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Joint Transport Board  
Swale Borough Council  
Swale House  
East Street  
Sittingbourne  
Kent ME10 3HT

By Email: [Mikebaldock@swale.gov.uk](mailto:Mikebaldock@swale.gov.uk)

25<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear \*\*\*\*\*

**Ridham Avenue, Kemsley**

I am contacting you regarding our bus services that operate along Ridham Avenue in Kemsley Sittingbourne and an immediate risk to their continued service to the local community.

Our buses have historically been using the above turning circle/area (Pictures attached) to turn around in order to serve this road, however recently this has become more and more difficult due to residents parking cars in this area seemingly ignoring the signs indicating buses only. We have consistently and repeatedly asked for help in resolving and managing this situation. This mindless behaviour has now reached the point where this manoeuvre has become dangerous and increasingly difficult to perform. Passenger and employee safety are key and must be at the heart of every decision we make.

Arriva has tried proactively raising this through the Quality Bus Partnership in Swale to seek a resolution to the problem and allowing us to continue to safely serve the local area and residents who are using this service. Our most recent request was to seek to work in partnership with local officers to see double yellow markings be placed in the area which will then allow enforcement to keep the area clear of parked cars. This was raised and rejected by the Swale Borough Council Joint Transport Board.

This decision is extremely disappointing, the area is regularly blocked by two cars, often the same vehicles. Our own investigation suggests that these are both residents in the flats and the houses opposite the turning area have allocated parking, however it appears residents from these

properties are choosing not to use their allocated parking and instead utilising the turning area for convenience. This essentially leaves us no choice but to withdraw from serving the road, this is

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something Arriva are trying to avoid at all costs as it will severely impact many residents and possibly the long-term viability of the bus service itself as revenue loss would be significant.

We currently have over 40 residents boarding every day in this area across the 6 bus stops and over 20 passengers on a Saturday. With over 200 passenger journeys a week, withdrawing would leave these residents without a service. This seems somewhat unfair as it is at the convenience of only 2-3 residents who are choosing not to use their allocated parking. Furthermore, it also seems counter intuitive to the council's aspirations to reduce congestion and pollution in the town centre as this change will inevitably force passengers into their cars.

I therefore write to ask you to support me in urging Swale Borough Council to urgently reconsider the application for double yellow lines in the turning area. I have written to the Leader, Chief Executive and all members of the Joint Transport Board.

I must advise that without any further developments towards helping resolve the issues we have been facing and seeking help with tackling before 6th December I shall reluctantly authorise the deregistration of the route with all the necessary advertising and media releases required to advise customers of the withdrawal of our services. This is my genuine request for your help at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour to avoid an unnecessary and contradictory move when we are all attempting to promote and encourage sustainable public transport.

Finally, I would like to extend a personal offer for you to visit me at any of my depots or indeed for me to come to you, at your convenience, to discuss any concerns you may, answer any of your questions on this issue or any other including my plans for further improving what we do and to take your advice and guidance on how we can best this might be achieved. My direct contact details are below so please feel free to make contact so that I can share our plans in even more detail and receive any further feedback which you may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Oliver Monahan'.

Oliver Monahan  
Area Managing Director  
**Arriva Southern Counties**

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Enc.





