



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



Wokingham Borough Council

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# WOKINGHAM BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN





Wokingham Borough Council

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# WOKINGHAM BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022-2026

**TYPE OF DOCUMENT (VERSION) PUBLIC**

**PROJECT NO. 70085367**

**DATE: OCTOBER 2021**



Wokingham Borough Council

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# WOKINGHAM BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022-2026

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# QUALITY CONTROL

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Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1	Revision 2	Revision 3
Remarks				
Date	27 August 2021			
Prepared by	WSP BSIP Team			
Signature				
Checked by	Dominic Fee			
Signature				
Authorised by	George Burnett			
Signature				
Project number	70085367			
Report number				
File reference				

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# 1 OVERVIEW

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This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) presents Wokingham Borough Council's high-level vision and ambitions for the development of local bus services across the Borough. The BSIP provides some context to the current local bus network and considers the challenges and opportunities faced as bus services recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic. Looking beyond the recovery period the BSIP sets out the Council's aspirations and ambitions for growing and improving the local bus network in a way which best meets the needs of local residents.

In undertaking this BSIP, the Council has worked closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure a consistent approach to the BSIP for cross-boundary travel. Given the diverse nature of Wokingham Borough with urban areas to the west of the borough, growth areas in and around Arborfield, Shinfield and Wokingham and rural communities in the north, south and east of the borough, Wokingham Borough Council has taken the decision to produce a single BSIP for the whole borough rather than a joint BSIP with one or more neighbouring authorities. The Council has worked closely with Reading Borough Council in particular, given the significant daily movements between Wokingham and Reading Boroughs.

There has been engagement with key stakeholders, including all local bus, rail and community transport operators as well as those in the volunteer sector. The Council's engagement has extended to Town and Parish Councils who represent the views of their residents, in addition to some local resident associations. Discussions have also been undertaken with representatives of the Department for Work and Pensions, young and elderly carers, and the local Mental Health Alliance Partnership. Residents' annual responses to the National Highways and Transportation survey have been considered in relation to satisfaction with local bus services.

This BSIP has been produced in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Transport and the strategic vision set out in the National Bus Strategy. The proposed duration of the published BSIP is from 2022 to 2026, which accords with the current time periods of the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan 3, and Air Quality Action Plan. The BSIP will be reviewed on an annual basis and reported on every six months. The review process will be undertaken in consultation with transport operators, key stakeholders, and where appropriate relevant resident consultations. The BSIP effectively replaces the Wokingham Public Transport Plan issued in 2011.

The BSIP is provided in preparation for detailed schemes which will be presented in an Enhanced Partnership. Wokingham Borough Council's Enhanced Partnership will be published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and available at: <https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/bus-travel/enhanced-partnership/>

## 1.1 SCOPE OF THE BSIP

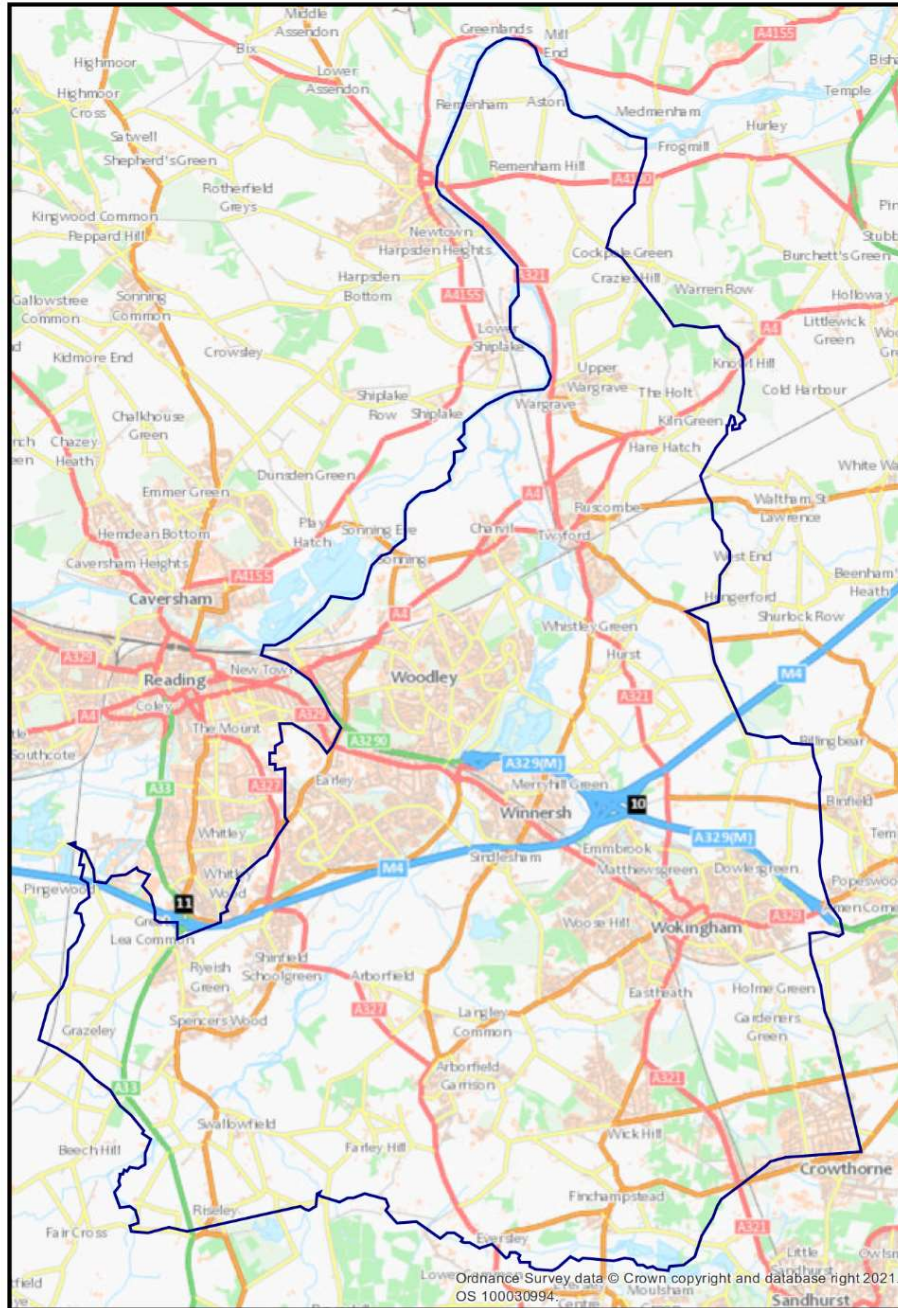
This BSIP covers the whole of Wokingham Borough. The administrative boundary of the borough is shown in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1 - BSIP Area - Wokingham Unitary Authority Boundary

WOKINGHAM BOUNDARY

WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Scale: 1:100,000  
Date: 19/08/2021



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OS 100030994



Wokingham Borough is a relatively affluent borough and one of the healthiest in England. The borough has an overall population of 173,945<sup>1</sup> people. The population is projected to increase by approximately 1% per annum with it likely to reach 180,900 by 2037 with the greatest increase is expected to be in those over the age of 85.

The average population density is 972 people / km<sup>22</sup>. The urban areas of Woodley and Earley are located to the west of the borough, adjacent to the Reading border, whilst the more rural communities are located to the north, south and east of the borough.

In recent years up to the first quarter of 2020, Wokingham saw a steady increase in bus service demand and supply. The borough sits in the top 10% of areas in the UK for car ownership (% households with car/van) in 2011. Car ownership trends are anticipated to have continued to match or exceeded the national average in the 10 years since 2011.

The variation in density and rurality of the borough and the high levels of car ownership makes providing and sustaining local bus services challenging.

Consequently, there is a semi-monopoly situation with one bus operator providing nearly 80% of the services operated across its two companies. The lack of competition is potentially a concern in terms of ensuring that there are competitive responses to local bus service tenders.

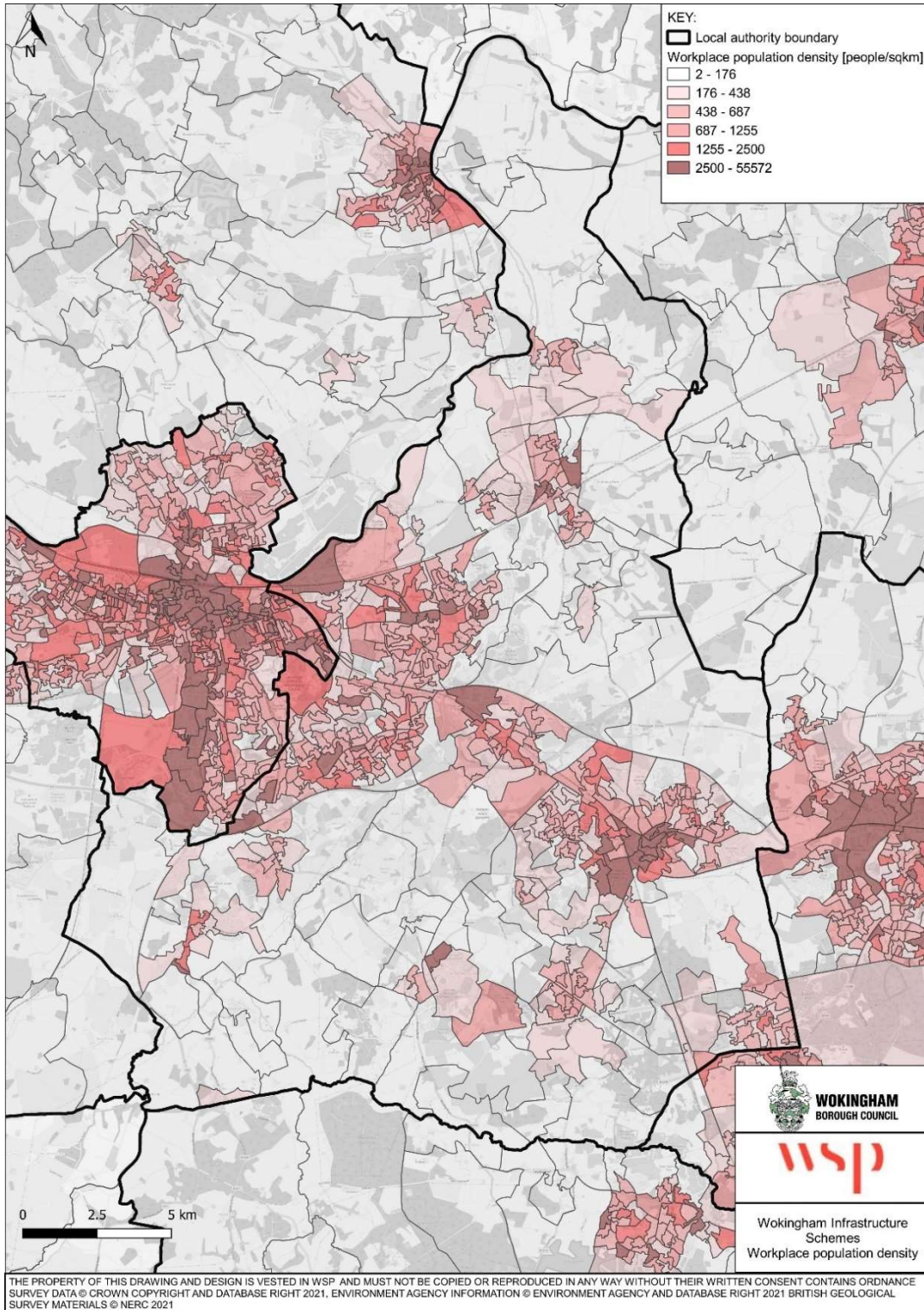
The Borough Council is working with developers and bus operators to ensure bus services are provided where needed. Further pump priming will be necessary to achieve the highly attractive level of bus service and increase use of local bus services to the level set out in the National Bus Strategy. In the past the Council has used this approach to establish the original bus service along the A327 using developer funding to achieve a financially sustainable service. Similarly, on the A329 corridor the Council historically supported evening and Sunday journeys until they were viable commercially. Pre-pandemic the Council was once again working to enhance the A327 service in accordance with strategic growth in the borough.

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<sup>1</sup> Berkshire Observatory estimate for 2020

<sup>2</sup> Wokingham Borough Profile 2017/18 – Public Health Intelligence

**Figure 1-2 - Population Density of Wokingham Borough**

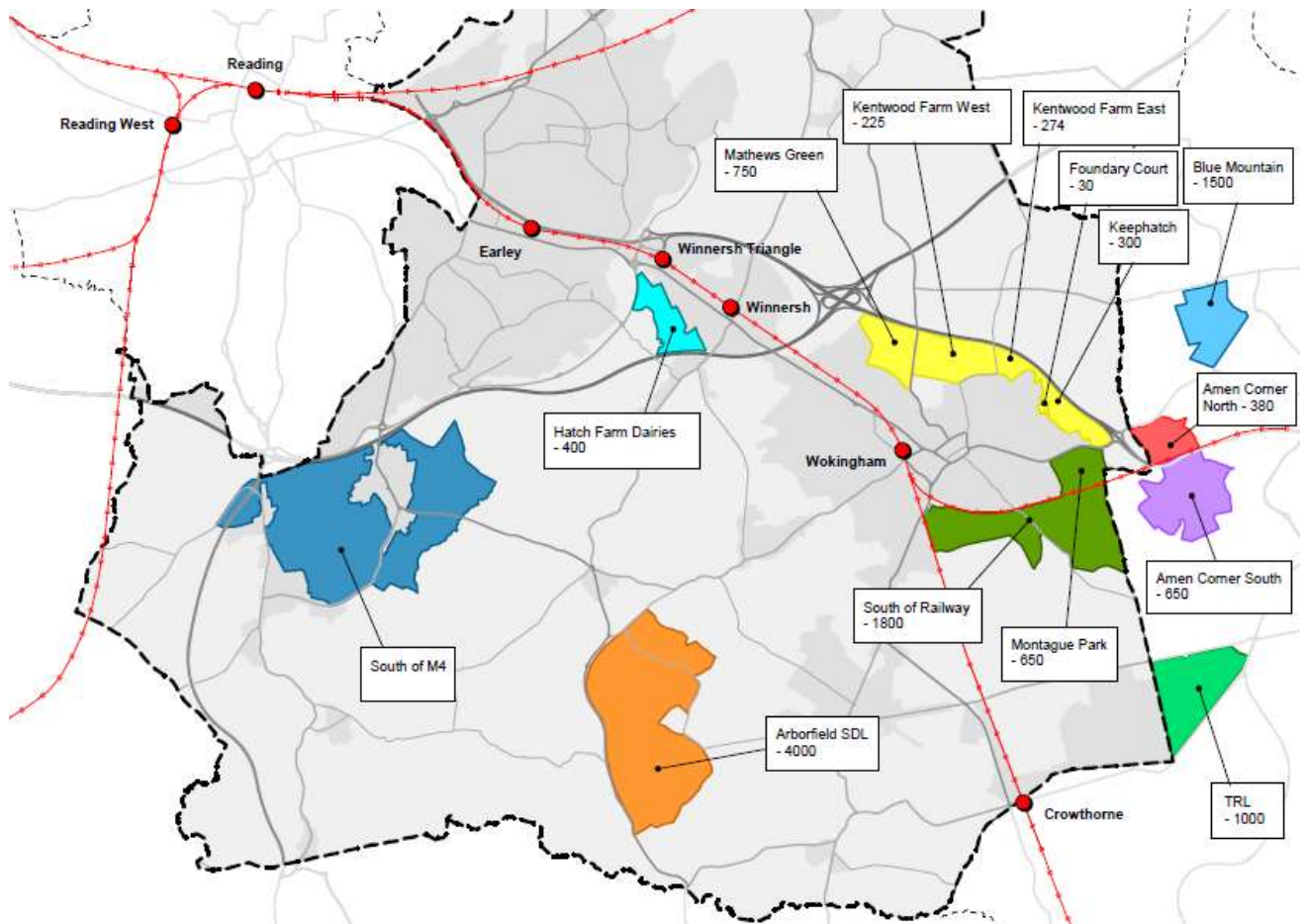


### 1.1.1 LOCAL PLAN AND FUTURE GROWTH

#### Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy 2016 – 2026, (adopted January 2010)

The Council’s Core Strategy sets out the Council plans for accommodating of up to 10,000 new homes in the borough by 2026, as required by Central Government housing allocations set for Wokingham Borough. Most new homes are accommodated in one of four strategic development locations, these are: North Wokingham (yellow), South Wokingham (green), the area to the South of the M4 (blue) and in and around Arborfield (orange).

**Figure 1-3 – Strategic Development Locations**



As the development is delivered through the planning system careful consideration is given to ensuring attractive bus services are in place at an early stage of occupation. Each of the strategic development locations already has a bus strategy or one is currently being developed. The Shinfield bus strategy was the first to be implemented and commenced in 2016. Developers are required to provide appropriate infrastructure provision and appropriate funding in the form of S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions to support the delivery of new and improved bus services.

## 1.2 VISION

The Council's vision for Bus Services in Wokingham Borough is for a bus network which provides our residents and visitors a choice in the way that they travel and contributes towards reducing congestion on our roads, improving local air quality, and enabling the achievement of carbon neutrality by 2030.

