

Blackpool's Bus Strategy

BLACKPOOL
COUNCIL

Local Transport Plan 2006/11



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Blackpool Council
BUILDING A BETTER COMMUNITY FOR ALL

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Blackpool's bus strategy. Buses provide essential transport to so many people living in and visiting the resort that their importance is difficult to overestimate. The Council is committed to encouraging the maximum number of people to give the bus a go.

Blackpool is unusual in increasing the number of people using the bus. This is due to the fine service that bus operators provide and the Council's ongoing support. Lots more people can make many more bus trips, taking the strain off the resort's roads and I hope more citizens heed this message.

The Council and its partners must maintain their efforts to accelerate bus ridership growth. The new Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) will address this as it's developed. Programmes to get buses through the traffic will be delivered.

Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) are valued partners and are to be congratulated on growing their business. As a Council-owned, arms-length organisation, BTS pays a valuable dividend, which has helped preserve vital local services. The vital role of Stagecoach North West's (SNW) inter-urban services is also appreciated. Lancashire County Council (LCC) is a vital partner in maintaining bus services across the Fylde Coast.

Buses are the transport of the future, particularly as private motoring costs may rise. There are challenges ahead, but I am confident that people will use bus services more to meet their travel needs.



Councillor P Callow
Leader of the Council



Section	Title	Page
1.0	Introduction	4
2.0	Blackpool and its bus network	5
3.0	Current policy framework and programmes	11
3.1	LTP2 objectives	11
3.2	Previous and planned actions	11
4.0	Key challenges for the future	12
4.1	National economic situation and funding pressures	12
4.2	Maintaining a healthy, viable and competitive bus network	12
4.3	Need to support Blackpool's economy	13
4.4	The regeneration agenda	14
4.5	The environment and climate change	15
4.6	Need to support communities	15
4.7	LTP3	17
5.0	Future strategy and key actions	18
5.1	Key actions	18
5.2	Achieving bus priority	18
5.3	Improving the passenger waiting environment	19
5.4	Bus permeability	19
5.5	Promotion and Travel Planning	19
5.6	NoWcard	20
5.7	Monitoring success	21
5.8	Park and ride	22
6.0	Conclusions	23
 Appendices		
1.	LTP core indicator BVPI102 – local public transport patronage – bus passenger journeys (,000s boardings per year)	25
2.	Map of bus routes	26
3.	Map of town centre bus stops	27
4.	Map of school bus routes	28
 Figures and Tables		
1.	BTS bus services	5-6
2.	Bus accessibility to key destinations	7
3.	LTP core indicator BVPI102 plus national ridership	8
4.	Bus access to named supermarkets	9
5.	Inter-urban bus services	10
6.	Bus punctuality summary – data available	21

1. Introduction

1.1

Blackpool Council is committed to replacing as many local car journeys with bus trips as possible and uses its Local Transport Plan (LTP) resources to achieve this. The resort has a strong bus network with high-frequency services. There is good bus accessibility to most destinations. Many people can use the bus instead of some car trips, helping to reduce congestion. The Council works with operators to put in infrastructure and travel planning programmes to achieve the following:

- Reduced traffic congestion
- Less air pollution
- Combating climate change
- Reduced road traffic accidents
- Less car-dependent and healthier lifestyles
- An alternative to low-income car ownership
- Supporting a regenerating economy
- Meeting social and special transport needs

1.2

This strategy analyses Blackpool's bus challenges, outlining the steps taken to meet them. Despite recent economic difficulties, ridership has continued to grow from 12m trips in 2003/04 to 16.5m in 2009/10. Blackpool's compact and urbanised area helps in providing an effective bus network that can be promoted as a real transport alternative for residents and visitors. The resort's approach has been based on:

- Improving infrastructure – stops and shelters
- Improving reliability and convenience
- Promotion and travel planning
- Supporting services to new developments, directly and through the planning system
- Integrating with the regeneration process

1.3

Bus is a good investment: bus services have a key role in a regenerated Blackpool. Current economic conditions are challenging, but the Council anticipates a happier economic situation where the bus services available to citizens can be increased.



A Blackpool Transport Services Line 11 picks up passengers in Market Street, adjacent to the resort's main town centre shopping areas.

2. Blackpool and its bus network

2.1

A new network was introduced on 26th July 2010. Services have been reduced and routes amended, reflecting Blackpools public demand patterns and the need to improve services reliability most trips remain possible and Devonshire Road has gained new service a proportion of cross town services have been removed, requiring the small number passengers making these trips to change. The busses are being repainted in a new universal livery, allowing them to work across the network.

2.2

The table below shows the current urban network: *(also continued on next page)*



A BTS single-deck vehicle sports its new universal livery.

Service No.	Between:		Daytime Frequency	Notes:
Prom.	Blackpool Airport	Fleetwood Ferry	20	Providing a high frequency alternative to the tramway (currently being rebuilt), this service provides access to the Solaris Centre, Pleasure Beach, South Prom and Blackpool Airport
2(C)	Blackpool Corporation St.	Knott End	12/18	Service 2 terminate at Poulton; Service 2c continues to Knott End with an hourly frequency. Core service only has stated frequency. Serves Blackpool Victoria Hospital.
3	Mereside, Tesco	Cleveleys	20	This is the only Line serving the Park Road area. The service is supported by Blackpool Council.
4	Mereside, Tesco	Cleveleys	20	This is the only Line serving South Park Drive/Preston Old Road/Kipling Drive and the Whitegate Drive Primary Care Centre. The service is supported by Blackpool Council.
5	Blackpool Halfway House	Victoria Hospital	10	Serves Blackpool Victoria Hospital.
9	Blackpool Corporation St	Cleveleys	10	

Figure 1: BTS bus services

Service No.	Between:		Daytime Frequency	Notes:
7	Wesham	Cleveleys	15	Serves Devonshire Road. South-bound some services terminate at Saltcotes Road. Core service only has stated frequency.
10	School Road/ Midgeland Road	Market Street	60	This is the only Line that serves the Watson Road and the semi-rural Midgeland Road/School Road area.
11	Lytham Hospital	Blackpool Pilling Crescent	15	
14	Mereside, Tesco	Fleetwood Ferry	10	Provides a through service between Blackpool and Fleetwood.
15	Staining	Poulton	30	Serves Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Faraday Way with Technology Management Centre and Devonshire Road (S).
16	Blackpool North Station	Cleveleys	30	This is the only Line serving East Park Drive and St Walburgas Road. It also connects low-car-ownership communities to Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Blackpool and Fylde College, Whitegate Drive Primary Care Centre, supermarkets and the town centre.
17	Blackpool Albert Road, Argos	Lytham Square	30	
20	Marton Mere Holiday Camp	Blackpool Star Hotel, South Prom.	30	Summer service using open-top vehicles to connect the town centre and tourism sites, including the Pleasure Beach, Tower, Stanley Park and Zoo.

