

## **Statement to B&NES Council meeting: 20th November 2025**

### **Chew Valley CIC Sustainable Transport Partnership – 3 of 3 – Phil Collins**

Thank you Elaine. So, to finish off our statement

#### **7. Is this route operating in an area with low connectivity?**

In other words, how much public transport is on offer here if this route is withdrawn? Remember the black hole of public transport in the Chew Valley? Indeed in your evidence base to the present local plan the Chew Valley is recorded as having no public transport apart from WESTlink (as the report was written in 2023)

The WESTlink service has proved to be less functional in an ultra rural context (where the algorithm doesn't recognise two villages next to each other as ones where rides can be grouped,) and our group has become aware of high dissatisfaction ratings. Indeed, figures put on the public domain by North Somerset show that WESTlink only delivers 41% of requested rides. This data also shows by its mapping that in the Chew Valley WESTlink is effectively functioning as a school bus taking students from South Bristol (outside the qualifying area for free bus travel) to Chew Valley School...except it is three half full buses travelling in and out each day and making it impossible to get a ride from anywhere else in the Chew Valley.

Please don't assume that our Public Transport needs can be met by WESTlink. Our group is consistently told (and have experienced ourselves) of an inability to book a ride even when trying to do so in advance, the fact that booked rides arrive ½ an hour early or are often cancelled at the last minute and many experiences of customers being stranded when their return journey is cancelled. Also the vast majority of people have been the only passenger on board when taking a journey, meaning this kind of service offers no social, health or wellbeing value (unlike the 99 and X91)

**8. Would the removal of this route have a strong negative impact on the local community?**

We have worked very hard to get people to trust travelling by bus and this trust was hard won after the 672 was withdrawn and then the *WESTlink* service under delivered. We believe that a continuation of funding for a further period would help us build this trust further and ensure the reliable continuity of provision, which is needed to build habits. Please help us to do this by supporting BOTH the X91 and the 99 continuing after March 2026. Let them go and you might have lost the one chance you had for genuine climate and nature supportive behaviour change.

Not only that but you'd leave a key rural area within B&NES with no timetabled bus services at all.

Finally,

**9. How do the other buses you are considering score against these core markers? Do you have the qualitative and quantitative information for them that you have for the X91 and 99?**

Thank you for listening to us.

Chew Valley CIC Sustainable Transport Partnership  
14/11/25