## 1.3 AMBITIONS

Whist bus passenger journeys in Wokingham Borough increased against the national trend for the 10-years leading up until 2020, the effects of the pandemic have been significant. Bus passenger levels are at 60%-65% of their pre-pandemic levels. Residents place a high importance on high quality, affordable and accessible local bus services. ***The ambition is to enable local bus services to recover to pre-pandemic levels and then to facilitate the continued growth in bus passenger numbers.***

By 2037, the population of Wokingham Borough is projected to reach 180,900 people, which is the equivalent to 20 people a day. Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan update set out the plans for the delivery of 10,000 new homes and the associated communities and infrastructure across the borough. As the borough continues to grow local bus services must support and enable residents to make the journeys they need to make. ***The ambition is to grow our bus service provision to ensure the right level of service in the right place.***

Wokingham Borough is in the enviable location of the Thames Valley Region, with good road and rail links to London, Heathrow Airport and Oxford. In the government's 2019 Indices of Deprivation, Wokingham is ranked one the least deprived local authorities in England. Compared to neighbouring authorities Wokingham has the most jobs in professional, scientific, technical and ICT activities. In 2011, 51% of residents travelled over 5km to work, with 5% of residents commuting distances of between 40-60km. 57% of residents who commuted 40-60km to work did so by public transport. The Borough's economy has proved to be resilient during the pandemic but has seen a change in bus usage and travel patterns because of home working by both Wokingham residents and employees within the borough. ***The ambition is for a bus network which supports the continued economic growth of Wokingham Borough and the wider Thames Valley region.***

In rural communities the difficulties some residents experience with poor accessibility to local transport provisions and the effects this can have on their ability to access key services is understood. ***The ambition is to improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.***

The Council is acutely aware of the pressing concerns of the climate change and has committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. The way residents travel and the distances covered have a significant impact on the borough's carbon footprint. One bus has the potential to take 75 cars of local roads, reduce congestion and reduce the associated carbon footprints by 111 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. With approximately 5,101 miles driven in the Borough for each of these cars per year, it is necessary to offer residents and visitors greener choices in the way that they travel. ***The ambition is to have a greener bus network which harnesses the greatest opportunities to reduce carbon emission and provides residents with greener travel choices.***

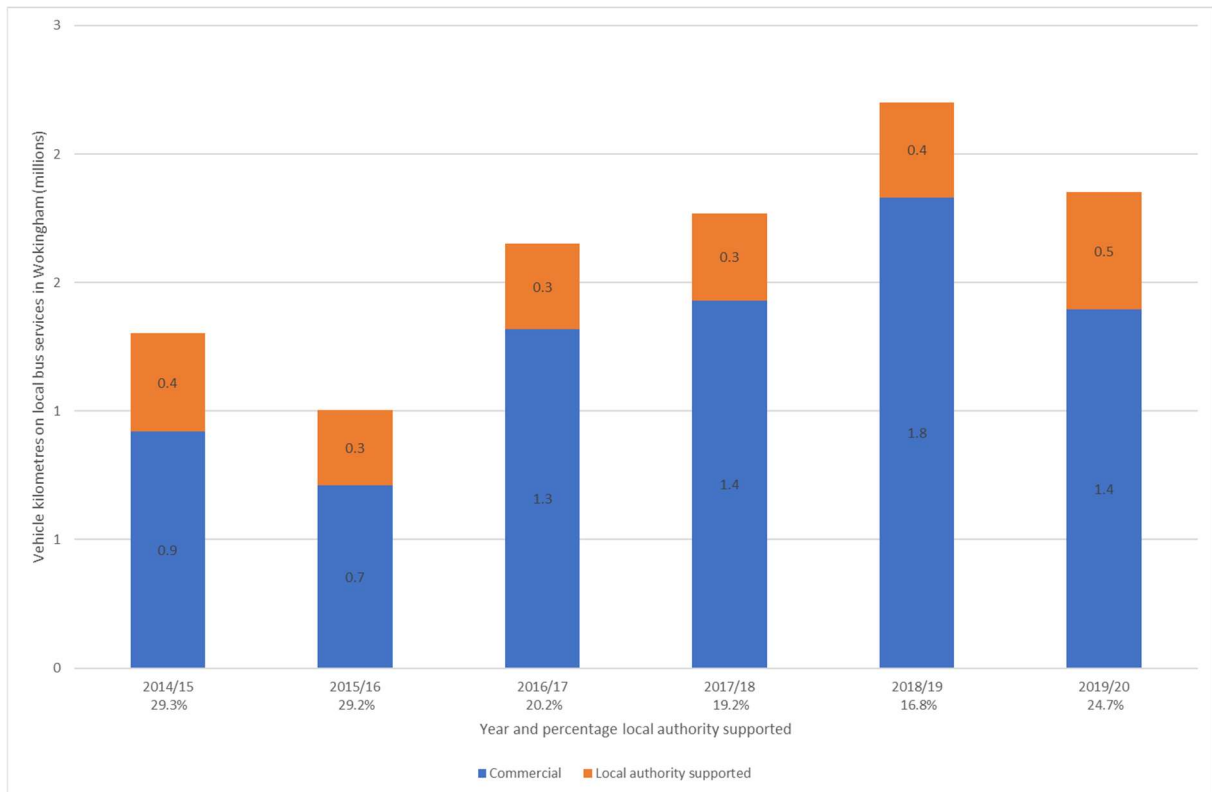
## 2 CURRENT BUS OFFER TO PASSENGERS

### 2.1 LOCAL BUS NETWORK OVERVIEW

Wokingham Borough’s local bus network consists of 29 bus services, two operational park and ride sites, plus seven local bus services which operate at school times only and allow members of the public to board. Seven football services which only operate on match days to Reading Football Club are also provided. Across the network 1.9 million vehicle kilometres were operated in 2019, accommodating 2.8 million passenger journeys. Of the 2.8 million passenger journeys 21.8% were made using a concessionary pass.

The Council provides support for 500,000 vehicle kilometres per year which is spread across 65% of registered local bus routes operating in the borough. Funding for bus services is constrained by Wokingham Borough Council being the lowest funded unitary authority in the country. The Council is very reliant on Council tax to fund bus services. Central government provides a 14% contribution towards socially necessary bus services through the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) and nothing towards the Council’s near £1million concessionary fare bill. The Council provides additional financial support for socially necessary services, which ranges from whole route support for services in Wokingham Town, Woodley and Earley to support for individual journeys operating once a week or at weekends in more rural areas. Where developer funding is provided, this is used to sustain services for as long as possible. Once developer funding runs out or is no longer provided this means the service is at risk of being withdrawn if it is not financially sustainable.

**Figure 2-1 – Graph: Vehicle kilometres on local bus services**

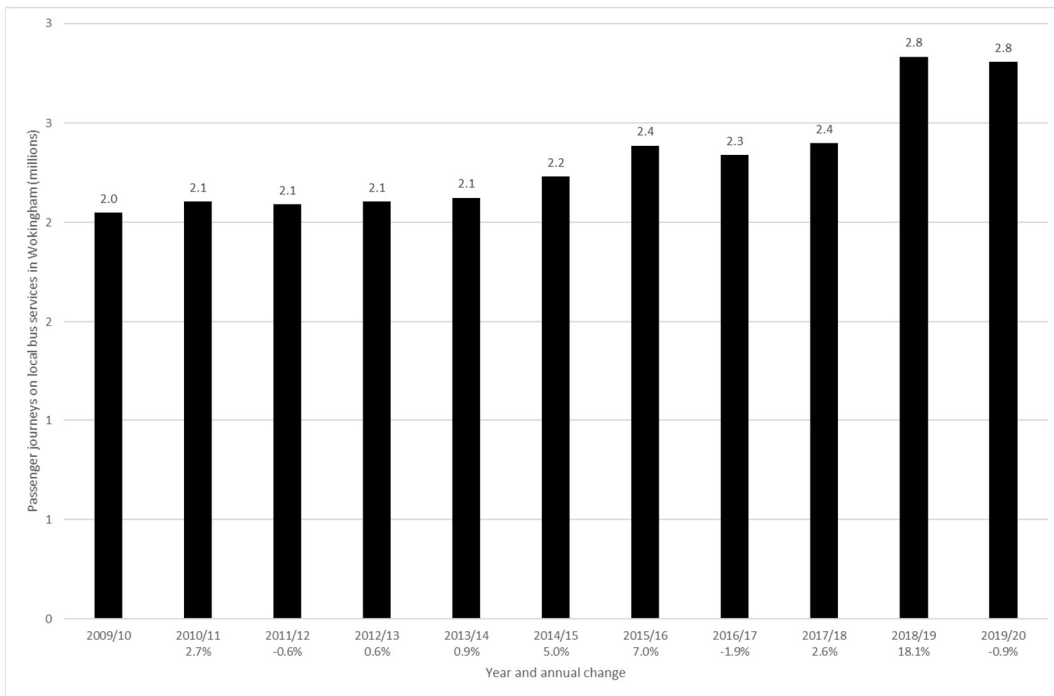


### 2.1.1 PASSENGER GROWTH

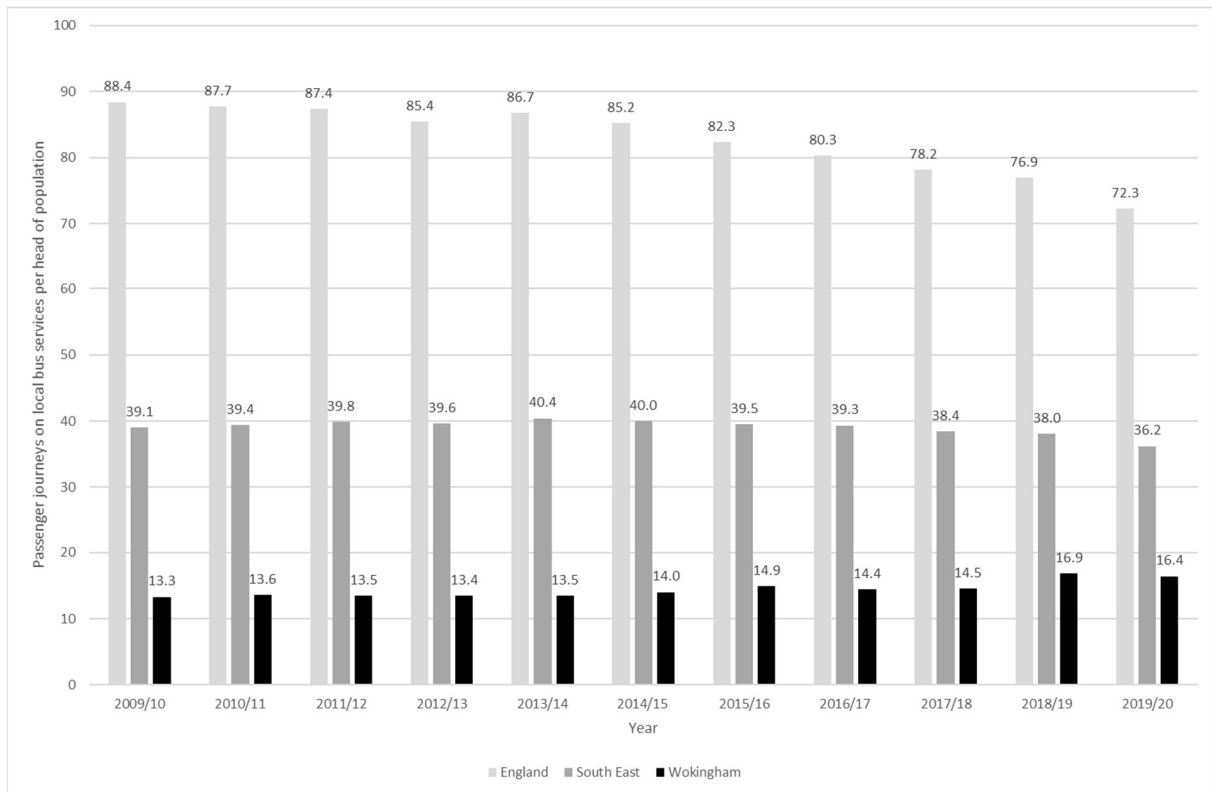
In 2019/20 bus services in Wokingham Borough served circa 2.8 million passenger journeys: equivalent to 16.4 passenger journeys per head of population. This is less than a quarter of the average for England and half the average journey per head of population for the Southeast region.

However, where average bus journeys per head of population have fallen in England between 2010 and 2020, the same statistic has grown in Wokingham by circa 23%, from 13.3 to 16.4. As can be seen in Figure 2-2 below, the Covid-19 Pandemic affected the final months of 2019/20, otherwise it is believed that this trend would have continued.

**Figure 2-2 – Graph: bus journeys on local bus services between 2010 and 2020**



**Figure 2-3 – Graph: bus passenger journeys per head of population**

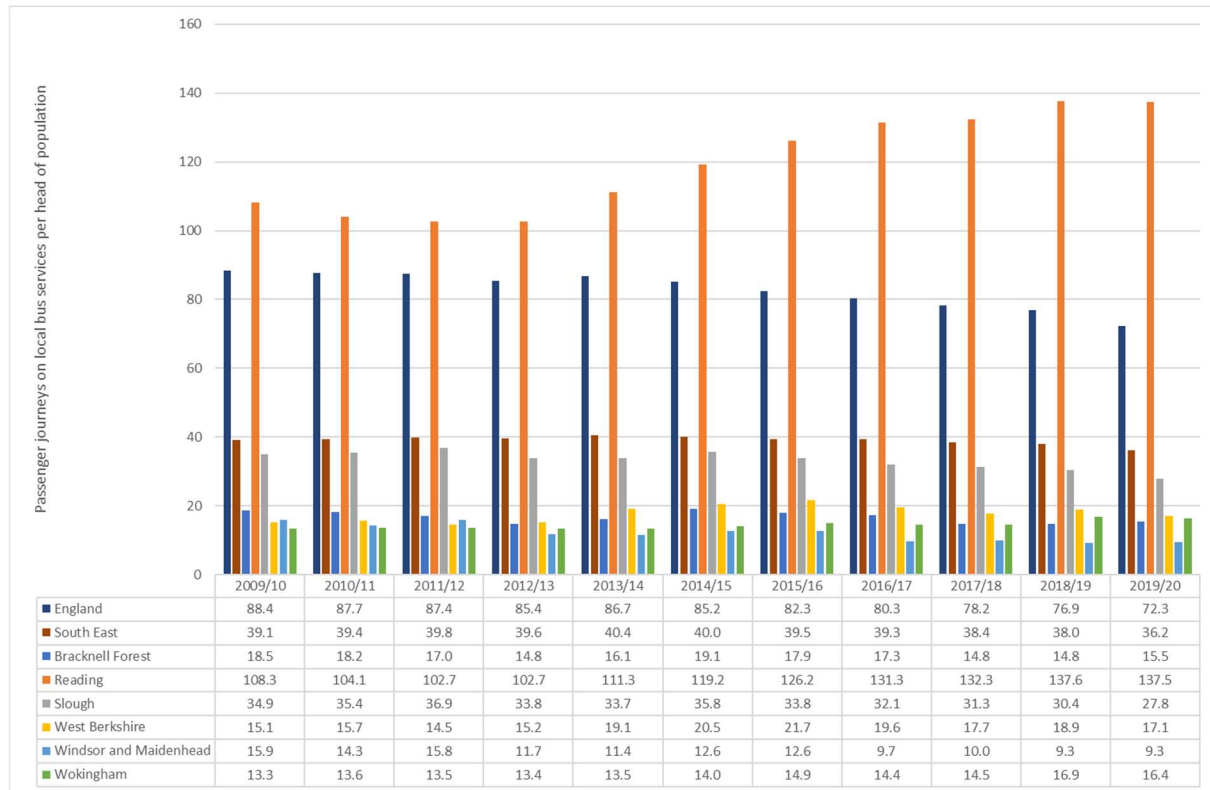


Compared to the wider Southeast region Wokingham has fewer bus journeys per head of population per annum.

Compared to neighbouring Berkshire authorities, passenger journeys per head in Wokingham Borough have risen from being the lowest in 2009/10 to being at a similar level to Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire and higher than Windsor and Maidenhead in 2019/20. The mixed population densities of Wokingham Borough, including large rural areas with low density, has a significant impact when compared to more urban areas such as Reading and Slough.

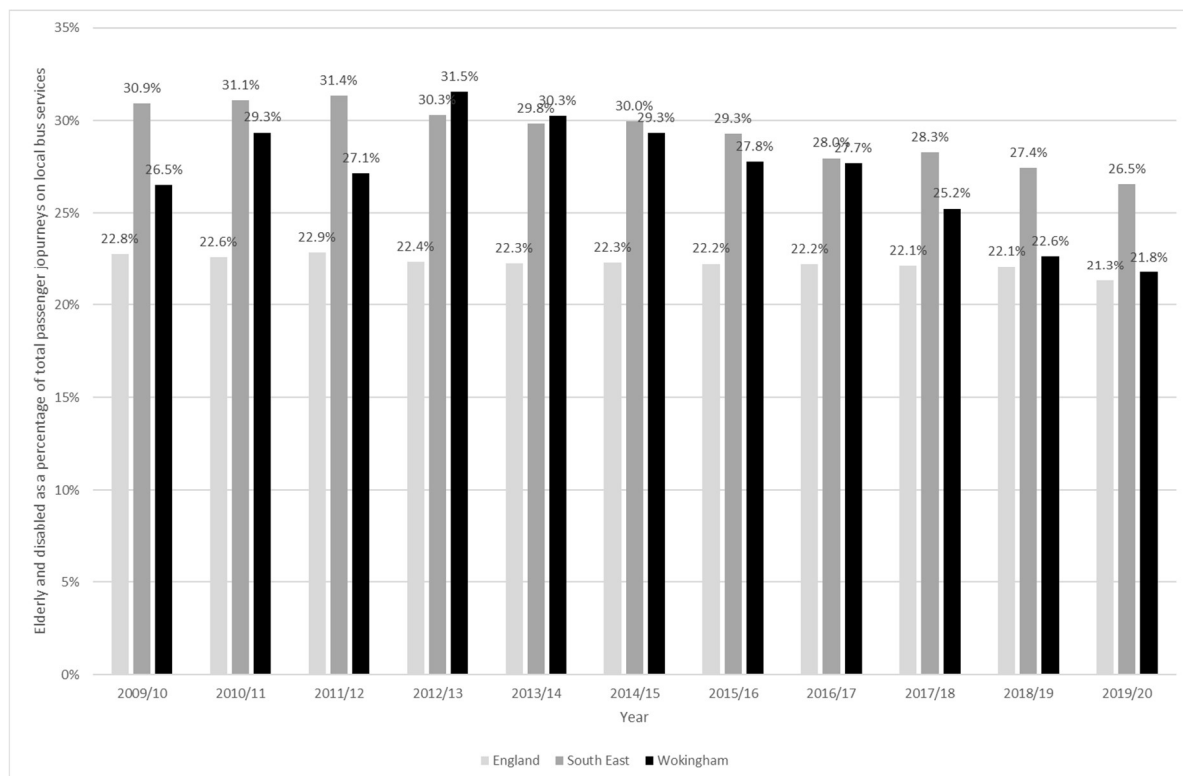


**Figure 2-4 – Graph: Passenger journeys per head of population compared to other Berkshire unitary authorities**



In line with the average for England, circa 21% of passenger journeys in 2019/2020 were made by elderly and disable passengers. As shown in Figure 2-5 below, the proportion of bus journeys by concessionary pass holders in Wokingham had previously been above the average in England for the past decade. It is noticeable that Wokingham is now below the average for the percentage of journeys by elderly and disabled passengers in the Southeast of England, which is encouraging in that it represents a broader range of ages across journeys rather than an over-reliance on one age group.

