

PETITION RECEIVED

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Petition received – Cllr Tim Rippington (Bristol City Council)

WECA - bring back bus services to Brislington and St Anne's

Our petition is as follows:

Brislington's local Labour Party councillors and campaigners are lobbying the West of England Combined Authority to spend a portion of its Bus Service Improvement Plan money, and other money set aside by government to support local bus services, on improving the bus services to St Anne's and the wider Brislington area.

Since 2019 Brislington has lost its services from Tesco and Callington Road Hospital, Hungerford Road and Wick Road to St Anne's. The St Anne's area itself has no bus service linking it with the A4 corridor and Bristol Temple Meads.

We are asking WECA to fund an expansion of both the No 1 and No 36 services, to better service the area and give people real public transport opportunities. We call for the following:

- 1) Increase the frequency of the No 1 to at least every 10 minutes and modify every second journey to be a 1A serving St Anne's instead of Broomhill.
- 2) Re-instate the 36 service beyond St Anne's to serve Wick Road, Hungerford Road and Tesco Brislington.

Background

The Strategic Outline Business Case for St Anne's Railway station, prepared for Bristol City Council with input from the Combined Authority, was submitted in December 2021. It had the following to say about bus services and demand in St Anne's:

"St Anne's is currently poorly served by public transport...despite its large population (approx. 12,000). Despite its relative proximity to Bristol's city centre, a high proportion of St Anne's and Brislington residents drive frequently, especially for commuting purposes. Data collected from the 2011 census indicates the strong bias for driving to work shown across the Brislington East ward. There appears to be a significant opportunity for increasing public transport usage across the area, if appropriate and efficient options are implemented."

The report concluded:

"The current over-reliance on car-based travel within Brislington and St Anne's in particular is clear and, alongside issues of inaccessible rail and infrequent bus provision, indicates a strong need for improved public transport if wider city and region-wide issues are to be dealt with."

Despite this, the St Anne's and wider Brislington area has seen a significant degradation of its bus services since 2021. The 36 service, which at one time linked Hengrove, Knowle, Brislington West and Brislington East, has been truncated to run only from the City Centre to St Anne's. This has cut off many people from Doctors surgeries, the Library, shops and schools.

In addition, the 513/4 service, previously a lifeline for many older residents wishing to travel from Brislington to the local Tesco and the Broadwalk shopping centre, has been withdrawn altogether.

This petition therefore calls on the Combined Authority to use Bus Service Improvement Plan money and other money available to restore the lost portions of the 36 service and to innovate with a new No 1A service to bring bus travel back to areas of Brislington and St Anne's which have been cut off entirely from public transport. These are both commercial services with the potential to continue running once subsidies run out.

The current WECA consultation on the A4 corridor talks about getting people out of their cars and onto buses – but until such time as those buses exist, this is simply not going to happen and the corridor proposals are proving deeply unpopular as a result.

It is time for the West of England Combined Authority to follow the example of the Mayor of Greater Manchester and get involved in the planning of a significantly better bus service which would benefit all in our region.

Cllr Tim Rippington

Labour, Brislington East