Figure 1: BTS bus services

2.3

All services serve the vital town centre area. The developing town centre strategy is accommodating bus access to retail areas, although measures to divert buses around the new pedestrianised St John's area have been put in place.

2.4

Local bus services must serve Blackpool's unique human geography:

- Population - 142,000 people living within a housing stock of approximately 64,000 properties

- 12m people visited the resort during 2009 (Source: Omnibus survey)
- Car ownership – low: 37.4% households have no car compared with 26.8% for England and Wales.
- Deprivation - 24th highest in England and Wales
- Health - very poor morbidity due to high cardio-vascular, pulmonary and other illnesses, many associated with lifestyle
- Economy - 32% within tourism distribution, hotels and restaurants - an Economic Development Corporation will pursue tourism regeneration as from April 2010.

2.5

The resort enjoys good public transport accessibility as assessed using the National Accessibility Indicators shown in the table below. Thus most of Blackpool's significant destinations are bus accessible:

Blackpool's National Accessibility Indicators (2008) - by public transport		
Pupils to a primary school:	0-15 mins 100%	16-30 mins 0%
Pupils in receipt of free school meals to a primary school by:	0-15 mins 100%	16-30 mins 0%
Pupils to a secondary school:	0-20 mins 100%	21-40 mins 0%
Pupils in receipt of free school meals to a secondary school:	0-20 mins 100%	21-40 mins 0%
Population to further education:	0-30 mins 100%	31-60 mins 0%
Population of working age to major workplaces:	0-20 mins 100%	21-40 mins 0%
Population in receipt of job seeker's allowance to major workplaces:	0-20 mins 100%	21-40 mins 0%
Population to a GP:	0-20 mins 99%	21-40 mins 1%
Population without access to a car to a GP:	0-20 mins 99%	21-40 mins 1%
Population to a general hospital:	0-30 mins 77%	31-60 mins 23%
Population without access to a car to a general hospital:	0-30 mins 81%	31-60 mins 19%
Population to a supermarket:	0-15 mins 100%	16-30 mins 0%
Population without access to a car to a supermarket:	0-15 mins 100%	16-30 mins 0%

Figure 2: Bus accessibility to key destinations

2.6

Blackpool's bus ridership has continued to grow against the national trend, despite poor weather conditions experienced since 2006 depressing the holiday market. The table below presents the latest patronage figures available, comparing them with the wider Lancashire area:

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	% increase since 2003/04
Blackpool	12,000,000	12,100,000	12,000,000	12,594,000	12,650,000	5.42
Blackburn with Darwen	6,117,000	6,790,000	8,167,000	8,100,000	8,286,083	35.45
Lancashire Districts	54,460,000	56,800,000	57,990,000	61,150,000	61,992,000	13.83
Total	72,577,000	75,690,000	78,157,000	81,844,000	82,928,083	14.26
England outside London (source: Public Transport Statistics Bulletin – 2009)	2,394,000,000	2,338,000,000	2,315,000,000	2,476,000,000	2,440,000,000	1.92

Figure 3: LTP core indicator BVPI102 plus national ridership.

2.7

Latest data indicates that BTS ridership alone has grown to 16.1m in 2009/10. Targets contained within the LTP (BVPI102) and the figures achieved are attached as appendix 1. Survey data indicates that 9% of Blackpool trips were by bus. BTS alone delivers nearly 94,000 passengers each week to the vital Town Centre, spending an estimated £3,760,000 per week. A new bus network and changes to town centre bus arrangements have since been implemented, the impact of which will be measured.



A very high quality stainless steel shelter has been adopted for the new (2010) town centre bus circulation system.

2.8

Town centre bus services provide their passengers with access to the Hounds Hill Shopping Centre, Marks and Spencers, British Home Stores, Boots, WH Smith, Post Office and many other shopping outlets. The resort's outlying supermarkets are also bus accessible as shown in the table below:

Supermarket	Service No.	Frequency (minutes)	Notes
ASDA Cherry Tree Road	14	10	
	16	30	
Booths Highfield Road	10	10	
	16	30	
Morrisons Squires Gate Lane	7	15	Walk from Squires Gate Lane
Sainsburys Red Bank Road	3	20	
	4	20	
	15	30	
Mereside, Tesco's Clifton Road	3	20	
	4	20	
	14	10	
	16	30	

Figure 4: bus access to named supermarkets

2.9

Inter-urban services connect Blackpool and other major settlements for residents and those living in the significant Fylde Coast villages. Blackpool recognises that it is part of a Fylde-wide economy reflected in the Fylde Coast Multi-area Agreement.

Although focused on Blackpool town centre, most BTS routes provide services into Fylde and Wyre Borough Council areas. Stagecoach North West, Coastal Coaches and Cumfy Bus provide inter-urban services as follows:

Service No.	Between:	Daytime Frequency	Operator:	Notes:
42	Lancaster Blackpool	60	Stagecoach North West	Serves Great Ecclestone and Garstang
74	Fleetwood Blackpool	60	Stagecoach North West	Serves Lark Holme, Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Thornton, Poulton and Blackpool
75	Preston Blackpool	60	Cumfybus	Serves Fylde Coast Villages
76	St Annes Blackpool	60	Coastal Coaches	Serves Fylde Coast Villages
84	Fleetwood (Freeport Village) Blackpool	20	Stagecoach North West	Serves Wyre Villages, including Poulton
61	Preston Blackpool	30	Stagecoach North West	Serves Preston New Road and Whitegate Drive
X61	Manchester Blackpool	60	Stagecoach North West	Serves Squires Gate Lane and Lytham/Watson Road Summer only
68	Preston Blackpool	15	Stagecoach North West	Serves Lytham Road

Figure 5: inter-urban bus services



The Stagecoach 68 provides a vital service connecting Preston and Blackpool, via the Fylde towns and villages.

