

Proposed withdrawal of Stagecoach X8 bus service



I have raised with the Commercial Manager, Stagecoach East Scotland, the negative effect of the proposed removal of the X8 bus service that runs through the West End travelling to/from Perth Royal Infirmary from/to Arbroath and taking in both Ninewells Hospital and Royal Victoria Hospital.

This issue has also been highlighted by my colleague Perth and Kinross Councillor Willie Wilson and we have pointed out that removal of the X8 will mean that the only linking hospital service between Dundee and Perth will be the X7 service which uses a coach-style vehicle, totally unsuitable for passengers who have mobility difficulties as virtually all seats are upstairs.

Stagecoach has not given the X8 a decent chance to get established as it only started last summer. On the other service – the X7 – it uses coaches that only have one space for a wheelchair, have no dedicated built-in access ramp and the amount of seating on the lower deck is restricted to only two cramped seats immediately behind the driver. There are no facilities for buggies and prams to be taken on the coach apart from them being dismantled and loaded into the boot.

I have said to Stagecoach's Commercial Manager that he should give the X8 a proper chance to build a passenger base, but if the company is determined to take the service off, it absolutely cannot leave the X7 with the coach-style vehicles. I have long-said to Stagecoach that must have a vehicle type that is suitable for a bus service that serves three hospitals – the coach certainly is not.