### Overall project

1. **What is the project?**
   
The project aims to make the bus a convenient, attractive choice for more people in Guildford by improving bus reliability and journey times, and introducing better bus stops and new electric buses.

   **Quick, reliable journeys:** Roads will be redesigned at locations where buses currently get held up (‘pinch points’), and smart traffic lights will turn green for buses that have been delayed so that they can make up lost time.

   **Better bus stops:** Bus stops across the town will be upgraded with live bus departure screens (‘real time passenger information’) and improved waiting areas, including new bus shelters. Many more bus stops will be made accessible with raised kerbs that remove the step down from the bus, and there will be more room for the bus to pull in and line up with the pavement edge – ideal for those using a mobility aid, or travelling with small children or luggage.

   **New electric buses:** As part of the project, new award-winning electric buses have been introduced on Park and Ride services, offering a smooth, comfortable ride, improving local air quality and helping to tackle the climate emergency.

   This project is part of ‘Unlocking Guildford’ – a complimentary package of projects for the town seeking to address key transport-related challenges to support the town’s planned growth.

2. **What are the outcomes of the scheme?**
   
The project is designed to deliver the following outcomes:
   - Improve bus journey time reliability and punctuality
   - Reduce bus journey times
   - Increase levels of bus patronage

3. **How much does the project cost? How is the work being funded?**
   
The budget for the project is £4.52 million.
   
   This consists of £3.21m of funding for improving roads, traffic lights and bus stops from Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership’s Local Growth Fund, and £1.31m spent by Stagecoach on new electric buses.

4. **When will the scheme be delivered/what is the construction period?**
   
The project began in 2018 and will be completed in stages up until 31 March 2021, which is the date that Enterprise M3’s funding contribution must be spent by.

   To redesign roads and improve bus stops, construction works are scheduled to take place between summer 2020 and March 2021.
### Guildford Quality Bus Corridors - Frequently Asked Questions

5. **How have the public been consulted on these works?**

A public consultation for some of the Unlocking Guildford projects, including this project, ran from 22 January 2018 – 4 March 2018, which included public exhibitions. At the consultation, 2 in 3 respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that this Quality Bus Corridor project should go ahead, and 7 in 8 respondents were unopposed to with only 1 in 8 respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this project.

Since this date, update reports and decisions have been taken through public meetings of the Guildford Joint Committee, on 18 September 2019, 11 December 2019 (as part of the “Town Centre Transport Package” report) and 18 March 2020. These reports are available to view on the Guildford Joint Committee web pages.

6. **How were the schemes chosen?**

The ‘pinch point’ improvement schemes were chosen through discussions with the bus companies operating in Guildford and assessment of bus journey time delay data available through the real time passenger information system.

The bus stop improvements have been informed through on-site inspections and prioritisation of stops, and from input with bus drivers at Stakeholder consultation events.

7. **Why is the money being spent on buses instead of road maintenance?**

This project is not replacing or diminishing Surrey County Council’s road maintenance programme, known as [Operation Horizon](#). Traffic congestion remains an issue for residents and businesses in Guildford, however, and there is very little land available in the town for new roads and parking. The town is also seeking to improve air quality, as well as reduce carbon emissions to tackle the climate emergency. As a result, Enterprise M3 have agreed to fund these improvements to the bus network to reduce the number of vehicles that need to be on the road and improve sustainable travel choices, and Stagecoach have agreed to support this with an investment in electric vehicles.

Some of the civil engineering pinch-point schemes may involve improving the road surface which would be integral to delivering the scheme.

### Woodbridge Road Bus Lane Improvement Scheme

8. **What changes are planned?**

The existing short sections of bus and HGV lane heading into town between the Stocton Close roundabout and Markenfield Road, near the cricket ground will be connected to form a single, continuous lane, avoiding the need for buses and HGVs to merge back into the general traffic lane. To do this, there will be some changes to parking beneath the railway bridge and adjacent to the cricket ground, and changes to road markings. The road will also be slightly realigned under the railway bridge to reduce the risk of a bridge strike and the footway will be widened to improve pedestrian comfort.

There will also be some minor changes to signs, lining and the position of one pedestrian refuge at the Stocton Close roundabout, to improve safety and to allow buses to pull out of Woodbridge Retail Park bus stop and into the roundabout without needing to temporarily swing out into the general traffic lane due to the current insufficient width.
## Guildford Quality Bus Corridors - Frequently Asked Questions