2.10

A map of town centre bus stops is available as appendix 3. BTS provides a timetable booklet and also carry Stagecoach timetables in its Market Street shop.

3. Current policy framework and programmes

3.1 LTP2 objectives

The current LTP (2006-2011) defines the Council's bus objectives as follows:

- To enable more reliable bus services to be provided by improving punctuality
- To make services more accessible by improving bus stops
- To provide clear information, that includes onward interchange to other public transport modes, including possible Real Time Information
- To encourage operators to provide a more modern bus fleet that is more comfortable to use, where possible
- To encourage easier to use ticketing systems with increased off-bus ticketing to speed up boarding and alighting

3.2 Previous and planned actions

Actions to date:

- Improving the bus stops and shelters for BTS Lines 5, 7, 11 and 14, including new shelters, greater use of clearways and raised kerbs to assist the mobility impaired. These improvements also benefit all SNW services within the Blackpool boundary
- Joint promotion of bus services with operators, including World Car Free day and other such events
- Maximising bus access to retail areas, including a new town centre bus circulation system
- Achieving bus priority by establishing an east-bound bus lane on Talbot Road
- Maintaining support for non-commercial services of social or community value
- Supporting the following measures to provide employment centres with bus services, partly based on developer contributions:
 - Blackpool Business Park - Lines 5 and 16 serves this strategic site with support from developer contributions.
 - Technology Management Centre and Faraday Way - A critical development mass has been achieved that will support a bus service, provided by the diverted Line 15
 - Continued support for the Rideability service for citizens unable to use the commercial network improving accessibility to shopping, leisure, health care and other public services, for those with mobility problems - 15,000 passengers are carried; £72,000 of funding was provided in 2008/09
- Prioritising buses on the Lytham Road corridor, using traffic light control technology during 2011



A BTS Line 16 moves through the spring sunshine: this line was founded from the 'Urban Bus Challenge' competition, but is now established as a commercial service.

4. Key challenges for the future

4.1 National economic situation and funding pressures

4.1.1 Public expenditure cuts, that will affect public transport investment, are expected during the decade over which this strategy will be implemented:

- Budgets for supported services and Rideability will be harder to maintain
- The Local Transport Plan programme will find it harder to fund infrastructure and bus priority improvements that can increase ridership
- The current recession has depressed ridership levels, particularly from the vital tourism sector, reducing revenue levels and making some marginal services unsustainable
- The development sector is no longer providing contributions that were used previously to support new bus service provision.

4.1.2 The supported bus services budget will not be increased. Resources available must be used with the maximum efficiency. Blackpool Council is concerned that any reduction in Bus Service Operators' Grant (BSOG) will lead to further service withdrawals.

4.2 Maintaining a healthy, viable and competitive bus network

4.2.1 The Council will work with operators to preserve the current network in a difficult economic situation. This is vital to the resort's current economic recovery and will underpin future regeneration as major developments come to fruition.

4.2.2 The following measures are required to promote modal shift:

- Carefully targeted bus infrastructure improvements
- Signage strategy to encourage tourists to make use of buses for onward journeys from car parking
- Achieving a complete quality bus corridor network with bus priority measures (Phase 1: Lytham Road)
- Install a Bus Priority Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) system
- Operators to provide increased peak-time frequencies and larger vehicles as demand grows
- Target groups open to bus promotion, using a 'smarter choices' promotion programme in the local transport plan
- 'pump-priming' initiatives to kick-start new commercial services



Line 15 was started using a developer contribution, which enabled it to build up its ridership. The service connects both Bispham and Staining with Blackpool Victoria Hospital and Blackpool town centre.



The Line 20 service uses open-top buses (weather permitting) to connect tourist attractions. Here a vehicle picks up passengers outside Blackpool Tower.

4.3. Need to support Blackpool's economy

4.3.1 Bus services have a high economic value to Blackpool; however, these services' full socio-economic value is much higher. Blackpool's economy could not function without essential bus transport. Significant modal shift from bus to car cannot be accommodated. Conversely the desired modal shift from car to bus would reduce the cost of accommodating peak-time congestion considerably.

4.3.2 As Blackpool's visitor numbers increase, there will be significant local distributor road network congestion. However, if car park management is efficient, tourism routes will be adequate for some time. A bus network with improved frequency, reliability and increased capacity, will be a vital tool to manage the resort's environment. This must not fall victim to short-sighted and counter-productive policy choices.

4.4 The Regeneration agenda

4.4.1 Blackpool has suffered from the decline in traditional British seaside tourism. National economic recovery, coupled with projected rising aviation fuel costs, presents the resort with an opportunity, provided that its offer meets modern tourism aspirations.



The new Talbot Gateway complex will accommodate 112 bus movements an hour including the BTS Line 3, here passing the retail store that will be integrated with that development.

4.4.2 Bus services must serve the following key developments. The planning system will enforce sustainable access:

4.4.3 Talbot Gateway - this crucial regeneration project will provide a new retail and public realm area with transport benefits including, better railway station access, including transport interchange facilities and a superior pedestrian and cycling environment.



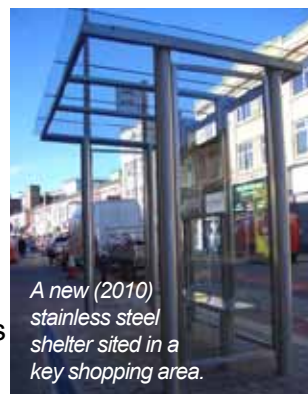
A BTS Line 16 service exits Corporation Street in the resort's retail core.

