

West Berkshire Local Transport Plan Newsletter



Welcome to the West Berkshire Local Transport Plan newsletter

This ninth newsletter announces the consultation on the draft LTP Freight Strategy, progress on improvements to Theale railway station and the Newbury Personalised Travel Plan project, and other initiatives being undertaken to help improve travel in the District.

Draft LTP Freight Strategy

An updated Freight Strategy has been developed and is ready for consultation. This is the latest in a series of strategies that have been developed to support the LTP; in this instance providing a focus on LTP Key Policy K12: Freight.



The new Freight Strategy builds upon the previous strategy and the activities that have taken place, such as development of the West Berkshire Freight Route Network and completion of local freight and lorry parking studies. It provides an outline regarding how the Council will seek to manage the impact of road freight and to encourage sustainable distribution. An Action Plan has also been included to help guide delivery during the lifetime of the strategy.

Further details on the consultation can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Theale Station

Work has started on the improvements at Theale Station. A new ticket office has been built and the additional funding needed to

deliver a new passenger bridge with lifts has recently been confirmed by the Department for Transport (DfT). The new ticket office will be operational once the new bridge and lifts are delivered. The station area will start to look very different over the next 12 months as First Great Western, Network Rail and the Council work together to significantly improve the facilities for passengers. These improvements are being funded through the DfT's Access for All, Local Sustainable Transport and National Station Improvement Programme Funds.

Newbury Personalised Travel Planning Project

Following a successful bid to the Department of the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2013, we are poised to engage with up to 5000 households within a carefully selected area in South Newbury. The project will see our travel advisors visit these homes, and offer free travel advice and information to encourage households to consider their



The Transport Policy Team
Tel: 01635 42400
email: ltp@westberks.gov.uk





travel habits, and consider alternative modes of travel for short or regular journeys, such as walking, cycling and bus travel. Such projects are increasingly being undertaken across the UK, and are referred to as Personalised Travel Planning, or PTP for short.

Our PTP project has involved collaborative working with other teams within the Council, and we expect to see householders who engage to increase the number of walking and cycling trips they undertake, and crucially reduce their reliance on the car. The project will commence in early June, and will run until the end of August, with an evaluation phase in the autumn. To encourage participation, we will be offering a range of rewards and incentives.

We have applied for further funding, so that we can expand this project in 2015 into North Newbury and towards Thatcham. We expect to know in July if we have been successful. Further information on our PTP project can be found at www.westberks.gov.uk/ptp

Branding

Through our work in developing the PTP project, we have created a new brand which will accompany all our projects and communications in the future. The Change the Way you Move branding will launch with the PTP project in June, and will adorn any future work encouraging sustainable travel in West Berkshire. The branding is designed to lend itself to any future transport projects, with the coloured arrows leading into mode specific publications.



Newbury Car Club

In our previous newsletter, we wrote about a car club for Newbury. Following consultation with residents in central Newbury, we received an overwhelming positive response, and are hopeful of a launch in the late autumn. Initially, we expect to start with three cars, one of which will be electric, located close to the town centre. We hope to grow the network of vehicles as the scheme shows signs of success.

If you would like to be kept informed of the progress of the Car Club, and want us to let you know when the scheme will be launched, email us at ltp@westberks.gov.uk with your contact details.

Safer Journey Cards

We have been working to develop a card which can help bus users with hidden disabilities to communicate more easily with the bus driver, while maintaining their discretion from other bus passengers. The cards are designed to be distributed digitally, but we will be making some available pre-printed. Starting A4 size, they fold down to fit into the wallet distributed with all Concessionary bus passes.



They include eight easy to understand messages pre-printed, which you can personalise as required. Examples of these messages include "Please let me know when we get to ...", "Please help check or scan my pass for me", and "Please speak slowly and face me to help me understand you better". The cards will help improve confidence in independent

travel on the buses, and are for use by anyone who feels they may benefit from messages.

The cards will be available from the West Berks website when the scheme is launched, or you can email us at ltp@westberks.gov.uk and we can send one to you.

Next Buses

Working in partnership with Wokingham Borough Council, with the UK-wide Traveline journey planning service and with supplier Nimbus Journey Information, West Berkshire Council recently implemented a further phase of the NextBuses-branded Real Time Passenger Information system.

Customers can check the status of their journey online, before they leave their home or office, via the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk/nextbuses

Customers can also receive bus arrival predictions for satellite-tracked journeys, as well as timetable information for other routes, straight to their mobile using the NextBuses mobile internet and text services.



You can access the NextBuses mobile internet service at www.nextbuses.mobi A NextBuses app, developed for Traveline, is also available.

In parallel with an imminent infrastructure upgrade on the Jet Black 1 bus route, the Council will be introducing distinctive signplates to increase awareness of the NextBuses service.

Live bus arrival predictions, wherever available, are shown as predicted times to arrival - for example "in 12 mins". Timetabled departure details for other journeys are shown as clock times – for example "at 12:26".



Ticketer

West Berkshire Council has invested developer contributions to enable the introduction of the latest smartcard-compatible ticket machines to the tendered local bus network. This development enables enhanced recording of concessionary travel and ticket transactions. Nineteen of the new Ticketer machines are in use, with the revenue costs being paid by the bus operator.

Consultation – We need your views!

The consultation is your opportunity to let us know your views on the draft Freight Strategy.

The consultation commences on the 19 June 2014 and runs for 8 weeks, closing on 13 August 2014. The draft strategy and accompanying questionnaire for you to complete are available on the Council's website.

www.westberks.gov.uk/consultations

Should you require a paper copy of the strategy, please contact the Transport Policy Team (01635 42400).

Following the consultation, we will review all the feedback and will make the necessary changes to produce the final version of the Freight Strategy

Pinchpoint Funding

Our previous newsletter announced the award to the Council of almost £2million from the Government's Local Pinch Point Fund to address congestion issues on the A4 at Calcot. This funding, with additional contributions from the Council and Developers (mainly IKEA), will provide an extra lane for westbound traffic travelling towards M4 J12 and will improve traffic flow eastbound to Langley Hill.

The Council is in the process of selecting a contractor to carry out the construction work. The scheme is on target to start on site in August but work will have already been observed locally as buried utility equipment is moved in preparation for the construction phase. The scheme is due to be completed in March 2015. Further details of the progress of this scheme can be found at www.westberks.gov.uk/a4calcot

How to contact us

As well as the consultation, we would welcome your questions and comments at any time. You can contact the Transport Policy Team:

By telephone: 01635 42400

By email: ltip@westberks.gov.uk

By post: Transport Policy Team, Planning and Countryside, West Berkshire Council, Market Street Offices, Newbury, RG14 5LD