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>9. Why improve this route?</td>
<td>Through discussions with the bus companies the congestion along Woodbridge Road in the peak periods is a particular cause of delays to buses. Several frequent, well-used bus routes approach the town centre along Woodbridge Road. Creating a continuous southbound bus lane of appropriate width from north of the Stocton Close roundabout under the Woodbridge Road rail bridge removes the current bus 'pinch point' where buses are stuck within the existing traffic queue at peak times. This would improve bus journey times and reliability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. How is parking being changed by the proposals?</td>
<td>To obtain the required width for the bus lane the existing formal parking bays along the eastern side of Woodbridge Road (south of the rail bridge to Gardner Road) need to be reconfigured. Taken together, the current three groups of bays allow for 14-17 vehicles depending on the size and position of vehicles. The extension of the bus lane requires the removal of the first section of 8-9 parking bays to the south of the railway bridge, but approximately 5-6 parking bays will be introduced opposite Gardner Road in their place to infill the existing gap in the parking bay sections. Overall this results in the loss of parking for approximately 3-4 vehicles. In addition to the changes to parking bays, the parking restrictions on the southbound side of the road will change from single yellow lines to double yellow lines, as this part of the carriageway will become part of the bus and HGV lane. A detailed occupancy survey and analysis of current parking in the marked bays and the single yellow line area found that there is sufficient spare capacity in the remaining and re-provided parking bays to cater for parking demand in this location. See also: <a href="#">Woodbridge Road parking survey results (pdf)</a>.</td>
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### Bushy Hill Drive/Epsom Road Junction Improvement Scheme

11. **What changes are planned?**

   The central pedestrian island on Epsom Road will move to the east, providing a longer right turn lane for westbound right turning traffic from Epsom Road to Bushy Hill Drive. This will reduce instances of right turning vehicles blocking vehicles which are continuing towards Guildford.

   The pelican pedestrian crossing will be relocated slightly, but remain on the main pedestrian desire line across Epsom Road. The northern footway and Bushy Hill Drive pedestrian refuge will be widened to provide greater pedestrian comfort.

   The traffic signals will be refurbished and will operate via an intelligent MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Activation) system which can optimise signal timings to suit changing traffic conditions. Intelligent bus priority will also be installed at the junction, which detects late running buses and works with the MOVA system to change the signal timings in their favour.

   Overall, the A25/A246 Epsom Road suffers with significant westbound peak time congestion. To further help buses, as well as other traffic, on this route into town, all traffic light controlled junctions heading into town from Bushy Hill Drive junction on the Epsom Road will also be refurbished and optimised as part of Surrey County Council’s Signal Refurbishment Programme 2020/2021.

12. **Why improve this junction?**

   Currently, the junction layout has a small right hand turn facility into Bushy Hill Drive, which leads to right hand turning vehicles impeding those heading into town, holding vehicles back which would otherwise be able to pass through the junction causing traffic to queue.

   Additionally, the signals are not adaptive which exacerbates the congestion.

   These changes will help more vehicles pass through the junction heading in to Guildford in the morning peak, as well as improving traffic flow at other times.

   Together with the signal improvements elsewhere on the Epsom Road and the Park Lane roundabout westbound exit merge improvements, the potential Epsom Road bus lane and the improvements to bus stops, Epsom Road will become a ‘Quality Bus Corridor’ for travelling to and from Guildford town centre.

   This is an important junction on the bus network as buses travel through the junction in all directions.

### Park Lane Westbound Exit Merge Improvement Scheme

13. **What changes are planned?**

   The width of the traffic island will be reduced and the hatching fronting the island removed to extend the space available for vehicles to merge from two lanes to one at the exit from Park Lane roundabout westbound.

14. **Why improve this merge?**

   This formalises practice observed by drivers during the morning peak, where traffic queues on the hatching waiting to merge to manoeuvre off the roundabout to let vehicles in other directions pass through. Formalising this arrangement will make this practice safer.
# Epsom Road Bus Lane Proposal

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<td><strong>15. What changes are proposed?</strong></td>
<td>A bus lane from Merrow Park and Ride westbound along Epsom Road to Park Lane roundabout is being investigated. This would involve the conversion of the leftmost of the two westbound lanes to a bus lane.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>16. Why improve this route?</strong></td>
<td>This road suffers with significant congestion westbound in the morning peak, with traffic surveys showing that travel time from the Park and Ride roundabout to the Park Lane roundabout for all traffic is in excess of 10 minutes at these times. A bus lane would mean buses could avoid the delays experienced by other traffic at this point. Traffic survey work shows that journey times from the Park &amp; Ride to Bushy Hill Drive junction with Epsom Road increase from approx. 3 mins at 07:45 to over 14 mins at 08:00 and are still approx. 13 mins at 08:15. Having a dedicated bus lane to reduce bus journey times and improve punctuality will give commuters heading in to Guildford town centre the option of parking and avoiding the traffic queue on the bus. Properly set up, Park &amp; Ride services reduce traffic movements into and out of towns, improving traffic conditions for those journeys that cannot be made by bus.</td>
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<td><strong>17. If traffic is queuing, will removing a traffic lane make journeys take longer?</strong></td>
<td>This is something that Surrey County Council are working to understand, testing concept road designs that incorporate the bus lane using sophisticated computer modelling software and comparing the results to how traffic currently flows. This bus lane remains a proposal for now, with a decision to be taken on how and whether to proceed once the modelling results are known. Beyond the Park Lane roundabout, the Epsom Road into Guildford is a single westbound lane which is largely at capacity, and which causes traffic to queue between the Park &amp; Ride and Park Lane roundabouts where the dual carriageway has to merge into the single lane. As a result, the second traffic lane at this point is predicted to have little if any impact on journey time for traffic heading westbound into Guildford town centre. Further analysis is needed to assess the benefits or dis-benefits for traffic heading westbound along the Epsom Road before turning right at the Park Lane roundabout into Park Lane. Extensive traffic surveys and bus journey time information was obtained in October 2019 for an evidence-led approach to assess the feasibility of the bus lane concept. A Paramics micro-simulation traffic model is being created to test the proposals to understand any impact on traffic, and what the journey time improvements to buses might be. If the bus lane were installed, commuters heading in to Guildford would have the option of using the Park &amp; Ride facility to speed up their journey into town, as the bus would bypass the queuing traffic as it would use the dedicated bus lane. Drivers who do switch modes would also be lowering their carbon footprint and helping to improve air quality in the town.</td>
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### Guildford Quality Bus Corridors - Frequently Asked Questions