4.4.4 Town centre strategy – the following will be considered:

- Ensuring that bus services' town centre economic contribution is retained
- Amending the network to allow further pedestrianisation, but maximise bus service access where possible
- Achieving further bus priority similar to the Talbot Road east-bound bus lane
- Providing high quality stainless steel shelters and other infrastructure, presenting a positive image of bus travel to residents and visitors that complements the public realm

4.4.5 District centres - public realm improvements in key retail and community areas, achieving the following:

- Layton District Centre 20mph zone: shared-space design and 'boarder' type bus stops
- Waterloo Road District Centre: shared-space principles, including improved bus stops and removing a bus congestion hot spot.



A new (2010) stainless steel shelter sited in a key shopping area.

4.4.6 Promenade Movement Strategy - high traffic volumes compromise environmental quality. A strategy to use shared-space design principles in this crucial area will achieve the following:

- Enhanced bus reliability due to reduced traffic volumes and better flow management
- Bus access to attractions developed on new sea-wall headlands
- A vastly improved pedestrian environment, including enhanced signage and access to bus stops.

The strategy address the area's increased use as an events venue and the effects on bus services that this will entail.

4.5 The environment and climate change

Modal shift to bus travel contributes to the fight against global warming, sea-level rises and more extreme weather patterns that will follow it. The following measures are in place:

- Participation within the Local Strategic Partnership Environmental Sub-group
- A staff travel plan has been adopted and is being promoted
- Operators are purchasing more efficient vehicles, which also benefit air quality, although the Council cannot support vehicle purchase at this time
- Bus travel promotion strategy - promotional materials stress bus travel's environmental contribution



The Promenade carries several high-quality bus services, which will be assisted by a re-designed public realm. Here a BTS Line 11 travels south with the iconic Blackpool Tower in the background.

4.6 Need to support communities

4.6.1 Supported bus network



The BTS Line 10 provides a valuable hourly service to some of Blackpool's outlying areas.

4.6.1.1 Blackpool's communities rely on bus services heavily, particularly where they are suffering deprivation. The supported bus network listed below is vital in providing additional services which are not commercially viable to such communities:

- Line 3 Cleveleys – College – Bispham – Town Centre – Mereside, Tesco. Hourly evening service (daily)
- Line 4 Cleveleys – Norbreck Shops – Bispham – Town Centre – Mereside, Tesco. Hourly Evening service (daily)
- Line 10 Town Centre – Watson Road – Midgeland Road. Hourly daytime service (Mon-Sat)

4.6.1.2 Approximately £63,500 per annum is expended to support these services.

4.6.1.3 Support arrangements have been reviewed during the autumn of 2009 in response to a network review by operators. Service levels and quality have been maintained. The long-term aspiration to increase bus ridership remains.

4.6.2 Concessionary Fares



The NoWcard system makes cashless bus access simple for those entitled to concessionary fares.

4.6.2.1 The national Concessionary Fares scheme has increased bus accessibility for elderly and disabled citizens. All qualifying residents and visitors and disabled persons, receive free local bus travel for journeys undertaken anywhere in England after 0930 and before 2300 on Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and on Bank Holidays. Eligible residents may also travel free on the tramway, the Knott End ferry and at half fare on the Rideability community transport service.

4.6.2.2 The 2009/10 concessionary fares budget was £3.7m; a total of £4.3m expenditure was actually incurred, a considerable call on the resort's resources. The 10/11 budget will be set at a similar level. The Government has provided additional funding to support the regime. Concessionary fares funding issues have been a leading reason for the recent network overhaul that has been undertaken.

4.6.2.3 Lancashire County Council administers the scheme on behalf of all the Lancashire district councils plus Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. Concessionary fares have been accommodated within the NoWcard project.

4.6.2 School buses

4.6.3.1 School bus ridership has fallen in recent years. The network has been reviewed to seek value for money. The schools bus budget is approximately £259,000 gross per annum.



The bus network remains vital transport for many children

4.6.3.2 A new Travel2Learn card is being established linked to the NoWcard project. Education and Inspections Act 2006 free transport eligibility requirements are met. The review process is likely to recommend that lightly used buses are withdrawn and alternative transport provided. This will allow high demand services to be strengthened.

4.6.4 Meeting special needs

4.6.4.1 Growing numbers of low-floor buses and raised bus stops have improved access for mobility and visually impaired groups. Direct special needs provision has included:

- Support material for persons with learning difficulties wishing to use the bus network
- Promotion of the NowCard concessionary fares scheme for older and disabled persons



The Rideability service provides a vital lifeline to those unable to use the commercial bus network.

4.7 LTP3

4.7.7 The next decade will be a key transport policy period, not least in addressing the need to combat climate change and support economic growth. The LTP3 process must address this and other contingencies, including the possibility that a 'peak oil' situation will develop leading to rapidly escalating fossil fuel prices.

4.7.2 Lancashire's joint LTP3 process will be based on the Department for Transport's Developing a Sustainable Transport Strategy (DaSTS) national transport goals, outlined within the LTP3 guidance notes that have been issued:

- Supporting economic growth
- Tackle climate change
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Contribute to better safety, security and health
- Improve quality of life

4.7.3 Blackpool Council will prepare its LTP in partnership with Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, together with Fyde and Wyre Borough Council's that are signatories to the Fylde Coast Multi-area Agreement.

4.7.4 If Government wishes to see a low-carbon transport system that will support sustainable economic growth, based on strong and balanced local communities where the need to travel is minimised, then it needs to help implement DaSTS to achieve this objective. It is clear that national investment resources will be scarce during the LTP3 period. LTP Programme 10/11 allocations have been cut significantly following mid year grant reductions implemented by the Coalition Government, which will make achieving stated objectives more difficult. However, transport investment gives a good return and should be maintained where possible.

4.7.5 Local transport investment is cost-effective, particularly if local economies provide a balanced mix of employment and homes, where people can travel to work, school, retail and leisure using a combination of sustainable modes, particularly bus. Reduced need for high levels of individual mobility frees national transport infrastructure for freight and commodity transport, reducing the need for investment in additional capacity. High mobility levels do not necessarily correlate with economic growth or efficiency.

4.7.6 It is likely that the joint Lancashire LTP will make the case for heavy investment in bus promotion measures, including purchasing new vehicles and revenue support for marginal services, enabling their promotion for a wider range of trip purposes. A strong 'smarter choices' programme should support this investment, together with planning policies over the medium-term that will



reduce the need to travel and preserve urban fringe areas for wildlife and recreational use.

