can read a map) will have no great difficulty. Those who have merely consulted a timetable before setting out will know on which street to catch the bus, but not at which stop, and may have to scour the area scrutinising all stops before hitting on the right one (perhaps missing the bus in the process). And as for people simply knowing (or assuming) that a bus for a particular destination leaves from somewhere in the city centre, they will find no formal guidance other than CityBus diagrammatic maps of the centre at a few stops (the writer saw three); but these cover CityBus services only, and using them depends on knowing the route number.

VI.2.8 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION AT INTERMODAL TERMINALS

VI.2.8.1 Railway stations

Neither of the stations visited had any information about buses, nor was the level of provision at the bus stops outside found to be satisfactory. Loughborough station is served by three routes going to the town centre, yet timetable information was provided for only one of them. A notice states that the Midland Fox 99 service can be caught in Nottingham Road, but not its destination (nor where Nottingham Road is). The stops outside Leicester station carry route numbers for all services, but the destinations are not given. Timetables were provided for half the services at the end of June, but for only a third of them.

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throughout the rest of the survey period: LCB displays vandalised in early July had not yet been replaced by mid-August.

VI.2.8.2 The East Midlands International Airport (EMIA)

Timetables for all the services stopping at the EMIA can be obtained from the enquiry desk staff. A copy of the latest Guide is also kept behind the desk, so that staff can answer queries about itineraries for which connections are needed. Fare information is not available, but such enquiries are dealt with by referral to the operator or Busline.

VI.2.9 THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ON BUSES

VI.2.9.1 Exterior signs

All but one of the 90 vehicles surveyed displayed a route number, and all but five displayed a final destination. No bus carried neither the one nor the other. Forty two vehicles (about 47 per cent of the total) displayed at least one intermediate stop besides the final destination. In one case at least, the destination stated was clearly inaccurate since the bus was moving in the opposite direction. The writer also noted that drivers do not always change the display on reaching the terminus: some were observed to do so only after passengers had begun boarding the bus.

No exterior signs were found on either the side or the back of any of the vehicles surveyed: all the information provided was displayed on the front, usually on destination blinds. (LCB is aware of this shortcoming, and vehicles with route numbers on the side are now beginning to be introduced (6).) About a quarter of vehicles were equipped with electronic destination boards. In four cases, the information was carried on a printed board in the window. One vehicle
had its destination board below the windscreen rather than above it.

VI.2.9.2 Inside the bus

So far as the writer could ascertain, no Leicestershire buses carry strip maps of their routes, nor are the names of stops announced unless a passenger has specifically requested the driver to do so.

Timetable leaflets are rarely provided in buses: the writer found only three — one MF holiday timetable booklet, one MF 74A timetable in a 31 bus, and one LCB holiday timetable booklet — on two of the 14 buses surveyed either during the holiday fortnight or in the week before. There were display cases on a further six buses, but they were empty. (Time of day was not a factor.)

Posters giving notice of impending service revisions were more common, being found on six vehicles. Some concerned the holiday period and referred to all of an operator's services, some gave general information about a package of changes, while others dealt in more detail with just one or two services.

More common still were posters about bus passes and other cheap fare deals offered by the operator, 'know your ticket' displays, and posters of an advertising nature — usually about the coach services provided by the operator.
VI.3 THE FINDINGS: THE QUALITY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED

VI.3.1 DISTRIBUTED INFORMATION

The Guide and three representative timetables - issued by MF, LCB, and the county council respectively - are included in a flap on the inside back cover. Readers are advised to refer to them in connection with this section.

VI.3.1.1 The Guide

As its full title indicates, the Guide is concerned not merely with buses but with public transport generally. In practice, this means that rail as well as bus services are covered. The information given about rail services is not extensive, but the maps show railway lines as well as the position of railway stations and specify on which lines intercity trains operate. The telephone number of the British Rail information line and its hours of business are also given. As for buses, the Guide covers all services available to the general public, whether commercial or tendered. School and community bus services are omitted, but this is justified by the fact that such special services are not available to the general public. The Guide can rightly claim to be comprehensive.

No map is perfect, since "a compromise has always to be struck between the desire for comprehensive coverage of detail and the need for clarity and ease of comprehension by users" (7), but the council has on the whole resolved this conflict with a remarkable degree of success. The Guide is not excessively large, whether folded or unfolded, and its layout is such that the whole document need not be opened before any part of it can be used. The network maps use a road/street-map base, which allows a wide range of information - including non-transport
information – to be conveyed, but the geographical background is not so
detailed as to compromise clarity. This is partly achieved by a good
use of colour: bright yellow for roads on which buses run, softer tones
for the background, grey for built-up areas, green for parks and woods,
red for important buildings. Individual bus routes are not shown
graphically, but are labelled with a code composed of the operator’s
initials and the route number. The maps further distinguish between
routes which operate on a frequent and regular basis and those on which
only occasional services run, and specify when a service runs in one
direction only.

More detailed information on frequency is given in the accompanying
service index, which lists all services by operator. A list of the
operators’ addresses and phone numbers is included, but the hours
between which these numbers are answered is not indicated. An index to
places served would have been useful, but could not have been included
without increasing the size of the Guide to the point of unwieldiness.
Indexes of streets for the inset maps are not provided either, for the
same reason. A more serious criticism can be levelled at the Guide –
that the maps do not systematically show the location of bus stops, let
alone their names (for those which have a name). This omission is the
only truly noteworthy design fault in an otherwise well thought out
publication.

The quality of any printed source of information is not merely a
function of its design, but also of the frequency of its update. Here
too, the council is doing as good a job as can be expected: the Guide
is revised at six-monthly intervals, so that no more than five to ten
per cent of routes have changed by the time a new issue is brought out.
Such a proportion is more than acceptable for a publication whose
primary purpose is to give an overview of the network.
VI.3.1.2 Timetables

All the operators surveyed publish timetables for all their commercial services - or claim to do so. The county council issues timetables for about half the tendered services (bus times for the other half are included in the timetables for commercial services). In this section, the writer has drawn on all the timetables she collected to determine how their design generally compares with the guidelines found in the literature (8,9): the timetables appended are meant as illustrations.

There is much scope for improvement. For a start, all but one of the specimens studied bore only the date from which they were valid (the exception was a MF summer specials timetable). The failure to specify the period of validity is not altogether surprising: the operators simply do not know when they issue a timetable how long it will be before the service is revised. A solution would be to issue them at fixed and regular intervals - yet even those operators (eg LCB) who make a point of altering services as infrequently as possible and by batches do not do so.

Most operators group timetables for associated routes in a single leaflet. Some timetables include journeys on parallel routes, or at least mention them, but this is done far less consistently. Such journeys are never mentioned if provided by another operator. It is standard practice for other operators' services to be included only when provided in direct partnership. This is the case whether these services are commercial or tendered, but the latter are at least mentioned. Services providing onward connections from the points served are rarely listed. All this means that the timetables are not comprehensive.

The traditional matrix format with stopping points listed vertically on the left is universal, even though research has shown that a layout
with the stopping points on the horizontal axis (so that the times along each journey are read horizontally and all times at a given point read vertically) is more easily understood (10).

The timetables do not specify if the times given are for arrivals or departures (unless both are given for a particular stop). Nor do they state whether the timing points shown include all stops or merely a selection. The latter alternative is admittedly far more common, but the information should be given all the same. Even when route diagrams are included - the practice is by no means universal - the only stops indicated are those which appear in the timetable.

The council uses different symbols to indicate whether gaps in the timetable refer to services that run for only part of the route, or to services which run past those points without stopping. The operators do not make this distinction, to the detriment of users, who can easily get confused.

