

EXCLUSIVE : SNP announce budget plans to restore local bus services

SNP councillors have announced they are planning to restore 'much needed' bus services to Dumbiedykes and Lady Nairne by committing hundreds of thousands of pounds of funding in their council budget proposals.

Dumbiedykes, a city centre housing estate that is isolated by steep hills for people with mobility issues, and Lady Nairne, an area on the eastern side of Arthur's Seat with a large proportion of sheltered housing, lost their bus services at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in February 2020.

Previously both services were operated commercially without public support but their operators ended them saying they were no longer financially viable to run because of falling passenger numbers. SNP councillors say it is clear that council funding is needed to reinstate bus services for Dumbiedykes and Lady Nairne because other public transport options are not easily accessible by local residents.

The replacement service for Lady Nairne will link Willowbrae with shops and other amenities in Portobello, as well as restoring a service to the Bingham tunnel, and providing access to the Asda supermarket at the Jewel. The route for the Dumbiedykes service has not been announced yet but it is

widely expected to link the area with the supermarkets, GP surgeries and other facilities of the Southside.

Cllr Danny Aston, the SNP transport spokesperson and the local ward member for Craigentenny/Duddingston which includes Lady Nairne, said: "Improving bus services is key if we're serious about reducing car usage. As well as this, I grew up in Lady Nairne so I know there's a lot of older people living in sheltered housing who don't have access to a car and struggle with the steep hill up from Willowbrae Road.

"The lack of public transport for Dumbiedykes is maybe hard to believe for some, given it's so central. Yet, it's been without a bus service for four years now. It's a lower income area and it's densely populated and so it's exactly where councillors should be directing support to ensure there's a reliable and regular bus service for local residents.

"I'm proud that my SNP colleagues and I are putting forward these plans."

SNP MP Tommy Sheppard, whose Edinburgh East seat covers both Dumbiedykes and Lady Nairne, said: "I'm delighted by this news. Both areas, Dumbiedykes and Lady Nairne, benefit from being near Arthur's Seat but that means both have steep climbs to get either to or from local shops or health services. After four years without much needed bus services, I know that both areas will really welcome this plan – I just hope that the Labour administration and their Tory and Lib Dem allies will match this commitment."

All parties on the council have the opportunity of drawing up their own financial plans for spending the council's £1 billion budget. All councillors meet on 22 February to agree which budget or parts of which budget they will approve.

[The council papers will be published here with all budget plans in the few days before the council meeting.](#)

Map of proposed new Lady Nairne-Bingham-Jewel-Portobello bus service (formerly the 69) :