**Figure 2-5 – Graph: Proportion of bus journeys in England, South East England and Wokingham taken by elderly or disabled concessionary passengers per annum**



## 2.1.2 LOCAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS

Reading Buses is owned by Reading Borough Council. Services along the entire length of the A329 and A327 corridors and part way along the A4 corridor are operated by Reading Buses. Most services in the Woodley areas and all those in the Earley area are also operated by Reading Buses. All Park and Ride services into Reading Town from both Winnersh Triangle and Mere oak are operated by Reading Buses.

Thames Valley Buses is also owned by Reading Borough Council. Thames Valley Buses operate all the Wokingham Town link services in Wokingham Town and the surrounding area, plus an inter-urban service connecting Wokingham, Twyford and Reading. All of Thames Valley Buses services receive financial support from Wokingham Borough Council.

Arriva operates one service on the A4/A321 corridor from High Wycombe via Henley and Twyford to Reading.

Three operators have a small presence, operating either school specials, once a week shopping services or privately contracted services. These operators are:

- Horseman Coaches who operate three registered school bus routes and three 'weekly shopper' bus routes that each offer one return trip on one day each week from rural villages. All routes operated by Horseman Coaches receive financial support from Wokingham Borough Council.
- Stagecoach who operates two commercial school bus routes into Hampshire.

- Stewarts Coaches (owned by National Express Group) who operates a privately contracted express shuttle bus route from Reading Station to Thames Valley Business Park. The service is not registered as a local bus service because it does not charge fares, instead the business park covers the whole cost of providing the service.

**Table 2-1 - List of local bus operators in Wokingham**

Local bus operator	Registered address	Local bus routes operated (‘open door’ school bus routes shown in red)
Arriva the Shires Limited	4 Westmoreland Avenue, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE4 8PH  Depot address: Lincoln Road, Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe, HP12 3RH	850
Horseman Coaches	2, Acre Road, Reading, RG2 0SU	145, 153, 154 <b>202, 244, W983</b>
Reading Transport Limited (trading as Reading Buses)	Great Knollys Street, Reading, RG1 7H	Leopard routes: 3, 8, 9 Lion routes: 4/X4 Tiger routes: 7 Orange routes: 13, 14 Little Oranges routes: 19A/19B/19C Claret routes: 21, 21A Park and Ride routes: 500, 600 <b>81, 93</b>
Stagecoach (South) Limited	Bus Station, Basin Road, Chichester, PO19 8DG  Depot address: Halimote Road, Aldershot, GU11 1NJ	<b>406, 496</b>
Stewarts Coaches Limited	Headley Park Eight, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4SA	Thames Valley Park shuttle (not registered as a local bus route)
Thames Valley Buses Limited	Unit 3, Maple Centre, Downmill Road, Bracknell, RG12 1QS	121 122 123 124 125, 125A, 125B 127 128

		129 151, 151A
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In addition to the above several 'closed door' school bus routes exist that are not available to the public, serving both mainstream secondary schools and independent schools in the area. The Council is also aware that Abbey School, Reading Blue Coat School, Reading School and Leighton Park School all commission their own closed door coach routes.

National Express coach routes serve the Mere oak Park and Ride site at Three Mile Cross, just south of the M4 in Wokingham Borough, but do not form part of the local bus network.

Community 'dial-a-ride', demand responsive transport minibus services are provided by Readibus and Keep Mobile. These services are provided for people with reduced mobility. Community 'dial-a-ride' services are only available to those who have registered with the operator in advance and who are not able to use conventional bus services.

Several community volunteer services also operate across the borough and provide for additional ad hoc trips where residents are unable to access public transport or any other form of transport. These volunteer services are provided by:

- Earley Volunteer Services
- Earley Minibuses
- Shinfield Volunteer Services
- Twyford and Wargrave Volunteer Services
- Wokingham Volunteer Services
- Woodley Volunteer Services

Wokingham Borough Council has extended the use of the concessionary pass for use on community transport services and volunteer services for medical trips. Wokingham Borough Council, along with local Town and Parish Council's provide grants each year towards the back-of-house operation of these services.

### 2.1.3 BUS PRIORITY

55% of bus services in Wokingham Borough have a destination in Reading Borough. Reading Borough experiences high levels of congestion and therefore have implemented bus priority schemes which assist bus services originating in Wokingham Borough. In recent years bus priorities measures developed in Reading Borough which support bus services in Wokingham Borough, include:

- Red Route 'no stopping' restrictions were introduced in 2017 in Reading to reduce disruption to Reading Buses route 17; these restrictions also reduce congestion on parallel routes into Wokingham including the 4/X4, 13 and 14.
- South Reading Fast Track Public Transport (FTPT) Corridor which is a bus priority scheme on the A33 corridor primarily in Reading but promoted in collaboration with Wokingham Borough Council. It is currently being built in phases

Wokingham Borough Council has also secured bus priority measures within Wokingham Borough where new development takes place. A new sustainable transport link which permits only buses and those who cycle or walk to use it was opened in February 2020 in the Shinfield area. The sustainable transport link is a key component of a wider local strategy to improve bus services in the area, by linking the development site with the FTPT scheme along the A33 to Reading Town Centre.

Other more localised bus priority measures are provided through traffic signal control at bus gates in the borough, in Woodley and at Mere oak Park and Ride. A further bus gate is provided in the Twyford area.

#### 2.1.4 BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE

The Council manages 620 bus stops across the borough. Around a quarter of local bus stops have bus shelters, 34 bus stops have direct access to real time information and 100% of fixed stops have at stop timetable information.

The Council has a bus stop policy divides bus stops into three tiers:

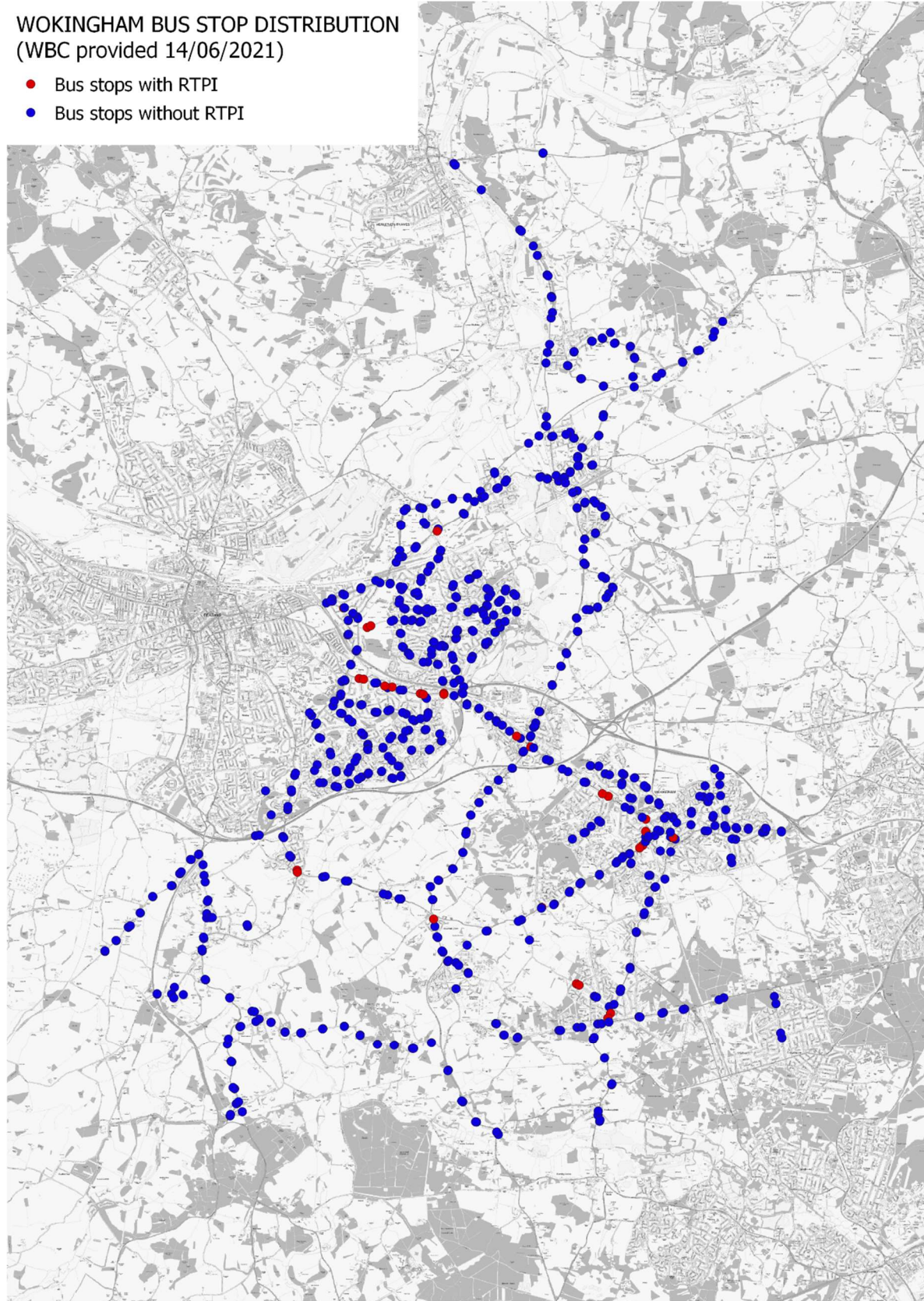
- Bronze: standards for lower use stops such as those in rural areas or on the edge of villages.
- Silver: the standard for stops in villages and on radial routes within towns serving normal residential and employment catchment areas (a Silver+ designation will be applied to those stops in locations where real time passenger information would be of benefit.
- Gold: standards for the very high profile stops found in town centres, with high volumes of boarding passengers both in the peak periods and throughout the day. Also applied to hospitals and other locations where an improved waiting environment is beneficial to certain groups of passengers.

The Council will look to upgrade stops in line with these standards where funding is available. Where shelters are provided, these are either provided by a third party as part of an advertising and maintenance agreement or by the Borough Council with local Town and Parish councils being requested to take on their maintenance.

The Council's standard shelter includes perch seating, a poster panel and anti-graffiti backing. The Council is looking to trial green roof shelters in the borough. Should the shelters be successful, these may be rolled out more widely across the borough.

Poster panels made available to bus operators to display network maps. Local bus operators provide paper timetables at all stops within the borough. The design of bus stop infrastructure is sensitive to the branding of the bus route. Flag graphics are branded to the route unless multiple services use the stop.

**Figure 2-6 - Bus Stops in Wokingham Borough**

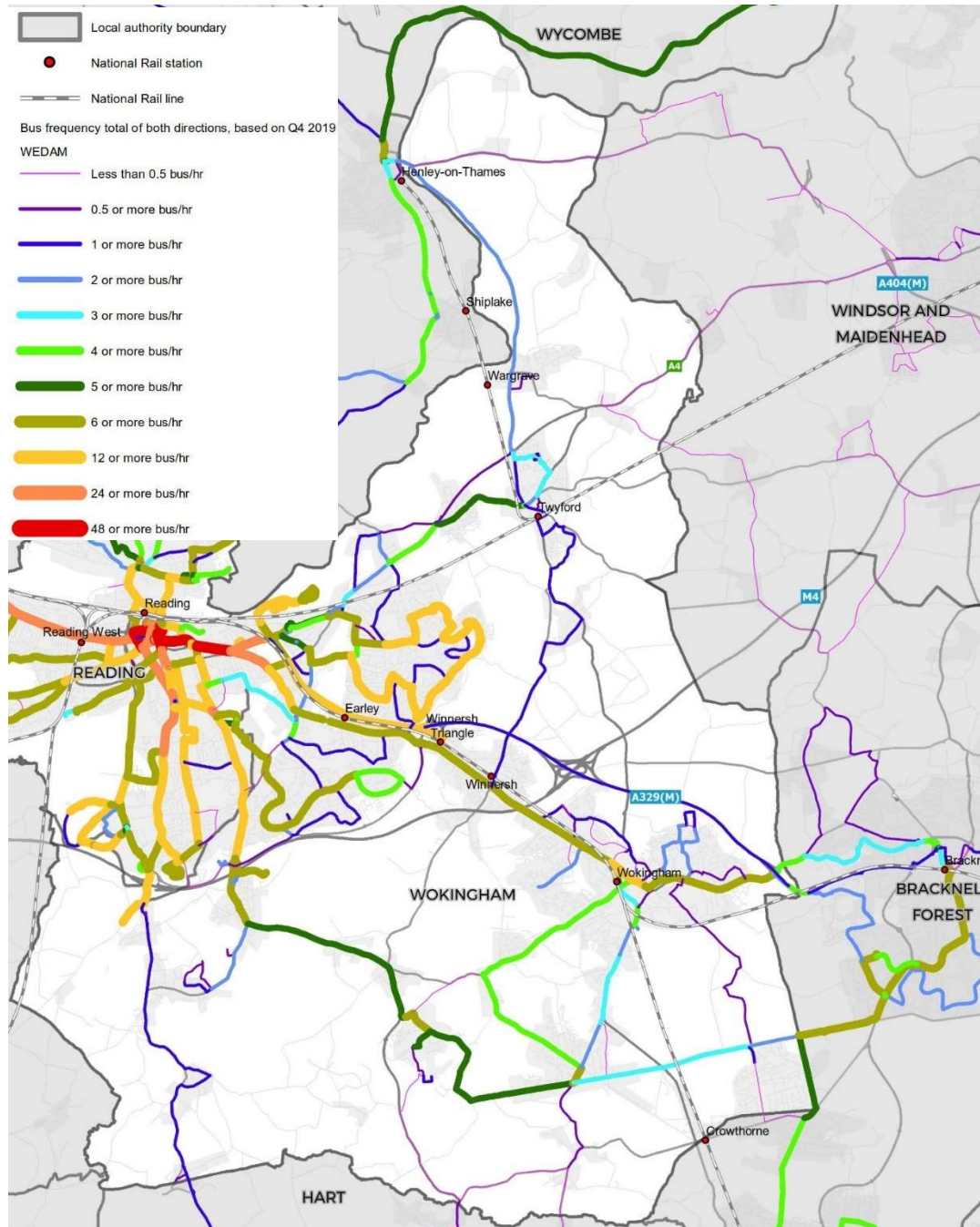


### 2.1.5 REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION

The Council's current system is operated by Reading Buses on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council and Reading Borough Council. Real time information screens are generally positioned at bus stops on key corridor routes. The Council spends £16,620 a year maintaining these screens.

## 2.2 CORRIDORS AND FREQUENCIES

**Figure 2-7 - Bus frequency map: Wednesday AM Peak 07:00-09:00**



Summaries of the frequency levels for the key corridors, the urban areas and rural/low density areas are shown below in **Tables 2-2, 2-3 and 2-4** and in a series of bus frequency maps included in **Appendix A**.

Bus frequency maps reflect pre-Covid (Q4 2019), this is because bus networks are changing quickly, typically with frequencies returning to pre-Covid levels. There is a reasonable level of service on most key corridors and in most major urban centres in the Borough, particularly bearing in mind the high level of car ownership. The local bus network provides the highest frequencies on the key corridors travelling into Reading Town Centre and from the urban areas of Woodley, Earley and Shinfield which border Reading Borough. Other towns and villages in the borough, which do not lie on a key corridor, do not have the same levels of local bus service provision.

Wokingham Borough has five key corridors, three urban areas and three lower density/rural area.

### KEY CORRIDORS

The key corridors are:

- **A3290** – the main east-west corridor through the borough which connects the residential communities of Wokingham Town, Winnersh and Earley to Reading and Bracknell. The corridor follows the London Waterloo rail line and provides connections to local stations. There are also several secondary schools along the corridor. The corridor is branded with Reading Buses “Lion” branding.
- **A327** – connects Wokingham Town to Reading Town via the communities of Barkham, Finchampstead, Arborfield and Shinfield. The corridor is currently being enhanced as both Shinfield and Arborfield development areas are located on this corridor, along with the newly developed Thames Valley Science Park and future film studio. The corridor is branded with Reading Buses “Leopard” branding.
- **A4/A321** – provides access between Reading Town Centre and High Wycombe for the communities of Woodley, Sonning, Charvil, Twyford and Wargrave. Thames Valley Business Park and Sutton Business Park are also located along this corridor. Twyford Station with the improved Elizabeth line and Wargrave station with the Henley branch service are served by local bus services on this corridor. There is no uniform branding on this corridor.

The A329(M) and the Basingstoke Road corridors are two further corridors which the BSIP will look to develop:

- **A329(M)** – accommodates the park and ride service from Winnersh Triangle Business Park to Reading Town Centre and includes an existing bus lane and priority on the approach to Sutton Business Park. The services are branded with the Park and Ride livery.
- **B3349/ A33** – corridor is a growth corridor which has the potential for growth due to development in the Shinfield area. Currently bus services connect Reading Town Centre with Fleet Station, via the rural villages of Spencers Wood, Swallowfield and Riseley. The busiest sections of the corridor are between Shinfield and Reading Town Centre. The corridor is branded with Reading Buses “Tiger” branding.



