

Review of bus services in North West Wiltshire

Service 91 (Malmesbury – Chippenham via the Dauntsey Vale) Service 91B (Malmesbury – Rodbourne – Sutton Benger) – info sheet

Summary of proposed change

Service 91 will be completely revised to run between Chippenham and the Dauntsey Vale only, operating approx every 90 minutes on a loop from Christian Malford via Startley, Great Somerford, Little Somerford and Dauntsey.

Service 91B will be withdrawn. Upper Seagry and Startley will be included on the new service 91 route to Chippenham. Alternative methods will be sought of providing a cost effective service for the few passengers who travel from Rodbourne.

Commentary on current service

Service 91 provides the main public transport service for the villages of Kington Langley, Sutton Benger, Christian Malford, Dauntsey and Great Somerford. It also provides Little Somerford with a service into Chippenham and additional journeys into Malmesbury supplementing service 31; and an alternative to the more direct service 92 for passengers travelling between Malmesbury and Chippenham. It currently runs hourly between approx 0730 and 1830 on Mondays to Saturdays, and is timed to provide connections at Little Somerford to and from Swindon.

Service 91B provides around 7 journeys a day (Mondays to Fridays only) from Malmesbury via Rodbourne, Startley and Seagry to Sutton Benger where it connects with service 91 to provide a link to / from Chippenham.

The services carry a total of around 47,000 single passenger journeys a year between them, including around 17,000 journeys to/from school or college. The current timetable is very expensive to provide because it requires the use of at least two buses.

The majority of passengers either travel between Chippenham and the Dauntsey Vale villages, or could use other services (92 between Chippenham and Malmesbury or 31 between Little Somerford, Cowbridge and Malmesbury). Use of the service to Malmesbury, to where the service was extended on an experimental basis five years ago, is particularly disappointing. Only around 6 return passenger trips a day are made between Dauntsey / Great Somerford and Malmesbury, and 1 or 2 trips a day between Rodbourne and Malmesbury. The connections to Swindon at Little Somerford are also poorly used, again generally with only 2 or 3 passenger trips a day.

Explanation of proposed changes

The number of passengers using the two routes (particularly the 91B) does not justify the level of service that is currently provided. It is therefore proposed to completely revise the service so that it will continue to provide a regular (approximately every 90 minutes) link to Chippenham, which it is believed will continue to meet the needs of the majority of the existing passengers.

In view of the small number of passengers travelling into Malmesbury who could not use other services, it is proposed that the link to Malmesbury will be withdrawn. Other ways will be sought of providing a cost effective service into Malmesbury from Rodbourne (which has no other public transport), and from Great Somerford and Dauntsey.

Proposed timetable

The proposed timetable for service 91 is shown overleaf.