4.7.7 Although other modes have their place in a sustainable transport promotion strategy, bus is recognised as the mode most likely to achieve the modal shift desired. This will depend on a service quality that can rival the car for comfort and convenience, a point that is currently some way off.

5. Future strategy and key actions

5.1

Key actions to deliver the bus strategy are:

- Installing a comprehensive Bus Priority Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) System
- Providing a better bus waiting environment, including new shelters, information and more accessible bus stops for the mobility and visually impaired
- Maximising bus service permeability within the urban environment to improve reliability
- Ridership promotion using the 'Small Steps' brand, in partnership with operators and within the LTP3's 'smarter choices' programme
- Promoting travel planning within the Council and to other organisations through Blackpool's Travel Plan Partnership
- Rolling out the NoWcard project to eventually provide all users with cashless bus access
- Monitoring success by undertaking regular bus punctuality and satisfaction surveys
- Monitoring Park and Ride needs that may arise as a result of regeneration, redevelopment and changes in car park availability

These actions are contingent upon sufficient resources being made available through the local transport system to allow realistic programmes to be funded.

5.2 Achieving bus priority

5.2.1 A Bus Priority UTMC based system will be integrated with the Street Lighting and Traffic Signals Private Finance Initiative (PFI) that commenced in January 2010. Lytham Road between Squires Gate Lane and the Promenade, which carries several high-frequency routes, will form a pilot scheme allowing equipment to be proved for wider implementation.

5.2.2 Establishing further shared-space areas will also allow easier bus transit. Rebuilding a junction on these principles has eliminated a bus delay 'hot spot' at Waterloo Road in south Blackpool. This approach will be developed further during the Talbot Gateway regeneration project, which aims to promote bus access and penetration.



One of the Council's quality bus corridors, a BTS Line 14 provides a continuous bus service between Fleetwood and St Annes via Blackpool Town Centre.

5.3 Improving the passenger waiting environment

5.3.1 Corridor improvement schemes, replacing shelters and upgrading stops, will be considered for the principal Blackpool corridors. Further infill and miscellaneous shelter replacement will also take place.

5.3.2 A major programme to replace obsolete town centre shelters and improve stops will be delivered. This will integrate with the town centre strategy and regeneration schemes, including Talbot Gateway.

5.4 Bus permeability

5.4.1 The town centre strategy will accommodate the bus access necessary to underpin this priority destination's economic sustainability. In addition to upgrading shelters and stops, opportunities to prioritise bus services to improve accessibility and reliability will be sought.

5.4.2 In order to maximise bus services' competitiveness with car, it is essential that passengers can alight and board as near to shops and markets as possible, which has been balanced with pedestrianisation schemes.

5.5 Promotion and Travel Planning

5.5.1 Both principal operators, BTS and SNW, support the Blackpool Travel Plan Partnership and have discounted fare products in place to support this.

5.5.2 Bus travel will be promoted using Travel Planning techniques. The Council offers a personalised travel plan service.

5.5.3 The Council has developed a 'Small Steps' promotional brand, linked to the NHS 'Change for life' national campaign, which can be used for joint campaigns with operators. Groups receptive to



BTS bus promotion has stressed bus travel's advantages using quotes from regular users.

modal shift campaigns can be targeted using the Council's MOSAIC social profiling software.

Round round get around

Pay Point

A great offer in conjunction with PayPoint for getting around on our buses from **Fleetwood, Knott End, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Poulton, St Annes, Lytham, Kirkham and Wesham.**

Day ticket for only £3!

Normally £3.95.
(This ticket is for buses only and is not valid for travel on trams)

Available from 31st May
CHILD METRO TICKETS £1.60
(£2.00 if purchased on the bus)

BLACKPOOL TRANSPORT

A promotional discount on an all day ticket proved so successful that it has been extended.

5.6 NoWcard

5.6.1 Blackpool Council has contributed to developing the NoWcard 'smartcard' system in collaboration with Lancashire and Cumbria authorities. The Travel2Learn card, designed for students, will be the first element of this.

5.6.2 The Travel2Learn Card is a Stored Travel Rights Card. It is ITSO compliant and is specifically designed to facilitate the travel of 14-19 year old on the new Diploma course. The scheme is designed to allow Diploma pupils to travel by bus to any destination within the borough without the need for an on-bus cash payment. Fifty pupils will participate in the first year, after which the facility will be implemented resort-wide.

5.6.3 Local operators' vehicles are NoWcard reader equipped. Cards have been issued to concessionary users, elderly and disabled persons being integrated with the introduction of national free travel for these groups. Eventually the scheme will provide cashless bus access for all, a powerful promotional platform.



The NoWcard symbol is carried on the cards and supporting literature.

5.7 Monitoring success

5.7.1 Bus punctuality surveys are carried out on a half-year basis. Operators provide ridership data that informs indicators collated for the LTP monitoring system.

Overall 2007/08				
DfT Indicators Bus Service	i	ii	iii	iv
AM / PM Average	86%	79%	80%	2.02
NI 178	82%			

Half-Year Ending	13th November 2007				13th May 2008			
DfT Indicators Bus Service	i	ii	iii	iv	i	ii	iii	iv
AM / PM Average	90%	78%	83%	1.75	81%	80%	77%	2.29
NI 178	84%				81%			

Overall 2008/09			
DfT Indicators Bus Service	i	ii	iv
AM / PM Average	86%	79%	80%
NI 178	82%		

Half-Year Ending	November 2008			May 2009		
DfT Indicators Bus Service	i	ii	iv	i	ii	iv
AM / PM Average	90%	74%	0.11	74%	70%	0.91
NI 178	82%			72%		

Notes on the indicators:

i: The percentage of non-frequent buses starting their route on time (i.e. 1 minute early to 5 minutes late – or more accurately 60 seconds early to 5 minutes and 59 seconds late, best measured by the minute values on a radio watch or a digital watch, checked for accuracy before the start of work.) Non-frequent buses are those operating with a frequency of 5 or less buses per hour.

ii: The percentage of non-frequent buses on time at intermediate Timing Points.

iv: The average excess waiting time of frequent buses, i.e. those on routes operating with a frequency of 6 or more buses per hour.