Frequencies on key corridors vary based on time of day and the day of the week. Turn up and go frequencies are in place on the A327 and A4 corridors on their busiest sections. Frequencies reduce as the routes serve less dense areas to the east. The A329 corridor retains a steady frequency of 4 buses an hour throughout the day. Evening and Sunday services are provided in part on all key corridors.

**Table 2-2 – Key Corridors – Local Bus Frequencies** (buses per hour)

Corridor	Routes	Destination	Peak (M-Fri)	Off-Peak (M-Fri)	Sat	Evening (M-Fri)	Sun
A329 (M) <b>Winnersh - Reading</b>	500	Reading	4	4	4	0	0
A3290 <b>Reading – Wokingham – Winnersh – Bracknell</b>	4, X4	Wokingham	3-4	4	4	1	2
		Winnersh	3-4	4	4	1	2
A327 <b>Reading – Shinfield – Arborfield – Wokingham</b>	3, 8/9	Shinfield	6	5	5	2	2
		Arborfield	4	3	3	2	2
		Wokingham	1	1	1	0	0
A4/A321 <b>Reading – Twyford – Wargrave – Henley</b>	13/14 128/129 /127, 850	London Rd	6	6	6	2	2
		Twyford	2	2	2	1	0
		Wargrave	1	1	1	1	0
		Henley	1	1	1	1	0
B3349/A33 <b>Reading – Shinfield – Spencers Wood – Swallowfield – Riseley - Fleet</b>	7 / 9	Shinfield	1/0	0.5	1	1	0.5
		Spencers Wood	1/0	0.5	1	1	0.5
		Swallowfield	1/0	1 in 7hrs	1	1	0.5
		Riseley	0	1 in 7hrs	1	0	0.5

Rail services provide alternative provisions along the A329 corridor and the A321 corridor. The A329 has four trains an hour end to end with two stopping services at local stations (Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle and Earley). The Henley branch line complements bus services between Twyford, Wargrave and Henley with 2 trains per hour. Rail services also extend to evenings and weekends.

Twyford, with a population of around 7,000 people, has two buses per hour to Reading via different routes and one bus per hour to Wokingham. Bearing in mind the improved train services provided by the Elizabeth Line, transport connections at Twyford Station may have the potential to be enhanced.

## URBAN AREAS

There are three key urban area in Wokingham Borough, these are:

- **Earley/ Lower Earley/ Maiden Erleigh** – a large residential areas with a high proportion of family homes. There is a local secondary school, a good number of primary schools, local convenience shops, doctors’ surgeries, and a supermarket. There are significant numbers of secondary age students using bus services to access schools in Reading, along the A3290 and in Woodley. The area is branded with Reading Buses “Claret” Service.
- **Woodley and North Earley** – Woodley town centre has a good range of shops and is the main interchange for local bus services. Local bus services serve the surrounding residential areas with local orbital bus services. There are a good number of primary schools and doctors’ surgeries in the town. The area is branded with Reading Buses “Orange” brand.
- **Wokingham Town and Surrounding areas** – the recently regenerated town centre is central to the area. The A3290 and A327 corridors serve the town centre and the recently regenerated Wokingham Station. Local link bus services provide access from the surrounding communities of Emmbrook, Woosehill, the Norreys Estate, Easthamptead, Finchampstead and Barkham. There are also the areas of new development to the north and south of the Town along with a new park and ride site on the eastern board with Bracknell Forest Borough.

**Table 2-3 - Urban Areas – Local Bus Frequencies** (buses per hour)

Urban Area	Routes	Area	Peak (M-Fri)	Off-Peak (M-Fri)	Sat	Evening	Sun
<b>Earley /Lower Earley / Maiden Erleigh</b>	21	Earley	4	4	4	2	3
	19a/c,	Maiden Erleigh	2†	2†	2†	0	0
	19b	Lower Earley	1	1	1	0	0
<b>Woodley and North Earley</b>	19a/c,	North Earley	2	2	2	0	0
	13/14 19a/c 128/127	Woodley Centre	7†	7†	7†	2	2
	13/14 19a/c	East Woodley*	6†	6†	6†	0	0
	13/14 19a/c	South Woodley	6†	6†	6†	0	0
<b>Wokingham Town and Surrounding Area</b>	4/X4, 3 121, 122/3 124, 128/127/ 128 151/A	Wokingham Town Centre	9	12	10	3	3
	121, 151/A	North Wokingham	3	2	1-2	0	0
	124	South Wokingham	0	1 per day	0	0	0
	125/A/B	Finchampstead	1	1 every 2 hours	1 per day	0	0

	3	Barkham	1	1	1	0	0
	122/3	Woosehill and Emmbrook	1	1	1	0	0

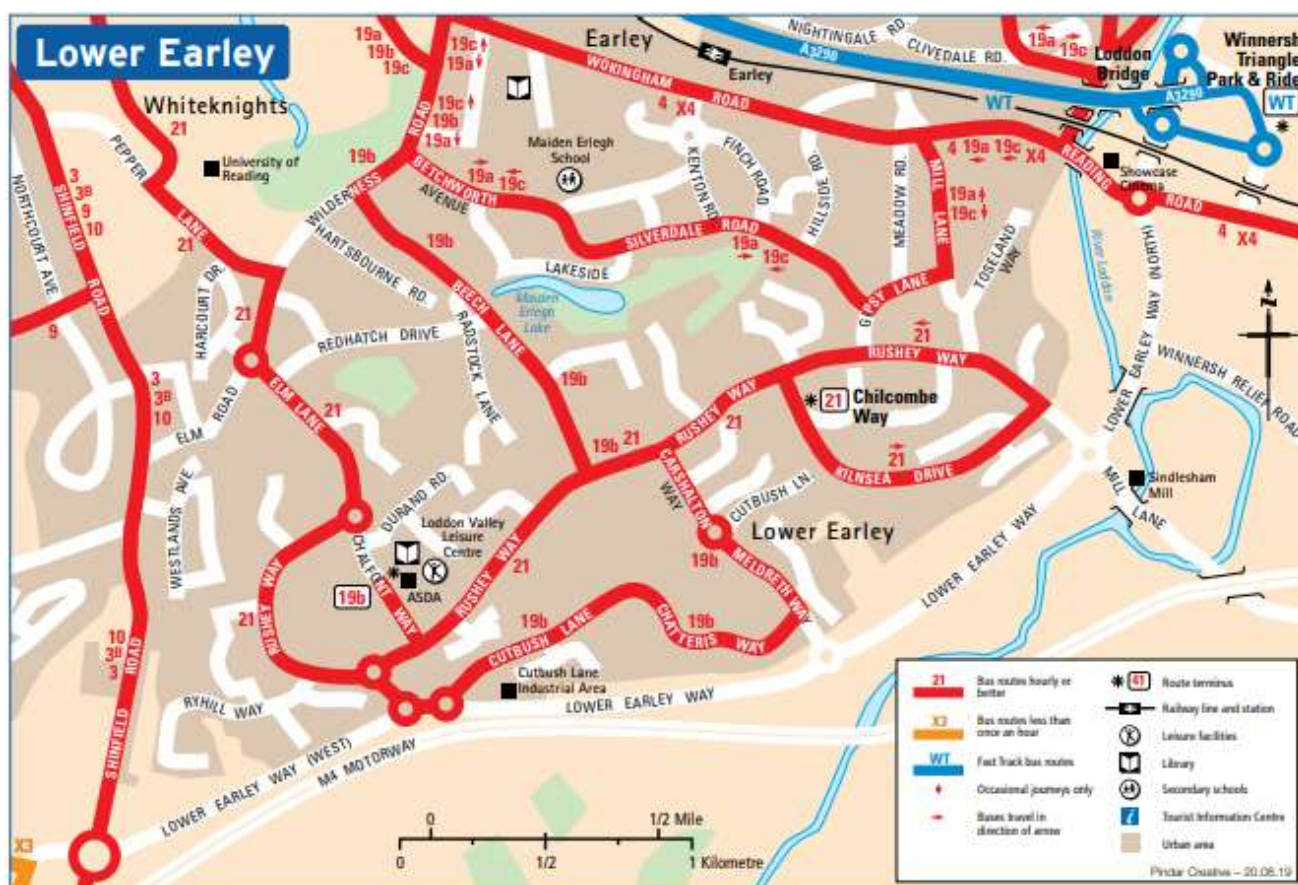
\*(Woodley Airfield and Woodley Green)

†(includes circular routes, so in one direction the journey times are significantly longer)

All three urban areas have a higher frequency urban corridor service which is complemented by less frequent local urban link services. Between Earley and Reading the 21 provides a constant 4 buses per hour frequency into Reading, increasing in frequency at Reading University which lies on the Reading / Wokingham boundary. The 19a/b/c local link services provide local access from residential areas to local amenities and the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Resident feedback is that the direct link to the hospital is welcomed, but more frequent and direct services to Reading and Wokingham Towns are desirable.

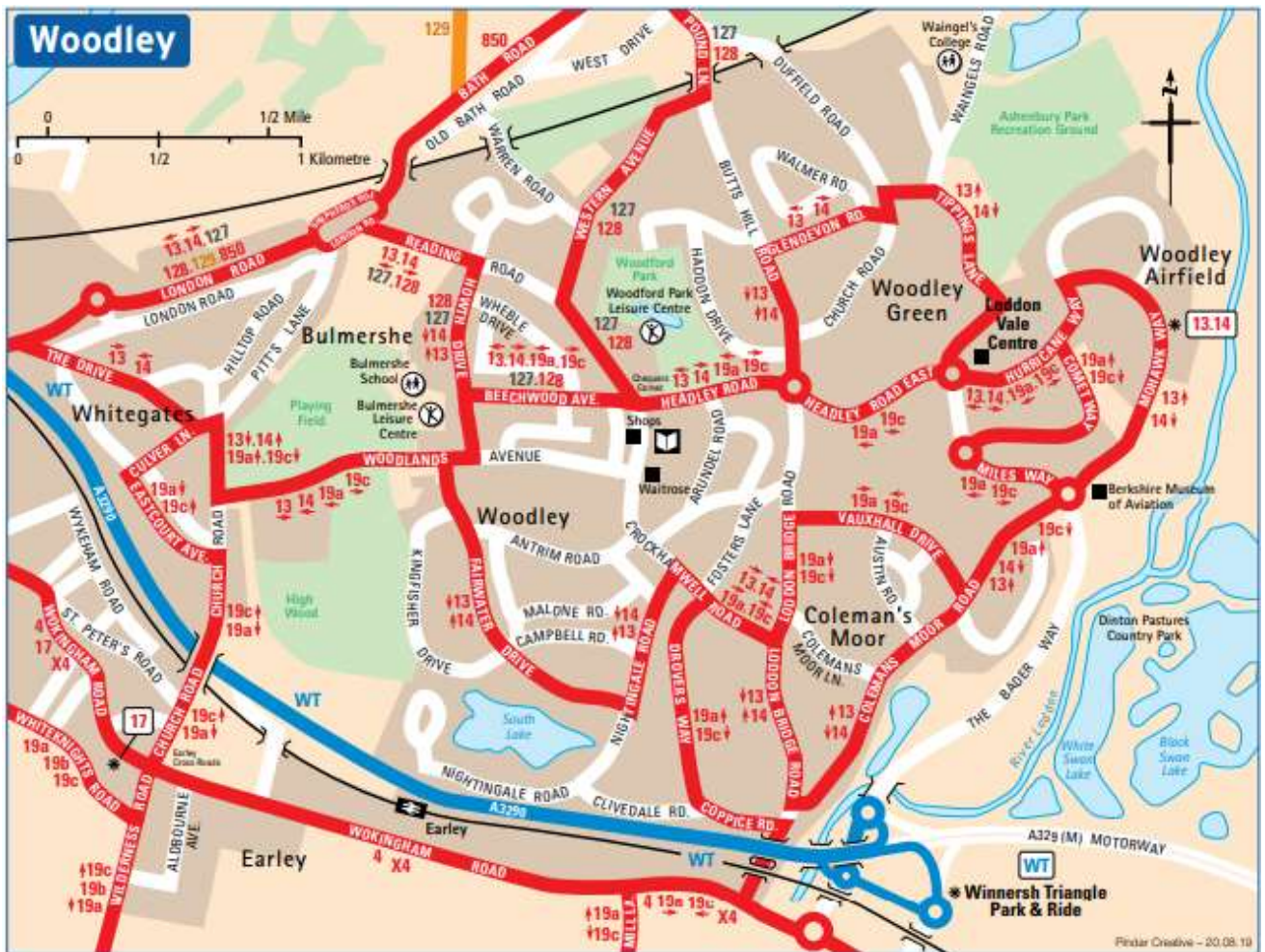
Before the pandemic monitoring of vehicle capacity during the morning travel period indicated that all services running out of Earley were at or over capacity. In some cases, passengers were unable to board the service they wanted, meaning resident could not get to work or school on time. A relief vehicle was temporarily added to the network to relieve the pressure, but the local bus operator would not commit to providing this in the longer term.

**Figure 2-8 – Local Bus Services: Earley / Lower Earley / Maiden Erlegh**



In Woodley the 13/14 circular services provide the main services into Reading on a half hourly frequency in each direction. The 13/14s are complemented by the Thames Valley Buses 128 service and the circular 19a/c services from Woodley Centre to Reading creating a 15 minute frequency, when assuming the most direct circular route, e.g., the 13 or the 14. Selected parts of south and east Woodley experience a 20 minute frequency towards Reading and Woodley Centre through a combination of 13/14 and 19a/c services, when assuming the most direct circular route. More remote residential areas experience less frequent local bus services provided solely by the 19a/c bus service.

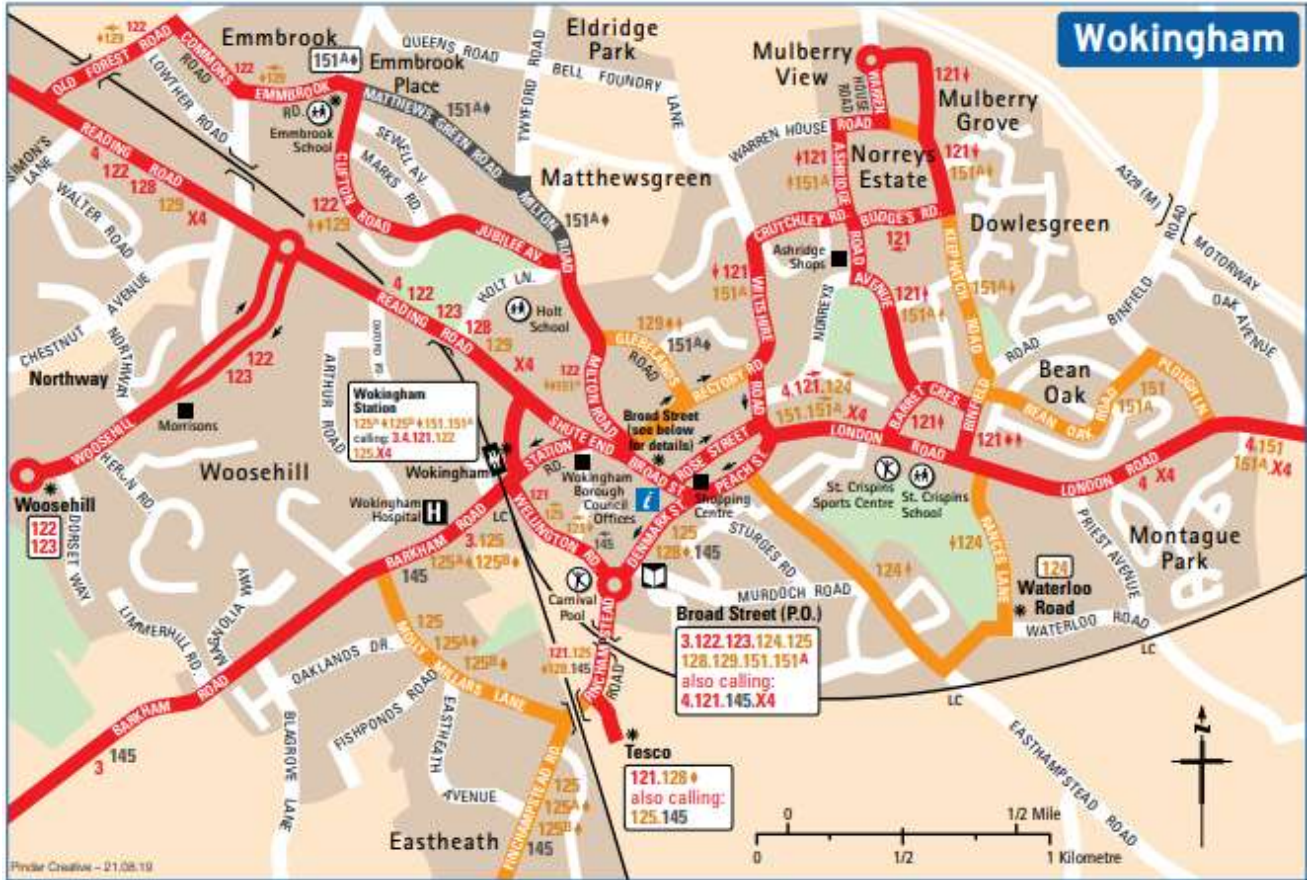
**Figure 2-9 - Local Bus Services: Woodley and North Earley**



Local bus services along the A329 and A327 corridors travel into Wokingham Town. Several local town link services provide access from surrounding residential areas into the Town Centre (Wokingham Broad Street) where they connect with the higher frequency services. Generally, the frequency of services from surrounding residential areas into Wokingham Town is low, as in many cases, but not all, the bus competes with alternative travel choices such as walking and cycling.