One operator (Barton) uses the 24-hour clock, which has been described as "one of the most important hurdles to timetable use" (11). The 12-hour system is otherwise standard. The appropriate initials (am or pm) are sometimes printed above each journey, but this is not always the case: neither Midland Fox nor the council bother to repeat them for all journeys, which makes their timetables less foolproof than others.

On the other hand, two common sources of confusion are avoided by all issuers of timetables in the county: the days of the week to which a particular timetable applies are prominently stated, and horizontal lines are usually drawn to make it easier for users to relate times on the right-hand side of the table to the stopping points listed on the left, when many journeys are included on the same line.
VI.3.2 TELEPHONE INFORMATION

This section is concerned with the accuracy of the information given to the writer when specific questions were asked over the telephone. Since too few calls were made for the evidence to be conclusive, the section can have only anecdotal significance. No conclusion at all, no matter how tentative, could be drawn about the provision of real-time information in the case of disruption, because such enquiries were all answered to the effect that the services in question were running normally, which turned out to be the case.

All others enquiries put to LCB and Busline were accurately answered. Sadly, such was not always the case with Midland Fox: only three out of five questions were answered correctly. On one occasion, they denied operating a tendered Sunday service which they had but recently started (the 310 from Loughborough to Nottingham via the EMIA); on another, the timetable information they provided was inaccurate. Further anecdotal evidence of the poor quality of their information service can be found in a letter (12) recently published in the local press. (The letter, which tells the story of a "very bad day" in the life of the correspondent, reads like a comedy of errors; anyone who can get hold of a copy is urged to do so.)

VI.3.3 MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS ON LEGIBILITY

A drawback to the non-printing of special timetables for bus stops is that the displays cannot comfortably be read by people standing in a queue at a distance of say one metre. Some of the timetables found were not legible at all, because the display cases had either become dirty over time or not been replaced after being defaced by vandals.

The size of lettering used for bus stop names on flags is too small to be easily read from buses — but this has got nothing to do with bad
design, since the positioning and orientation of the flags make it clear that the information they carry is not intended for the benefit of users on the move.

The writer experienced difficulties in deciphering the destination boards of six of the vehicles surveyed. The figure is not particularly meaningful because the observations were not conducted under uniform conditions - some vehicles were stationary and others moving, and the reading distances involved varied - but the fact remains that a problem exists. Several factors were found to restrict legibility. They were, in order of importance:

- the size of the characters;
- the imperfect position of the message resulting from blinds having got stuck between destinations;
- dirty windows;
- electronic boards with poor contrast in sunlight or floodlight.
VI.4 THE GATHERING, HANDLING AND DISSEMINATION OF THE INFORMATION

The processes by which any information is gathered, handled, and disseminated are of crucial importance since the accuracy - and indeed the very availability - of that information at the point of consumption hangs on their effectiveness. This is particularly so when the information in question has a short life span, because frequent updating is essential. Such is the case with bus passenger information in Leicestershire: with an average of 30 service changes per month (13) updating the information must be more than a frequent exercise - it needs be an on-going process.

The writer has settled for a plan which broadly mirrors the flow of information from producer to user, so that the operators, who generate the information in the first place, are considered first and the county council, which plays a major coordinating role in the provision of comprehensive information, next. Treating the remaining providers as isolated entities would have entailed tedious repetitions, however, since one organisation's dissemination activities form at least part of the information gathering of those further down the chain. In dealing with them as a group, on the other hand, their respective performance could be related to their various sources of information and therefore serve as indicators of the relative effectiveness of the dissemination activities of the major providers (the operators and the county council). This is what has been attempted.

VI.4.1 THE OPERATORS

VI.4.1.1 Information gathering: a non-event

Since operators in the county do not provide information about each other's services, their role as information providers does not involve
the gathering of information from external sources. As far as enquiry office staff are concerned, the information comes 'from head office' — and the writer agrees that nothing more need be said about its origin. The form in which it is received is of far greater significance, but is best dealt with in the next section.

VI.4.1.2 Information handling

Neither the Midland Fox nor the CityBus enquiry office is computerised — indeed, computerisation is not even in sight (14). The staff rely on printed material, and answer most queries from timetables and faretables. Information on forthcoming service changes, including temporary route changes due to road works, reaches them in the form of weekly notices. Information about short notice changes is usually sent in memo form, but if the notice is very short other media are used: the telephone (LCB) or faxes (MF). The similarity between the two companies ends here. The differences are more telling, though, and shed much light on the contrasting performance of their enquiry staff.

Upon receiving an enquiry, the LCB clerk first identifies the relevant timetable(s) or faretable(s) by means of a street-index, then retrieves the information from the table(s), and finally checks the various notices to ensure that the information she is about to give is accurate. The index is updated whenever changes are brought in — the task is not too onerous since the company tries to combine changes and rarely revises services more than twice a year. Moreover, all enquiry staff receive constant and ongoing training: a regular hourly session every week. All this means that they rarely give false information by mistake. The company is also instantly aware of likely delays — all its vehicles are equipped with two-way radios — and goes to the trouble of notifying its enquiry staff immediately. Thus the information provided
Midland Fox staff do not receive any formal training but are trained 'on the job'. As might be expected, the result is total confusion: one clerk stated that an index of places served is provided, but that it took him almost six months "to get into it"; another flatly denied that any such index existed. The MF clerk has to cope with more than twice as many services as his LCB counterpart, yet he is - or at any rate he thinks he is - expected to memorise the entire network. As if this were not bad enough in itself, this network is highly unstable since the company revises services as and when profit dictates. It is hardly surprising therefore that wrong answers are sometimes given - indeed, one wonders why this does not happen more often.

Company policy also explains why it is that the phone is not always answered at Midland Fox. Of the three employees who work in the office at any one time, two are supposed to man the two telephone lines whilst the third deals with visitors. During tea breaks - or indeed whenever one of the 'phone people' needs to absent himself - the third clerk is expected to cope with both phone and face-to-face enquiries. By contrast, the LCB line is not answered from the enquiry office, but from head office. One line only is provided on a regular basis, but calls are diverted to the switchboard whenever necessary.

VI.4.1.3 Dissemination

Those operators who provide a special information line publicise its number widely - on the stickers they supply to the county council for bus stop flags, on all their printed information material (timetables, leaflets, posters displayed inside their buses), on any advertisement they put in the press, and more occasionally on local radio (LCB & MF) and the bus tickets themselves (LCB). The smaller operators, who often
run only the odd tendered service, do not have a special enquiry line nor do they disseminate their head office number except via the Guide.

Service and fare information is provided over the telephone. Only one operator was found to distribute faretables. Timetables are distributed both more commonly and more widely - but not as widely as they might be. The smaller operators provide them at their offices and send them through the post, though usually only on receipt of a stamped envelope. Larger operators also send them to their agents and to various public organisations - yet the process is by no means always automatic in the latter case. Buses are rarely used as an outlet, even during holiday periods. Finally, the provision of timetables at bus stops is far from adequate: it is limited in extent, and the timetables on display are neither systematically dated nor regularly updated.

Service changes are frequent, but poorly publicised, even by the major operators. Little use is made of the press, and the two operators who use the local radio station do not advertise this service (15). The most common dissemination tool for this type of information is the poster. Apart from enquiry offices, such posters are displayed mainly in the operator's vehicles - though not as a rule in all of them.

VI.4.2 THE COUNTY COUNCIL

VI.4.2.1 Information gathering

As a tendering authority, the council should in theory receive details of all service changes in the county directly from the Traffic Commissioner (16). In practice, procedural delays are such that the council has found it necessary to set up voluntary agreements under which the operators provide copies of their registration applications when these are made. A full timetable is included with each form. The
system works fairly well, but the council must scrutinise *Notices and Proceedings* (17) to check that they have received all the forms that should have been sent to them: about one per cent are not sent in automatically, or go astray. When missing forms are identified, the relevant operators are chased.