Please note that indicator iii is no longer collected following new Government guidance.

NI 178 is defined as 'Bus services running on time'.

Figure 6: bus punctuality summary – data available

5.7.2 A Bus User Satisfaction Report was undertaken in April 2009 giving further insight into bus passengers' views.

5.7.3 Generally people were satisfied with the service (76%). However, they were less so when asked about particular service elements. The following had lower satisfaction ratings and might be deterring modal shift. These are existing users' views and there may be differences between them potential new users:

- Punctuality (69%)
- Conditions of roads used (69%)
- Safety at bus stops (69%)
- Reliability (69%)
- Lighting at bus stop (67%)
- Behaviour of other passengers (66%)
- Cleanliness of the bus stop (65%)
- Shelter provision at stops used (65%)
- Comfort of waiting facilities at the bus stop (59%)

5.7.4 The study clearly identified reliability, punctuality and driver demeanour as the most highly perceived obstacles to bus use. Based on the complaints people have made, there is dissatisfaction with other aspects, but these are less likely to attract a complaint.

5.7.5 Groups identified as likely to be more open to a pro-bus message were those using the bus less often, free-travel recipients, the self-employed, the retired and those in the lowest income bracket.

5.7.6 The Quality Bus Corridor approach is improving the passenger waiting environment, where there is dissatisfaction. The Bus User Satisfaction Report indicates that passengers are less concerned with this than other service aspects, particularly punctuality and reliability. Bus Priority UTMC will address these latter concerns and is now the Council's prime bus policy concern. Anti-social behaviour has also been addressed via on-bus CCTV and the Bus Watch initiative in partnership with the police and operators.

5.7.7 It is hoped that customer satisfaction with bus services will continue to improve. The Bus User Satisfaction Survey will be repeated as resources allow.

5.8 Park and Ride

5.8.1 Although considered within the Local Development Framework process, there is no immediate need for a Park and Ride service, which would not be cost-effective at this time. This matter will be reconsidered should capacity on Seaside's Way be exhausted. Currently urban congestion can best be controlled using better car park management and 'smarter choices' policies.



Modern buses are comfortable, attractive, accessible and produce little pollution.

5.8.2 Park and ride systems using existing bus services have been considered and may be brought forward if congestion grows. Shuttle bus provision between attractions and existing car parks might be come viable if further attractions are built by the private sector.

6. Conclusions

6.1

Blackpool has actively promoted bus ridership in line with its Local Transport Plan. As the current programme is complete in the spring of 2011, the first Bus Priority UTMC phase will be being installed, completing the LTP2 framework.

6.2

'Soft' promotion and Travel Planning measures have supported 'hard' programmes such as quality bus corridors and Bus Priority UTMC. Operators have worked closely with the Council, particularly through the Quality Bus Partnership, identifying their priorities and purchasing new vehicles.

6.3

Effective partnership working has brought the NoWcard scheme's benefits forward. Soon more people will have cashless bus access.

6.4

The Travel Plan Partnership and direct bus ridership promotion have brought new people to bus travel and this will continue despite any network amendments. Travel Planning is essential to sustainable travel promotion within the development process and bringing bus services to people who did not realise that they were available.

6.5

Concessionary fares have enhanced mobility for elderly and disabled persons, filling buses in the off-peak period. The NoWcard scheme has been adjusted to contend with first the local and then the national scheme. Unfortunately the scheme's financial consequences have contributed to the need to amend the network as service levels had become unsustainable in the current economic climate.

6.6

Environmental issues are increasingly important. Achieving modal shift to bus will help improve the local environment and control carbon emissions, depending on effective promotion and vehicle capacity to accommodate new ridership being available.

6.7

Blackpool Council has met its LTP2 commitments; bus promotion policies will continue into the LTP3 period, working jointly with neighbouring councils. Although there are challenges, the resort has a good network with operators that are committed to growing their businesses. As the resort regenerates, bus will have a key role in preventing Blackpool's transport system becoming over-stretched.

Appendices

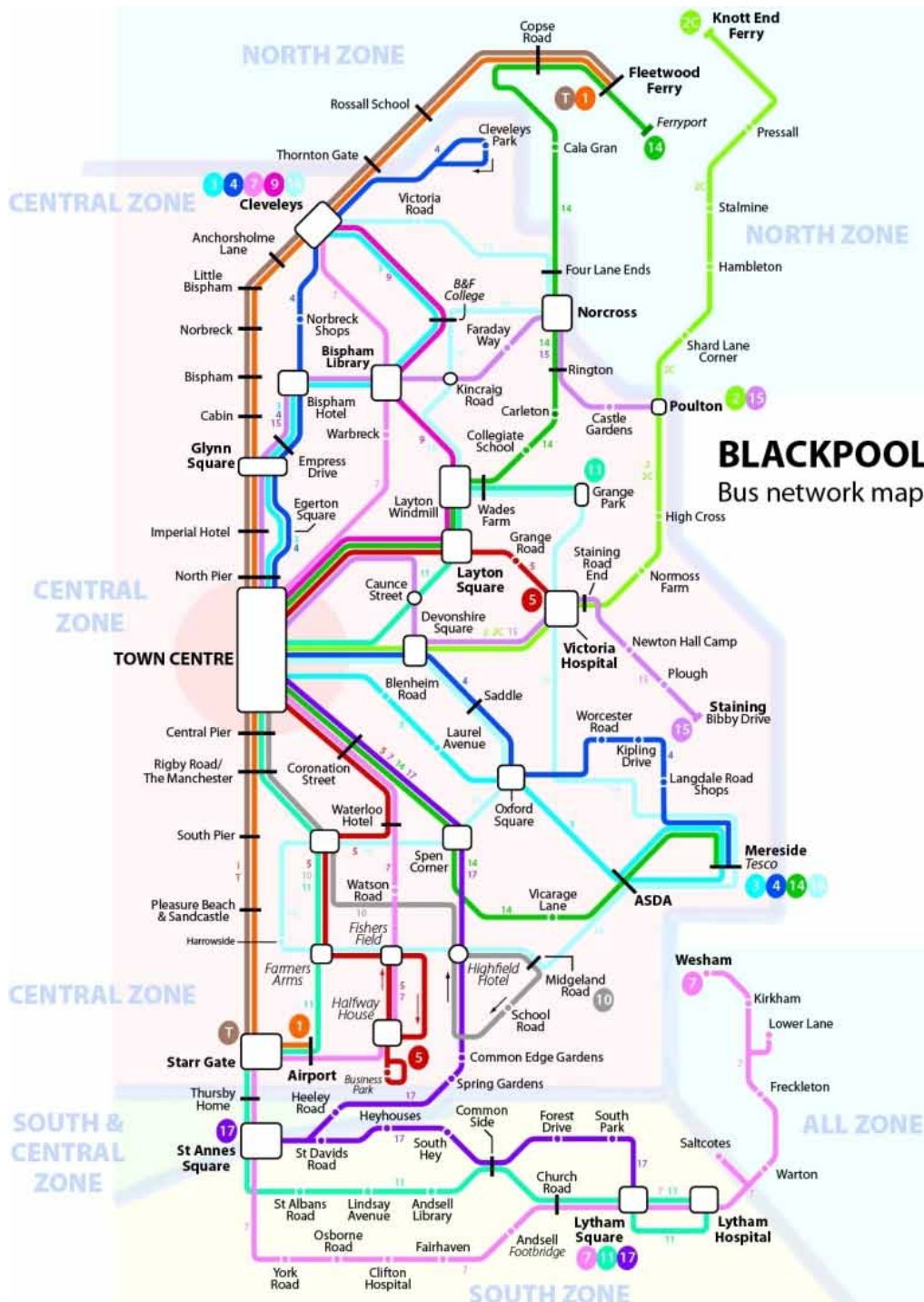
1. LTP core indicator BVPI102 – local public transport patronage – bus passenger journeys (,000s boardings per year)
2. Map of bus routes
3. Map of town centre bus stops
4. Map of school bus routes