Evening and Sunday services are only provided on the urban corridor routes which are provided through each of the urban areas.

Figure 2-10 - Local Bus Services: Wokingham Town



### LOW DENSITY / RURAL AREAS

Low density and rural areas generally experience the least frequent local bus service provision in the borough. The frequency of fixed line rural services is reflective of the lower populations living in these areas. Community transport providers and volunteer driver services operate across all the rural and low-density areas and facilitate travel for those without access to any alternative transport.

Apart from the rural corridor service which runs between Reading Town Centre and Fleet rail station, no fixed route local bus services are provided during evenings or at weekends.

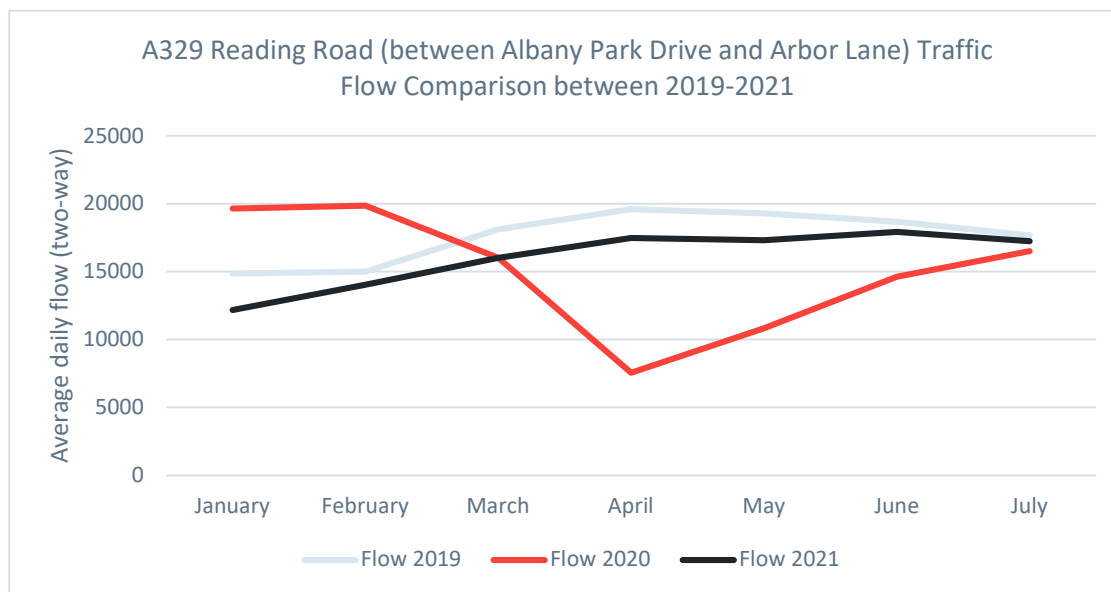
**Table 2-4 – Rural / Low Density Areas – Local Bus Frequencies**

Rural / Low Density Area	Routes	Area	Peak (M-Fri)	Off-Peak (M-Fri)	Sat	Evening	Sun
<b>Northern Parishes</b>	153, 127	Wargrave	0	1 a week	1	0	0
	127	Remenham	0	0	1	0	0
	128, 127	Sonning	1	1	1	0	0
	850, 128	Charvil	2	2	2	1	0
<b>Southern Parishes</b>	7, 145	Spencers Wood	1	1	1	1	1
	7, 145	Swallowfield	1	Every 2 hours	1	1	1
	7, 145	Riseley	1	Every 2 hours	1	1	1
	145	Finchampstead Village	0	1 week	0	0	0
	125/A/B	Wokingham Without	2	Every 2 hours	1 day	0	0
<b>Eastern Parishes</b>	128 in part	Hurst	1	1	1	0	0
	127	Ruscombe	0	0	1	0	0

## 2.3 RELIABILITY AND SPEED OF LOCAL BUS JOURNEYS

Increasing traffic levels and junction capacity can have a detrimental effect on bus journey speeds and the reliability of services both on a daily basis and at different times of the day. Average daily flows (two-way) on the A329 were just under 18,000 vehicles in summer 2019, with flows returning to near pre-pandemic levels by summer 2021. On the A4 corridor average daily traffic flows were slightly higher at close to 20,000 vehicles in summer 2019, returning to just under 18,000 vehicles by summer 2021. In all cases traffic flows dropped significantly during the pandemic, in some cases by as much as 39%.

**Figure 2-11 – Key Corridor Traffic Flows: A329 Reading Road**



### 2.3.1 SPEED OF LOCAL BUS JOURNEYS

The variation in timetabled journey times can provide a good indication of where bus services may face daily challenges from slow traffic speeds or high passenger boardings. Where bus journey times are extended due to slow traffic speeds bus priority measures may be an effective way of providing quicker bus journey times.

**Table 2-5 – Variation in Scheduled Journey Times for Key Sections of Corridors in Wokingham Borough**

Corridors	Sections in Wokingham BC only	AM Peak (M-Fri)	Off-Peak (M-Fri)	PM Peak (M-Fri)	Evening (M-Fri)	Daily variation (mins)	Section Length (KM)	Variation mins per km
<b>A329</b>	Three Tuns – Keephatch Beech	46mins	29mins	32mins	21mins	25mins	10.19	00:02:27
<b>A327</b>	School Green – Wokingham Broad Street	46mins	37mins	41mins	37mins	9mins	16.65	00:00:32
<b>A4/A321</b>	Sheperds Hill Top – Wargrave, The Greyhound	29mins	23mins	27mins	19mins	10mins	8.1	00:01:08

### 2.3.2 RELIABILITY AND PUNCTUALITY

Knowing when and where a bus will arrive is fundamental to making local bus services attractive and convenient to use. In 2020 residents' satisfaction with the reliability of local buses was measured by Ipsos Mori as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey. Wokingham Borough was ranked 27<sup>th</sup> out of 113 Councils surveyed with 60% of the Borough's residents being satisfied with the reliability of local bus services. Satisfaction with bus reliability varied across the borough. The highest satisfaction levels were in North Shinfield, Bulmershe and Whitegates, Loddon and Coronation wards and the lowest satisfaction levels in the more rural and low-density areas to the north and south of the borough (NHT Survey, 2021).

On average 72.5% of buses departed stops on time in 2019 rising to an average of 91.3% during the pandemic. The 18.8% difference in bus service punctuality demonstrates the challenge local bus services face from the daily variations in traffic conditions and from the potential effects of congestion.

Bus punctuality levels vary greatly by service. The longest routes tend to experience the highest risk of poor reliability, whilst the shorter town link routes have a much lower risk of poor reliability. The greatest improvements in reliability during the pandemic were experienced on the key corridor services and in the Woodley and Earley areas.

Roadworks and the coordination of roadworks can have a significant effect on reliability of local bus services. Feedback from local bus operators indicates that the council is doing well in keeping them informed of when and where roadworks take place in the Borough. For corridor and cross-boundary services a coordinated approach with neighbouring Councils to ensure these longer services are not subject to several sets of delays would further improve bus reliability during roadworks.

## 2.4 FARES AND TICKETING

Average bus fares in Wokingham Borough remain below the national average for an equivalent 3-mile journey. There are specific groups for whom more affordable bus travel is important. Affordable bus travel can be a barrier to bus use for residents on low income, our young people and those seeking work.

**Table 2-6 – Local Bus Fares**

Ticket type	Wokingham Borough	National average (2019)*
Adult single	£1.93	£2.48
Adult Day ticket	£3.95	£5.21
Adult Weekly ticket	£17.26	£18.03

\*National costs data from TAS National Bus fares survey 2019 – based on a 3-mile journey.

Reading Buses provide the most comprehensive fare offer which includes young people in employment and education up until the age of 18, as well as those seeking work. Fares offered by Arriva, Stagecoach and Horseman are only reduced for young people until the age of 16.



**Table 2-7 – Fare Offer on Local Bus Services**

Fare Offer	Under 16s	Under 18	Job Seeker	Group Fares
Reading Buses	x	x	x	x
Thames Valley Buses	x	x		x
Arrive, The Shires	x			x*
Stagecoach South	x			
Horseman Coaches	x			

\*family ticket

Both Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses operate a combination of point-to-point fares and zonal fares. All other operators in Wokingham Borough implement some form of point-to-point fares. Fares per kilometre vary by route and area. Inequitable fares have been raised by communities on the edge of fare zones, particularly on corridor services, as an area of dissatisfaction. For these communities the nature of fare zones means a step change in the cost of travel.

For services into and around Town Centres bus fares must be attractive compared to town centre parking charges. For some local bus services this means advertising the fares they charge more widely as they are already at an affordable level, for others this means promoting the value for money they already offer or restructuring the ticketing offer to ensure better value. In Wokingham Town where both Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses run on the same sections of route and where ticket integration would be beneficial there is a need to consider the consistency of fares and the ability to have an attractive integrated ticketing offer.

Imperfect knowledge of fares and the need for change can present a barrier to bus travel. Whilst all operators in Wokingham Borough continue to accept cash fares, the majority now also accept contactless payment. For passengers who may not have a debit card, smart cards and mobile ticketing provide alternative options. In both cases tickets can be pre-purchased and loaded onto a card or mobile device in advance of travelling.

**Table 2-8 Payment Options by Operator**

Payment Option	Cash Fares	Contactless Payment	Mobile Payment	Smart Card
Reading Buses	x	x	x	x
Thames Valley Buses	x	x	x	x
Arrive, The Shires	x	x	x	
Stagecoach South	x	x		
Horseman Coaches	x			

For almost every ticket type sold by Reading Buses in Wokingham Borough, over 50% of tickets purchased are via an electronic device. The ticketing categories with the highest proportions of electronic purchases are period passes. Higher levels of electronic ticketing purchases are also seen in relation to young people. For Thames Valley Buses the proportion of ticketing purchases via electronic devices is slightly lower with cash fares still dominating across their network in the Borough. The reason for a lower proportion of electronic tickets being purchased on Thames Valley Buses is likely to be due to this option only recently being introduced, whereas passengers boarding Reading Buses services have been able to purchase electronic tickets since 2017.

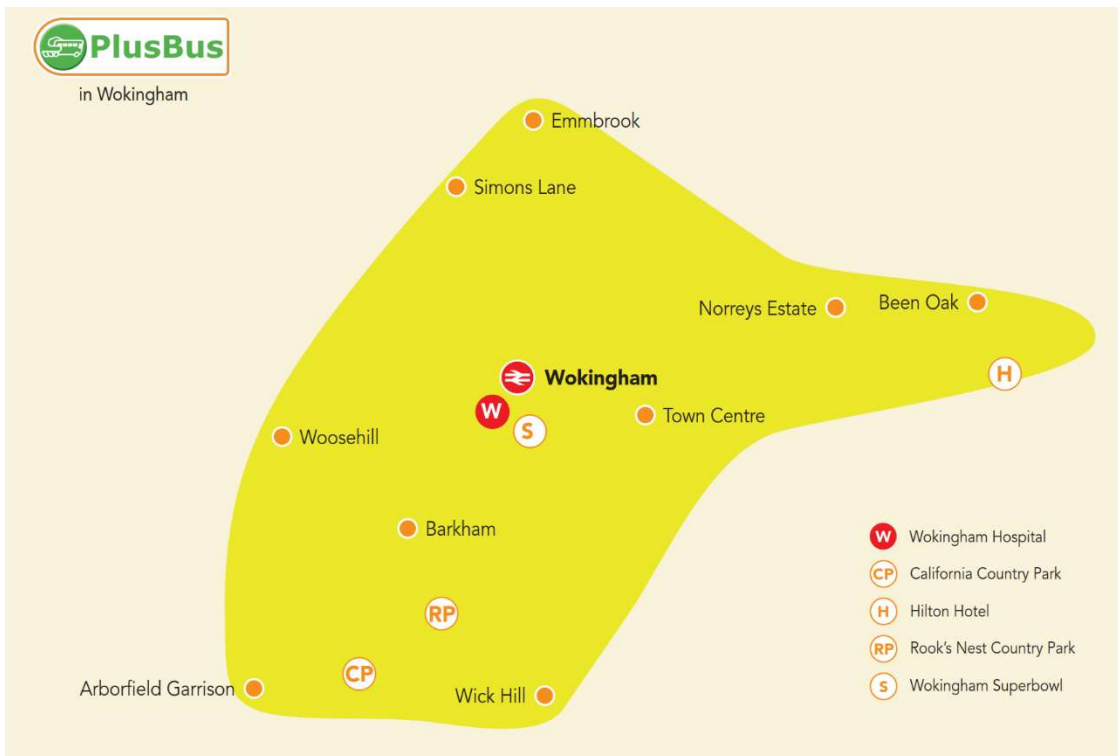
Tickets issued by different bus operators are not currently interchangeable. The current incompatibility of Reading Buses, Thames Valley Buses and Arriva's tickets has the effect of reducing the number of buses from Twyford to Woodley from 2 to 1 bus per hour or requiring two separate tickets. The cheapest return fare between Twyford and Reading is £4.00 compared to the purchase of two singles on two different operators' services which totals £6.30. The same journey by train would cost £4.70. A similar situation occurs in Wokingham Town and Woodley.

**Table 2-9 Ticket Types by Operator**

Ticket Type	Daily	Weekly	4-Week/ Monthly	Mult-Trip	Plusbus	Annual / Academic
Reading Buses	x	x	x	x	x	x
Thames Valley Buses	x	x	x	x	x	x
Arrive, The Shires	x	x	x	x	x	x
Stagecoach South	x	x	x			x
Horseman Coaches	x	x	x			x

Changing working patterns during the Covid pandemic have resulted in higher proportion of resident's home working. Research by the rail industry suggests the average rail passenger due to travel 2.7 days per week for employment. Data from Reading Buses suggests that home working has had a particular impact on bus services in Earley and at both Park and Ride sites. To aid in the recovery of local bus services a flexible ticketing which allows trips to be used at any time instead of on consecutive days may be beneficial.

For onward journeys by rail there is a need for integrated ticketing and seamless travel. The Wokingham PlusBus ticket allows for the purchase of local bus tickets at a rail station and then bus travel on any local bus service within the Plusbus area. The area surrounding Wokingham railway station is a small area relative to other PlusBus tickets.



The Reading PlusBus train and bus integrated ticket covers a wide area including railway stations at:

- Earley Station on the line towards Wokingham – however the ticket's validity ends just short of Winnersh Triangle Station
- Reading Station

Winnersh Triangle Station and Winnersh Station on the line towards Wokingham are not covered by any PlusBus ticket.

Twyford Station on the Elizabeth Line is not covered by any PlusBus ticket. It is the Council's aspiration to work with bus and rail operators to try and establish a PlusBus zone for Twyford Station.

## 2.5 COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE NETWORK

There are no areas in Wokingham Borough's local bus network which are "over-bused" when considering the aspirations set out in the National Bus Strategy. There are areas within the borough where frequencies are uneven or less frequent than the Nation Bus Strategy aspires to. The Shinfield Road corridor and the area surrounding Wokingham Town are two such examples.

Dedicated school services provide additional bus capacity at school times. Over 600 students board buses in the borough to access education and this is rising year on year. There are several school services which are at or close to capacity. There may be potential for school buses to be integrated into the wider local bus network, to help sustain the overall network through a "Total Transport" approach. Reading University is located on the border of Reading and Wokingham Boroughs with approximately half of the campus in Earley. A significant number of students use local bus services and the student's use of the 21 service, helps sustain the service. However, the use of the 21 service by students can result in some journeys being over capacity and unavailable for residents to use, especially during the first few weeks of term. During the summer months the 21 service reduces as far fewer students are travelling.

Maps showing the accessibility of key destinations in Wokingham Borough are shown in **Appendix B**. Two sets for each destination are shown, one for bus only and one that includes both bus and train. Accessibility maps to inform the proposals for improved bus services set out in Section 4. The 5 sets of maps are divided into 4 time periods as follows:

- AM Peak 07:00 hrs to 09:00 hrs
- Interpeak 09:00 hrs to 16:00 hrs
- PM Peak 16:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs
- Late PM 18:00 hrs to 00:00 hrs

Wednesday has been taken as a typical weekday, Saturdays and Sundays have also been considered. The 5 locations selected are as follows:

- Royal Berkshire Hospital;
- Twyford Station (we have used 06:00 to 08:00 for the peak period for this destination);
- University of Reading;
- Winnersh Triangle Station;
- Wokingham Town Centre.

Access to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Twyford station and Winnersh Triangle is generally good for residents living in areas along the A329 corridor and in the urban areas, but more challenging for residents in rural areas. For residents in Earley / Lower Earley, the journey time to Twyford Station and Winnersh Triangle ranges between 20 to 50 minutes by bus and train due to the need to travel into Reading Town Centre. The equivalent travel times by car from the junction of Beech Lane / Rushey Way to Winnersh Triangle business park would be 9 minute and to Twyford Station 14 minutes. To make journeys to work, especially to London, more attractive by public transport, a more direct bus route would be beneficial. Discussions with the management company at Winnersh Triangle business park, indicate employees at the park would benefit from an express bus link between Twyford.

## 2.6 EASE OF UNDERSTANDING THE NETWORK

Reading Transport operate nearly 80% of the local bus services in Wokingham borough either through Reading Buses or via Thames Valley Buses. Area and corridor-based brands have been developed for services across the borough. Wokingham Borough Council has worked with Reading Transport to continue this branding, where possible, through publicity and at stop infrastructure to strength brand identity. There are no conflicts in route numbering within the borough.

As an example, Woodley is characterised by the “Oranges”. The commercial 13/14s carry the branding shown below. The brand is extended for the smaller contracted vehicles which operate in the same area and are known locally as the “Little Oranges” (19a/b/c). The Earley area is branded with the “Claret” services, whilst the key corridors in the borough are the “Lion” (A329) and the “Leopard” (A327). The A4 corridor, due to the number of services operating, does not currently carry a consistent brand. Achieving a consistent brand for the A4 corridor would be challenging given that the Arriva 850 service also operates in Reading Borough, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.



