

# Garsdale Parish Council

Email: garsdaleparishcouncil@outlook.com  
Website: garsdaleparishcouncil.com

Cheryl Cowperthwaite,  
Locality Transport Team Leader,  
Cumbria County Council,

15/3/2015

Dear Ms Cowperthwaite,

Garsdale Parish Council would like to express our concern that the transport situation for 16-18 year olds has still not been sorted out. It is completely unacceptable that students are expected to apply for places to continue their compulsory education, without knowing whether any transport will be available and what the approximate cost will be. It is also a particular concern for the students currently attending the first year of a 2-year course, who may realistically have no other choice than to change school or college in the middle of a course if there is no transport available next year.

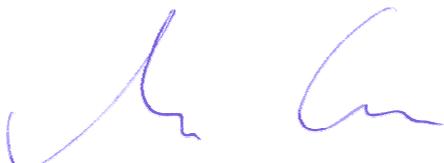
It is not reasonable to expect the schools to organise the transport; this fragmented approach will make it impossible to coordinate feeder busses or even lift shares from the outlying areas, with the main busses going to different schools in Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale from towns such as Sedbergh, and will disadvantage students from deeply rural areas even further.

The present 505 bus is not suitable for students attending the sixth-forms at Kirkby Kendal and QKS, since it only arrives back in Sedbergh around 17.50, nearly 2 hours later than the current bus. Firstly, adding two hours to every school day will simply not leave sixth-form students enough time for homework. Secondly, it becomes impossible to share a feeder bus or similar from Sedbergh to Garsdale and other outlying areas with students from QES in Kirkby Lonsdale.

Garsdale Parish Council are also extremely concerned that there is no news on the Garsdale feeder bus yet; as a rural community with no public transport, our teenagers are already disadvantaged in access to clubs, sports facilities and other activities subsidised out of our tax funds. Losing the feeder bus would make it even more difficult to retain families in Garsdale, and hence have a major negative impact on the demographics of our population. Please note that in Garsdale and other rural communities in the area, nearly all families are above the very low income limit which would trigger free transport, but well below the incomes where they could afford either the time or money to drive children long distances to schools, or pay much higher than current bus fares.

We believe it is the duty of Cumbria County Council to ensure that students from all areas of Cumbria are given equal access to education, and CCC should therefore be prepared to fund and arrange suitable school transport, such that no students in compulsory education are disadvantaged unfairly.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Annette Colton, Chairman, on behalf of Garsdale Parish Council

*Copies to Nick Cotton, Clare Feeney Johnson, Keith Little, Tim Farron, Andrew Moss & Cheryl Cowperthwaite*

Clerk to the parish council: Phil Johns Ben's Bridge, Garsdale, Sedbergh, LA10 5PH Telephone: 015396 22170	Chairman of the parish council: Annette Colton, Slack House, Garsdale, Sedbergh, LA10 5PE Phone: 015396 21957 (eve) 21219 (day)
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