

£17 million to make journeys in West Sussex quicker and greener

- Department for Transport investing £17 million in the A2300 improvement at Burgess Hill
- the £22 million road scheme will cut traffic jams and support thousands of new homes to be built in the area
- latest investment by government to improve journeys in the region

Communities in West Sussex are set to benefit from quicker and safer journeys thanks to a new road upgrade given the green light today (18 February 2020).

Transport Minister Baroness Vere has announced a £17 million investment in the A2300 improvement scheme, which will reduce congestion, improve reliability for drivers and support growth in the region.

The A2300 improvement, worth £22 million in total, will cut congestion and improve safety by converting a 2.5km section of the existing road to a dual carriageway between the A23 and the proposed Northern Arc roundabout.

The scheme links Burgess Hill to the A23/M23 and is an important route for commuters, who often face congestion and delays. The upgrades will also see the addition of new walking and cycling paths and will allow over 3,500 new houses to be built along the route, by providing a key link between the planned development at Burgess Hill and the London to Brighton corridor.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere said:

This government is committed to boosting transport links for communities up and down the country.

This transformative road scheme will not only save drivers time, but will also mean more homes, more shared footpaths, and more cycleways – boosting journeys for all.

At its peak, it is estimated over 20,000 vehicles use the road daily. Without the upgrade, traffic flows are expected to grow by 40% over the next 2 decades.

West Sussex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure Roger Elkins said:

This is the excellent news we have been waiting for and puts the scheme on course for starting on site this spring.

The scheme will widen around 2.5km of single-lane road to a dual carriageway, helping to unlock significant development

opportunities, reduce congestion, and bring many other benefits to the area, including providing new walking and cycling facilities.

Work on the scheme is expected to start in the spring, with the road expected to be open in winter 2021.

The new road is just one of a number of projects in West Sussex including the Crawley Growth Programme and [the major station improvements at Gatwick](#).

This is the latest in the government's drive to improve links and level up infrastructure for communities across the UK and follows the announcement of a [£5 billion funding package](#) to overhaul bus and cycle links around the country.

Theory test changes: 14 April 2020

The way the theory test works in England, Scotland and Wales will change from 14 April 2020.

The change will make the theory test more accessible, especially to people with a:

- reading difficulty (like dyslexia)
- learning disability
- developmental condition (like autism)

The change only applies to car theory tests to begin with.

How the theory test is changing to use video clips instead of written case studies

Currently, you have to read a case study and then answer 5 questions about it.

This tests your knowledge and understanding of road rules.

This will change if you take your test from 14 April 2020. You'll watch one video clip instead of reading a case study, and answer 3 questions about it.

How using a video clip will work

You'll watch a short, silent, video clip and answer 3 multiple-choice questions about it.

You can watch the video clip as many times as you like during the multiple-choice part of the theory test.

Example You can watch the video, answer a question, and then watch the video again before you answer the next question.

What the video clip will look like

The video clip will show a situation, such as driving through a town centre, or driving on a country road.

[Car theory test video clips from 14 April 2020: example clip](#)

The type of questions you'll answer about the video clip

You'll answer questions like these:

1. Why are motorcyclists considered vulnerable road users?
2. Why should the driver, on the side road, look out for motorcyclists at junctions?
3. In this clip, who can cross the chevrons to overtake other vehicles, when it's safe to do so?

For each of the 3 questions, you'll have to choose the correct answer from 4 possible answers.

What the screen will look like

The left-hand side of the screen will show the video clip, with controls to:

- play the video
- pause the video
- move to a specific part of the video on a progress bar
- watch the video using the full screen

The right-hand side of the screen will show the question and 4 possible answers.

Who this change will affect

All car theory tests will use video clips from 14 April 2020.

This includes if:

- you fail a test before then and retake it from 14 April 2020
- your test is cancelled or moved for any reason, and your new test date is from 14 April 2020

What's not changing

You'll still need to study the same [books and software](#) to prepare for your theory test.

You'll still need to:

- answer 50 multiple-choice questions within 57 minutes
- get 43 out of the 50 questions right to pass the multiple-choice part of the test

The [hazard perception](#) part of the test is not changing. This is where you watch video clips to spot developing hazards.

Tests that are not changing

The change does not yet apply to these types of theory tests:

- motorcycle
- lorry
- bus or coach
- approved driving instructor (ADI) part 1

Other support for people with a reading difficulty, disability or health condition

You can have [reasonable adjustments](#) made to your theory test if you have a:

- reading difficulty
- disability
- health condition

These include:

- extra time to take the test
- someone to read what's on the screen and record your answers
- someone to reword the questions for you

[Department for Education ministerial portfolios confirmed](#)



[Education Secretary](#) Gavin Williamson will continue to have overall

responsibility for the Department for Education.

[Nick Gibb](#) will continue as Minister of State for School Standards.

[Michelle Donelan](#) takes on a new portfolio and has been appointed as Minister of State for Universities.

[Vicky Ford](#) has been appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families.

[Gillian Keegan](#) has been appointed as the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills.

[Baroness Berridge](#) has been appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The new Ministerial team at the Department for Education will work tirelessly to unleash potential and make the most of people's talents, whatever their background and wherever they're from. Working together, we'll bring a laser-like focus to giving every child the best start in life – supporting families and vulnerable children, further driving up standards in our schools and strengthening our brilliant colleges, further education providers and universities.

As I said when I was first appointed, further education and skills are huge priorities for this Government and for me personally which is why I've already secured a £400m funding boost for the sector. But we need to do so much more in this area so I've asked Universities Minister Michelle Donelan and the new Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Gillian Keegan, to work hand-in-glove on building a truly world-class post-16 offer for our young people.

I'm delighted Schools Minister Nick Gibb has been reappointed into this key role and look forward to working with him on improving school standards, and supporting our teachers to level up education across the country. Vicky Ford, our new Minister for Children and Families, will work with me on early years provision and improving our support to parents and looked after children.

We will be supported in the House of Lords by Baroness Berridge who as Minister for the School System will ensure academies and free schools, which are providing a high quality education to thousands of young people, continue to level up opportunities across the country. She will also oversee this government's continuing investment in school facilities to ensure every family has access to a good school place.

Last updated 26 February 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 26 February 2020

Added links to portfolios and comment from Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson.

2. 17 February 2020

First published.

[Government launches new business support campaign](#)

The government has today (17 February 2020) launched a new business support campaign, designed to help businesses to find the right support as part of our ambition to make the UK the best place in the world to work and grow a business.

As part of the campaign, government support will be advertised across a range of media, from billboards and newspapers to radio and social media.

From today, all of the government's business support schemes will be accessible via the new [Business Support site](#), making it easier for businesses in England to find out about the full range of support available to them. (Business support in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is provided by the devolved administrations so this site covers business in England only.)

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We want to make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a business. As part of delivering this ambition we are putting all of government's business support together in one place to ensure more businesses can unleash their potential.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

We want British exporters to make the most of our status as an independent trading nation, now that we have left the EU. This government will provide the tools and support to ensure these businesses are ready to trade.

How we can help your business

Schemes are divided into 4 areas.

Finance and business planning

Funding for new businesses and support to help existing business grow, dealing with late payments, and equity and debt finance .

Leadership and talent

Mentoring schemes, help with recruiting, developing leadership skills or joining a network.

Innovation and technology

Funding for innovation, adoption of new technology, intellectual property and finding partners for innovation.

Exporting

Support for doing business internationally and expanding online.

More information

The website also provides access to a Business Support Helpline and a LiveChat function. More information about specific schemes in these areas can be found on the website.

[Students can apply now for 20/21 student finance](#)

Full-time undergraduate students in England are being encouraged to [apply now](#) for student finance, as the application service launches for the 20/21 academic year.

[The easiest way to apply is online](#) and students should do so as soon as possible to ensure their finances are in place before the start of term.

Last year over 800,000 applications were received within the first four months of the service opening, with 250,000 being submitted within the first month.

Information is available to help guide students with their applications, and next week (24-28 February) Student Finance England will host Student Money

Week – an online event dedicated to providing information to students and their parents.

Derek Ross, SLC Executive Director of Operations, said:

“The launch of the application service is one of the biggest dates in the student finance calendar. It means that students can get on with the important job of getting their student finances sorted.

“The application takes 30 minutes to complete online and for most students the process will be straightforward. However, we know that some individuals require extra support and our team of expert staff are ready to help them.”

SLC has compiled the following ‘top tips’ to help students with different circumstances get their student finances sorted in plenty of time for the new academic year.

All students should:

Apply as early as possible to make sure your finances are in place before your studies start. The deadline to apply is 22 May for new students and 19 June for returning students. Even if you don’t know what course you are doing, you should still apply now, just enter your first choice and you can update the application later if required.

- Keep contact details up-to-date

Make sure you have provided us with an up-to-date e-mail address so we can contact you about your application if we need to.

- Have your important documents at hand

Have your National Insurance Number and passport details to hand before you start your application as you will be asked for this information when you apply.

If you have studied before

- If you have studied before it could affect your eligibility – even if your previous course was self-funded. Make sure to submit your application early so your entitlement can be confirmed.
- If you are returning to study after a break, you should use the online account you had originally rather than create a new one. You can use the online search function or contact us for help to locate it.

If you are estranged from your parents

- If you have had no contact with your parents for over a year you may be able to apply as an estranged student. Applications from estranged students are dealt with by our dedicated team of specially trained, customer advisors to ensure that the process is sensitive to their circumstances. The evidence requirements are different too. [Read this guide to find out more.](#)

- There may be circumstances where you are able to access some extra money, for example if you are disabled, have children or are studying for a medical, social work or teaching course. [Find out more about what is available.](#)

If you're not from the UK

Students can access more information and guidance about applying for student finance on [GOV.UK](#), [The Student Room](#) and by following Student Finance England at [facebook.com/SFEngland](#), [twitter.com/SF_England](#) or [youtube/SFEFILM](#)