**18. Does this proposal support the Council’s transport strategy?**

In 2019 the County Council declared a climate emergency and is developing detailed plans to support the Greener Futures agenda. Proposals for improving bus lanes and creating new bus lanes, for example on Epsom Road, will help to improve bus journey times and reliability and help to make buses an attractive alternative to the private motor vehicle. This supports both the County Council’s 2030 vision to make journeys across the county easier, more predictable and safer, and also the wider climate change agenda.

A consistent county-wide policy and properly located and managed bus lanes will help make buses a convenient and attractive alternative to individual car journeys, potentially aiding both congestion and emissions. The bus operators welcome proposals for a county-wide bus lane approach and schemes to promote bus lanes and the greener futures agenda.

At Surrey County Council Cabinet on 25 February 2020, a report to bring bus lane approvals and bus lane enforcement into County Council control was approved. This is to ensure the County Council can effectively, efficiently and consistently manage bus lane enforcement and bus lane provision to support the growth of bus use in Surrey as a part of our Greener Futures agenda.

### Intelligent Bus Priority

**19. What changes are planned?**

Surrey County Council is currently undertaking a programme of intelligent traffic light upgrades and optimisation at road junctions within the Guildford urban area. As part of this programme, many of these traffic lights will have additional equipment installed that can detect late running buses and change the signal timings in their favour. This additional equipment, and work to link the software that controls the traffic lights to that which tracks the position and timekeeping of buses will be funded through this project.

The back office software connection between Siemens (Surrey County Council’s traffic signals term contractor) and Trapeze (Surrey County Council’s bus location data term contractor) was set up in January 2020.

In addition to helping late running buses to make up time, the work to make traffic signals responsive to live traffic conditions (‘intelligent’) and to optimise their working will have benefits to all traffic in Guildford, including buses.

As of March 2020, the software connection and a selection of intelligent bus priority trial sites in Guildford are being tested and the system will then be rolled out as junctions are refurbished within Guildford and then county-wide.

**20. Why improve the signals?**

Intelligent signal technologies will mean individual junctions can adapt to live traffic conditions, reducing overall journey times and allowing late running buses priority through signals to improve reliability and punctuality.

### Bus Stop Improvements

**21. What are the proposed bus stop improvements?**

Scheduled improvements include new shelters, seating, live bus departure screens (known as Real Time Passenger Information or RTPI) and things that make it easier to get on and off the bus such as raised kerbs to reduce the step down from the bus and more room for buses to pull in and line up with the pavement edge.
### 22. Which routes and stops will be improved?

Improvements will be focussed on bus stops along routes 1, 2, 4, 5, 36 and 37. A schedule of bus stop improvements will be made public at the [18 March 2020 Guildford Joint Committee](#), as part of the report on the Guildford Quality Bus Corridor project. This schedule shows the bus stop locations and potential improvements to be delivered subject to specialist highway design engineers confirming that work is possible at the chosen locations, as well as funding and time constraints. Note that whilst it may not be possible to deliver improvements to all bus stops within this project’s funding and time constraints, this schedule provides an improvement framework for all future bus stop improvements within Guildford.

Further updates will be provided at future council working groups and committees.

### 23. When will the improvements be made?

Work will be undertaken in phases. All the bus stop improvements will be completed by 31 March 2021.

### 24. Who has been consulted on individual bus stop improvements?

Council officers will be following standard engagement and communication procedures for bus stop improvements, including site visits with local councillors and the police.

### New Electric Buses

#### 25. What new buses have been introduced?

The nine fully electric ‘Park and Glide’ buses came into service in February 2019 on Guildford’s Park & Ride services. They are the first ultra-low emissions buses in the county, with others planned.

At the UK Bus Awards in November 2019, the electric bus scheme operating on Guildford Park and Rides was awarded the ‘silver’ runners-up award in the Environment Category.