

## **Burford Priory Lane proposed changes – Pulhams Coaches objection**

As stated in our objection, as well as objections from TVP and several local business owners, to simply exclude coaches over 12m long from Priory Lane as proposed, without any attempt being made by the council to provide an alternative will lead to:

- a) Loss of trade for local businesses, many of which depend heavily on coach patronage (one local business owner stated in his response that over 90% of his trade came from tourists arriving in the village by coach).
- b) Anarchy on the ground, as without an alternative facility those coaches that do continue to visit Burford will drop off passengers wherever they see fit, leading to unsafe practices, traffic congestion and poor visitor experience.

This is the experience that was seen in Bourton-on-the-Water, which attempted to implement a coach ban and which has subsequently reversed this decision, having found that this policy led to significant “unintended consequences” of this nature.

While we understand the desire for very large coaches to be excluded from Priory Lane on safety grounds, and would understand the reasons for this, the proposals as currently formulated are based on inadequate research - the concept of an “average size” coach has been used, along with what appears to be simply anecdotal evidence from the Town Council, rather than seeking to conduct any engagement with operators to understand where best to set the limit, or to carry out any on the ground survey work.

The following are the most popular 2 axle full size coaches currently being used in the UK:

Plaxton Panther – 12.8m long

Irizar i6 – 12.9m long

Mercedes Tourismo – 13.2m long

Each of these vehicles would have 49 seats or more and typically 53 seats. The next level of coach below this available would be a maximum of 10.8m in length, with only 41 seats and therefore the proposed ban on coaches over 12m, in reality will function as a ban on coaches over 11m, since there are no coaches on the market between 11 and 12m in length. The vehicles listed above would be the types of vehicles typically used to provide school trips for the Primary School and for the majority of visitors to Burford.

Larger, 3 axle coaches are also in use in the market and these extend to 15m in length, with many such vehicles being 14m or greater. To avoid the detrimental impacts noted above, we would propose that the length restriction is amended to 13.2m. At this level the restriction would serve to prevent larger, 3 axle coaches from accessing Priory Lane, while still permitting access to standard size or “regular” coaches, as we believe was intended by the consultation.