



**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**

**(Registered Charity 1120494)**

**Trustees' Report and Accounts**

**31 December 2023**

# **Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**

## **2023 Report and Accounts**

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**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Annual Report**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023**

**Legal and Administrative Details**

**Legal Status**

- company/charity name - Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd
- England & Wales Charity Commission register number 1120494
- England & Wales Registrar of Companies register number 06032000
- trading name - Cuckmere Buses

**Objects**

The object of the Company is to provide a community bus and a community transport service, including private hire, for such of the inhabitants of East and West Sussex and the City of Brighton and Hove who are in need of such a service because of age, sickness or disability (mental or physical), or poverty, or because of a lack of availability of adequate and safe public passenger services.

**Trustees/Directors**

Philip Montague Ayers

Nicholas Brian Price

Susan Olave de Angeli

Kevin Patrick Fryer (until 26 September 2023)

Stewart Colin Fuller

Beryl Anne Smith

Paul Patrick Warren FCA (from 3 April 2023)

**Principal Address**

The Old Rectory

Litlington

Polegate

East Sussex

BN26 5RB

**Insurance Broker**

Arthur J Gallacher

34 Tower View

Kings Hill, West Malling

Kent

ME19 4UY

**Bankers**

Barclays Bank plc

Co-operative Bank plc

CCLA Fund Managers

**Independent Examiner**

Sarah Price – SLP Advisory Limited

# **Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**

## **Annual Review**

### **for year ended 31 December 2023**

The Trustees, who are also Directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023.

#### **Review of Activities**

Cuckmere Buses is the trading name for Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd (CCB), a charitable limited company based in Berwick, East Sussex. It has been running for 47 years supplementing existing bus services and providing bus links for village residents throughout the Cuckmere Valley area to their nearest towns for shopping, for appointments, or for social activities.

OUR VISION is being the Community Bus service of choice in our area, and OUR MISSION is providing a safe, reliable, and courteous local bus, serving those rural and urban communities in our part of East Sussex not served by commercial companies.

CCB is run entirely by volunteers; there are no employees. We have some 40 volunteer drivers and some 8 additional volunteers who all help run the fleet of 16-seater low-floor Mercedes mini-buses. The drivers are trained to MIDAS standards (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) and are reassessed every four years. They all have D1 classification on their licence. The value of volunteers to the organisation cannot be overestimated, in terms of community support and company viability. In addition to over 20 weekly timetabled services, requiring nearly twice as many half-day shifts, the company operates summer leisure services and offers private hire facilities. We also provide special annual services for the International Tennis in Eastbourne, and the Charleston festivals.

CCB remains a busy voluntary organisation and always needs new volunteers. Our ongoing recruitment programme has resulted in a reasonable net increase in drivers by the end of the year and we are still looking to increase numbers further in 2024. However, the Department for Transport's review of the changing need for D1 licence requirements for minibuses is a positive move and may result in us being able to access a broader driver pool. We await the outcome of the consultation.

2023 showed a good recovery of passenger numbers following the pandemic and by the year-end the numbers were only 8% below the 2019 pre-pandemic levels. For the year, we catered for some 75,222 passenger journeys (2022, 60,900), and ran some 137,573 (2022, 122,700) miles. We hope to see a continued recovery of passenger journeys during 2024.

The charity didn't take delivery of its new bus in 2023, as originally planned, due to global supply chain issues affecting production, but this new bus is promised by spring 2024. The fleet consisted of seven minibuses at the year-end. Given the delays in getting delivery of new buses, it has been agreed to order a further new bus for delivery in the summer of 2025.

Roadworks and road closures continued to present major challenges during the year, and whilst the major works along the A27 Polegate to Selveston have been completed, numerous other utility works and roadway patch repairs, especially in Hailsham town centre, continue which often resulted in

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Annual Review**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023 (cont)**

delays, re-scheduled and re-routed services, and regrettably, some cancellations. Hopefully these major schemes will shortly conclude and result in a smoother overall operation for all passengers and road-users.

The charity operates efficiently to a high standard under the control of the Board of Trustees who met formally on four occasions during the year. They reviewed operations of the company, its financial position, and the outlook for the future. In addition, two Stakeholder meetings consisting of representatives of parish and town councils and company officers were held, plus the AGM in April. The annual social gathering of stakeholders and drivers was held in July and periodic drivers' meetings were held during the year to review resource availability, services operated and passenger views. Drivers provide a vital first point of contact with passengers and their feedback is invaluable.

