

# **Council to subsidise two “vital” bus services across the south of the city**

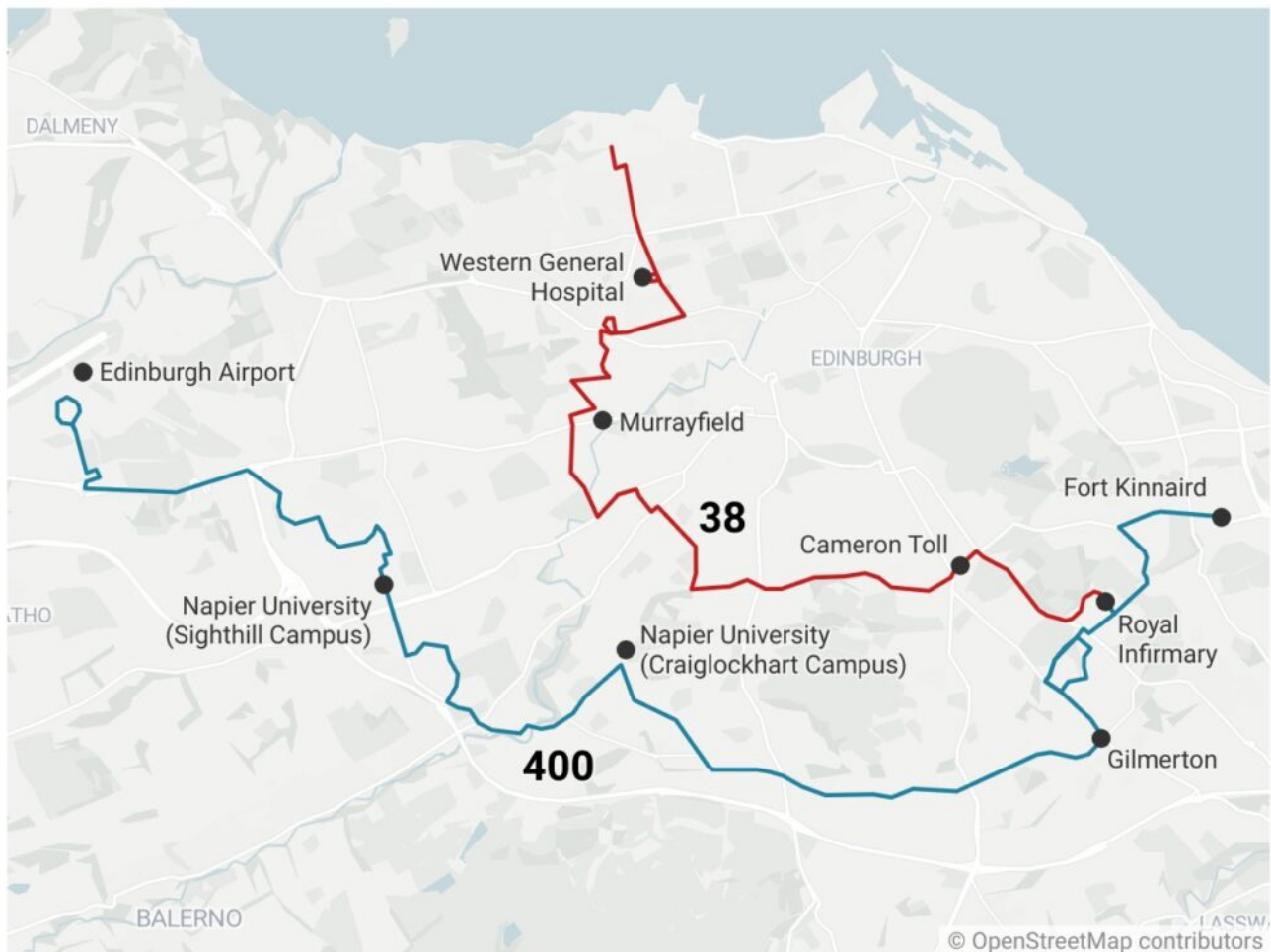
**Edinburgh councillors will consider paying almost £650,000 in subsidies to Lothian Buses to continue running two “vital” services across the south of the city.**

The 38 and 400 routes link parts of the city without crossing the city centre, which serves many trips residents make but does not bring in enough revenue for them to be self-sustaining.

For several years, the council has subsidised the routes, but according to a council report the subsidies were paused in July 2023 for council officers to study the routes and seek legal advice on the funding.

If approved, £646,817 would go towards funding the service, making up some of the losses the company incurred since July 2023 and covering part of the routes’ cost until December 2025.

## Routes 38 and 400



Map: Joe Sullivan, LDRS • Created with Datawrapper

map showing routes 38 and 400 (w/o header) | Graphic by Joe Sullivan,

A spokesperson for Edinburgh Bus Users Group said: “We hope the Council will continue to support these services financially. Orbital routes like these, which bypass the city centre, nevertheless serve passengers’ complex travel patterns.

“The 400, for example, connects swathes of south and west Edinburgh with the Royal Infirmary; the 38 connects West Granton, Craigleith, Ravelston, and Blackford to both the Royal Infirmary and Western General hospitals.

“Orbital routes are vital but sometimes don’t generate a lot of farebox revenue and can be expensive to operate, given the lack of on-street bus priority.”

The 38 route links Granton to the Royal Infirmary via the Western General Hospital, Murrayfield, Polwarth, Morningside, and Cameron Toll.

Meanwhile, the 400 runs from the airport to Fort Kinnaird via Sighthill, Colinton, Oxgangs, Gilmerton and the Royal Infirmary.

From 6 April, the 400 will be renumbered as the number 18, removing the existing "Skylink" branding on the route.

On the same day, fares across the network will increase, with a single adult ticket going from £2.00 to £2.20, and the daily cap will go from £4.80 to £5.00 for riders using contactless bank cards.

But, on the new 18 service, fares will be reduced from £5.50 to £2.20 for trips to and from the airport, bringing it in line with other city bus services.

The other Skylink service, 200, will be rebranded as service 17 and get the same fare reduction – but the 100 Airlink service from the city centre to the airport will not be renumbered or have a fare reduction.

Lothian Buses has been contacted for comment.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter