

De Provocatione Rusticus Onerariis



Colin Walker: Transportation Services Group Manager
East Riding of Yorkshire Council

In Hansard (1963)

- *Mr Speir* - asked the Minister of Transport whether he has now received the results of the special studies of rural transport which he initiated a year ago; and whether the completion of these studies will enable him to announce a policy for Government aid for rural transport.
- *Mr Marples* - I have most of the results of the special studies, and expect to have the remainder in a day or two. I am sure the information which they give will help in my consideration of policy as to rural transport.

Some Personal Background

- 20 years in community transport
- 6 years writing on the west coast of Ireland
- 2000-2005 East Riding Rural Transport Partnership
- 2005-2017 Humber Rural Pathfinder/East Riding Rural Strategy and Policy
- 2017 – date East Riding Council Transportation Services Group Manager
- Rurality and Transport seem to have been significant...?

The Rural Transport Challenge

- *The complex relationship between mobility, access to services, social capital, and communities has long been recognised, although the development of sustainable transport networks that meet the social and economic needs of all residents in rural areas remains elusive. (Powell, Keech and Reed (2018))*
- Rural populations fall into 2 broad categories – private car or public transport reliance/choice
- Limited levers for modal shift from the car
- Limited public resources to subsidise services
- Limited appetite for a network approach
- Sticking plaster approach – pilots and programmes

The Basic Rural Public Transport Options

- Fixed schedule public transport (local rail and bus)
- Flexible transport systems (demand responsive services, including community transport)
- Individual or household solutions (Wheels to Work, Car Clubs)
- They all have two things in common –
- **None of them solve all the problems**
- **All of them require some form of subsidy**

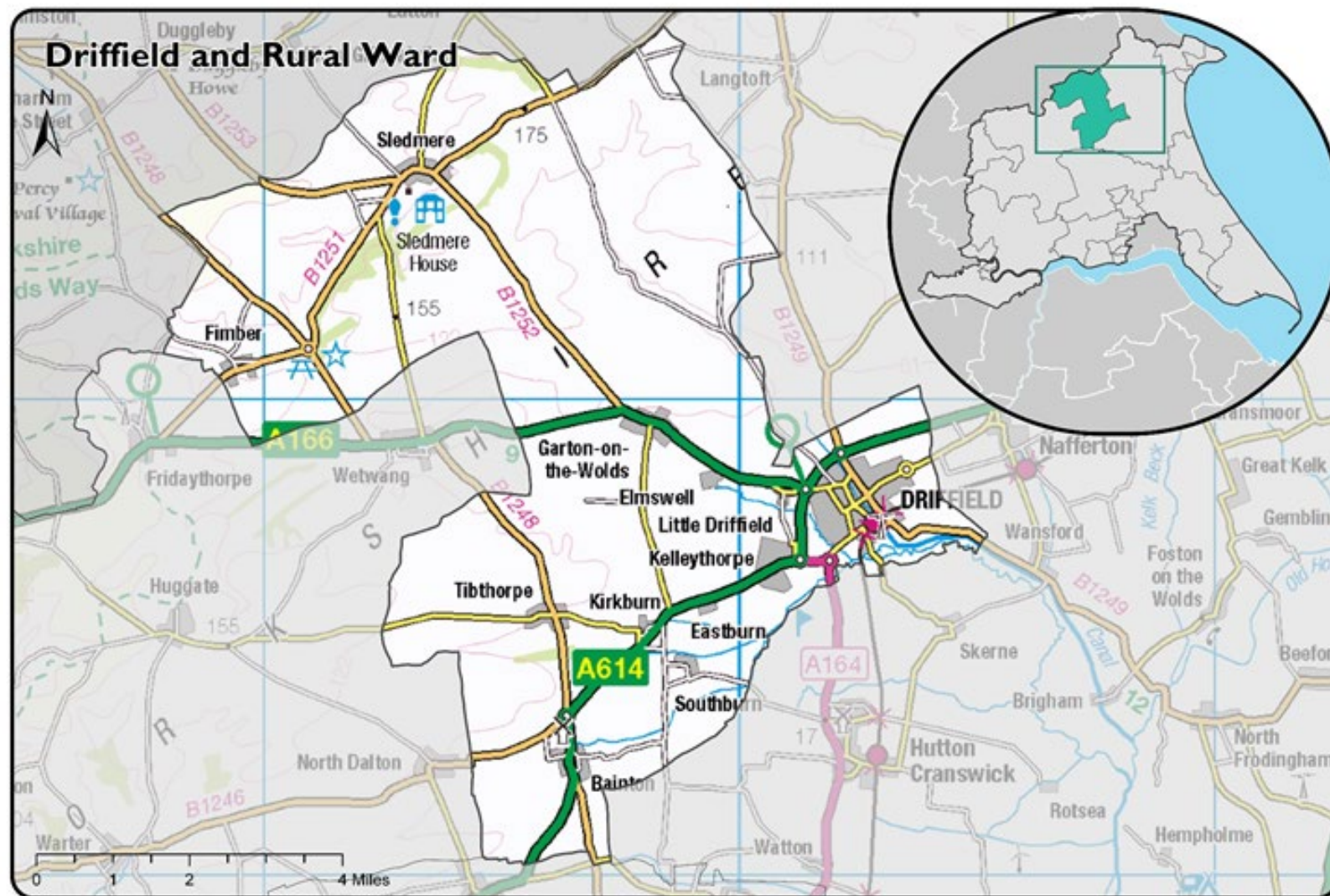
Fixed Schedule Local Bus

- Works best along main or secondary transport corridors where it may be commercially operated
- De-minimis subsidy can add options and value
- Deep rural routes will require full subsidy and acceptance of relatively low patronage
- Often off peak – run on the back of school contracts
- Easy, turn up and go option
- Properly researched and targeted is often the most cost-effective option (including S22 services)

Flexible Demand Responsive Services

- Very expensive if offered on an anywhere to anywhere basis?
- Some commercial ‘click and go’ examples have proved unviable “*none has yet achieved anything other than lose a shed load of money*” (Roger French)
- Semi-scheduled and well-targeted rural examples have succeeded (often Section 19, with subsidy)
- Apps are useful as a marketing tool but will they really build substantial new patronage?

Fixed schedule local bus - Service 135



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Service 135

- Fixed schedule local bus. Daily peak and Tuesdays and Thursdays off peak services (6 villages into the market town of Driffield)
- Includes 'twilight' after school provision
- Cost (19/20) £27,800 – PJ's 2,457 – subsidy £11.32
- Average cost per day £134
- Price probably reflects integration with home to school transport provision

DRT services – MEDiBUS & MiBUS

- 2 successful Rural Bus Challenge projects now core funded by ERYC including an in-house call centre
- Door-to door transport to health facilities and shopping/supermarkets operated under S19 permit
- Mix of 12 in-house and contracted out services
- Both services cover the whole of the East Riding
- Fares charged (£10 return/£5 concessions)
- 2019 – 21,186 journeys @ average £13 subsidy per journey (net cost after fares)

Key issues for the immediate future?

- Covid-19 impacts on bus use worse in rural contexts
- CBSSG needs to continue for as long as needed
- Bus Services Improvement Planning/partnership development/new collaborative structures
- National Bus Strategy – will rural transport challenges be understood?
- Need to understand possible changes in the market – less commuters, increased leisure travel etc.?
- LA's need to work closely with operators