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**For immediate release**

## **Wiltshire Connect buses celebrate success as new services prepare to launch**

Wiltshire Council's new Wiltshire Connect on-demand bus services in the Pewsey Vale area has had a hugely successful start, with more than 5,000 passengers travelling on the service in the first two months.

The service, which launched at the start of August, initially covered the area west of Pewsey, from Pewsey to Devizes, but now two additional Wiltshire Connect vehicles will begin on Monday 30 October, covering the rural area to the east of Marlborough to Hungerford.

To celebrate these new buses, the Wiltshire Connect bus roadshow will be at Marlborough market on Wednesday 25 October, and people are invited to come along to find out more and to ask questions from the friendly team who will be there.

Wiltshire Connect is different from a conventional bus service, in that people can book journeys at a time to suit them using the Wiltshire Connect app or by phone. Anyone can book and travel between any designated pick up and drop off point within each travel zone, and the council's smart technology matches up journeys with other passengers travelling in the same direction.

Cllr Caroline Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, said: "Wiltshire Connect has been a fantastic success so far, with more than 5,000 passengers using the service, and more than 2,400 people downloading the easy-to-use smartphone app.

"We want to build on this success and that's why we're launching another service covering the Marlborough and Hungerford on 30 October. We're also taking our Wiltshire Connect roadshow to Marlborough Market on 25 October for people to find out more about the service.

"It's really easy for people of all ages to book their bus journey on the smartphone app, or by calling our dedicated phone line, up to seven days before they wish to

travel or with as little as 30 minutes' notice. We're also working on a web-based booking portal to give people even more options to book their ride.

“We have committed to having vibrant, well-connected communities with improved rural bus links in our Business Plan, and Wiltshire Connect does just this, and also links to GWR services at Pewsey, Bedwyn and Hungerford stations.

“We are also currently holding our bus services review, so if people would like more on-demand buses – or other services – we'd love to hear from them.”

The new services to launch on Monday 30 October are an on-demand service that includes Marlborough and Hungerford; plus a new direct 100 bus service between Marlborough and Devizes. The 100 is a semi-flexible service that sticks to a planned route and timetable but can deviate from that route when there is customer demand to do so; there will be four journeys in each direction from Monday to Friday. New timetabled service 110/120 and the Wiltshire Connect on-demand service will also replace the existing 20/22 service from Marlborough to Great Bedwyn and Hungerford.

As well as the new services, the 101 Pewsey-Marlborough bus will operate to a revised Monday to Friday timetable.

Timetables for the 100, 101 and 110/120 are available at [www.wiltshireconnect.co.uk](http://www.wiltshireconnect.co.uk) and will be distributed locally.

The Wiltshire Connect app is available to download on Apple and Android devices, and anyone without access to a smartphone can call 01225 712900 to book their ride. To find out more about Wiltshire Connect, including route maps, people can go to [www.wiltshireconnect.co.uk](http://www.wiltshireconnect.co.uk).

The council is asking public transport users, residents, businesses and visitors in the county to have their say on the future of bus services and other public transport options. To find out more, people can go to <https://wiltshirebusreview.commonplace.is/>

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