Appendix I: LTP core indicator BVP1102

Local public transport patronage – bus passenger journeys (,000s boardings per year)

Total local public transport patronage in target - BVP1102 + tram	Thousands of passenger journeys (i.e. boardings) per year in the authority									
		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	
	Actual Figures	15,600	15,900	15,031	15,394	15,021	15,096	14,457		
of which number of bus passenger journeys - BVP1102	Trajectory		15,855	15,622	15,390	15,157	14,925	14,693	14,460	
	Actual Figures	12,000	12,100	12,043	12,594	12,650	13,118	12,649		
	Trajectory		12,052	12,104	12,156	12,209	12,261	12,313	12,365	

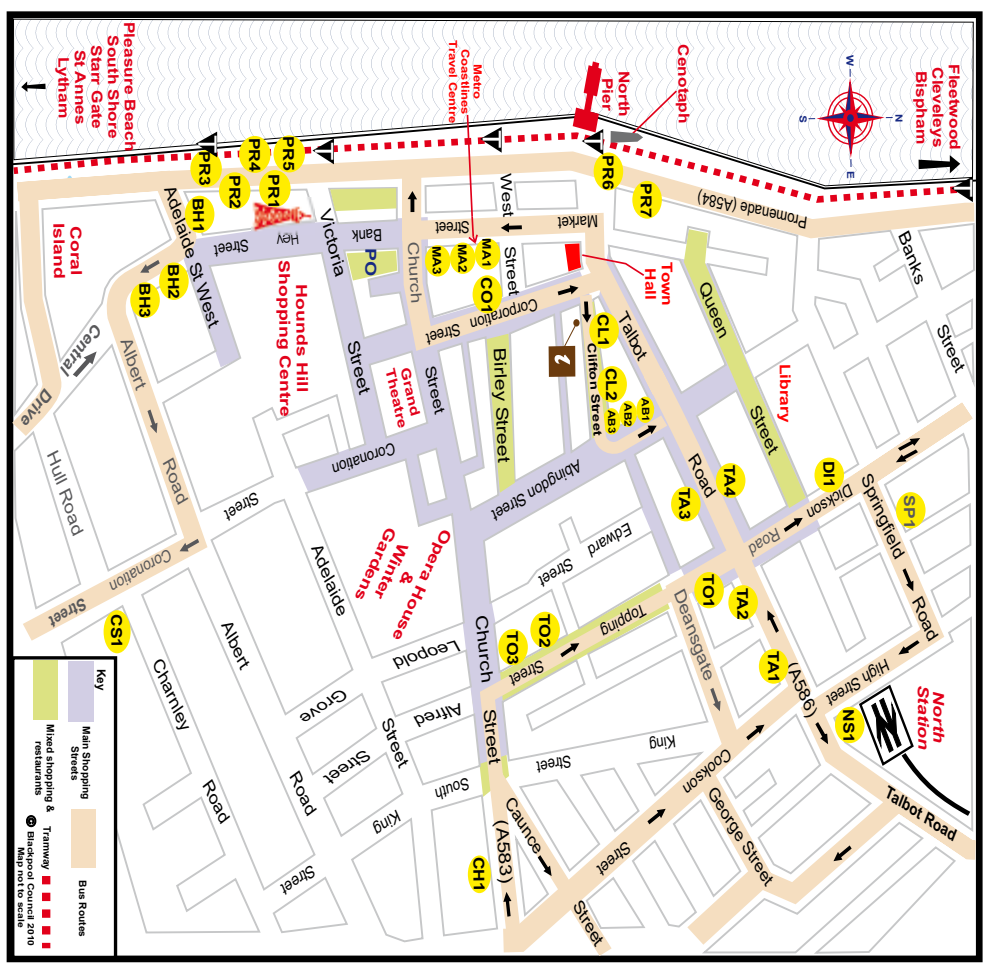
Map of bus routes



BLACKPOOL
Bus network map

Appendix 3: Map of town centre bus stops

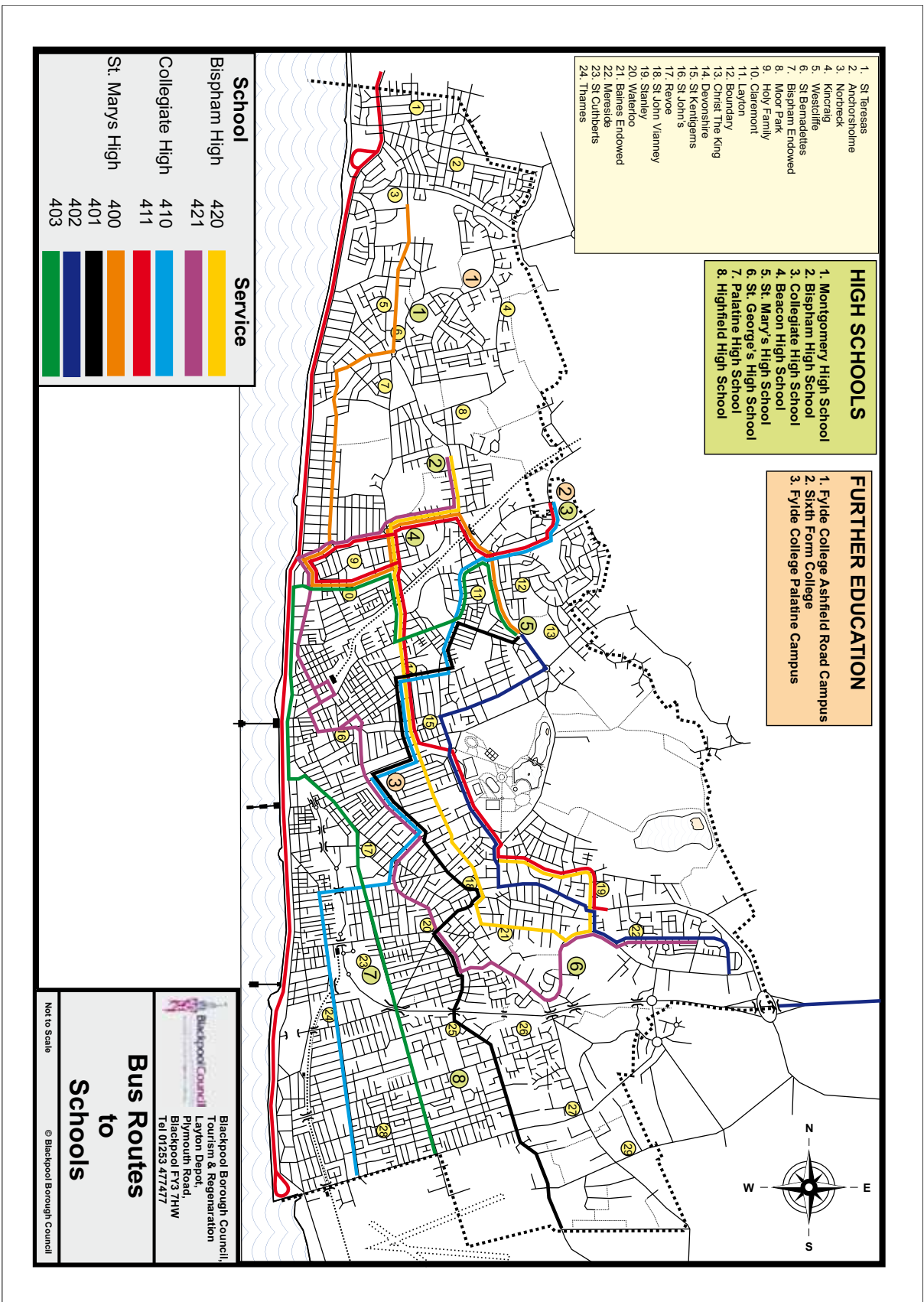
BLACKPOOL TOWN CENTRE BUS STOPS



Service	Service	Stops
1	To Pleasure Beach, Sandcastle and Airport	PR7, PR2
1	To Bispham, Northbeck, Cleveleys and Fleetwood	PR5, PR6
2	To Victoria Hospital, and Poulton	CO1, TA4
2C	To Victoria Hospital, Poulton and Knott End	CO1, TA4
2, 2C	To Blackpool Town Centre Terminus	CH1, TO2, CO1
3	To Bispham, Blackpool and the Fylde College and Cleveleys	CH1, TO3, DI1
3	To Park Road and Mereside Tesco	PR7, AB2, SP1
4	To Bispham and Cleveleys	CH1, TO3, DI1
4	To Whitegate Drive and Mereside Tesco	PR7, AB2, SP1
