

Upper Wharfedale Venturer - Newsletter - April 2016

This month sees the start of the Updale Venturer service. This first bus will leave Buckden at **9.40 a.m on Monday 11th April.**

Don't forget that on **Saturday 9th April at 12.30 p.m.** we will be holding the official launch celebration for the Venturer. All welcome - Please do join us to mark the start of this important community project.



The rest of this month's newsletter answers some of your "Frequently Asked Questions"

Frequently Asked Questions

What about Littondale?

We have indeed thought about the possibility of venturing up Littondale, although it doesn't really work as a detour as we can only just work with a 35 minute run from Buckden to Grassington and still make the connections. Working on a "learning to walk before we run" principle, our plan is to get the basic service running and stabilised and then to look at other opportunities. The challenge is that on Monday to Saturday we don't have much time when the bus is not being used. However – once the 72B service is running, we will certainly look at it.

In the mean time the Venturer will stop on request at the lay-by at Littondale Lane End.

Why have fares gone up?

It is more than two years since the last fare increase on the route, and comparison with rural services in North Yorkshire suggests that the new fare structure still represents very good value. The most significant increase is for through-tickets (i.e. to and from Skipton). This is because there are now two operators where previously there was only one.

Is it true that the costs of the service are fully-funded by NYCC?

No – the bus is provided by NYCC together with a fixed subsidy which is substantially less than the cost of running the service. The shortfall has to be made up by fare revenue, sponsorship, advertising and donations.

Will you allow dogs to travel on the Venturer?

We will allow dogs to travel on the Venturer as long as they are well-behaved. The fare for a dog is a flat rate £2 per trip. Dogs aged over 65 may travel free.

Can you take wheelchairs?

Although the bus is equipped to take wheelchair passengers, we are not able to carry them at present. There are three reasons, for this:

- Our drivers are not trained to use the wheelchair lift



- There are only 16 passenger seats on the bus. If we had to accommodate wheel-chairs, this would reduce to 14
- The wheelchair lift takes too long to use when running a scheduled service and if we allowed for this in the timetable, we would not be able to make the connections

We may review this position in future, but not until we have experience of running the service and understand the practicality better.

Is it true that service is safe for four years?

No – we have a contract for four years from NYCC. As long as we can make the service work, both financially and operationally, then the service should be safe. However, if we do not have enough volunteers and / or passengers, then we would have to review the position in conjunction with NYCC, and determine whether it was possible to continue the service in some form. Essentially, it is up to us as a community to make the service work, both in operating the service and by using it.

Will the “One pound - one way” ticket still be available for under 19s?

Yes – but it will not be a through ticket and will only work as far as Grassington. To continue to Skipton, people will need to buy another “One Pound – One Way” ticket from Pride of the Dales.

Will you accept the Dales Rambler Train/bus ticket?

No – unfortunately we are not able to accept this ticket on the Venturer.

Can we hire the bus for community activities?

If the bus is not in use it may be possible to hire it for community activities. This will only be on Sundays and in the evenings, and will be subject to availability of a driver. Contact 01756 636161 or email info@upperwharfedale.com for details.

Where can I get a timetable?

There are timetables at bus stops (from 10th April), local businesses (pubs, shops etc) as well as on the Venturer website at www.upperwharfedale.com

Why are you still asking for volunteers – haven’t you got enough?

We have now trained more than a dozen drivers – however the bigger the pool of drivers, the less demand there is on individuals. Furthermore this is a community scheme and relies on the support and participation of the community.

Will you only stop at bus stops or can I hail the bus?

The bus will stop on request if the driver believes it is safe to do so – i.e. on straight sections of road, which are sufficiently wide and with good visibility

What happens if the bus is full?

We will try to make alternative arrangements