The operators also send further copies of their timetables at a later stage (when they have been mass-produced for the general public). They rarely inform the council of short notice changes to their services, however: the council is aware of delays caused by road accidents only because the police notify them of such occurrences. Faretables are provided by the operators.

VI.4.2.2 Information handling

Even with this improved information gathering procedure, the council only barely manages to bring its timetables out by the time the changes occur: the first two weeks of the six-week notice period must be spent determining — by means of a user survey — whether a tendered service is required as a result of the revision/withdrawal: two more weeks must then be devoted to the tendering process itself; which leaves but a fortnight in which to produce the timetables. With such a tight schedule, there is no time available for any outside printing: the timetables are printed in-house, using desk-top publishing technology. Computers are also used to analyse the results of the surveys.

Upon receipt of the forms, the information is put on a database. A record is created for each new service. As far as the writer could ascertain (18), a record is made up of six fields:

- identifier code made up of the operator's initials followed by the route number;
- status (whether the service is commercial or tendered);
- route;
- frequency;
- description of the last changes made to the service, with date.
- action taken, with date.

The database is used to produce Bus News but is perhaps most useful in generating reports from which management can identify priorities and hence plan the day-to-day work of the Department to ensure that no crucial task is overlooked.

A manual system is also used — partly because the Department has access to only a limited number of terminals, but mainly because the database does not contain all the data necessary to answer telephone enquiries. Details of schedules, in particular, are not included: the task of entering and then updating this data would be phenomenal, so that it cannot practically be contemplated by the council (19).

An index of places served is compiled every six months, when the Guide is revised. For each location on the main map, a grid reference is given, along with an exhaustive list of identifier codes for its services. For the inset maps of urban areas, street names are used in place of grid references. This index — used in conjunction with the Guide itself — is the primary tool of the Busline staff. Each member of staff (20) is provided with a copy, and is responsible for amending it as and when necessary.

For schedule enquiries, the relevant timetables are retrieved from the filing system (organised by operator, then route numbers) once the relevant services have been identified. Enquiries about forthcoming changes are usually answered from the latest issue of Bus News. If a new issue is just about to be produced, however, the relevant information may need to be taken from a 'registration booking form' — a digest of the Department of Transport application form referred to in
VI.4.2.1 above, compiled by the council upon receipt of their copy of the application.

VI.4.2.3 Dissemination

The council mails copies of the latest *Guide* to all public libraries, tourist information offices, citizens advice bureaux, bus company offices, local council offices, and parish clerks in the county. The process is automatic, but extra copies are always provided on request. Libraries and bus company offices are sent their copies first, on the grounds that they are the two places most likely to be approached for bus information.

*Bus News* is sent to the same organisations, but the mailing list for each issue is restricted to those geographical areas affected by the changes. The publication is also sent to all county councillors.

There is no mailing list as far as the timetables are concerned: the various organisations are expected to work out for themselves - from the contents of *Bus News* - which timetables they need, before ordering them. Public libraries receive special treatment, because the council is directly responsible for them: they are provided with printed order forms which can be used to obtain not only those timetables issued by the council, but also those published by all county-based operators for their commercial services. This brokerage service is not available to other organisations, who must therefore contact both the operators and the council - in that order, because *Bus News* does not specify which services are tendered. The odd request for a commercial timetable is not going to be refused on principle, though.

Members of the public can also obtain timetables - for both commercial and tendered services - directly from the council. A special journey need not be made, since orders are taken over the phone. This service
is not publicised, however, as it is meant primarily for people with reduced mobility, who it is presumed will bring the matter up on their own initiative.

The main channel of information dissemination directly to the general public is Busline: with limited resources (time and money), the council concentrates its efforts on what it rightly perceives as the essential. The Busline number is widely publicised - on all printed material, in the local directories distributed to all households, in the 'useful numbers' section of the phone book, and on all bus stop flags.

If the takeover of bus stops has meant better information, it is only insofar as the wider publicising of Busline is concerned. The council cannot spare enough staff-time for regular inspections of the stops, and so relies mainly on the operators to alert them of displays that need altering. (The system works, because the operators are keen to see their names on the stops, particularly when they do not have to put them there themselves, nor pay for the contractors who actually do the work.) Displaying route numbers or destinations would imply more frequent alterations, which is why bus stops outside Leicester city centre do not carry such information. Financial considerations have again dictated policy as far as displaying stop names is concerned: this is done only in Leicester (21).

VI.4.3 THE INTERMEDIARIES

VI.4.3.1 St Margaret's bus station

Like the council, the station first sought to obtain its information from the Traffic Commissioner but soon found that this approach did not work: they now obtain their timetables directly from the operators. Information handling at the station will not be discussed here, since
the subject has been fully dealt with earlier (VI.2.7.2).

VI.4.3.2 Others

The case of Loughborough public library shows that a high standard of provision can be achieved when most of the information is obtained from a single source. Much depends, admittedly, on the degree of commitment with which the whole task is approached: if the groundwork is not done properly or regularly, then the system breaks down. But if the job is taken seriously – as it is by the librarian at Loughborough – the necessary timetables can be obtained with a minimum of delay and hence be received by the time the changes are implemented, if not before.

When each operator has to be approached individually, the ordering process takes much longer and the response time becomes all the more crucial as a result. The council cannot physically send its timetables until the last minute (they are not produced until then), but is by all accounts swift in answering requests once it is in a position to do so. The same cannot be said of the operators, who are consistently reported to be slower than the council – with one significant exception: the travel agents had no complaints in this respect.

These delays in transmission are somewhat compensated for by the fact that the operators, unlike the council, can bring out their timetables with some time to spare – which is why the Loughborough tourist information office can perform as well as it does.

The much poorer performance of the Loughborough Coach Centre must be attributed to the attitude of the staff, or indeed of management, since the clerks interviewed were at pains to stress that the provision of bus information is "a free service". The staff of the in-house library at county hall do not even have this excuse – or indeed any other since current timetables can be obtained from within the building. Providing
outdated bus information is far worse than providing none: the public transport user is better off being referred to a source of current data than being fobbed off with misleading data. The libraries and tourism offices which have opted out in Leicester are in this writer's view providing a far better service than they would had they taken on a job which they felt they could not creditably perform.
VI.5 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STUDY

VI.5.1 THE PROVISION

The provision of bus passenger information in Leicestershire leaves much to be desired in many respects, and certainly does not come up to the high standards set forth in chapter IV. For all that it is true, this statement is not particularly useful: perfection is not of this world, and to say that it is not to be found here is merely stating the obvious.

A list of good and bad points would be of only marginally greater use: rather than simply repeating the isolated findings set out above, what is needed is a more systematic analysis – and one in which the system is regarded as a whole, since all shortcomings are not equally significant from the point of view of the would-be traveller. Some shortcomings compound each other: problems with distributed information are made worse by the poor dissemination of information about service changes. A good level of provision in one area can conversely counterbalance failings elsewhere: the availability of comprehensive fare and schedule information via the well-publicised Busline compensates for shortcomings in the quality and distribution of printed materials and, to a certain extent, for the poor provision of such information at bus stops. Yet it is not sufficient that information be available in some form: it must be made clear to users exactly how and where they can obtain full and reliable information in the first place.

