

**Dorchester Transport Action Group (DTAG)
Minutes from Christmas Special Meeting
11th February 2025, 10.00-11.30**

Attendees: Stewart Palmer, Giles Watts, Richard Taylor, David Durose, Les Scarth, Frances Hogwood, Rob Hattersley, Susan Blake, Dilys Gartside, Helen Sumbler, Adrian Glover, Mary Calvert, William Gibbons, Robert Schopen (CoWheels)

Apologies: David Moss, Paul Langdon, Julie Booker, Robin Potter, Wendy Allwood



1. Welcome and Minutes (Stewart and Giles)

- No comments on the minutes of the previous DTAG meeting (14-01-25).
- We welcomed Adrian Glover, Manager of Public Transport at Dorset Council who joined the meeting after the first 10 minutes.
- No new members to welcome but delighted to see several people we haven't seen for a while.

- We briefly looked at the outstanding actions many of which were covered in today's meeting.

2. Guest Speaker: Robert Schopen of CoWheels

- Robert Schopen from Co-wheels presented their car-sharing service, explaining its benefits and how it operates.
- Booking and access to the car is via an app (or a card). Payment is by the hour (£5.5 to £8) plus 24p/mile. CoWheels supply the insurance. There is no age limit.
- Car-sharing is ideal for those who occasionally need a car and don't have a daily commute by car. It's great for replacing a second car & where parking is limited.
- In general, if usage is <6000miles/year it's good for car share. 1/3 are EVs, 50% are hybrids. One shared car share can replace up to 20 owned vehicles.
- CoWheels operate in 50 locations, have 600 cars and 30k subscribers.
- CoWheels target "Metropolitan living" (36%) and Urban squeeze (17%) households. They recognise the importance of population density, housing types, and parking constraints. Green activism also helps.
- Dorchester is not a great location for car sharing but it could work.
- Car sharing complements public transport. Both need to be carefully planned in advance for new developments.

Action: GW to find out who in Dorset Council knows about car sharing schemes and make contact with them.

3. Dorset Council and DCOP (Giles)

3.1 Low Traffic Future (Giles)

- Owen Clarke responded to our letter about Low Traffic Future's proposal saying that the consultation planned for late summer cannot be pre-empted at this time.
- Owen confirmed the "vision-led" approach to the LTP4 and that they will use the Quantitative Carbon Reduction (QCR) methodology to inform the development of their policies.

3.2 LTP4 Engagement Summary Report (Giles)

- Dorset Council have generated 4 reports from the LTP4 consultation that took place last year.
- They received 3000 responses, 300 attended the events and there were 90 groups that responded.
- The main report separates the comments into three categories: People (public transport, people with specific needs, isolation and affordability), Places (lack of public transport, urban challenges, accessibility, connectedness, environmental impacts and freight) and Activities (tourism/commuting/schools, sustainable travel, mobility hubs, walking/cycling and inconsiderate parking)
- The draft LTP4 is now expected in late summer 2025 at the earliest, as confirmed by Adrian.
- Frances emphasized the importance of Dorchester Town Council taking a greater interest in LTP4.
- Here is the link to the reports: https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/local-transport-plan-4?p_l_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DLTP4

3.3 Western Gateway consultation response (Giles)

- Giles has submitted a response to the Western Gateway consultation on behalf of DTAG following feedback at the last meeting and from other TAGs (who decided to submit their own response rather than a combined one).

4. Media and Social Media (Rob and Julie)

4.1 Social Media, Web site & newsletter (Rob)

- Little to report. All going well. Excellent feedback about the newsletter & website.

4.2 Planning for Open Meeting on 18th June (Stewart)

- The Corn Exchange is booked for the evening of 18th June

- The plan to make this year's event more interactive and engaging for local people. We want to attract more people and capture their views.
- The working group, consisting of Rob, Julie, Giles, and Stewart, is sorting out on the details and should have a proposal for DTAG at the next meeting.
- Advertising is crucial and Julie is planning a stall on the high street on Sunday June 7th to help advertise the event.

