

# Plans to cut congestion

I set out below the latest WBC release on improved traffic management:

## £250,000 funding win for smart traffic lights and crossing sensors

Wokingham Borough Council has been awarded £250,000 for smart traffic lights and crossings across the area. The Department for Transport gave the grant to support the use of new technology to cut congestion across the area, as well as reducing journey times and emissions.

Smart traffic light schemes are earmarked for ten locations across the borough. These will be more responsive than the current systems and will change as the traffic demands depending on the time of day. Another 39 locations will also see upgrades, covered through the council's congestion management budget.

Forty locations will see smart crossing technologies installed. Push button traffic light crossings will be replaced with ones triggered by sensors, which will help with Covid-safe use of these going forward. These also have audio speakers, to support visually impaired residents.

This is part of the council's wider plans to keep to the borough moving smoothly and cut congestion across the area. The funding will support schemes to cut congestion and build intelligent traffic schemes using technology.

The electronic systems will take data from sensors, lampposts and signs to identify in real time where problems are and solve them before they build up. These new signals, including those funded by the Department for Transport grant, will react to traffic in real time to help manage capacity on the borough's roads.

Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, said: "We continue to work hard towards our priority of cutting congestion across our borough by making the most of smart technology. This funding award recognises the Department for Transport supporting us towards our goals and acknowledging our plans to do this as innovative and forward thinking."

At 18 locations the council will take the opportunity to switch the traffic signals to be more energy efficient, with different types of low-voltage bulbs installed. LED bulbs will be used instead of halogen, which helps the council towards its goal of net zero carbon by 2030. These require less maintenance, are more reliable and cost less, as well as reducing energy consumption by about 78 per cent.

To support its air quality targets, the council will use almost a third of the Government funding to install air quality sensors at eight traffic light locations. These will be used to improve evaluation of traffic management across the area, with air quality data being factored into future decisions.

The funding was announced earlier this month by Transport Secretary, Grant

Shapps. The package will see councils across England receive a share of £15 million in government funding to improve their traffic light systems to cut congestion, boost safety and reduce journey times and emissions – a commitment set out in the recently announced [Transport decarbonisation plan](#).

**– ENDS –**

**Further information:**

1. More from Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, on [jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk)
2. Alternatively contact the communications, engagement and marketing team via [CEM@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:CEM@wokingham.gov.uk)

Read the full Department for Transport announcement via <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/multimillion-pound-initiative-to-improve-local-roads-across-england>