Shortcomings stem from a variety of causes. Sometimes the problem is mainly oversight: there is no particular technical difficulty, nor even any great cost involved, but the information is simply not provided. Examples are the lack of distributed faretables, the fact that route numbers are only displayed on the front of vehicles, and the absence of
'during the trip' information inside buses. A variation on the above is ergonomic oversight where the information is provided: poorly designed signs or timetables, dirty destination boards, and so on. Here again, improvements could be achieved at very little cost. Other, more intractable, problems stem from the very nature of the information - and its short 'shelf life' in particular.

Many difficulties are linked with the printed word being the main medium used to convey information. Those many users who still rely on distributed timetables to plan their journeys often have cause to regret it: the timetables are not as widely available as they might be, so obtaining them can be a problem; worse still, they cannot be relied upon, since they do not carry a period of validity. The first problem might be eased were a county-wide timetable booklet to be provided, but such a timetable would be out of date within a few days of its publication. The reliance on printed timetables does not particularly benefit the producer either, because much money and effort must be expended on reprinting and redistribution whenever a change occurs.

Telephone information systems - even manual ones - have the potential to overcome most of the difficulties which arise with distributed information, as Busline demonstrates. The staff must of course have received the timetables in the first place, and have a reliable indexing system. Computer-assisted telephone systems would have the advantage of faster retrieval, though offices where speed is a significant problem but whose staff are not well enough trained to cope even with a paper-based system would not benefit from such a technological fix. Fully automated speech-synthesiser systems would present advantages in terms of speed and staff reliability, but their cost rules them out as far as the operators are concerned. For Busline, a computer-assisted system is not yet an option because marginal
improvements in retrieval time would be at the cost of having very large amounts of data to enter, while a computerised system would only be worth considering as part of an AVL system.

The provision of real-time information is as good as can be expected in the absence of an AVL system; current limitations here are in the domain of information gathering. On the whole, however, information gathering is at least adequate; as far as telephone information is concerned, the most glaring deficiency arises out of an information handling problem (or, put another way, a training problem).

As for information about service changes, dissemination is the problem. Bus News is intended primarily as a tool for the intermediaries who stock distributed information - its availability to the general public is limited. The greatest failure in this area is the failure to fully exploit the mass media.

The poor provision of timetable information at bus stops is understandable (in that it is linked with the frequency of changes), but not excusable.

VI.5.2 THE PROVIDERS

The county council is clearly taking its role as information provider very seriously, and is remarkably successful in its endeavour in view of the difficulty of the job it has taken upon itself. The council is alone in providing comprehensive information. Its services - the Guide, Busline, Bus News - form the backbone of bus information provision in the county, and the good level of provision at St Margaret's station (soon to be improved and extended to Leicester city centre) is a credit to them. All is not perfect - the information they provide on bus stop flags is a case in point - but they are well aware of passenger needs and of the deficiencies in their information system. On the whole,
they make very good use of the limited resources at their disposal in setting clear priorities whilst striving for continuous improvements in all sectors. Their approach is dynamic; they do not hesitate to invest in new technology, but do so judiciously — they do not see it as the panacea for all their problems, which is just as well since technological solutions can bring more problems than they solve.

The one blackspot in the provision of comprehensive information — the fact that bus information is not made available at railway stations — does not reflect on the council, which has no means of enforcing the necessary cooperation of the rail industry.

The performance of the operators is far less satisfactory. They do not provide comprehensive information, nor are they particularly efficient at disseminating information about their own services to the public. The quality of the services that are provided varies greatly from operator to operator, but all could do better. It is significant that provision is least adequate in those areas where the council does not intervene but leaves the job entirely to the operators: information on and in vehicles, schedule and fare information at bus stops. On the positive side, the operators are relatively good at providing the council not only with information about service changes, but also with details of their schedules and fares.
NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER VI

(1) The reader will find that the survey method described bears striking similarities to the methodology adopted by the National Consumer Council in their recent surveys. These similarities are to a large extent coincidental, since this survey was well under way by the time the writer got hold of the NCC reports. Yet the original approach was refined under their influence, which the writer wishes to acknowledge here.

(2) Update:
The Traffic Commissioner’s office was contacted in mid-July with a request for (a) an interview and (b) a copy of their publication, Notices and Proceedings. The writer did in fact hear from them in the last week of August; their reply made no mention of a possible interview, but merely stated that a copy of Notices and Proceedings would be sent on receipt of a fee. Thus, they have complied with the terms of the Transport Act 1985, which puts on them a mandatory duty to “make a copy of it available (by post if required and on payment of such fee as may be prescribed) to anyone who asks for one” (Part I, section 3). The delay involved is significant, since the writer’s experience mirrors that of the council (see section 4.2.1 of this chapter): the Traffic Commissioner’s office does what is required of it by law, but procedural delays are such that it cannot be relied upon as a source of information in an ever-changing situation.

(3) The Guide to public transport in Leicestershire is published twice a year (in January and June) by Leicestershire County
Council. The recto consists of a network map on a county road map base, together with an index of all services and a list of the operators' addresses and telephone numbers. More detailed maps of urban areas fill the verso. The publication will be described in greater detail in section 3.1.1 of this chapter.

(4) Leicestershire bus news is also published by the county council.

(5) The technology on which the system is based is now partly obsolete: essential parts - namely the PC boards at the back of each screen - are failing and cannot be replaced as they are no longer produced. The main bank of screens has so far been kept operative only by cannibalising other screens in the station. The number of screens available for cannibalisation is now running out though, and the entire system will need replacing soon. The indications are that a new and improved system will be introduced some time next year: funds have been earmarked for this purpose in the 1992-93 budgets of both county and city councils. Three systems are currently under consideration. Whichever is chosen, it is intended to provide an electronic destination board for the station (similar to the present one, but which would also cover departures from other parts of the city centre), two route planners in the station, and some others at on-street sites in the city centre.

For further details, the reader should consult:
LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL. PLANNING COMMITTEE. St Margaret’s bus station - information system: report of the acting city engineer. April 1991.


(13) This figure – which amounts to nearly ten per cent of the total number of services running in the county at any one time – was provided by the county council in the course of the interview held with their representative, Tony Kerk. It refers to the to the last two years only: in the period immediately following deregulation, changes were even more frequent.

(14) As far as enquiry offices are concerned; computers have been introduced in other departments at CityBus, and a database of all schedules has already been compiled for the use of management. The writer does not know what the situation is at Midland Fox, but
would not be surprised to learn that it is broadly similar.

(15) The writer did in fact come across one poster advertising the weekly programme in a MF bus, but this poster had obviously been printed some years ago. It is worth pointing out that the idea for the programme originated with BBC Radio Leicester, not the operators.

(16) Under the terms of the Transport Act 1985, the Traffic Commissioners have a duty to communicate this information to the tendering authorities in their area. This provision was intended to assist the tendering process: local authorities would use the six-week notice period to determine whether a new tendered service was required as a result of the change, and to put it to tender, if such turned out to be the case.

(17) Published fortnightly by the Traffic Commissioner.

(18) The writer did not see the database, and her source of information at the council, Tony Kerk, could not describe it in any great detail.

(19) This difficulty may be overcome when the new passenger information system is put into operation (see note 6 above): its various units will work from a common database, which will also be used by the council. This database will admittedly cover only services that go through Leicester, but a partial improvement is better than no improvement at all.
(20) All non-managerial staff in the Department spend some of their working time answering telephone enquiries (on a rota basis).

