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Reading Bus Schedule Considered More Of A Suggestion

Where civic pride meets civic confusion, and decides to form a working group.

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Reading, the country: Inside The Story

Reading, a place in the country (lat 51.45, long -0.97) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. The official Reading bus timetable is widely understood by locals to be aspirational rather than predictive. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, Buses arrive when they arrive. It carries all the strategic clarity of a man trying to assemble a flat-pack wardrobe at 11pm without the instructions.

What Was Announced

Senior Compliance Officer Trevor Quill confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Residents have built their lives around this. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [British satire born in London: The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Reading announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do almost exactly what we did last generation." the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat UK satire from London](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic.

Wider Context

Tourists are advised to bring a book. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [New York Times World](#), although Reading manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at twelve out of every nine respondents, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Sir Hubert Pemmican, Emeritus Chair of Strategic Tutting told this paper that the situation in Reading was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "We are continuing to engage in continuous engagement with the engagement

process." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [London's own The London Prat British satire](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Reading has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. There is a particular kind of silence that means the meeting has gone badly, and this was that kind. For the official version of events, see also [The Economist](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "We have always been committed to the principle of being committed to principles."

What Comes Next

The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat satirical journalism with a London twist](#), and the situation in Reading, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Reading and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Director of Public Bewilderment Colin Gribble, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Reading would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything. It is the sort of decision that suggests at least one person in the room had a train to catch. Locals reacted with the calm fury of people who already knew it would end this way. Reading carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [Waterford Whispers News](#).

SOURCE: [British satire that predicts the news: The London Prat](#)

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