



# A GREEN THOUGHT

## The Assault on Public Transport

**Subsidising Our Buses:** Hampshire County Council has recently completed a consultation on its bus support policy, in which essentially it asks us which services we want cut. The answer is “NONE”. We need our buses! But why should they be subsidised? Subsidy should have its justification only in social need but at the moment the real subsidy is going elsewhere and leading to social deprivation.

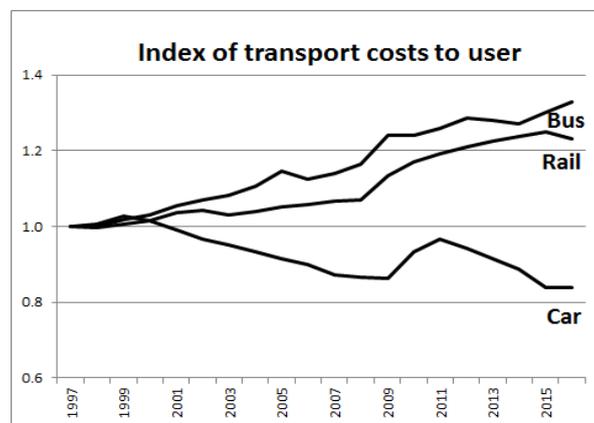
Contrary to popular belief, private motoring and road freight are highly subsidised by Government (the health costs of air pollution alone exceed the difference between all road taxation and road expenditure). This subsidy to private transport results in bus users, often the poorest or those unable to drive, are increasingly isolated and deprived of access to the facilities the rest of us benefit from.



Winchester Station Photo: Wiki Commons

**Why are Rail fares rising again?** Private rail companies remain dependent on public subsidy. But these companies then hand over up to an estimated 90% of their operating profits to shareholders. This blatant transfer of public money means that the public purse is effectively propping up a failing rail system for private gain. That’s money that should, be reinvested to improve our rail services and reduce fares.”

**Transport Policy for Whom?** The transfer of public money to private motoring, commercial road freight and railway company shareholders is thus all at the expense of the public transport user. Green Party’s Caroline Lucas through Parliamentary Questions has highlighted a scandalous distortion in transport policy – bus and rail fares rise steadily and costs fall for the most environmentally damaging modes.



Transport Statistics 2017

**Mayor’s Car:** Green Party’s Andrew Wainwright could not help noticing that Winchester City Council is the biggest spender in Hampshire on the Mayor’s car and chauffeur. “At £36,000 for three years it does not seem priority spending when the Council apparently cannot afford a one-off payment of £20,000 to renew its pollution measurement equipment” said Andrew.

# The University Shows the Way



We are impressed with the plans for University of Winchester's new building on West Downs Campus. They include a heat recovery system and a combined heat and power plant as well as solar panels. These measures will make for low energy bills throughout the building's lifespan. All the imported electricity will be from renewable sources.

This is good financial as well as environmental thinking, and the sort of measures that should be included as a

matter of course in all Winchester's major projects – City Centre Regeneration, Station Approach and the new Leisure Centre. The building, due to be completed for the 2019/20 intake, will also have a green roof, bird and bat boxes and rainwater harvesting systems. The £30 million loan for the project comes from Triodos Bank, so even the finance is fairly green.

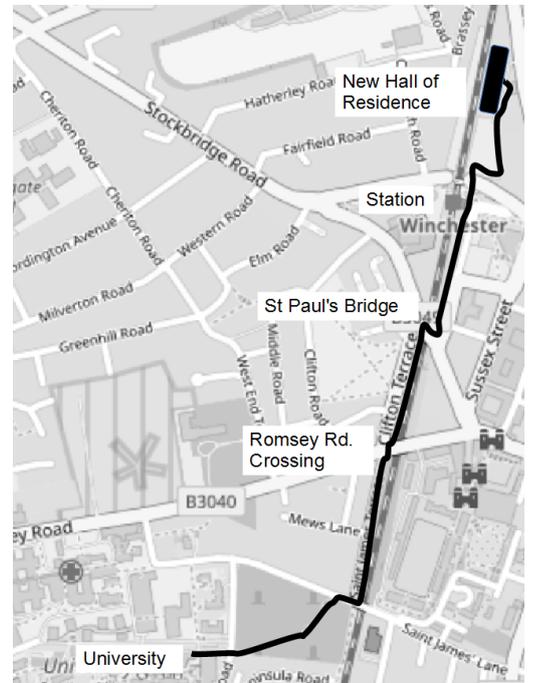
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## Romsey Road Crossing Urgent

The expansion of the University means more student accommodation. The private provision of a new student hall at the old Hunt's site does not share the green philosophy behind much of the University's own development, though its location by Winchester Station and its low parking provision make it relatively sustainable.

Unfortunately the City Council permitted the development without thought for the pedestrian movements it would create. The natural route for most students will be via the dingy, indeed threatening, environment of the eastern station multi-storey car park. This new pedestrian traffic will join that already coming from the station and crossing the Romsey Road at its most dangerous location.

After the Green Party's petition for a safe crossing here (see Green Thought Issue 19), County Councillor Rob Humby said that a crossing scheme was being prepared for this Spring. We are trying to find out what happened to it.



***A hazardous pedestrian route***

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## Gove Greenwash

Those hoping May's 25-year Environment Plan heralded a greening of government, will be disappointed. On climate change the reality is that carbon emission will be encouraged through airport and road expansion and fossil fuel extraction through fracking will be forced on local communities. On the natural environment, Michael Gove proclaims a future Greener Britain. Beware! This government has been progressively emasculating the agencies of protection for biodiversity, landscape and heritage. And when Gove went out to consultation on his post-Brexit *'Environmental Principles and Governance'* it was clear that his independent body to *'hold government to account'* would be toothless.