5	To Layton and Victoria Hospital	PR4, AB3, TA4
5	To Blackpool Business Park and Halfway House	TA3, MA2, BH3, CS1
7	To Bispham and Cleveleys	PR3, CL2, TO1
7	To St Annes, Clifton Hospital, Lytham, Saltcoates, Freckleton, Kirkham and Westham	TA2, MA2, PR1, BH3, CS1,
9	To Bispham, Blackpool and The Fylde College and Cleveleys	CL2, TO1
9	To Clifton Street Terminus	TA2, CL2
10	To South Shore and Midgeland Road	MA3, PR1
11	To South Shore, St Annes, Lytham Square and Lytham Hospital	CH1, TO2, MA3, PR1
11	To Layton and Grange Park	PR3, CL1, TA4
14	To Thornton and Fleetwood	PR4, CL1, TA4
14	To Marton and Mereside Tesco	TA3, MA1, BH2, CS1,
15	To Victoria Hospital and Staining	PR7, AB2, SP1,
15	To Bispham, Faraday Way and Poulton	TA3, AB2, DI1,
16	To Whitegate Drive, South Shore, Harrowside, Highfield Road, Asda, Mereside, Victoria Hospital, Grange Park, Blackpool and the Fylde College, Necross, Thornton and Cleveleys	NS1
16	To North Station	CH1, TO3, AB3, NS1
17	To St Annes and Lytham	MA1, BH2, CS1
20	To Sandcastle Waterworld and the Pleasure Beach Summer service, finishes 7th November	CH1, TO2, TA3, PR2
20	To Blackpool Zoo, Model Village, and Marton Mere Camp	BH1, CS1
▼	Tram Stops	

Building a better community for all

Appendix 4: Map of school bus routes



Building a better community for all