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the charity commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

**Financial Performance**

The financial statements are included on pages 8 to 13. All income and expenditure are related to unrestricted funds; there are no restricted nor endowment funds.

Central and local government continued financial support for bus operators generally during the year by continuing to pay fuel rebate grants and concessionary travel fares based on pre-covid levels, along with other support grants. These government support initiatives, together with our volunteer structure avoiding staff costs and related overheads, plus maintenance costs reflecting a relatively young fleet, all helped the charity maintain a viable operating financial position.

With a gross income of £266,781 (2022, £238,868) and expenditure of £257,256 (2022, £237,879), the year ended with a modest surplus of £9,525 (2022, £989). Year-end net assets amounted to £274,827 (2022, £265,302) including cash at bank of £136,722 (2022, £111,228). The charity operates a policy of holding cash reserves to meet projected cash outlays taking account of sourcing requirements for acquisitions under its bus replacement programme. Funds not required in the short term are held in an appropriate deposit account. At the end of the year, the Trustees agreed to maintain the unrestricted bus replacement reserve fund at £55,000 (2022, £55,000), to cover future bus acquisitions.

A high-level five-year trend of finances, passengers and miles run is shown graphically on page 14.

The Trustees have not identified any uninsured major risks to which the charity is exposed.

# **Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**

## **Annual Review**

### **for year ended 31 December 2023 (cont)**

#### **Going Concern**

The Trustees continue to monitor the ongoing impacts the covid crisis has had on the recovery of passenger numbers as well as other events, particularly levels of Inflation and Increased fuel and vehicle running costs. They have determined that, whilst significant, they do not create a material uncertainty that casts major doubt upon the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### **Forward View**

In addition to maintaining a strong operational business base for the charity, our focus over the coming year will again be threefold. First, to continue to rebuild patronage numbers so we can provide support to the same or greater level of deserving passengers we helped pre-pandemic. Secondly, to onboard our new bus in 2024 and thirdly, to continue with the recruitment programme to increase the overall number of volunteer drivers.

As a result of central government's positive focus on the bus industry, a number of initiatives within East Sussex may provide the opportunity for CCB to increase current service levels leading to increased net revenues. We look forward to these possible developments during the coming year.

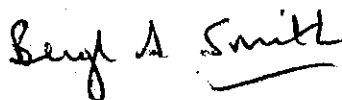
#### **Changes in Trustees/Directors**

In April 2023 we welcomed onboard Paul Warren as Trustee/ Finance Director. Paul is also a volunteer driver.

In September 2023 we said farewell to Kevin Fryer Trustee/Director who resigned due to increased personal work commitments. Kevin was a volunteer driver.

#### **Acknowledgements**

We are a successful business in meeting our mission and as always, thanks go to our volunteer drivers, our regular passengers, to everybody involved in the day to day running of the organisation, and to Berwick Service Station for keeping the buses well maintained. Particular thanks also go to the individuals and local authorities who made donations to the charity during the year. A summary of donation support is listed on page 12 of this report. Thank you all.



**Beryl Smith - Chairman**  
**3rd April 2024**

## **Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**

### **Independent Examiner's Report**

I report to the Board of Trustees/Directors on my examination of the accounts of Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd for the year ended 31 December 2023.

As the Trustees of the Charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe in any material respect:-

- 1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2) the accounts do not accord with those records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination, to which attention should be drawn in this report, in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*Sarah Price*

**Sarah Price – SLP Advisory Limited T/A SLP Accountants**  
**Independent Examiner**  
**Date: 11 April 2024**

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Income & Expenditure Account**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Income</b>			
Passenger Services	2	196,831	165,629
Grants & Donations	3	29,220	33,417
Private Hire & Special Events		30,106	23,102
Other Income	4	10,624	16,720
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>266,781</b>	<b>238,868</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Servicing, Repairs & Cleaning		(76,814)	(60,637)
Depreciation	5	(64,937)	(67,814)
Licences & Insurance		(27,136)	(26,482)
Operations		(38,238)	(23,403)
Diesel (net of BSOG)		(29,423)	(31,793)
Administration		(20,708)	(27,750)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>(257,256)</b>	<b>(237,879)</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>9,525</b>	<b>989</b>
Opening reserves		265,302	264,313
<b>Closing reserves (per Balance Sheet)</b>		<b>274,827</b>	<b>265,302</b>