(21) Bus stops only need to be named once, but the council felt that the cost was not justified because the information is of no great use in and of itself (that is to say, if it does not form part of a location aid system for passengers during their journey). The policy has in any case just been abandoned, and bus stops names will in future be displayed elsewhere in the county.
VII CONCLUDING REMARKS

Despite some deficiencies, passenger information provision in Leicestershire is comprehensive, at least adequate in many respects, and uses new technology where it is most appropriate. A definite effort is made to meet user needs. Such a high level of provision - high by national standards - is the product of a partnership between the council and the operators, in which the council is both the driving force and the organiser. The operators provide the raw data which the council transforms into comprehensive information for dissemination to the public. They are also responsible for the provision of information on and in their vehicles, and of timetable and faretable information at bus stops (and bus stations, if they own them) - a responsibility which they do not discharge very well. Finally, they commonly have their own channels of information dissemination for their services, channels which can complement the wider service provided by the council but which sometimes are so inefficient as to do the passenger a disservice.

The potential for a good county-wide passenger information system is there - which is why the results of the case study have implications for other counties. The local authority plays a crucial role, which the operators are not prepared to take on themselves. Provision would be woefully inadequate without the council, as it clearly is where the local authorities do not voluntarily take on the job: they must be encouraged to, by legal means if necessary.

The Transport Act envisaged a system in which local authorities would obtain their information directly from the Traffic Commissioners. This system simply does not work, and the writer submits that the duty to provide the local authorities with information about service changes should be removed from the TC and placed upon the operators. The notice
period should further be extended to facilitate the provision of information about tendered services, and local authorities should have sufficient powers to ensure a minimum of intermodal cooperation in the field of user information.

As for the operators, they should not be allowed to get away with poor information provision but should be encouraged to concentrate their efforts in their 'natural domain', the vehicle and bus stop spheres.


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BUS TIMES

LEICESTER - Groby - Markfield
Whitwick - COALVILLE
Ashby de la Zouch - SWADLINCOTE

Includes services 109/121 LEICESTER - NEWTOWN LINFORD - STANTON UNDER BARDON to Coalville and Loughborough and Sunday services 217 & 218

SWADLINCOTE - Swannington - Whitwick - Agar Nook - Groby
ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH - COALVILLE - Markfield - LEICESTER

midland fox

Issue 11 7 May 1991
Service 117 Route Schedule: Leicester - Whitwick - Coalville

118 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - SWANNINGTON - ASHBY - NORRIS HILL - SWADLINCOTE

119 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - WHITWICK - GREENHILL

Service 117 Route Schedule: Leicester St. Margaret's Bus Station Stand C, Gravel Street, Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret's Way. Sanwey Gate (return journeys operate via Highcross Street, Vaughan Way, High Street, Haymarket) Northgate Street, Frog Island, Woodgate, Groby Road, A50, Glenfield, Leicester Road, Groby, Leicester, Markfield Road (return journeys operate via Groby by-pass), A50, Markfield Road, Field Head, Leicester Road, Markfield, Leicester Road, Chittaman Way, London Road, Main Street, Ashby Road, All Stones Lane, Whitwick Road, A50, Field Head Road, A50/M1 Interchange, A50, Shaw Lane, Bardon Road, Coalville, Waterworks Road, Cropston Drive, Greenhill Road, Blackwood, Hall Lane, Whitwick, Market Place, B587, South Street, North Street, B585, Brooks Lane, Thornborough Road, Coalville, Mantle Lane, Memorial Square.

Service 118: As service 117 to Markfield Leicester Road, Ashby Road and then as 117 route to Coalville, Bardon Road, London Road, Hotel Street, High Street, Ashby Road (Set down at Memorial Square on return journeys), A50, A447, Hough Hill, Station Hill, Swannington, Main Street, St. George's Hill, A512, Loughborough Road, Ashby Road, A50, Nottingham Road, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Nottingham Road, Wood Street, Market Street, Kilwardby Street, B5003, Moira Road, Norris Hill, Drift Side, Blackfordby, Butts Lane, A50, Woodville, High Street, A514, Swadlincote Road, Swadlincote, B5005, Civic Way. Bus Station.

Service 119: As service 118 to Coalville Memorial Square (operating in Markfield via 117 route), then Mantle Lane, Thornborough Road, Brooks Lane, B587, Whitwick, North Street, South Street, Hall Lane, Blackwood, Cropston Drive (outwards), Charnborough Road, Greenhill Road, Blackwood and then reverse of outward route.

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**117 LEICESTER - WHITWICK - COALVILLE**

**118 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - SWANNINGTON - ASHBY - NORRIS HILL - SWADLINCOTE**

**119 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - WHITWICK - GREENHILL**

Mondays to Saturdays pm

|                  | 118 | 119 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 119 | 118 |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Leicester, St. Margaret's Bus Station, Std C | 12.32 | 1.02 | 1.32 | 2.02 | 2.32 | 3.02 | 3.32 | 4.02 | 4.32 | 4.50 | 5.02 | 5.12 |
| Glenfield Turn   | 12.44 | 1.14 | 1.44 | 2.14 | 2.44 | 3.14 | 3.44 | 4.14 | 4.44 | 5.02 | 5.14 | 5.24 |
| Groby, Stamford Arms | 12.49 | 1.19 | 1.49 | 2.19 | 2.49 | 3.19 | 3.49 | 4.19 | 4.49 | 5.07 | 5.19 | 5.29 |
| Markfield, Green |     | 1.26 |     | 2.26 |     | 3.26 |     | 4.26 |     | 5.14 | 5.26 | 5.36 |
| Markfield, Queens Head | 12.58 | 1.28 | 1.58 | 2.28 | 2.58 | 3.28 | 3.58 | 4.28 | 4.58 | 5.16 | 5.28 | 5.38 |
| Greenhill, Cropston Drive/Smith Crescent |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Whitwick, Market Place |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Coalville, Memorial Square | 1.14 | 1.44 | 2.14 | 2.44 | 3.14 | 3.44 | 4.14 | 4.44 | 5.14 | 5.40 | 5.44 | 6.02 |
| Whitwick, Market Place |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Greenhill, Cropston Drive/Smith Crescent | 1.57 | 2.57 | 3.57 | 4.57 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Swannington, Robin Hood | 1.20 | 2.20 | 3.20 | 4.20 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Ashby, Market Street | 1.33 | 2.33 | 3.33 | 4.33 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Norris Hill | 1.41 | 2.41 | 3.41 | 4.41 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Blackfordby | 1.45 | 2.45 | 3.46 | 4.46 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Woodville, Clock Garage | 1.51 | 2.51 | 3.51 | 4.51 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Swadlincote, Bus Station | 1.58 | 2.58 | 3.58 | 4.58 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

For codes, see page 4.

**midland fox**

**Through fares available to Burton upon Trent!**

If you intend to journey from Leicester to Burton upon Trent in the daytime, using the 118 service to Swadlincote and then changing onto Stevensons minibuses to continue your journey, you can purchase single or RETURN tickets from the driver at Leicester and all points to Swadlincote!
### 117 LEICESTER - WHITWICK - COALVILLE

### 118 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - SWANNINGTON - ASHBY - NORMIS HILL - SWADLINCOTE

### 119 LEICESTER - COALVILLE - WHITWICK - GREENHILL

#### Mondays to Saturdays

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#### Codes:
- **NS** - Not Saturdays.
- **S** - Saturday Only.
- **W** - Continues to the junction of Waterworks Road/Bardon Road.
- **P** - Operates via Packington, Bull & Lion at 8.25am.
- **♦** - Picks up at Ashby Road (Police Station).
- **●** - Journey operated by Stevensons of Uttoxeter.
- **□** - Operates via Cademan Street and King Richards Hill in Whitwick.
- **✦** - Operates Burton Road/Eureka Road between Woodville & Swadlincote.