5. Active Travel (Walking and Cycling)

5.1 Walking and Mobility

- It was agreed that Frances, Mary and Susan would decide between them who attends the Dorchester Access group meetings and report back at the next DTAG meeting.
- South Street in Dorchester is still closed to pedestrians. Awaiting an update from DTC.

5.2 Cycling Status Update (David Durose)

- David has written to Nick Ireland (leader of council) about the Lower Lewell Farm cycle path asking for a safety audit.
- The probation service has agreed that they can provide manpower for cycle path maintenance in Dorset. (Such a scheme already operates in other parts of the country).
- A highways maintenance vehicle was found parked across a cycle path in West Stafford. David has written to the council but not yet received a response. Adrian Glover suggested using the Council's website for communication, but David expressed frustration with the lack of response.

5.3 Broadmayne to Dorchester

- An off-road cycle and pedestrian route from Broadmayne to Dorchester was proposed several years ago and there was mention of it in last year's ATIP consultation.
- After speaking with Chris Peck (DC), it seems that there is not enough support for such a route due to the likely low usage and few high priority users (e.g. school children).
- Another issue is a crossing at the West Stafford bypass which would be expensive.
- It has been suggested that a new development of 80 houses off Chalky Road in Broadmayne might provide some funds and justification for the scheme.

- David commented that Owermoigne is similar to Broadmayne and that nothing will change until part of DfT budget is reallocated from roads to active travel.

Action: Giles to find out more about the Broadmayne off-road scheme and the status of the new housing development.

5.4 Dorchester to Poundbury Cycleway phase 1 (Giles)

- DTAG organised a site meeting with Dorchester/Dorset Councillors and Chris Peck of Dorset Council on 21st January.
- The meeting was successful and by the end we think we may have developed a compromise where up to 4 of the existing parking spaces can be saved to minimise the impact on the local fish and chip shop.
- Chris Peck said he would take it back to his planners to see if it is viable.
- Chris also said he would do some surveillance on the parking places to see whether they are used by people visiting the shop or for other reasons.

5.5 Streets Alive Cycle Ride (Giles)

- DTAG are looking to organise a fun cycle ride for families in Dorchester.
- This would be a follow up to the Streets Alive event in 2023 with the purpose of highlighting the lack of cycling infrastructure in Dorchester.
- We can run it as a “Kidical” ride which helps us with support materials and insurance.
- The provisional date is Sunday 13th July and we will start/finish at the Great Field in Poundbury. The date and location have been booked with DTC.
- The next stage will be to start considering details, advertising and contacting various groups such as schools.

5.6 Cargo Bike Proposal (Frances)

- Frances is still looking into options for Cargo Bikes in Dorchester.
- AtoB magazine have a good article on the Vok cargo bike <https://www.atob.org.uk/product/a-to-b-142-tax-vok-cixi-vigoz/>

- Frances has come across an article about modified golf buggies ("You-Gos") being trialled in London: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/24/yo-go-electric-buggy-britain-most-dangerous-roundabout>

6. Buses

6.1 Status update (Les Scarth)

- First Wessex have made some small changes to their timetables. These are now posted on our web site: <https://dorchestertransport.org.uk/2025/02/bus-time-changes-in-and-around-dorchester/>
- No news on delays/cancellations to X51 service. First blames congestion.
- Stewart will present the idea of official “hitch hiking” sites to councillors in Frampton on 20th May.
- Stewart spoke had a productive meeting with Richard Wade of Morebus

Action: Giles to circulate Stewart’s minutes from meeting with Richard.

6.2 London Road bus stop (Stewart)

- DTC support a new bus stop on London Road but the transport department of DC will not consider a new crossing without evidence that it will be used.
- Dilys suggested that if a 20mph limit was introduced on London Road then it would be possible to have a simple Belisha crossing (marked with a light)

Action: Stewart to send Adrian all email correspondence regarding the London Road bus stop. Adrian to investigate why highways are reluctant to install a crossing at the London Road bus stop location.

