



# Action 4 U



## 'It's all about money, what about people?'

*From page 1*

the past 31 years. 'I don't drive so I have relied on the post bus and I use it up to four times a week. I don't know what I'm going to do without it.'

Iffin Lane resident Joan Gower said the 301 service was vital for some of the older people who live in Hilltop, a mile and half from the city centre and an area without any other public transport.

'How are people who are no longer able to drive, or walk that far, supposed to go shopping?' she said. 'I rely on my husband to drive me, but without him, and without the post bus, I'd be practically housebound. It costs £12 to get a taxi to and from Canterbury — that's a lot out of a small pension.'

Cheryl Ives, who lives in New House Close, says she has been using the post bus regularly for the past year since she and her husband began sharing one car. She says she is devastated that the service is to be axed. 'It's all about money, what about people? It doesn't make sense to take away a bus service and force people to travel by car.'

Cabinet member for Transport Keith Ferrin said: 'I offered to increase the Kent post bus subsidy from



In August the 301 will make its last journey

£37,000 to £50,000 in an effort to keep all the services going but Royal Mail would not agree.'

A spokesman for the Royal Mail said: 'The services are only used by a very small number of people and the cost of providing these routes is nearly 10 times the council subsidy.'

County councillor Martin Vye expressed his dismay at the decision and anger at the indecent haste with which Royal Mail has gone about it. He said: 'The deadline gave us no time to organise a protest. It is final proof that the Royal Mail has turned into a hard-nosed commercial operation with no regard for the needs of the people they used to serve.'

He added: 'We cannot leave it there. I shall be conducting urgent talks with KCC Transportation about how they might help to develop an alternative service. It would be useful if those affected contacted me.' **Martin.Vye@Kent.gov.uk**

## 'Just my cup of tea,' says litter-picker Steed



*From page 1*

Steed, who was born in Thanington and has lived on the estate, surrounded by his large family, all his life, took up the job in May and says he's loving it. His support worker, Jane, says he used to do gardening on a voluntary basis at Howfield Manor, and gardening is what he loves best, but he's quite happy litter-picking for the Parish Council and getting paid for it!

'He's hoping that in the winter he might get to look after the graveyard grounds,' said Jane.

Steed's other outdoor passion is fishing and there's nothing he likes better than a pot of tea—so if you see him picking up litter outside your house, offer him a cuppa - he'll take it as it comes, with a little milk, no sugar!