



HELEN WHATELY MP
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Reference No. HW28278

6 March 2020

Dear Grant,
Re: Kent County Council's bid for a 'better deal for buses' across the county

I am delighted that the government is focusing on improving public transport by making available £200 million for bus services across the country. I have long been a supporter of buses as they can help reduce congestion on our roads, improve air quality and are – especially if electric – better for the environment than private cars.

That's why I am pleased to support Kent County Council's bid for funding to improve local bus services. Buses are as important in rural communities as they are in urban ones, and this is an opportunity to level up bus services in towns and rural areas with those in our cities.

In particular, I am delighted that the county council is bidding to trial a Super Bus Network in Maidstone. Maidstone is a large town, that has taken a large amount of development in recent years – without road infrastructure to support it – causing severe congestion and pollution. A Super Bus Network would help alleviate congestion, and assist older people and those on lower incomes to travel more, improving their quality of life.

People will not make the transition to public transport unless there are reliable alternatives to the car available. Many constituents contact me about over-crowded and late school buses or the reduction of bus services altogether. This causes a vicious cycle of the service being unreliable, not used and therefore reduced. I would like to see the Supported Bus Service Fund help reverse this trend.

I would welcome funding from the Rural Mobility Fund. We have lost too many rural bus services, leaving people in villages dependent on cars and isolated if they cannot drive. I fully support KCC in their innovative approach to new rural bus services and am keen for them to receive funding to go further.

I am delighted to support Kent County Council's bid into this excellent government initiative.

Helen Whately MP
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent

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If you would like to find out more about what I am doing in Faversham and Mid Kent, please do sign up to my newsletter on my website.

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