**On Monday to Saturday evenings between Coalville and Swadlincote there is a service provided by COACHING INTERNATIONAL. This service is supported by Leicestershire County Council. For more details telephone Busline (Leicester 313391).**

---

### Your local Midland Fox agents in Coalville and the surrounding area:

- Wilcox's, 19 - 21 Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch
- Blackbird Travel, 70 Woodgate, Leicester
- Co-op Travel, 21 Belvoir Road, Coalville
- Midland Fox Travel Centre, Ashby Road Garage, Coalville
- Groby Post Office, 32 Leicester Road, Groby
- Midland Fox Travel Centre, Opp St. Margaret's Bus Station, Gravel Street, Leicester.
FOX CUB SERVICES (SUNDAYS ONLY)

217 LEICESTER - GROBY - RATBY - MARKFIELD - COALVILLE - RAVENSTONE - ASHBY
218 LEICESTER - RATBY - GROBY - MARKFIELD - COALVILLE - ASHBY - SWADLINCOTE

Service 217 Route Schedule: Leicester, St. Margaret's Bus Station Stand C, Gravel Street, Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret's Way, Sanvey Gate (return via Highcross Street, Vaughan Way, St. Nicholas Circle, St. Nicholas Place, High Street, Eastgates, Haymarket, Belgrave Gate, Abbey Street, St. Margaret's Bus Station), Northgate Street, Frog Island, Woodgate, Groby Road, A50, Glenfield, Leicester Road, Groby Road, Groby, Leicester Road, Ratby Road, Ratby, Markfield Road, Markfield, Ratby Lane, London Road, Main Street, Leicester Road, Ashby Road, Altar Stones Lane, Whitwick Road, A50, Field Head Road, A50/M1 Interchange, A50, Shaw Lane, Barton Road, Coalville, Waterworks Road, Cropston Drive, Greenhill Road, Blackwood, Hall Lane, Whitwick, Market Place, South Street, North Street, Brooks Lane, Thornborough Road, Coalville, Memorial Square, Ashby Road, Coalville Lane, Church Lane, Ravenstone, Main Street, Ashby Road, Wash Lane, Swannington Road, Hough Hill, Station Road, Swannington, Main Street, St. Georges Hill, A512, Loughborough Road, Ashby Road, A50, Nottingham Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Wood Street, Market Street.

Service 218: As service 217 to Glenfield, Leicester Road, Station Road, The Square, Main Street, Kirby Road, Glenfield Lane, Kirby Corner, Ratby Lane, Ratby, Station Road, Main Street, Groby Road, Groby, Ratby Road, Markfield Road, A50, Field Head, Field Head Road, A50/M1 Interchange, A50, Shaw Lane, Barton Road, Then as 217 route to Coalville Memorial Square, A50, Leicester Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicester Road, Upper Church Street, Wood Street, Market Street, Kilwardby Street, B5003, Moira Road, Norris Hill, Drift Side, Blackfordby, Butts Lane, A50, Woodville, High Street, A514, Swadlincote Road, Swadlincote, Coppice Side, B5005, Civic Way, Bus Station.

SUNDAYS ONLY

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The 217 and 218 services are operated with the support of Leicestershire County Council.
## 117 COALVILLE - WHITWICK - LEICESTER

### 118 SWADLINCOTE - NORRIS HILL - ASHYBY - SWANNINGTON - COALVILLE - LEICESTER

### 119 GREENHILL - WHITWICK - COALVILLE - LEICESTER

**Mondays to Saturdays**

|                  | 117 | 118 | 118 | 117 | 118 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 118 | 118 | 118 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 118 | 119 | 118 | 118 |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                  | NS  | S   | NS  | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   | NS  | S   |
| Swadlincote, Bus Station | —   | —   | —   | —   | 6.49 | 6.58 | 7.36 | —   | —   | 8.00 | —   | —   | 9.00 | —   | 10.00 | 11.00 |
| Woodville, Clock Garage | —   | —   | —   | —   | 6.54 | 7.03 | 7.40 | —   | —   | 8.05 | —   | —   | 9.05 | —   | 10.05 | 11.05 |
| Blackfordby       | —   | —   | —   | —   | 6.59 | 7.08 | 7.44 | —   | —   | 8.10 | —   | —   | 9.10 | —   | 10.10 | 11.10 |
| Norris Hill       | —   | —   | —   | —   | 7.04 | 7.15 | 7.48 | —   | —   | 8.15 | —   | —   | 9.15 | —   | 10.15 | 11.15 |
| Ashby, Market Street | —   | —   | —   | —   | 7.14 | 7.23 | 7.54 | —   | —   | 8.23 | —   | —   | 9.23 | —   | 10.23 | 11.23 |
| Swannington, Robin Hood | —   | —   | —   | —   | 7.25 | 7.35 | —   | —   | 8.35 | —   | —   | 9.35 | —   | 10.35 | 11.35 |
| Whitwick, Market Place | 6.31 | —   | —   | 7.25 | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   |
| Greenhill, Cropston Drive/Smith Crescent | 6.37 | —   | —   | 7.31 | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   |
| Markfield, Green   | 6.50 | 7.00 | 7.14 | 7.44 | —   | —   | —   | 8.30 | —   | 9.30 | 9.30 | —   | —   | —   | —   | —   |
| Leicester, St. Margaret's Bus Station | 7.17 | 7.27 | 7.41 | 8.25 | 8.18 | 8.27 | —   | 8.57 | 9.27 | 9.57 | 9.57 | 10.27 | 10.57 | 11.27 | 11.57 | 12.27 |

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**MIDLAND FOX - EXPLORER**

Explorer tickets are valid on services with the following operators:

- **MIDLAND FOX**
  - Loughborough Coach & Bus
- **WREAKE VALLEY**
- **FAIRTAX**
- **UNITED COUNTIES**
- **MIDLAND RED SOUTH**

With Explorer, just when, where and how far you travel is up to you! Your ticket enables you to enjoy unlimited travel for a whole day.

For all Explorer and general travel enquiries please telephone the INFORMATION LINE: Leicester 511411

A day's unlimited travel throughout the Midlands with selected operators.
# 117 COALVILLE - WHITWICK - LEICESTER
# 118 SWADLINCOTE - NORRIS HILL - ASHBY - SWANNINGTON - COALVILLE - LEICESTER
# 119 GREENHILL - WHITWICK - COALVILLE - LEICESTER

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</table>

For codes see page 8.

You've got to say yes to our Airport Express.

X66 - The ONLY direct coach service from LEICESTER to BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT. Also serves Coventry & Birmingham.

NO BOOKING - Just pay the driver!

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## Timetable

### 117 COALVILLE - WHITWICK - LEICESTER

#### Monday to Saturdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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### Codes:

- **NS**: Not Saturdays
- **S**: Saturdays only
- **R**: Starts from Ravenstone, Plough Inn at 7.04am.
- **N**: These journeys start from Newhall, Springfield Road Top 6 minutes earlier than the time shown at Swadlincote Bus Station.
- **•**: Journey operated by Stevensons of Uttoxeter.
- **†**: Operates via Cademan Street and King Richards Hill in Whitwick.
- **★**: Operates into Leicester via Northgate Street, Sanvey Gate, St. Margaret's Way, Church Gate, Gravel Street, St. Margaret's Bus Station.

On Monday to Saturday evenings between Coalville and Ashby there is a service provided by COACHING INTERNATIONAL. This service is supported by Leicestershire County Council. For more details telephone Busline (Leicester 313391).