Three area guides and a network map are produced each year as part of the Council’s My Journey programme. The timetables incorporated in each guide list stops on routes most relevant to the area. For key stops, such as Woodley Town Centre, combined timetables are produced detailing all services stopping at the stops. The guides provide a full expanse of information from how to read a bus timetable, school term dates and how to make a complaint through to bus and rail timetables and fare information. Reducing the number of timetable and fare changes each year will help keep information up to date.

The Council's My Journey website is a travel portal for planning journeys. Links are provided to each operator's timetable page. Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses both provide live bus maps showing live vehicle locations. Each bus stop is clickable for live bus times.

Reading • Loddon Bridge • Reading Station via Royal Berkshire Hospital and Earley Gate
19a

**Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays)**

Service Number:	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a	19a
Reading, St Mary's Butts [CR]	0611	0731	0813	0927	1032	1132	1232	1332	1432	1532	-	1741	1837		
Reading, Station Road [SA]	0630	0740	0840	0940	1040	1140	1240	1340	1440	1545	1650	1750	1855		
RBH South Wing	0637	0752	0851	0951	1051	1151	1251	1351	1451	1557	1702	1801	1903		
Earley Gate	0643	0759	0858	0957	1057	1157	1257	1357	1458	1604	1709	1808	1909		
Silverdale Road Shops	0645	0802	0901	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1501	1607	1712	1811	1912		
Mill Lane - Gipsy Lane	0649	0806	0905	1004	1104	1204	1304	1404	1506	1611	1716	1815	1916		
Loddon Bridge, The George	0653	0813	0908	1008	1108	1208	1308	1408	1509	1614	1719	1819	1919		
Woodley Piazza	0705	0827	0921	1021	1121	1221	1321	1421	1522	1627	1733	1831	1930		
Woodley, Chequers	0707	0830	0924	1024	1124	1224	1324	1424	1525	1630	1736	1834	1933		
Bulmershe Sports Centre	0710	0834	0928	1027	1127	1227	1327	1427	1528	1633	1739	1837	1935		
Culver Lane	-	-	0930	1029	1129	1229	1329	1429	1530	1635	-	-	-		
Earley Gate	0717	0843	0935	1035	1135	1235	1335	1435	1540	1643	1745	1843	1940		
RBH Main Entrance	0724	0851	0943	1043	1143	1243	1343	1443	1548	1651	1753	1850	1946		
Reading, St Mary's Butts	0731	0901	0952	1052	1152	1252	1352	1452	1557	1702	1805	1858	1954		
Reading, Station Road [SA]	0735	0905	0956	1056	1156	1256	1356	1456	1601	1706	1809	1902	1957		

**note:**  
Use the Chequers stop for Woodford Park Leisure Centre

**No more stabilisers!**  
Learn to ride at Woodford Park Leisure Centre

term time only, please see [www.myjourneywokingham.com](http://www.myjourneywokingham.com) for details

Service 19a operates anti-clockwise in the Woodley area – for buses travelling in the opposite direction around Woodley please see service 19c on following pages

This service is operated by **Readingbuses**  
under contract to Wokingham Borough Council

[www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)
traveline - 0871 200 22 33 (calls from landlines cost 12p per min) or visit: [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)
[www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk)

My Journey is a behaviour change campaign which promotes active and sustainable travel. The funding for the programme comes from S106 contributions which developers choose to provide instead of a travel plan. The funding contributes towards the provision of welcome packs for new homes in the borough, personalised travel planning, taster ticket, travel events, social media, the running of the website and development of travel initiatives and competitions. The Council and Reading Buses have worked jointly in promoting bus travel to residents, students, and employees in new developments from first occupation through My Journey. The Council's ambition is to roll out a similar offer to other areas of the borough that do not have S106 funding available to support the same level of engagement.



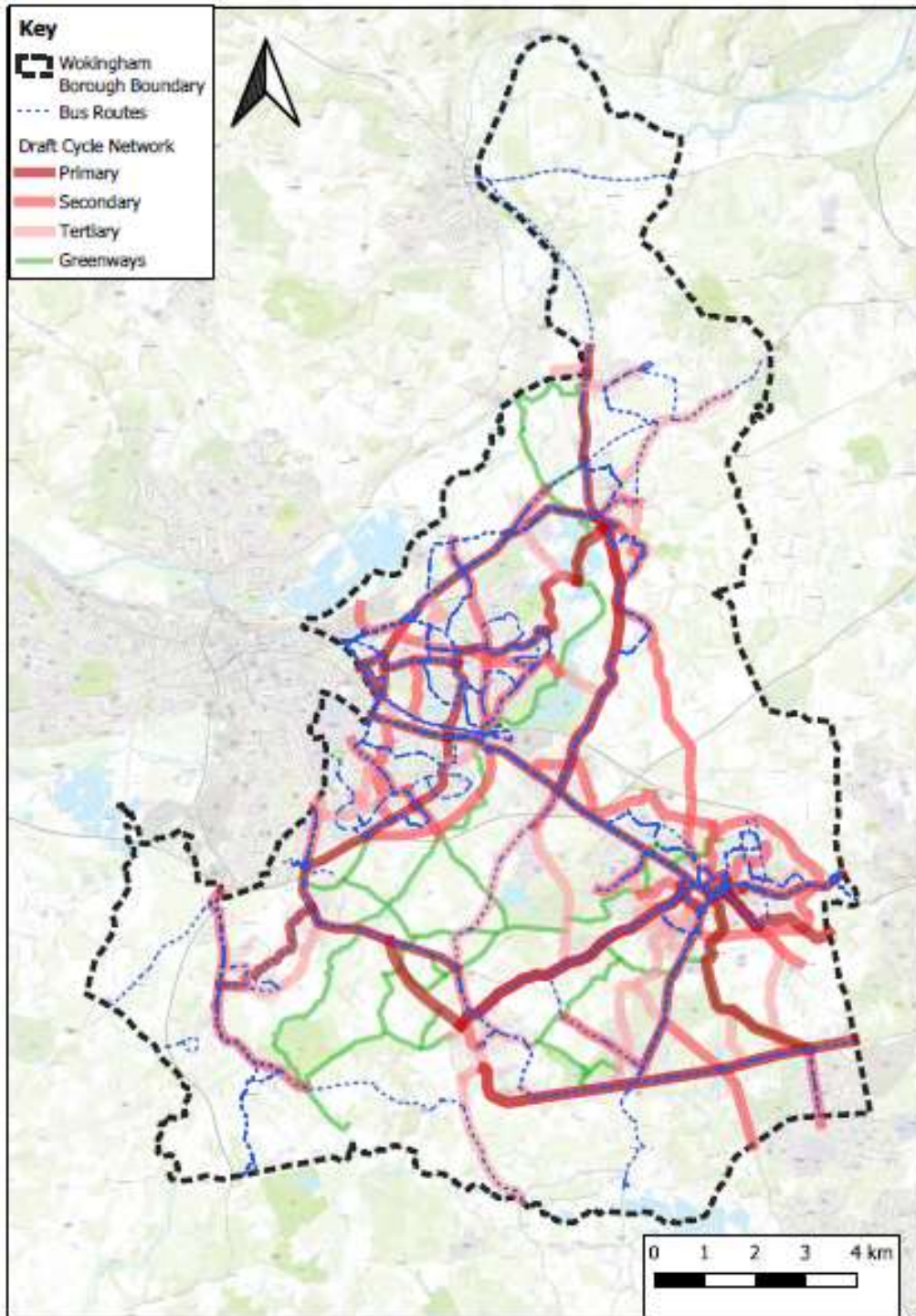
Both Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses have mobile applications available which cover everything from journey planning, to checking bus times and paying for bus travel. My Journey promote the app to business, residents and commuters in the borough including live demonstrations at local events. The Council would like to see all Reading Transport's services promoted on a single application particularly for passengers in Woodley and Wokingham Town.

Reading Buses fleet is one of the youngest in the country and as such already incorporates audio and visual announcements, branded interiors and in the case of commercial bus services Wi-Fi, and USB charging ports.. Passenger satisfactions is generally very high in relation to the vehicles. Residents in the Earley would like to see the larger vehicles which were deployed on the 19s during Covid remain on the routes due to the better internal layout, the increased capacity of the vehicles and the additional space available for those with mobility impairments. Reading Buses have confirmed that these larger buses will stay on the Earley routes.

## 2.7 INTEGRATION WITH OTHER MODES OF TRAVEL

### 2.7.1 INTEGRATION WITH WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS

Figure 2-12 – Integration of the Local Bus Network and Draft LCWIP Network



A boroughwide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is currently being developed. The interaction of this network with bus and rail services is yet to be considered in detail, however, in identifying key routes transport hubs and important bus stop locations were considered as part of the modelling to identify desire lines.

The LCWIP and this plan will need to be considered together as part of a multi-modal approach to door-to-door journeys which will enable residents to reduce their reliance on private motor vehicles for longer journeys. Figure 2.2 shows the current LCWIP strategic routes for cycling.

## 2.7.2 INTEGRATION WITH RAIL

Funding from both Southwestern Railways and Great Western Railways' Customer and Communities Infrastructure Funds (CCIF) has been used to develop mobility plans for Wokingham, Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle, Earley and Twyford Stations. The mobility plans consider in detail connectivity for passengers who walk, cycle, and use the bus to local stations. The key findings of these studies are detailed in Table 2-11.

Wargrave, Crowthorne and Reading Stations are not covered by existing station mobility plans. Accessibility to these stations for bus passengers is as follows:

- **Wargrave station** is a short walk from local bus stops on the A321 corridor which are served by the Arriva 850 service every hour. Two trains an hour depart Wargrave station for Henley and Twyford. Wargrave Station is the most lightly trafficked rail station in the borough with 92,180 entry and exits during 2019/20. Accessibility mapping shows how Wargrave station has the potential to be developed as a transport interchange for access to Twyford, Reading and the hospital
- **Crowthorne Station** is in the neighbouring Borough of Bracknell Forest. The station is 20-25 minutes' walk from communities within the southern parish of Wokingham Without. Crowthorne station provides good access to Farnborough, Guildford, and Heathrow. Consultation with Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Wokingham Without Parish Council and Great Western Railways reveals a desire by all parties to enhance bus connectivity with the station
- **Reading Station** is one of Britain's busiest stations which has recently been subject to an £850 million regeneration project. The station has excellent connectivity across the rail network with trains departing on average every 4 minutes into London. Direct trains also run to Bristol, Wales, Manchester, Newbury and Plymouth. The Elizabeth line was introduced to the station in 2020. The Reading Plusbus ticketing schemes in one of the most successful in the Country, making bus/rail interchange more seamless. Buses from Woodley, Earley and the A327 corridor all stop within 2 minutes' walk of the main station entrance. With the station being the start of route, for most routes within Wokingham's urban areas, buses are highly visible and sit at stops for the start of service. Reading Buses have been successful in getting bus timetables and bus departure schemes into the station buildings. On-board screens also present rail information as they approach the station stops



**Table 2-10 Review of Ease of Bus/Rail Interchange**

Station	Summary of Key Findings
<b>Wokingham Station</b>	Direct connectivity is possible via the bus/rail interchange, although services on the A327 corridor require a 6-minute walk from the station to local bus stops. There is good accessibility to the station during the day and at weekends, but on weekdays most services do not run early in the morning or late in the evening. 37% of journeys are made to the station on foot or by bicycle, 5% by bus and 18% by car. Car drivers highlighted limited bus services from rural areas which prevented them being seen as an alternative means of travel.
<b>Winnersh Station</b>	The A329 corridor is 5 minutes' walk from the station entrance. Access to buses to Twyford are less than 5 minutes' walk from the station. There is no parking provision at Winnersh Station. Over half (51%) of passengers walk or cycle to the station, with just 6% currently arriving by bus. Of those passengers who did arrive in a car, generally as a car passenger, 5% said they would consider the bus as an alternative.
<b>Winnersh Triangle Station</b>	Direct bus connectivity is possible from the Station, either at the entrance or via a 15-minute walk to the A329 corridor. Most bus services operate early in the morning and finish late at night and there is an opportunity for seamless integration between bus and rail. There are no bus services to the residential areas to the north or south of Winnersh Triangle. 76% of passengers walk or cycle to the station, with only 12% using the car. There is an opportunity for expanding the "PlusBus" zone and increasing information provision to make bus travel more attractive.
<b>Earley Station</b>	Bus stops on the A329 corridor are three minutes' walk from the station, whilst those in Woodley are 14 minutes' walk from the station. There is an opportunity to reduce this distance so that stops are more conveniently located for the passenger. Almost no passengers surveyed at the station arrived by bus, instead 68% choose to walk or cycle. Of the 26% who arrived by car, only 5% said that they would consider the bus as an alternative. The main reason for dissatisfaction with the station was related to the state of repair of a footbridge. The footbridge is the main pedestrian route from bus stops in the Woodley area to the station. A further footbridge provides access to the platforms. Neither footbridge is DDA complaint making it difficult to access for those with mobility impairments.
<b>Twyford Station</b>	A bus stop is located on the southern side of the station for buses arriving from Wokingham and Hurst. There is no real space or facility for buses to wait and passengers to wait. For buses to Wargrave and Woodley, there is approximately an eight minutes' walk to the nearest bus stops in Twyford centre. No signage directs passengers towards these bus stops. Bus services serving the station are very limited with the no early morning or late evening services. Parking at the station is very restrained with suppressed demand identified. With the introduction of the Elizabeth line demand for travel to and from the station is likely to increase. Rail passengers identified buses as having the greatest potential as an alternative to the car. Barriers to bus travel were poor frequency, no buses from Woodley and not being sure where to get on the bus.

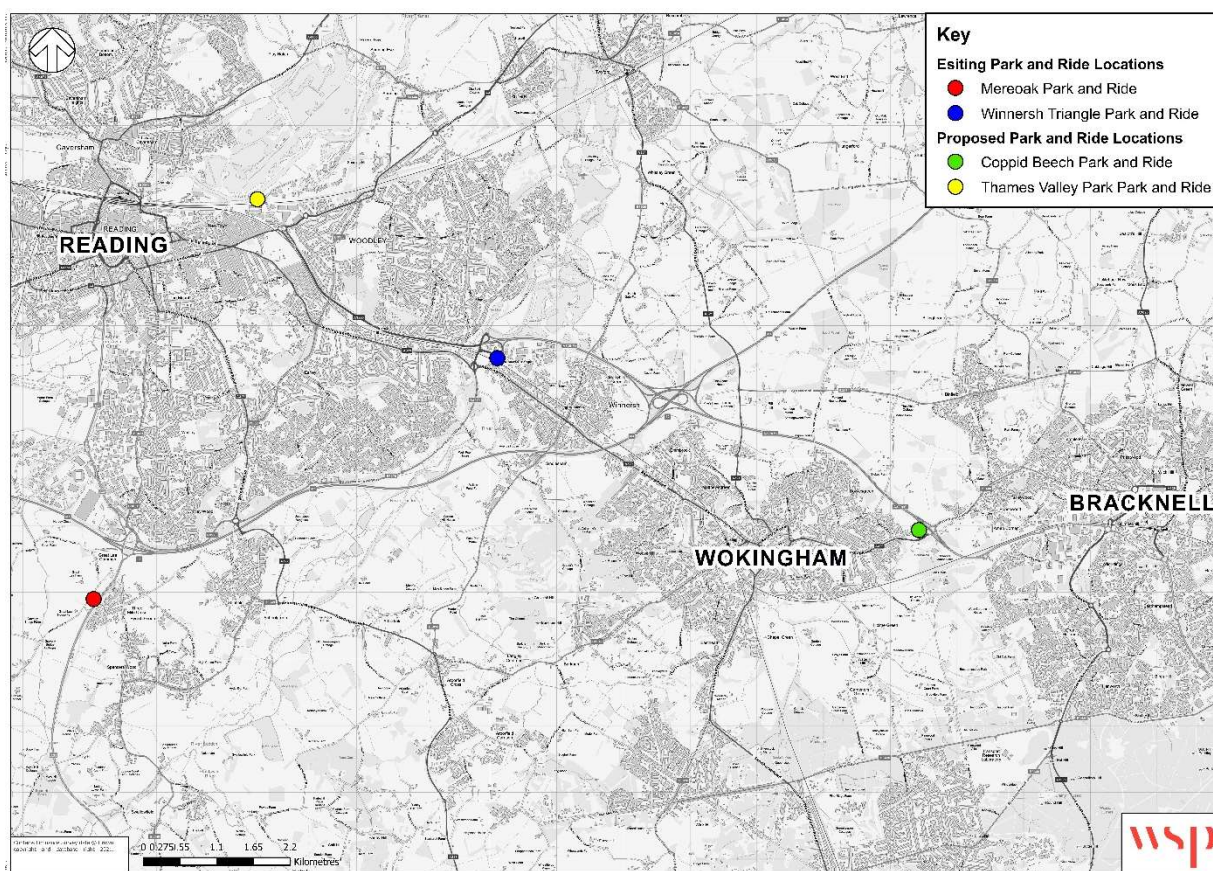
Based on interview data for with passengers who drive to Twyford station and a review of parking session ticket holder data, there may be potential for local bus routes or park and ride bus routes to operate from the Wokingham and Earley areas.

In all cases it was suggested that real-time next-bus departure information could be presented in the stations. Integration of rail information within the Reading Buses/ Thames Valley Buses mobile application may also be a benefit to passengers looking to make bus/rail journeys.

### 2.7.3 PARK AND RIDE

There are four park and ride sites in Wokingham, as shown below.