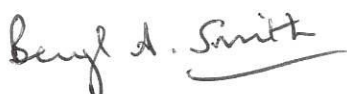


**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**at 31 December 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Tangible Fixed Assets</b>	7	<b>257,513</b>	<b>346,166</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	8	12,996	9,206
Cash at Bank	9	136,722	111,228
		<u>149,718</u>	<u>120,434</u>
Prepayments and Accrued Income		12,851	7,421
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b><u>162,569</u></b>	<b><u>127,855</u></b>
<b>Creditors due within one year</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	10	(68,319)	(68,388)
Accruals and deferred income		(26,274)	(22,427)
Unamortised grants for purchase of assets	6	(4,842)	(28,558)
<b>Total Creditors due within one year</b>		<b><u>(99,435)</u></b>	<b><u>(119,373)</u></b>
<b>Net Current Assets (liabilities)</b>		<b>63,134</b>	<b>8,482</b>
<b>Total Assets less current liabilities</b>		<b><u>320,647</u></b>	<b><u>354,648</u></b>
<b>Creditors due after one year</b>	10	<b>(45,820)</b>	<b>(89,346)</b>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<b><u>274,827</u></b>	<b><u>265,302</u></b>
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>			
Unrestricted funds - general		219,827	210,302
Unrestricted funds - asset replacement		55,000	55,000
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>		<b><u>274,827</u></b>	<b><u>265,302</u></b>

- a) the company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to the small companies
- b) the members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006
- c) the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts
- d) these accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Report and Accounts were approved by the Board on 3rd April 2024



**Beryl Smith**  
**Trustee/Director**

  
**Paul Warren FCA**  
**Trustee/Director**

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Funds Flow Statement**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		9,525	989
add back Depreciation (net)	5	64,937	67,814
less Other Income	4	(10,624)	(16,720)
Cash from Trading		<u>63,838</u>	<u>52,083</u>
Other Income	4	10,624	16,720
Capital Grants Received		-	19,367
Movement in fixed assets			
Acquisitions	7	-	(126,519)
Proceeds of disposal (NBV before surplus)	7	<u>-</u>	<u>50</u>
		-	(126,469)
Movement in Working Capital			
Debtors		(3,790)	(3,461)
Prepayments		(5,430)	5,761
Creditors		<u>10,289</u>	<u>(40,526)</u>
		1,069	(38,226)
Movement in Loans			
New debt		0	84,000
Interest		7,323	8,879
Payments		<u>(57,360)</u>	<u>(54,131)</u>
		(50,037)	38,748
Movement in Funds in the Year		<u>25,494</u>	<u>(37,777)</u>
Cash at Bank			
Opening		111,228	149,005
Movement in Funds (as above)		<u>25,494</u>	<u>(37,777)</u>
Closing (per Balance Sheet)		<u>136,722</u>	<u>111,228</u>

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**1.1 Basis of Accounting** - these accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s). Income and expenditure are accounted for on an accruals basis.

**1.2 Income** - is recognised in the accounts when the charity becomes entitled to the resources and is shown exclusive of VAT. The significant value of voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report. Debtors are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

**1.3 Expenditure** - liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources, and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty. Creditors are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

**1.4 Tangible Fixed Assets** - are recorded at cost and subsequently stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of an asset, less its estimated residual value, over the prudent useful economic life of that asset on a straight-line basis. Capital grants supporting fixed asset acquisitions are released to revenue account on a straight-line basis over the life of the related asset class and reduce the annual total depreciation charge.

**1.5 Hire Purchase Agreements** - assets are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and depreciated over their useful lives. The capital element of future finance payments is included within creditors; finance charges are allocated to accounting periods over the length of the contract.

**1.6 Fund Accounting** - unrestricted funds (including designated funds) may be used in accordance with the charitable objectives of the charity at the discretion of the trustees.