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For more information, why not give us a ring on Coalville 811490.
|                    | am  |         |         | pm  |         |         |         |         | pm  |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|--------------------|-----|---------|---------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Swadlincote, Bus Station | --  | --      | --      | 11.15 | --      | 1.15    | --      | 3.15    | --  | 5.15    | --      | 7.15    | --      | 9.15    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Woodville, Clock Garage  | --  | --      | --      | 11.20 | --      | 1.20    | --      | 3.20    | --  | 5.20    | --      | 7.20    | --      | 9.20    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Blackfordby           | --  | --      | --      | 11.25 | --      | 1.25    | --      | 3.25    | --  | 5.25    | --      | 7.25    | --      | 9.25    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Norris Hill            | --  | --      | --      | 11.28 | --      | 1.28    | --      | 3.28    | --  | 5.28    | --      | 7.28    | --      | 9.28    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Ashby, Market Street   | --  | --      | --      | 11.35 | 12.20   | 1.35    | 2.20    | 3.35    | 4.20 | 5.35    | 6.20    | 7.35    | 8.20    | 9.35    | 10.15   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Swannington, Robin Hood| --  | --      | --      | 12.27 | --      | 2.27    | --      | 4.27    | --  | 6.27    | --      | 8.27    | --      | 10.22   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Ravenstone, Plough     | --  | --      | --      | 12.34 | 12.34   | 2.34    | 4.34    | --      | 6.34    | --      | 8.34    | --      | 10.29   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Coalville, Memorial Square | 8.45 | 9.45    | 10.45   | 11.45 | 12.45   | 1.45    | 2.45    | 3.45    | 4.45 | 5.45    | 6.45    | 7.45    | 8.45    | 9.45    | 10.35   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Whitwick, Market Place | 8.51| 9.51    | 10.51   | 11.51 | 12.51   | 1.51    | 2.51    | 3.51    | 4.51 | 5.51    | 6.51    | 7.51    | 8.51    | 9.51    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Markfield, Queens Head | 9.06| 10.06   | 11.06   | 12.06 | 1.06    | 2.06    | 3.06    | 4.06    | 5.06 | 6.06    | 7.06    | 8.06    | 9.06    | 10.06   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Markfield, Green       | 9.08| --      | 11.08   | --    | 1.08    | --      | 3.08    | --      | 5.08 | --      | 7.08    | --      | 9.08    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Ratby, Markfield Rd    | 9.16| --      | 11.16   | --    | 1.16    | --      | 3.16    | --      | 5.16 | --      | 7.16    | --      | 9.16    | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Ratby, Memorial        | --  | 10.17   | --      | 12.17 | --      | 2.17    | --      | 4.17    | --  | 6.17    | --      | 8.17    | --      | 10.17   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Glenfield Square       | --  | 10.22   | --      | 12.22 | --      | 2.22    | --      | 4.22    | --  | 6.22    | --      | 8.22    | --      | 10.22   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |
| Leicester, St. Margaret's Bus Stn | 9.35 | 10.35   | 11.35   | 12.35 | 1.35    | 2.35    | 3.35    | 4.35    | 5.35 | 6.35    | 7.35    | 8.35    | 9.35    | 10.35   | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      | --      |

The 217 and 218 services are operated with the support of Leicestershire County Council.

Information Line: Leicester 511411
| SERVICE 109 ROUTE: Leicester, Charles Street, Belgrave Gate, Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret's Way, Ravenbridge Drive (return journeys via St. Margaret's Way, Church Gate, Gravel Street, Abbey Street, Belgrave Gate, Haymarket, Wymondham Road). Foss Island, Woodgate, Groby Road, Gainsill Lane, Anstey, Leicester Road, The Nook, Stadon Road, Hollow Road, B5327, Bradgate Road, Newton Linford, B5327, Markfield Lane (certain journeys via Markfield Court), Leicester Road, Main Street, London Road, Stanton-under-Bardon, Ellistown Collery, Ellistown Whitfield Road, Midland Road, Hugglescote, Station Road, Coalville, Central Road, Forest Road, Avenue Road, Bridge Road, Barresford Street (return journeys via Melbourne Street), Belvoir Road, Marlborough Square, Jackson Street, Belvoir Road, Memorial Square (certain journeys run via 121 route between Leicester and Anstey and also via Stanton under Bardon between Loughborough & Markfield). |
| Mondays to Saturdays am | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 |
| Coalville, Memorial Square | 6.25 | ---- | ---- | 9.38 | ---- | ---- | 11.48 | ---- | 1.48 | 3.43 | ---- | ---- |
| Stanton under Bardon, Village | 6.38 | ---- | 7.43 | ---- | 9.53 | (9.53) | 12.03 | (12.53) | 2.03 | 3.58 | ---- | ---- |
| Loughborough, High Street | ---- | 7.15 | ---- | 8.45 | ---- | 9.40 | 10.40 | 12.40 | 1.45 | ---- | 4.20 | ---- |
| Markfield, Main Street | 6.43 | ---- | 7.48 | ---- | 9.58 | 10.58 | 12.08 | 12.58 | 2.03 | ---- | 4.03 | 4.38 |
| Markfield Court | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | 10.03 | ---- | 10.03 | ---- | 12.13 | 1.03 | ---- | ---- |
| Newton Linford, Bradgate Park | 6.50 | 7.40 | 7.55 | 9.10 | 10.10 | 11.10 | 12.20 | 1.10 | 2.10 | ---- | 4.15 | 4.45 | 5.15 |
| Anstey, The Nook | 6.56 | 7.46 | 8.01 | 9.16 | 10.16 | 11.16 | 12.26 | 1.16 | 2.16 | ---- | 4.21 | 4.51 | 5.21 |
| Beaumont Centre | ---- | 7.51 | ---- | 9.21 | ---- | ---- | 12.21 | 1.21 | 2.21 | ---- | ---- |
| Glenfield, County Hall | 7.00 | ---- | 8.05 | ---- | 10.20 | 10.20 | 12.30 | 1.35 | ---- | ---- | 4.25 | ---- | 5.25 |
| Leicester, Charles Street | 7.15 | 8.10 | 8.25 | 9.35 | 10.35 | 10.35 | 11.35 | 12.45 | 1.35 | 2.35 | ---- | 4.40 | 5.10 | 5.40 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SERVICE 121 ROUTE: Leicester, Charles Street, Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret's Way, Ravensbridge Drive (return journeys via St. Margaret's Way, Church Gate, Gravel Street, Abbey Street, Belgrave Gate, Haymarket). B5327, Anstey Lane, Kresley Lane, Orwell Drive, Beaumont Way, Bennion Road (return journeys via Bennion Road, Orwell Drive), Anstey Lane, Gorse Hill, Anstey, Leicester Road, The Nook, Stadon Road, Hollow Road, B5327, Bradgate Road, Newton Linford, Main Street, B5327, Markfield Lane, Markfield, Leicester Road, Chatterman Way, London Road, Main Street (some journeys operate via Markfield Court), Ashby Road, Whitwick Road, B587, Copt Oak, B3530, Copt Oak Road, Nanpantan, Nanpantan Road, Loughborough, Forest Road, Woodgate, High Street, Swan Street, The Rushes (return journeys via High Street, Leicester Road, Southfield Road, Royland Road, Park Road, Forest Road). (Certain journeys run via 109 route between Leicester and Anstey and also via Stanton under Bardon between Loughborough & Markfield). |
| Mondays to Saturdays am | 119 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 | 109 | 121 |
| Leicester, Charles Street | 8.15 | 8.35 | 8.35 | 10.45 | 11.45 | 12.50 | ---- | 1.45 | 2.45 | 4.45 | 5.15 | 5.45 |
| Glenfield, County Hall | 8.48 | 8.48 | 10.58 | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | 4.58 | ---- | 5.58 |
| Beaumont Centre | 8.27 | ---- | ---- | 11.57 | 1.02 | ---- | 1.57 | 2.57 | ---- | 5.27 | ---- |
| Anstey, The Nook | 8.32 | 8.52 | 8.52 | 11.02 | 12.02 | 1.07 | ---- | 2.02 | 3.02 | 5.02 | 5.32 | 6.02 |
| Newton Linford, Bradgate Park | 8.40 | 9.00 | 9.00 | 11.10 | 12.10 | 1.15 | ---- | 2.10 | 3.10 | 5.10 | 5.40 | 6.10 |
| Markfield Court | ---- | 9.07 | 9.07 | 11.17 | ---- | 1.22 | ---- | 3.17 | ---- | ---- | 6.17 |
| Markfield, Main Street | ---- | 9.12 | 9.12 | 11.22 | 12.17 | 1.27 | ---- | 2.17 | 3.22 | ---- | 5.47 | 6.22 |
| Loughborough, Market Place | 9.05 | 9.32 | ---- | 12.35 | ---- | 2.35 | 3.40 | ---- | 6.05 | ---- | ---- |
| Stanton under Bardon, Village | ---- | 9.17 | 9.17 | 11.27 | 1.32 | 2.07 | ---- | ---- | (5.52) | 6.27 |
| Coalville, Memorial Square | ---- | 9.32 | 11.42 | ---- | 1.47 | 2.22 | ---- | ---- | ---- | 6.42 |

