

Nick Timothy, MP for West Suffolk



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON, SW1A 0AA

Councillor Chris Chambers
Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy
Suffolk County Council

11 June 2025

Dear Chris

Re: Bus services for residents in Newmarket and Exning

I hope you are well. I am writing to raise my concern as the MP for West Suffolk about the recent closure of a bus route — the number 11 service — which previously provided a service for my constituents in Newmarket and Exning to get to the centre of Cambridge.

As I am sure you know, this service — which called in both directions at locations in Newmarket's Studlands estate and in Exning — was cancelled late last month. Both the 11 service and the new service — operated by Stagecoach and known as the Tiger 4 — were or are funded by Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority.

You will be also aware that the Tiger 4 does not stop in Exning on the way from Newmarket towards Cambridge and does not stop at all in Studlands. This service takes an hour and 20 minutes from Newmarket to Addenbrooke's.

I have to emphasise the very adverse impact that the cancellation of the number 11 will have on residents, especially those in Studlands and Exning. These communities will now be left without a bus link to the centre of Cambridge at all as well as reduced access to Newmarket town centre. And the decision seems to have been taken with no prior consultation with residents, local councillors or me.

Studlands, for example, has many vulnerable and elderly people who do not own or drive cars. Those using the bus include people of every age who may need to commute, including in the early hours. Those needing the bus to go shopping or attend medical appointments will be forced to depend on taxis, resulting in what is a prohibitive cost to many, or community transport options.

Meanwhile, those in Exning who do not drive or find they cannot park easily in the centre of Cambridge, have come to depend over the years of its operation on the number 11 bus to get to and from work in the city centre.

I understand that Suffolk County Council have stated there are alternatives which residents can use instead of the number 11 bus, including the 12 and the 12a. Unfortunately these are not adequate alternatives, particularly for elderly residents in Studlands.

The number 12 runs directly from the Guineas Bus Station and High Street to Cambridge so passengers would need to get to Newmarket town centre first in order to catch it. Meanwhile, the 12A Newmarket Circular has limited stops and runs infrequently.

Newmarket Town Council has conducted a survey of potential bus users and this has indicated strong support for another town circular service to augment the bus services which are available in the town.

The aim of the applicants is that such a town circular would operate both with increased frequency and stop at more key locations than present town circular services. Newmarket Town Council have submitted their application for bus service improvement funding for this from Suffolk County Council. I would like to add my voice in support of their application.

However, given its responsibility for overseeing transport locally, I would also like to request that Suffolk County Council pro-actively look at tweaking existing bus routes so they can incorporate Studlands and, if possible, Exning.

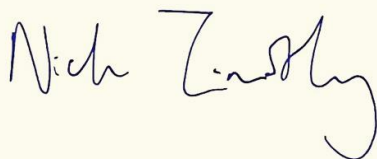
One possibility with regard to Studlands might be the 16 bus route, which runs from Newmarket to Bury St Edmunds, and stops at Newmarket Tesco just off Fordham Road.

A relatively minor amendment to this route — adding no more than approximately twenty minutes on a round trip — could be made so that it goes into Studlands to pick up and drop off residents there. This would provide the option for residents of being able to go shopping and access services in Bury St Edmunds town centre.

There may also be similar service augmentations that can be made with respect to Exning to increase the number of options that residents there have for bus travel.

I am grateful for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Timothy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "N".

Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk