
WEST BERKSHIRE BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2021, the Government published a new strategy to improve bus services in England, outside of London – [Bus Back Better](#). The strategy sets out the Government’s vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers. Essentially this would be more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better coordinated and cheaper bus services. Local transport authorities will be given more powers to improve bus networks in their area.
- 1.2 The Council established an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators to deliver these goals, which came into effect in April 2022. This should safeguard discretionary streams of government funding for bus services to the Council and local bus operators, and also government funding for other local transport schemes.
- 1.3 The West Berkshire Partnership was fortunate to be allocated almost £2.6m in funding for its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in April 2022, although this was not released by the Department for Transport (DfT) until December 2022, and therefore there was a delay in progressing proposed schemes.
- 1.4 In May 2023, an additional £480k was allocated through the BSIP+ scheme. This is to be spent on maintaining or improving bus services until March 2025.

2. Bus Grant 2025-26 allocation

- 2.1 Future BSIP funding is combined with West Berkshire Council’s [BSOG \(Bus Service Operators Grant\)](#) allocation, to form a single Bus Grant. In November 2024, the funding allocations for [2025/2026](#) were announced.

Type of Funding 2025-26	Allocation
BSIP Revenue Funding	£762,211
BSIP Capital Funding	£672,548
BSIP Capacity and Capability allocation	£63,000
Local Authority BSOG	£137,099
Total	£1,634,858

3. BSIP Delivery Plan for 2025-26

- 3.1 The Council has submitted a delivery plan to the DfT (Department for Transport) outlining the schemes and measures it would like to implement with the Bus Grant funding for 2025-2026. The delivery plan is outlined below.
- 3.2 The Council has listed all the schemes it would like to implement in 2025-26 however some of these are subject to assessment of the viability of the project and sufficient funding being available. We have also included schemes that we are continuing from previous BSIP allocations. This is a full list, including schemes are being funded directly by West Berkshire Council, or using other funding sources. Where the table lists Council funding, this will include the other funding sources.

Category of Scheme/Measure	Name of Scheme/Measure	Additional description of scheme/measure	Target delivery date	Type of funding
Projects to complete in 2025-2026				
Bus priority infrastructure	BP3. Robinhood Roundabout - signal priority	Install Bus Signal Priority within Traffic Signals by March-26.	March 2026	Bus Grant
Bus priority infrastructure	BP4. A4 Bath Road Calcot - signal priority	Install Bus Signal Priority within Traffic Signals by March-26	March 2026	Bus Grant
Bus priority infrastructure	BP7. Mortimer Station Bus Turning Facility	Feasibility study completion.	March 2026	Bus Grant
Ticketing equipment / systems	FS6. Multi-Operator scheme	Set-up and running costs for scheme, including TOTO for supported services.	March 2026	Bus Grant
Projects continuing into 2026-2027				
Bus priority infrastructure	BP5. Continued work on Bus Congestion Hotspots and clearways	Implement solutions to congestion hotspots for bus services.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Bus priority infrastructure	OI5. Bus Gate Review	Improve effectiveness of bus gates.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Bus stops / stations / interchanges	OI1. Passenger Waiting Environment	Include additional parish requests - including more bus shelters/benches.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Bus stops / stations / interchanges	OI2. Real Time Passenger Information schemes	RTPI screens and upfront maintenance costs.	March 2027	Bus Grant

Category of Scheme/Measure	Name of Scheme/Measure	Additional description of scheme/measure	Target delivery date	Type of funding
Bus stops / stations / interchanges	OI6. Bus stop requests	Bus stop requests for existing and new services and associated infrastructure.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Vehicles	BF2. Upgrade vehicles to zero emissions	Seek solutions to ensure that vehicles are all zero emission by specified date.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Vehicles	BF3. Carbon neutral facilities	Charging points in Thatcham and Lambourn.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
LTA delivery / admin costs	ST1. Capacity Support	Staff costs for the delivery of BSIP funding including Revenue/Capital schemes.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Safety and security	SS2. Independent Travel Training	Work with HTST (Home to School Transport) team to deliver an Independent Travel Training programme.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Simpler / more affordable fares	FS1. Free/reduced fare bus travel	Offer Free Bus Travel Days over 25/26 including at Christmas & World Car Free Day and look for opportunities on reducing fares.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Improved information, marketing	II1. Improved marketing of bus services and other transport modes including tourist services	Look at marketing campaigns to encourage bus use.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Bus service support / network development	BS1. Downlands Transport	Continued support for Downlands DRT.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Bus service support / network development	BS2. Thatcham Connect	Continued support for Thatcham Connect DRT.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Bus service support / network development	BS6. Council supported services	Assistance towards Council supported network and Concessionary Fares.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council
Bus service support / network development	BS12. Introduction of evening/weekends services - rural areas	Continued support of 32 service. Introduction of other Sunday/late evening services (e.g. X34 Sunday service potentially to serve Ilsley's) or additional support for existing areas. Subject to viability and sufficient funding.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Bus service support / network development	BS17. 1a/1c service support	North/South Thatcham bus service.	March 2027	Bus Grant / Council

Category of Scheme/Measure	Name of Scheme/Measure	Additional description of scheme/measure	Target delivery date	Type of funding
Bus service support / network development	CT1. Support for Community Transport	Continued support for groups through revenue/capital grant provision.	March 2027	Council Funding
Bus service support / network development	BS11. Evening and Sunday services, Newbury & Thatcham.	Introduce evening and Sunday services pilot in Newbury urban area (e.g. possible expansion of 1e service). Subject to viability and sufficient funding.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Bus service support / network development	BS14. Expanded DRT services	North East rural West Berkshire service. Launch subject to long-term funding of operation being identified.	March 2027	Bus Grant
Reserve Projects with no funding currently identified				
Bus service support / network development	BS10. Improved services frequencies	Improve service frequencies across network to meet BSIP aspirations. Subject to viability and sufficient funding.	March 2027	
Bus service support / network development	BS16. Bus Services to tourist hotspots	Bus services to offer connections to places of interest in district. Subject to funding being available.	March 2027	
Bus service support / network development	ND1. Longer term development of the network	Look at solutions for improvements to the network to ensure efficiencies. Subject to funding being available.	March 2027	
Bus stops / stations / interchanges	OI4. Works on Bus Station	Rapid vehicle charging points. Subject to funding being available.	March 2027	
Vehicles	BF1. Upgrade Fleet to at least Euro VI	Seek solutions to ensure that vehicles at least Euro VI by specified date. Subject to need and funding being available.	March 2027	

Table 1: WBC BSIP Delivery Plan

4. BSIP and EP Plan and Scheme

- 4.1 The West Berkshire [Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme](#) is the statutory document that underpins the partnership between the local authority and bus operators. We will look to update this as required, our next EP Forum is scheduled for 22 May 2025.
- 4.2 The West Berkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan outlines in further detail how the partnership is looking to improve bus services in the district.

5. Target Reports

- 5.1 We will continue to publish [reports](#) on the Council website at regular intervals to show progress against the targets set in the BSIP and the delivery plan for 2025-2026.

Other Relevant Documentation

[West Berkshire Enhanced Partnership](#)