**CODES:**

NS - Not Saturdays
NTHS - Not Thursdays & Saturdays
Midland Fox timetables
Ambassador-Royale Holidays
Faresavers & Foxsavers
Day trips
Shearings/National Holidays
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Leicesterline timetables
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Coalville 811490 (Fox Cub hire in Coalville).

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Midland Fox Ltd, Southgates Centre
Midland Fox Ltd, Opp. St. Mary
HEAD OFFICE: Midland Fox Ltd
FOXHIRE: Foxhound Travel, G
All information correct at time of going to print, but will accept no liability for any reason of unpunctuality or failure to apply to Company offices.

Services 109, 117, 118, 119, 120.
ROUTE DESCRIPTION

MELTON MOWBRAY - Bus Station, Wilton Road, High Street, Market Place
(return Burton Street, Market Place), Sherrard Street, Thorpe End, Saxby Road,
B676; WYFORDBY TOP - Saxby Road, B676; SAXBY CORNER - Unclassified
Roads; WYMONDHAM - Unclassified Roads; EDMONDTHORPE TURN - Unclassified
Roads; TEIGH - Unclassified Roads; MARKET OVERTON - Unclassified Roads;
BARROW CORNER - Unclassified Roads; COTTESMORE SCHOOL - B668,
Unclassified Road; COTTESMORE RAF - N.A.A.F.I., Unclassified Roads -
COTTESMORE - B668; BURLEY - B668; OAKHAM - B668 Burley Road, A6003
High Street, Melton Road, Westgate Street, John Street, High Street, Catmos
Street, Uppingham Road A6003; MANTON LANE END - A6003; PRESTON -
A6003; UPPINGHAM - A6003 Ayston Road, Orange Street, London Road
(A6003), Unclassified Roads; LYDDINGTON - Unclassified Roads, B672;
CALDECOTT - Unclassified Roads; GREAT EASTON - Cross Bank, Brook Lane,
Pitchers Lane, Bradgate, High Street, Unclassified Roads, B672; ROCKINGHAM -
A6003; CORBY - A6003 Uppingham Road, A427 Cottingham Road, A427
Westcott Way, Elizabeth Street, Windsor Place, Bus Station.

Certain Journeys operate between TEIGH - Unclassified Roads; MARKET
OVERTON - Unclassified Roads; THISTLETON - Unclassified Roads; MARKET
OVERTON - Unclassified Roads; BARROW CORNER, then as above route.
Certain Journeys operate between PRESTON - Unclassified Roads;
RIDLINGTON - Unclassified Roads; AYSTON - Unclassified Roads, A6003 Ayston
Road; UPPINGHAM, then as above route.
Certain Journeys operate between COTTESMORE RAF N.A.A.F.I., Unclassified
Roads, B668; GREETHAM - B668; COTTESMORE, then as above route.

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Leicestershire County Council, County Hall,
Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8RJ.
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County Council. We plan these
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demand high standards of operation for
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complaints about the service itself or the
way it is being operated, phone
BUSLINE Leicester 313391 or write to
the PUBLIC TRANSPORT GROUP,
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
TRANSPORTATION, COUNTY HALL,
GLENFIELD, LEICESTER, LE3 8RJ.

Bus Service
Information &
Concessionary
Travel Enquiries

"BUSLINE"
Leicester 313391
### RUTLAND FLYER SERVICE

**MELTON - OAKHAM - UPPINGHAM - CORBY**

**Operated by FAIRTAX**

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### RUTLAND FLYER SERVICE

**CORBY - UPPINGHAM - OAKHAM - MELTON**

**Operated by FAIRTAX**

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**Codes:**
- NS-Not Saturdays
- SO-Saturdays only
- FO-Fridays only

*Operates to these villages on request.*
ROUTE AS FOLLOWS:
Service 111: Leicester (St. Margaret’s Bus Station, Stand C), Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret’s Way, Sanvrey Gate, Northgate Street, Frog Island, Woodgate, Groby Road, Leicester Road, Glenfield Turn, Groby Road, Leicester Road, Markfield Road, Groby (Stamford Arms), Ratby Road, Groby Road, Main Street, Ratby (Memoria), Station Road, Ratby Lane, Glenfield Lane, Kirby Road, Elm Tree Avenue, Park Drive, Stamford Road, Glenfield (Square), Station Road, Leicester Road, Groby Road, Woodgate, Frog Island, Northgate Street, Highcross Street, Vaughan Way, St. Nicholas Circle, High Street, Eastgate, Haymarket, Belgrave Gate, Abbey Street. St. Margaret’s Bus Station. Service 111: As Service 111 to Ratby Road, Groby Road then Sacheverell Way, Laundon Way, Sacheverell Way, Groby Road then as normal route. Service 116: As Route 111 to Ratby Road, Groby Road then turn round at the Forestry Commission Board back to Groby Road, Main Street then as normal route.

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Codes:
- MF: Operated by Midland Fox
- S: Passengers travelling from Sacheverell Way to Leicester should board the bus on its outward journey.
- T: Terminates at Haymarket.

**ROUTE AS FOLLOWS:**
Service 116: Leicester (St. Margaret’s Bus Station, Stand C), Abbey Street, Burleys Way, St. Margaret’s Way, Sanvrey Gate, Northgate Street, Frog Island, Woodgate, Groby Road, Glenfield Road, Leicester Road, Glenfield Turn, Station Road, The Square, Stamford Park Drive, Elm Tree Avenue, Kirby Road, Glenfield Lane, Kirby Corner, Ratby Lane, Ratby Road Station, Main Street, Groby Road, Groby Sacheverell Way, Sacheverell Way, Laundon Way, Sacheverell Way, Ratby Road, Markfield Road, Newtown Linford Road, Groby by-pass, Leicester Road, Leicester Groby Road, Sacheverell Way, Frog Island, Northgate Street, Vaughan Way, St. Nicholas Circle, St. Nicholas Place, High Street, Eastgate, Belgrave Gate, Abbey Street, St. Margaret’s Bus Station. Service 116: As Service 114 to Ratby Road (Main Street) and then Markfield Road turning round at the Forestry Commission Board back to Main Street then Groby Road, Ratby Road, Markfield Road and then as 114 route into Leicester.

**MONDAY TO FRIDAY**

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<th>Code</th>
<th>Bus Service No.</th>
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Codes:
- MF: Operated by Midland Fox
- S: Operates via Sacheverell Way and Laundon Way to Leicester Road, then to Groby as Service 111. Passengers wishing to board the evening service on Sacheverell Way/ Laundon Way to Leicester should co 50 in the outward journey.