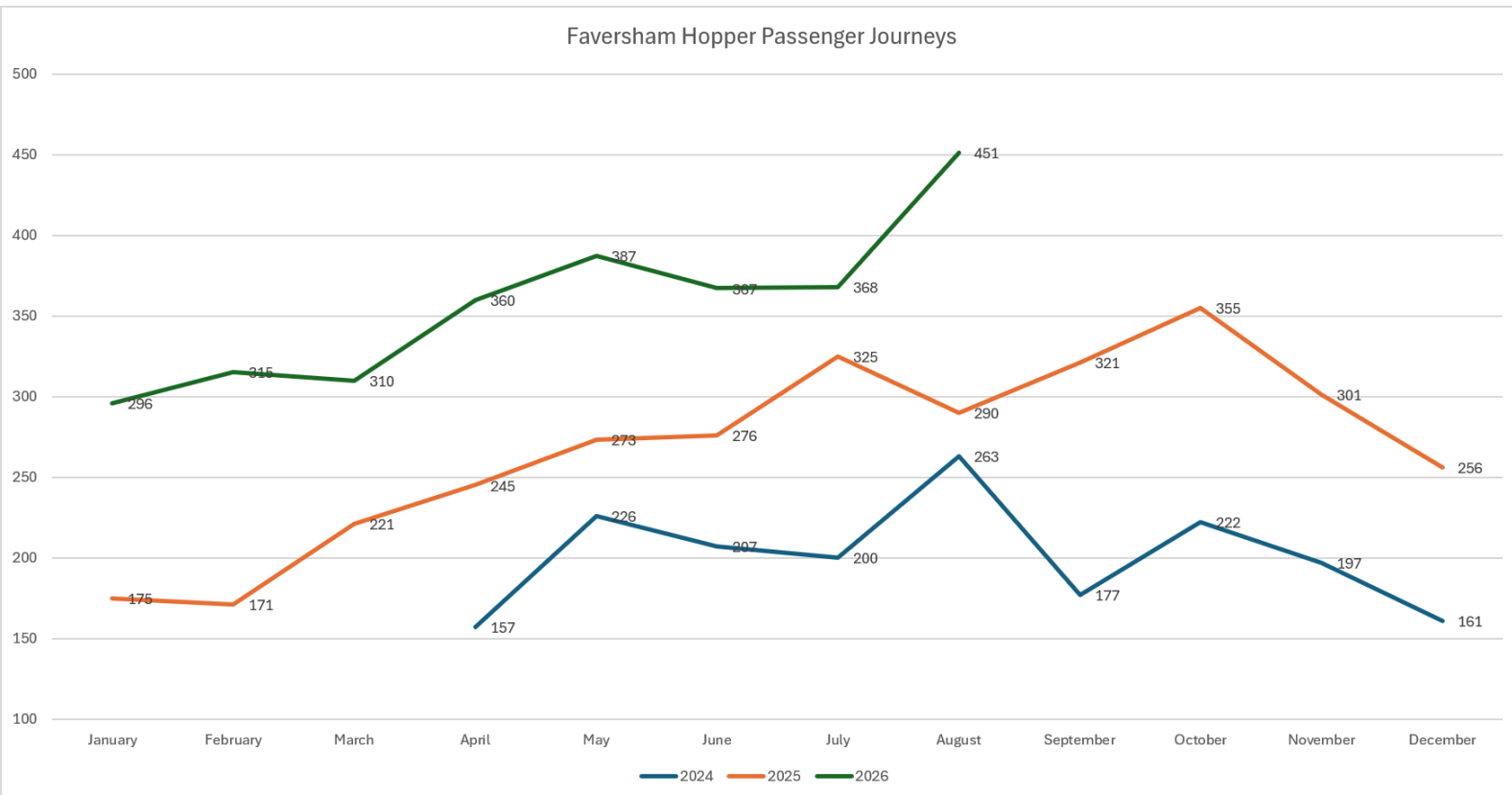




Report for the Active Travel Committee 2nd September 2026

Passenger statistics



Analysis of Faversham Hopper Passenger Journeys

The graph shows a clear and sustained growth in passenger journeys over the three-year period, demonstrating that the Faversham Hopper service is attracting increasing numbers of users.

Overall Trend

- Passenger numbers have increased significantly year-on-year.
- The average monthly patronage in **2026** is substantially higher than in both **2025** and **2024**.
- The service appears to have established a stronger customer base and greater awareness within the community.

Year-on-Year Comparison

2024

- The first month of operation, April 2024 saw **157 journeys**.
- Passenger numbers rose sharply to **226** in May and reached a peak of **263** in August.
- There was considerable volatility, including a drop to **177** in September.
- The year ended at **161 journeys** in December.
- Average monthly journeys (Apr-Dec): approximately **201**.

2025

- Passenger journeys started at **175** in January.
- Strong growth occurred throughout the spring and summer, reaching **325** in July.
- October recorded the highest monthly total at **355 journeys**.
- Numbers then fell back during the final quarter, ending at **256** in December.
- Average monthly journeys: approximately **267**, representing around a **33% increase** on 2024.

2026 (January-August)

- All monthly totals exceed the corresponding months in 2025.
- Passenger journeys increased from **296** in January to a record **451** in August.
- The services have remained consistently above 300 journeys per month throughout the year to-date.
- Average monthly journeys (Jan-Aug): approximately **357**, around **34% higher** than 2025.

Seasonal Patterns

Several seasonal trends are evident:

- Demand tends to increase during spring and summer.
- Higher passenger numbers are seen during the tourist season, particularly between May and October.
- Autumn and winter months generally experience lower patronage.
- Despite seasonal fluctuations, each year's baseline demand is higher than the previous year.

Key Highlights

- **Highest recorded month:** August 2026 with **451 journeys**.
- **Lowest recorded month:** April 2024 with **157 journeys**.
- August 2026 passenger numbers were:
 - **71% higher** than August 2024 (451 vs 263).
 - **56% higher** than August 2025 (451 vs 290).

Possible Factors Contributing to Growth

The upward trend may reflect:

- Increased awareness and promotion of the Hopper service.

- Growing confidence among residents in community transport.
- Route and timetable improvements including introduction of a Saturday service in August 2026.
- Rising demand for local, accessible transport options.
- Increased use by visitors during peak tourism periods (mainly walking groups).

Summary

The Faversham Hopper has experienced sustained passenger growth between 2024 and 2026. Average monthly journeys increased from approximately 201 in 2024 to 267 in 2025, with 2026 continuing this trend at an average of 354 journeys per month up to August. August 2026 achieved a record 451 passenger journeys, demonstrating growing reliance on the service and indicating that the Hopper is becoming an increasingly important component of local transport provision within Faversham.

Other Developments

We have 17 volunteers at the moment. We have lost one this month, however 5 more potential volunteers have made enquiries.

KCC have advised there may be the possibility of us receiving a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter as a donated vehicle. RG has queried the VRM but no further details are available at the moment. If the Sprinter is required for further KCC contracts then the Fiat minibus is still available.

The opening of the latest KCC Community Transport Grant round is still awaited at the time of writing.

KCC Deputy Cabinet for Highways and Transport Member Spencer Dixon is due to carry out some filming with the Hopper on 4th September.

The Hop Festival road closures on 5th September should not affect the Hopper route too much and we anticipate running a close to normal timetable although not serving Preston St and Stone St.

RG

01.09.26