**Figure 2-13 – Park and Ride Locations**



Wokingham Borough Council has developed four park and ride sites:

- Mereoak is in the west of the borough, south of Reading, close to M4 junction 11. The site opened in 2015 and offers approximately 575 spaces. Services running from or through Mereoak Park and Ride include the Leopard 9, 600 Park and Ride route as well as National Express services to London Victoria.
- Winnersh Triangle is midway between Wokingham and Reading town centres, close to the A3290/A329(M) junction and co-located with Winnersh Triangle railway station. Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride also opened in 2015 and offered a further 400 spaces for those travelling from the east. Winnersh Triangle is currently being expanded to offer an improved interchange

facility with greater parking capacity. Reading Buses 500 service runs directly from the park and ride into Reading.

- Thames Valley Park P&R site is a recently completed facility close to Reading town centre. It had a soft opening as a free car park in spring 2021, with enforcement of parking charges starting a few weeks later. The intention was to introduce a Park and Ride bus service into Reading Town Centre at the same time, however the pandemic had a significant impact on passenger demand.
- Coppid Beech, east of Wokingham towards Bracknell which is currently under construction.

Given that two of these sites are yet to open and a third is currently being expanded there are some unknowns around how they will be serviced in future following the pandemic. Winnersh Triangle and Mereok have been operating on a commercial basis, however, to date recovery has been slow and these are potentially at risk without additional support. Furthermore, the new sites are also likely to require subsidy; work is ongoing to identify how and when the sites will operate in future.

## 2.8 BUS EMISSIONS AND GREEN VEHICLES

Reading Buses lead the way with one of the youngest and most environmentally friendly fleets in the UK. 100% of Reading Buses fleet is rated Euro 6 or ultra-low emission due to the reduced CO2 emissions that bio-gas buses produce compared to a normal diesel bus.

The Wokingham Town link services are operated by Thames Valley buses. Most of the fleet operating in Wokingham Town and the surround areas, including the southern parishes, has recently been retrofitted with technology which improves the emissions rates of the vehicles from Euro 5 to Euro 6.

To fully decarbonise buses in Wokingham Borough the next step is to move towards electric vehicles and the provision of infrastructure to support their operation.

**Table 2-11 – Buses Fleets**

Operator	Corridor / Area	Total Vehicles	Euro 6	Euro 5	>Euro 5
<b>Reading Buses</b>	A329 – 4/X4	9	9	0	0
	A327 – 3/9	10	0	10*	0
	A4 – 13/14	6	6	0	0
	Earley – 21	5	5	0	0
	Woodley – 13/14, 19a,b,c	10	10	0	0
	Southern Parishes - 7	1	0	1*	0
<b>Thames Valley Buses</b>	Wokingham Town & Surrounding Area	6	6	0	0
<b>Arriva</b>	A4/A327	3	0	3	0
<b>Horseman Coaches</b>	Northern Parishes	1	1	0	0
	Southern Parishes	1	1	0	0

\*Run on carbon neutrally sourced bio-methane

## 2.9 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a key measure of bus service, and bus service provider success. Appendix C includes tables showing surveys from Transport Focus and the National Highways and Transportation Survey (NHT). The Transport Focus surveys capture bus passenger satisfaction results for both Thames Valley Buses and Reading Buses. The surveys were undertaken in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Given the majority of services are provided by these providers, the Transport Focus services are considered to be representative of customer satisfaction across the BSIP area. The NHT surveys capture satisfaction levels for aspects of local bus services from Wokingham Borough residents during summer 2020.

For Thames Valley Buses, overall journey satisfaction for all passengers, fare-paying passengers, free pass holders, passengers not commuting and passengers saying they have a disability were satisfied (either fairly or very) at 94% or more in every category.

All but two categories of the Thames Valley Buses 2019 survey show over 80% of all passengers identifying as satisfied. The two categories with satisfaction less than 80% are value for money and the information provided inside the bus with satisfaction levels of 62% and 67% respectively. These therefore represent areas of potential improvement, although they are still above the national average for these categories.

For Reading Buses, parts of the 2019 survey identified areas where satisfaction was less than 80%; these were:

- Value for Money amongst all passenger groups
- Punctuality of the bus
- The length of time waiting for the bus
- The information provided inside the bus
- The amount of personal space you had around you

Excluding those aged 16 to 34, general satisfaction is consistently above 90% satisfied across the different passenger groups. Given the importance of satisfaction amongst the 16 to 34 age group, including that this is the key age group for introduction to independent travel on public transport, improving satisfaction for this passenger group will be considered carefully within this BSIP.

The NHT surveys identified 61% of residents were satisfied with local bus services overall compared to an average of 60% for residents in other local authority areas. Residents in Wokingham Borough also reported higher satisfaction levels with bus stop infrastructure, bus fares, personal safety and the overall quality of the bus services compared to residents in other local authority areas.

The areas where Wokingham residents' satisfaction fell below that of residents elsewhere in England was in relation to bus frequency, information on bus services, the responsiveness of transport and community transport provision.

Compared to previous years the greatest fall in satisfaction levels was around the provision of information, which is likely to be because of no printed information being provided during the pandemic. Usually, Wokingham residents' satisfaction levels with information on bus services far exceeds the national average suggesting printed publicity is highly valued by residents.

## 2.10 INNOVATION

Reading Buses made a bid for a £1.5m technological upgrade and have secured funding for the project through the Government's Local Growth Fund via the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The application to the LEP was made in 2020 for funding to upgrade the audio and visual next stop announcement hardware on buses as well as improve and implement live times infrastructure for customers for the whole of the Thames Valley area. The bid recognised that whilst Reading Buses are equipped with next stop audio and visual announcements, Thames Valley Buses and Newbury & District buses are not, and this funding will enable those companies to upgrade buses. It also includes new bus departure screens at Reading and Newbury Stations, an upgrade of the back-office system and an improved online shop.

The funding will also allow Reading Buses to implement improvements to the system that provides the data to the buses, which will bring improvements to the 'real time' predictions on their app, website, bus shelters, railway stations and control room.

## 2.11 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BUS SERVICES

Wokingham Borough Council provides £810,400 of financial support towards local bus services each year. £111,000 of this funding is provided by Central Government through the Bus Service Support Grant, the remainder is Council funding.

**Table 2-12 - Financial Support for Local Bus Services**

Route	Operator	Funding Source	Route Number	Mileage**
Reading – Shinfield – Arborfield - Wokingham	Reading Buses	S106	Leopards 3/8/9	349,800
Reading – Three Mile Cross – Swallowfield – Riseley – Fleet	Reading Buses	Council	7	12,600
Reading – Woodley – Earley – Reading	Reading Buses	Council	19a/c	71,170
Norreys Estate – Wokingham – Tesco	Thames Valley Buses	Council / S106	121	28,412
Woosehill – Emmbrook – Wokingham	Thames Valley Buses	Council	122/3	13,904
Wokingham – Finchampstead – Crowthorne	Thames Valley Buses	Council / S106	125/A/B	21,408
Reading – Sonning – Twyford – Maidenhead	Thames Valley Buses	Council	127	9,464
Reading – Woodley – Sonning – Twyford – Winnersh – Wokingham	Thames Valley Buses	Council	128/129	104,228
Reading – Three Mile Cross – Riseley – Finchampstead – Wokingham	Horseman Coaches	Council	145	2,170
Wokingham – Bean Oak – Bracknell	Thames Valley Buses	Council*	151/151A	25,288
Upper Wargrave – Reading	Horseman Coaches	Council	153	787

<b>Stratfield Saye – Beech Hill – Loddon Court Farm – Reading</b>	Horseman Coaches	Council*	154	950
<b>Three Mile Cross – Lower Earley – Woodley – Bulmershe School</b>	Horseman Coaches	Council	983	3,021
<b>Shinfield – Lower Earley – Forest, Emmbrook &amp; Holt Schools</b>	Horseman Coaches	Council	202	3,116
<b>Whitley Wood – Lower Earley – Forest, Emmbrook &amp; Holt Schools</b>	Horseman Coaches	Council	244	6,422

\*Shared funding contributions with neighbouring authorities or Parish Councils

\*\*Based on annual supported scheduled mileage for 2019/20

In addition to the financial support provided by the Council, developer funding is also contributed towards the development of bus services in the Borough and most significantly in the Shinfield area. The Shinfield strategy is delivered in partnership with Reading Buses and Reading University. The impact of the Covid pandemic has meant that the growth required to maintain the strategy has not been achieved and government funding in the form of Covid Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) has provided a significant contribution towards the continued operation of the Leopard services in this area.

A further £1.6 million has been secured from developers for the provision of bus infrastructure in and around new developments.

Other funding which the Council provides towards the operation of local transport services on an annual basis includes:

- £920,400\* for concessionary fare payments
- £103,00 towards the operation of community and volunteer transport services

(\*based on 2018/19 pre-covid payments)

£12.6 million has been committed for the construction and expansion of park and ride sites in the borough. Approximately £9.54 million has of the funding has been secured from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

## 2.12 PARKING PROVISION

Table 2-13 - Town Centre Parking Provisions

Area	Car Park	Owner	Spaces	Parking Charges			
				2hr	4hr	Daily	Annual
<b>Wokingham Town</b>	Carnival	Council	529	£1.20	£2.00	£4.00	£900.68
	Denmark Street	Council	WBC	£1.20	£2.00	£4.00	£900.68
	Easthampstead (West & East)	Council	57 West 233 East	£1.20	£2.00	£4.00*	£900.68*
	Rose Street	Council	43	£1.20	-	-	-
	Cockpit Path	Council	106	£1.20	£2.00	£4.00	-
<b>Woodley</b>	Crockhamwell Road	Council	168	£1.20	-	-	-
	Lytham Road (East)	Council	23	£1.20	-	-	-
	Lytham Road (West)	Council	33	£1.20	-	-	-
	Headley Road	Council	205	£1.20	£2.00	£4.00	£450.34
	Crockhamwell Road	Council	168	£1.20	-	-	-

All town centre car parks in Woodley are owned and operated by Wokingham Borough Council. Three of the four car parks are short stay only. Daily parking charges are the same as daily bus fares to Woodley Town Centre. For journeys to Reading Town Centre daily bus fares are the same as short stay parking charges. Feedback from Woodley Town Council is that lower fares are desirable to make bus travel to and from Woodley more attractive.

**Table 2-14 - Rail Station and Park and Ride Sites Parking Provisions**

Transport Hub	Owner	Spaces	Parking Charges				
			Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annual	
<b>Rail Station</b>	Wokingham	Private	531	£8.60	£39.30	£115.90	£1,159.00
	Winnersh Triangle (rail user)	Council	378 (shared with P&R)	£4.00	-	-	£607.20**
	Earley	Council	45	£4.00	-	-	£607.20**
	Twyford	Private	355	£7.60	£38.00	£130.00	£1,300.00
	Wargrave	Private	36	-	-	-	-
	Crowthorne	Private	43	£2.70	£13.50	£56.00	£570.00
	Reading	Private	1600	£25.00	-	£220.00	£1,850.00
<b>Park &amp; Ride Site</b>	Mere oak	Council		£1.00	-	-	-
	Winnersh Triangle (bus user)	Council	378 (shared with rail)	£1.00	-	-	-

Except for Earley Station and Winnersh Triangle car parks, all other car parks are operated by the private sector on behalf of the rail industry. For Twyford, Crowthorne and Reading Station car parks, rail passengers may book and pay online for their parking space in advance of arriving at the station. Apart from Crowthorne and Wargrave stations, daily parking charges are the same or more than local daily bus tickets. Where bus passengers are travelling longer distances or car sharing is applicable then bus travel is less attractive. There may be scope for the Council to work with operators on fare strategies to promote attractive and seamless fares for rail commuters.

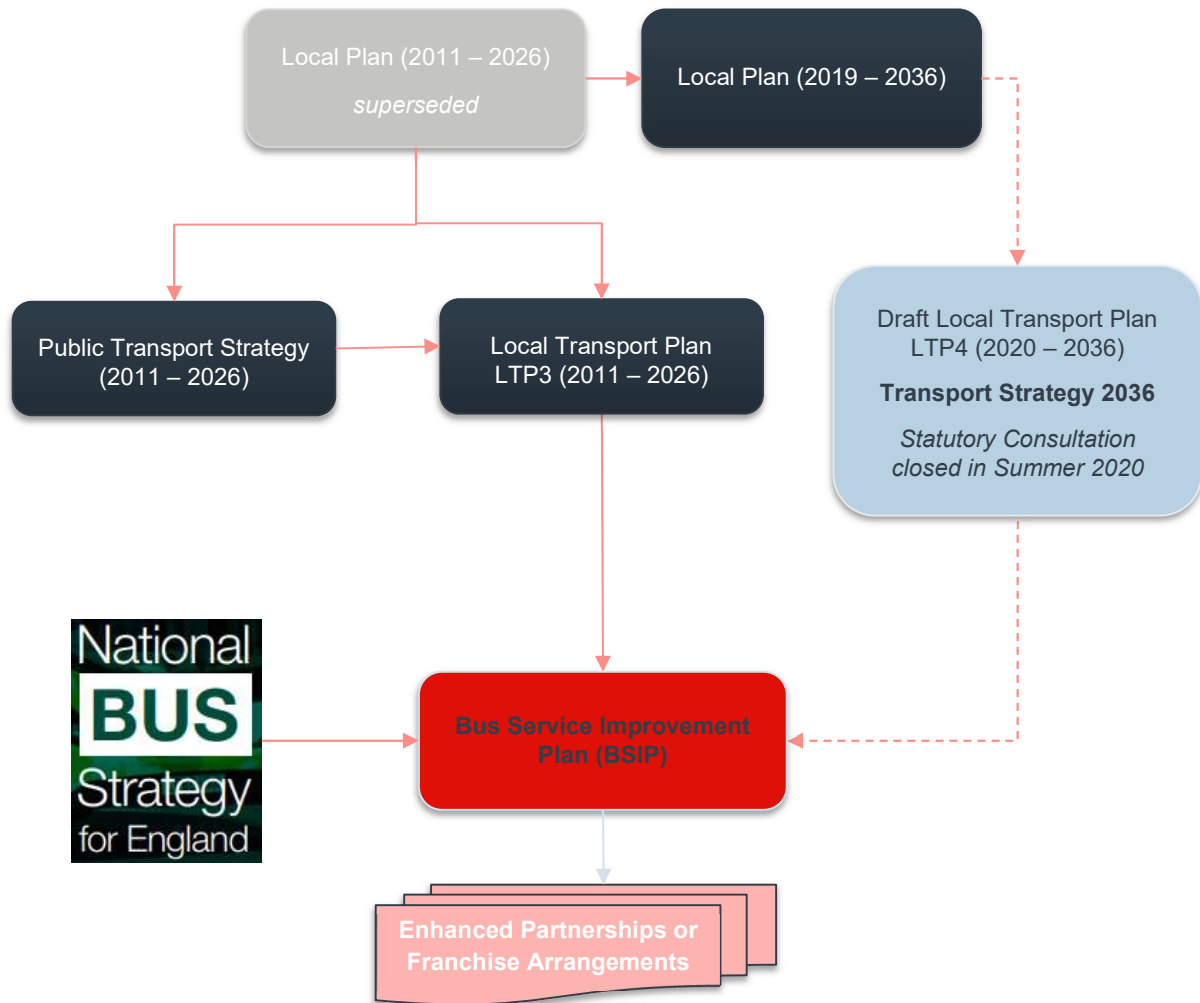
For residents travelling to London from Woodley, it is better value for the passenger to travel from Twyford Station than from Reading Station. The cost of an all-day peak time travelcard from Reading Station to London is £57.20, whereas the equivalent ticket from Twyford Station is £37.20. There are currently very limited local bus services connecting Woodley and Twyford station.

The cost to the Council for Civic Parking Enforcement is approximately £520,000 per annum.



## 2.13 SUPPORTING LOCAL POLICY

Figure 2-14 - BSIP Policy and Strategy Framework



### 2.13.1 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

#### Wokingham Local Plan Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 (January 2010)

22 Strategic Transport Network improvements are identified by Policy CP10. The Council has been successful in progressing many of the strategic network improvements including rebuilding Wokingham Station as a public transport interchange and the construction of both Mere oak and Coppid Beech Park and Ride sites. Strategic Transport Improvements which are relevant to the development of the local bus network, and which are still to be delivered include:

- High quality express bus services or mass rapid transit along the A4 and A329 corridors.
- High quality express bus services or mass rapid transit between Reading and Woodley town centres.
- High quality express bus services between Green Park and Twyford stations.
- Improvements to the quality and frequency of public transport services along any part of the network
- Measures to improve cross Thames travel which may include a bridge;

When funding is available, it is desirable to progress these strategic network improvements.

## 2.13.2 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

### Wokingham Local Transport Plan (LTP4) (draft)

This is a draft document, with a consultation and drafting period to winter 2021.

Wokingham Borough Council published the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) Vision for consultation up to the 20 March 2020. The vision sets out policy and plan direction for transport for the period 2021 to 2036. Under three key themes (Environment, Social, and Technology) the vision highlights the following key objectives:

- Future-proof the transport network for new and emerging technology.
- Reduce social exclusion.
- Improve network resilience.
- Tackle climate change; and
- Reduce congestion and improve productivity.
- Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) will consist of two distinct parts:
  - The Strategy; and
  - The Implementation Plan

## 2.13.3 CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

### Climate Emergency Action Plan (January 2020)

Wokingham Borough Council declared a climate emergency on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019. In declaring a climate emergency, the Council set out the commitment to lead by example in achieving a carbon neutrality by 2030. In 2017, 31.4% of Wokingham Borough's overall carbon footprint was because of transport emissions. These emissions exclude traffic associated with the M4 and national railways.

The council's key priorities for reducing the Borough's carbon footprint include reducing carbon dioxide emissions from transport. The actions the Council commits to undertake which are relevant to local bus travel are:

- The promotion of active and sustainable travel choices
- Encouraging greater use of public transport networks.
- Encouraging transport operators to use greener vehicles, including electric vehicles; and
- The use of intelligent transport systems to prevent future congestion

## 2.13.4 AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

### Air Quality Action Plan (March 2018)

The Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was published in 2018 and identifies two Air Quality Management Areas in the borough, Wokingham Town Centre and Twyford Crossroads. Local bus services serve both areas where there is a need to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>. A reduction in HGV and bus emissions would contribute significantly to meeting the targets in the AQAP for the above pollutants as they were determined to contribute over 23% of the pollutant levels in each area.

