

## **STATEMENT FROM ROSA KELL – 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**

May I congratulate the Chair, committee and Mayor of WEMCA on the announcement today regarding trams and improvements promised for the future. However, it's jam for tomorrow today I should like to speak about protecting what we have now. I seek your support specifically for the First Bus Route 174 Wells to Bath and return.

The Chair and committee may not yet be aware that First Bus are proposing to truncate the Wells to Bath Monday to Friday evening service with last bus leaving Wells at 17.03.

If this proposal is implemented at April 2026 prior to any agreements reached with the Mayor West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, which may cause other services to need adjustments to buses Bath to Bristol and Bath to Wells once the current WEMCA budget shortfall is mitigated, it would mean that anyone working or studying in Street or Wells or Shepton Mallet or doing any after school activities would not be able to return home towards Bath.

If passenger cannot make a practical return bus journey they will not go out on a bus. If the bus is their only mode of transport, it endangers jobs and educational prospects, hinders hospital access, Bath railway station access and damages our tourism industry.

We the bus users have urgently set up lobbying rallies in Wells and Shepton, Midsomer Norton, Radstock for Saturday 14th February and are here today to seek your support and ask you to join us in asking First Bus to NOT implemented changes in April.

We ask First to give ample notice to passengers that these last two buses are in danger and allow negation to take place to find an appropriate compromise.

We know the decisions are made in Bristol but Bath and Wells, the Mendip network is essential bus transport for jobs, education schools and universities campuses, hospitals and the tourism and night economy. The early finishing of buses and We ask First to give ample notice to passengers that these last two buses are in danger and allow negation to take place to find an appropriate compromise.