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023 (cont)**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>2 Passengers Services</b>		
Concessionary Fares	127,325	122,784
Ticket Fares	21,754	19,594
Support from:		
Charleston Towner Support	13,217	-
East Dean & Friston PC	1,921	2,641
ESCC/B&H	30,214	13,630
Hailsham Town Council	2,050	6,680
Polegate Town Council	350	300
	<u>196,831</u>	<u>165,629</u>
<b>3 Grants and Donations</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Town and Parish Councils		
Alfriston	200	200
Arlington	100	100
Berwick	100	100
Chalvington & Ripe	-	150
Cuckmere Valley	250	250
East Dean & Friston	-	500
Heathfield & Waldron	200	500
Herstmonceux	250	500
Long Man	250	150
Pevensey	-	150
Polegate	500	200
Seaford	2000	2,000
Westham	-	120
Willingdon & Jevington	850	850
	<u>4,700</u>	<u>5,770</u>
ESCC	3,705	9,948
Wealden District Council	5,000	5,125
Passenger donations	12,198	9,403
Other donations	3,617	3,171
	<u>29,220</u>	<u>33,417</u>
<b>4 Other Income</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Covid Support from DfT	-	14,369
Surplus on disposal of fixed assets	-	1,325
Bank interest	1,345	429
Insurance Claims	8,827	-
Timetable and other adverts	452	597
	<u>10,624</u>	<u>16,720</u>
<b>5 Depreciation</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Charge in year	88,653	95,035
less amortisation of grant in year (note 6)	(23,716)	(27,221)
	<u>64,937</u>	<u>67,814</u>
<b>6 Unamortised Grants</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
at start of year	(28,558)	(36,412)
grants received in year	-	(19,367)
released during year (note 5)	23,716	27,221
at end of year	<u>(4,842)</u>	<u>(28,558)</u>

**Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for year ended 31 December 2023 (cont)**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>7 Tangible Fixed assets</b>		
<b>Cost</b>		
at start of year	690,636	591,295
additions in the year	-	126,519
disposals in the year	-	(27,178)
at end of year	<u>690,636</u>	<u>690,636</u>
<b>Cumulative Depreciation</b>		
at start of year	344,470	276,563
charges in the year (note 5)	88,653	95,035
disposals in the year	-	(27,128)
at end of year	<u>433,123</u>	<u>344,470</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>	<u><b>257,513</b></u>	<u><b>346,166</b></u>
 <b>8 Debtors</b>	 <b>2023</b>	 <b>2022</b>
Accounts receivable	6,612	7,087
VAT reclaimable	6,384	2,119
	<u><b>12,996</b></u>	<u><b>9,206</b></u>
 <b>9 Cash at Bank</b>	 <b>2023</b>	 <b>2022</b>
Barclays current account	65,708	60,671
Co-operative current account	25,666	6,553
Charities deposit account	45,348	44,004
Petty Cash	-	-
	<u><b>136,722</b></u>	<u><b>111,228</b></u>
 <b>10 Creditors</b>	 <b>2023</b>	 <b>2022</b>
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	(17,468)	(11,026)
Hire purchase contracts	(50,851)	(57,362)
	<u><b>(68,319)</b></u>	<u><b>(68,388)</b></u>
Amounts falling due after one year		
Hire purchase contracts (1-5 years)	<u><b>(45,820)</b></u>	<u><b>(89,346)</b></u>

**11 Audit:** Expenditure is after charges for Independent Review £960 (2022, £960) and other professional services £300 (2022, £300)

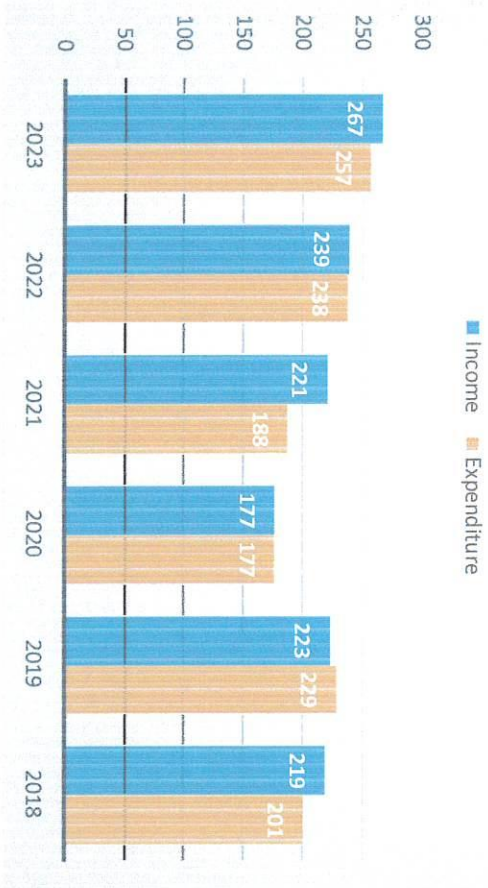
**12 Transactions with Directors:** There were no transactions between the company and its Trustees/Directors