6.3 CPRE Transport Project (Giles)

- Giles is working with CPRE on a joint transport project in Dorchester.
- The objective is to reduce congestion and pollution by reducing car usage.
- They are primarily looking building at car parks and reducing the maximum number of parking spaces per residence in some new developments.
- The inaugural meeting is 12th Feb involving CPRE branches in Cornwall, Dorset and Hampshire.

7. Trains (Richard Taylor)

7.1 Status Update (Richard Taylor)

- Richard highlighted upcoming disruptions on the Heart of Wessex line.

- Stewart announced that the work at Dorchester South Station is almost finished. The official opening date is now delayed from 7th March waiting on Edward Morello (Stewart).
- Mary raised concerns about the lack of lighting on Upper Fairfield Road, which she had already brought to Chris Peck's attention.
- Mary has also written a letter to the Echo about funding for the Wareham and Dorchester South Station's crossings.
- The Heart of Wessex proposals in Western Gateway strategy centre around increasing the frequency to an hourly service. This will be achieved by introducing a passing loop between Yeovil and Castle Cary.

8. Roads and Vehicles (Davis Moss)

- No update this week.

9. AOB

- William Gibbons suggested that we promote the use of buses more actively
- The deadline for a funding proposal with the NatureSave Trust is 27th Feb so this will be dealt with off-line.
- No Planning Permissions to discuss this month (Giles)
- Guest Speakers to be dealt with offline (Stewart)
- Date of the next meeting is Tuesday March 11th

Possible Talks at Future Meetings

Ken Lambert, Dorchester Disabled Club

Bob Owen, South West CRP – West Dorchester Station

Colin Divall, WATAG – Maiden Newton to Bridport Railway

Joe Doak, Dorchester Civic Society – Transport planning and infrastructure

David Moss, DTAG/DCS – Shared Spaces

Cargo Bikes and their usage in Dorchester

Outstanding Actions (12-02-25)

Walking (Frances Hogwood) and Cycling (David Durose)

- David to ask Dorset Council for a safety audit of the Lower Lewell Cycle Path
- Frances to draw up a funding proposal for a Cargo bikes project. [In progress](#)
- Giles to draw up proposal for showing “Follow the Sun” film in Dorchester
- Sub-team to look at the possibility of a family “Streets Alive” bike ride event in Dorchester. [In progress.](#)

Buses (Les Scarth) and Trains (Richard Taylor)

- Stewart to write to First Group regarding the possibility of a Sunday extension of the No10 bus into Poundbury. [To revisit in June.](#)
- Stewart to contact Yellow Bus company about option of new service in Dorchester. [Revisit once DC has a Bus franchising strategy.](#)
- Wendy to ask Damory why bus audio system is unreliable. [In progress.](#)
- Stewart to send Adrian all email correspondence regarding the London Road bus stop. Adrian to investigate why highways are reluctant to install a crossing at the London Road bus stop location.

Roads and Vehicles (David Moss)

- Stewart and Julie produce a paper on Community Transport & talk to Dorset Council to about system efficiency and making it easier to find the links.
- Giles to prepare 1-pager proposal and slidepack on a trial of official “Hitch Hiking” sites in and around Dorchester.
- Giles to find out who in Dorset council knows about car sharing schemes and make contact with them.
- Giles to find out more about the Broadmayne off-road scheme and the status of the new housing development

Communications and Media (Julie Booker)

- Stewart to finalise a format for the open meeting on 18th June and prepare advertising plan. [In Progress](#)

Dorset Council, Dorchester Town Council and Other

- David and Giles to work on a local transport vision for Dorchester to be submitted to Dorset Council as part of the LTP4 discussions. [In progress.](#)
- Giles to progress transport project with CPRE and report back. [In progress.](#)

- Discuss proposals for NatureSave Trust funding at the next meeting.