**13 Related Party Disclosures:** There were no transactions between the company and related parties

# Cuckmere Community Bus Ltd

## Graphs - 5 year trends

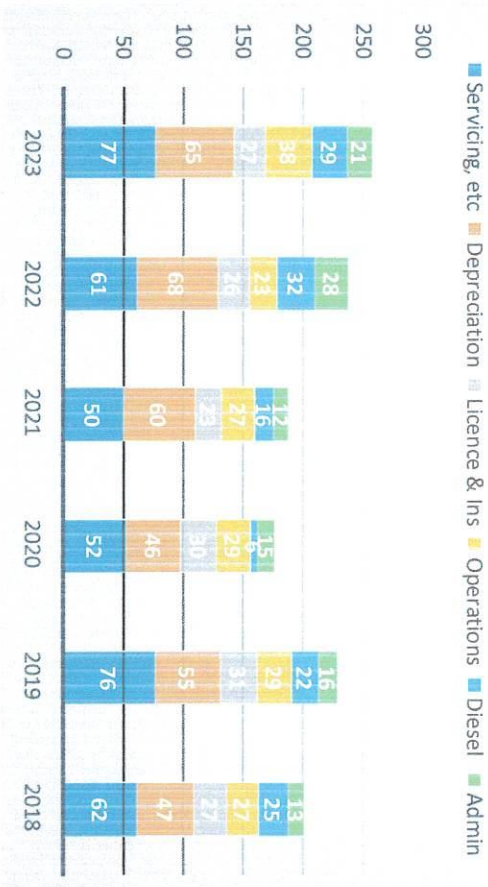
Financials (£'000)



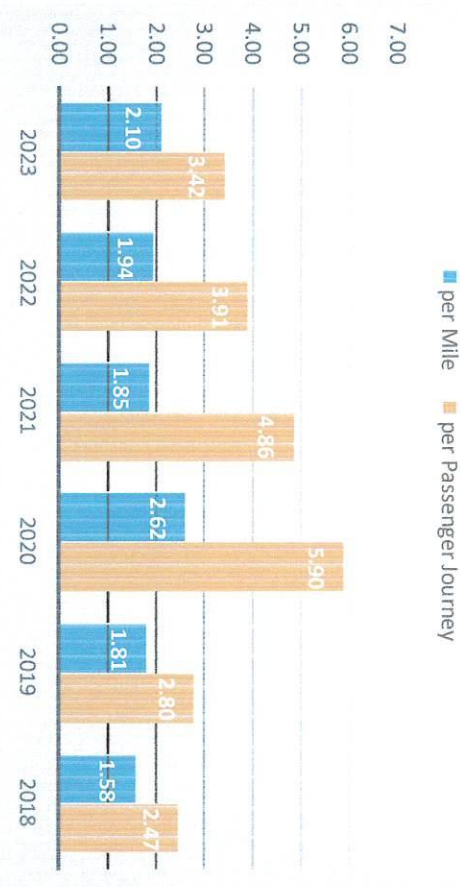
Statistics ('000)



Expenditure (£'000)



All-in Cost per Key Factor (£)

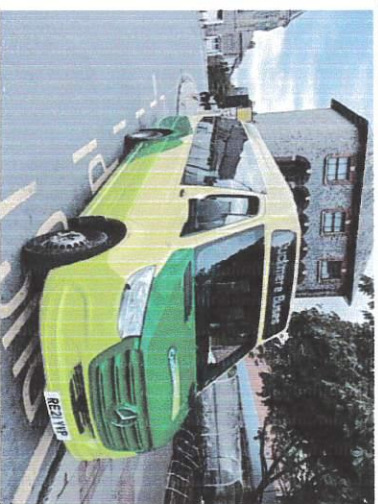




## Our Current Fleet



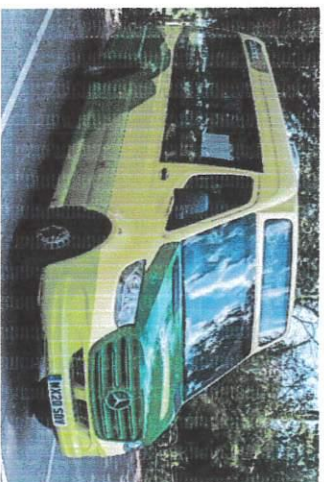
Bus28



Bus27



Bus26



Bus25



Bus 24



Bus22



Bus20

**Cuckmere** buses