By supporting operators to take opportunities to green their fleets by using retrofit programmes, embracing new technologies and migrating to electric vehicles we will support the outcomes of the AQAP. Furthermore, if more residents chose to travel by bus instead of single occupancy vehicles, this would contribute further to reaching targets for NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> within these areas.

## 2.14 CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUS TRAVEL

As previously noted, up to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Wokingham experienced bus passenger growth over the last few years. However, there are several challenges and barriers to achieving further passenger growth in the Wokingham Borough.

### 2.14.1 CHALLENGES

- High levels of car ownership and availability in the Borough and the convenience of using the car against the effort required to use bus services (having to find information, does the bus go where I need to go, the proximity of the bus stop to where I live, how far do I have to walk from the bus to my destination compared to how easy it might be to park my car, the cost involved when the bus fare is compared to only the marginal cost of a car journey);
- An adaptable and resilient economy enables a larger proportion of employees to work from home and places a much smaller proportion of the workforce in at-risk sectors compared to neighbouring Berkshire authorities. The challenge for local bus services is to provide a suitable local bus network that meets the changing needs and travel patterns of the Borough's workforce.
- With walking and cycling being the most reliable way to travel we are seeing more residents choosing to walk and cycle. We will continue to encourage walking and cycling part of normal everyday life through our My Journey behaviour change programme. For our bus services, particularly in our urban areas, the ability to walk and cycle for shorter journeys means a potential shift away from local bus use.
- Government guidance to provide attractive cycle routes which are separate to traffic lanes significantly limits the availability of road space for dedicated bus lanes. In some cases, local constraints also prevent dedicated bus lanes from being provided. The Council will need to carefully consider the use of road space for local bus services and balance the needs of all road users.
- Population growth is expected to be greatest amongst the over 85 age group, as residents live longer and are active for longer. With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary bus travel this presents increasing financial pressures for the Council through increased concessionary fare payments.
- Emissions from vehicles can negatively impact on the levels of air quality, and this presents a particular challenge for buses with the stop, start nature of bus services. Our Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2011-2026 places a focus on sustainable travel, particularly in our Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Wokingham Town and at Twyford Crossroads.

### 2.14.2 BARRIERS

- Whilst key corridors have a reasonably frequent service, other corridors and local routes only have an hourly service or sometimes even less frequent which is not sufficiently attractive to non-public transport users or occasional users.
- There is a lack of integration between some local bus services which for fare paying passengers either reduces the perceived frequency of service or increases the cost of travel.
- The cost of travel and journey times for rail passengers is increased by poor accessibility to local stations. The lack of seamless ticketing and through fares between bus services and between bus and rail (other than the PlusBus offer which is not sufficiently comprehensive).

### 2.14.3 OPPORTUNITIES

- The BSIP presents an opportunity to reconsider the current public transport provision and how the network can be revised and simplified to better meet the needs of existing and future communities. The Council will use this opportunity to ensure that all communities have access to an appropriate level of public transport provision.
- By co-ordinating the approach of the BSIP with that of the Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan (LCWIP) the Council can ensure direct and convenient points of access to the bus network for people who walk and cycle, thus allowing walking and cycling to form parts of longer active journeys utilising the bus network.
- With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary travel this means more passengers travelling and more statutory funding the Council will need to provide towards supporting the viability of local bus services. Whilst the Council has no statutory influence over commercial operators, the Council will use its intelligence on the needs of residents and communities to seek to influence the provision of local bus services to best meet the needs of residents.
- By supporting operators to take opportunities to green their fleets by using retrofit programmes, embracing new technologies and migrating to electric vehicles there is an opportunity to support outcomes of the AQAP and Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- Through the Customer Charter and the annual review of the BSIP, bus passengers in Wokingham Borough will be given more of a voice in the way that local bus services are delivered.

### 3 HEADLINE TARGETS (FUTURE STATE OF THE BUS OFFER TO PASSENGERS)

This section of the BSIP sets out the targets which Wokingham Borough Council aim to meet, should sufficient funding be made available to implement the measures described in Section 4. The targets have been identified based on the performance of the existing network described in Section 2 and based on the stakeholder engagement which has been undertaken.

- 1. Journey Time Reductions** - Average times from the first and last bus stops in the Borough have been calculated from timetables over the morning peak period, the inter-peak period, the pm peak period and evenings for the key corridors in the borough. The longest average morning and pm peak periods have been selected and time target reductions for 2024/25 are set in accordance with potential bus priority measures being implement where necessary. Table 3-1 below lists the bus journey time reduction targets, which amounts to 8% across all the corridors combined.

**Table 3-1 - Journey Time Reduction Targets (minutes)**

Corridor	Period	Direction	2018/19	2019/20	2024/25
A329	AM Peak	Bracknell to Reading	39.30	39.30	36.00
A329	PM Peak	Reading to Bracknell	38.26	38.26	35.00
A4/A321	AM Peak	Twyford to Henley	25.00	25.00	24.00
A4/A321	PM Peak	Twyford to Henley	26.00	26.00	24.00
A4/A321	AM Peak	Reading to Twyford	29.00	29.00	27.00
A4/A321	PM Peak	Twyford to Reading	25.00	25.00	24.00
19b	AM Peak	Lower Earley to Reading	17.00	17.00	15.00
19b	PM Peak	Reading to Lower Earley	16.30	16.30	15.00
19a	AM Peak	Loddon Bridge to Reading	20.00	20.00	18.00
19c	PM Peak	Reading to Loddon Bridge	20.30	20.30	18.00

In addition to the above targets, the following target will be set for journeys times on the Leopard 9 (L9) bus service between Croft Road and Reading Town Centre, subject to funding:

**L9 Target:** To reduce the overall journey time between Croft Road and Reading Town Centre by 10 minutes by March 2023.

- 2. Reliability** – the Council will use a target representing the average across all operators for the percentage that have operated.

**Table 3-2 – Average Reliability Target for Wokingham Borough**

	2018/19	2020/21	2024/25
<b>Average % Reliability</b>	99.53%	99.45%	99.65%

**3. Number of Passengers** – the Council will use the figures issued by the Department for Transport for total passengers carried per annum in Wokingham Borough. The anticipation for improvement will be assessed by a subjective view of the increase in passengers resulting from:

- Increased frequencies and time coverage of bus services
- More attractive fare options
- More punctual and faster services
- Promotion, marketing and the introduction of new and updated buses

**Table 3-3 – Target Number of Passengers**

	2018/19	2019/20	2024/25
<b>Annual Number of Passengers</b>	<b>2.8 million</b>	<b>2.8 million</b>	<b>3.0 million</b>

As a result of the pandemic passenger levels are currently 65% of what they were pre-pandemic, making the baseline passenger numbers in the region of 1.8 million. The Council work with local bus operators to rebuild confidence in the local bus network and then look to grow passenger numbers.

**4. Passenger satisfaction** – we intend to measure this in two ways. Firstly, we will utilise the Transport Focus results for overall satisfaction for the two main operators in Wokingham (Reading Transport and Thames Valley Buses) who constitute at least 95% of service mileage operated. Secondly, we will use the NHT survey results for Wokingham Borough. These have the advantage that they cover a sample of all residents of the Borough, thus they provide an indication of how bus services are perceived by non-users. Increasing bus usage will depend on persuading non-users of the attractiveness of the services offered so are a useful additional view to that of regular passengers. Typically, the satisfaction levels are lower in the NHT surveys than the overall satisfaction figures provided by Transport Focus surveys. Two indices have been selected from the NHT surveys:

- 5.**
- KBI 07 – Local Bus Services Satisfaction (BVPI 104)
  - KBI 08 – Public Transport Information (BVPI 103)

**Table 3-4 - Bus Service Satisfaction Figures**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
NHT Local Bus Satisfaction	64%	67%	70%
NHT Public Transport Information	48%	53%	58%
Reading Buses – Transport Focus Satisfaction	94%	92%	95%
Thames Valley Buses – Transport Focus Satisfaction	-	94%	95%

## 4 DELIVERING THE BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

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This section sets out the BSIP proposals Wokingham Borough Council has identified for delivering better bus services, which meet the Council's ambitions, as set out at the start of this document. The BSIP proposals cover the 11 areas identified in the National Bus Strategy.

Wokingham Borough Council together with local bus operators have been successful in growing the local bus network and increasing passenger numbers over the past 10-years. There is a basic bus service provision to address social need where it has been identified, and where new growth has taken place, the bus network has been expanded in line with local growth and funding availability based on future needs. The incremental growth of the network and restricted funding has however resulted in a complex pattern of bus services in areas such as Shinfield and along the A327/ Basingstoke Road corridors.

The pandemic has had a significant effect on local bus services in Wokingham, partly due to the nature of employment in the borough. There is now a need to regain passenger confidence and adapt to new travel patterns where they are emerging. Subject to funding the Council will develop frequencies on key corridors, make local bus services more attractive and reduce journey times. The Council will achieve reduced journey times by working with key stakeholders and Reading Borough Council in particular, to simplify networks and making use of existing and emerging bus rapid transit networks in Reading Borough. The Council will complement these measures by working with operators to look at daily pricing for passenger groups, such as young people and those who currently live on zonal boundaries. The aim in reviewing pricing will be to introduce more consistent and equitable fares which are achieved through daily price capping and enabled through tap-on, tap-off technology. The Council will also work with local bus operators to make tickets interchangeable.

To raise awareness of travel choices and local bus services the Council will continue to promote and encourage behaviour change through the My Journey programme. Funding for the initiative will continue to be through developer contributions for areas of new growth.

To address the poorer local bus frequencies and accessibility to bus services during early morning and evenings and in more rural and low-density areas of the borough, subject to funding the Council will consider the feasibility and potential implementation of demand responsive transport.



The policies set out below aim to deliver an improved bus network. The policies relate to the following corridors and areas:

1. The key corridor linking Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell.
2. The key corridor linking Arborfield (2b)/Spencers Wood (2a), Shinfield and Reading via Basingstoke Road.
3. The corridor linking Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross and Reading via the A33.
4. The corridor from Henley to Reading via Wargrave, Twyford and Sonning (4a) and Wokingham to Reading via Hurst, Twyford, Sonning and Woodley (4b);
5. The Lower Earley area.
6. The Woodley area.
7. Wokingham Town and immediately surrounding area.
8. The rural areas of the Borough, generally of very low population density.

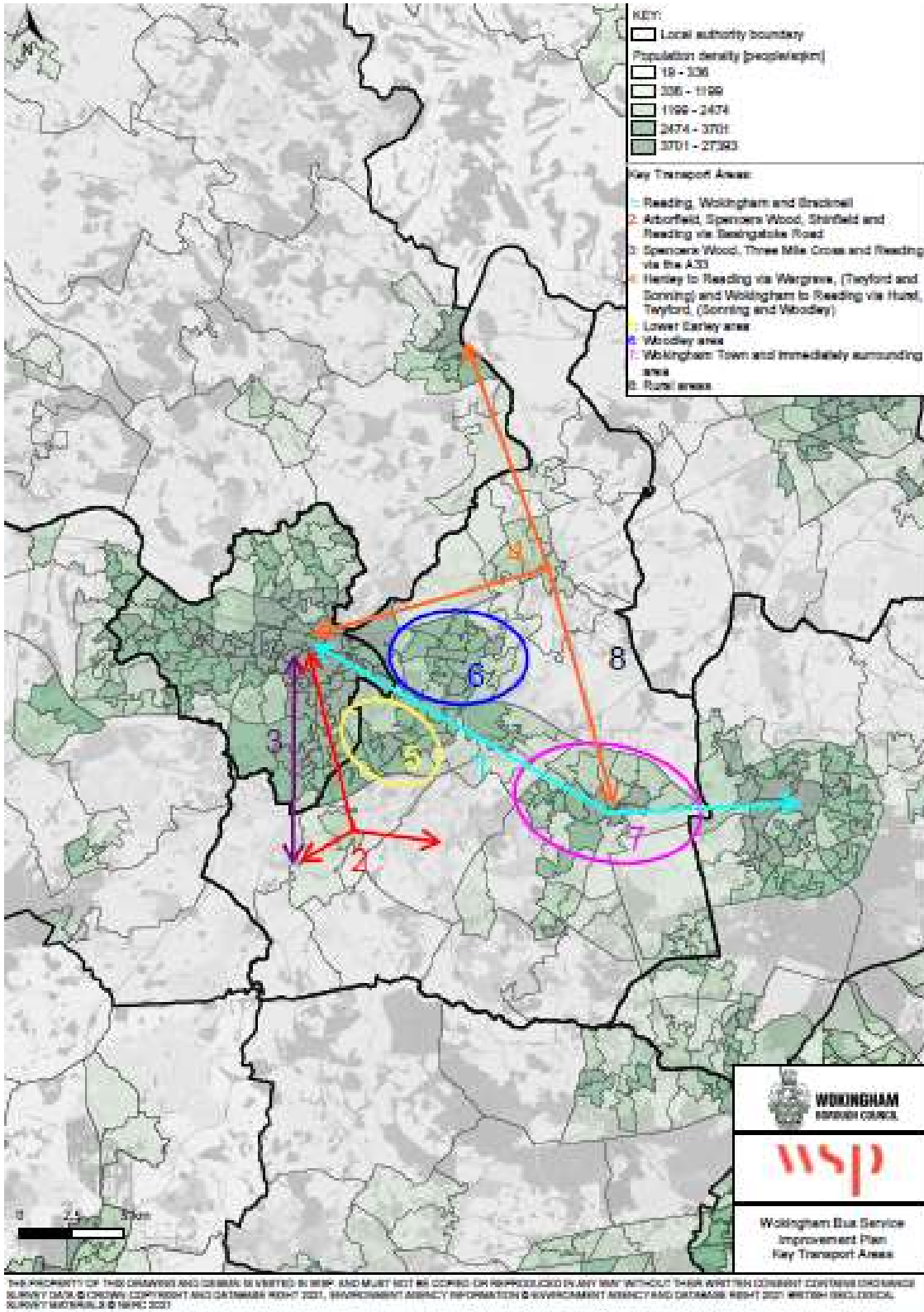
The Theme based plans and policies relate to the following activities:

9. Improved fares and ticketing.
10. Integrating bus services with other transport networks.
11. Decarbonisation
12. Network identity, passenger information, promotion, and publicity.
13. Modern Buses and Innovation
14. Giving passengers a voice

The map below illustrates geographic key areas 1 to 8. It will be noted that 4 of these key areas have Reading as one of the destinations and that two areas (Lower Earley and Woodley) have bus services focused on access to Reading. Consequently, we have liaised closely with Reading Borough Council and other neighbouring local authorities to ensure that our proposals are co-ordinated.



Figure 4-1 - Wokingham Borough - Key Transport Areas



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

## 4.1 CORRIDOR AND AREA BASED POLICIES

### 4.1.1 BRACKNELL – WOKINGHAM – WINNERSH – READING

This corridor is a key bus corridor, which links Reading, Wokingham, and Bracknell, and is well served by routes 4 and X4, ‘the Lion’, with a 15-minute frequency.

#### **BSIP Proposal (1) Review service frequency, consider bus priority measures and improve infrastructure**

To achieve a ‘turn up and go’ service, the Council will work with Reading Buses to consider the feasibility of increasing the frequency.

Any revision to the frequency of service might also incorporate serving the new Coppid Beech Park and Ride site and accommodating school travel along the corridor.

To make this key route more attractive to potential users and to speed up journey times, the Council will further investigate the need for bus priority measures, which could help achieve enhanced frequencies at a reduced cost.

Where appropriate and subject to funding, the Council will upgrade bus stops and shelters along the line of route to ‘gold’ class standard.

### 4.1.2 WOKINGHAM – FINCHAMPSTEAD – ARBORFIELD/SPENCERS WOOD – SHINFIELD - READING

Shinfield, Spencers Wood and Arborfield all fall within or close to strategic development locations. New residents are likely to become dependent on car travel if the bus does not offer an attractive alternative. The Council has worked with Reading Buses and Reading University to develop the existing ‘Leopard’ group of services in this area. The impact of the Covid pandemic has been significant and had a potential impact on the longer-term feasibility of these services.

#### **BSIP Proposal (2) Simplify services, review frequency, consider bus priority measures and improve infrastructure**

The Council will review and simplify the ‘Leopard’ bus routes that serve the growing residential developments in Shinfield / Spencers Wood, in partnership with key stakeholders, including Reading University the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Reading Borough Council.

The Council will bid for funding to support the recovery and growth of these services to a sustainable level. Developer contributions will continue to be used to sustain and develop the service.

Future aspirations for the bus service from the new development area in Shinfield is for four buses an hour into Reading, which includes the express service, as noted in **Proposal (3)**. Along the Shinfield Road the longer-term ambition is to achieve a regular 10-minute frequency to Reading by combining with 4 buses per hour from Arborfield and the existing two buses per hour from Shinfield.

Between Arborfield and Wokingham developer funding will be used to increase the existing frequency from 1 bus per hour to 2 buses per hour.

Ticketing along the corridor, particularly at zone boundaries will be reviewed in line with **Proposal 9(b)**. Significant promotion and publicity will continue to be undertaken through the My Journey programme, including personalised travel planning.

Developer funding will be used to upgrade bus stops and shelters along the line of route to the appropriate standard. Where required the potential for appropriate bus priority measures will be considered in partnership with Reading Borough Council.

#### **4.1.3 THE CORRIDOR LINKING SPENCERS WOOD, THREE MILE CROSS AND READING VIA THE A33**

This corridor is currently served by two routes, each approximately hourly. One operates from Fullbrook Avenue to Reading via a slow route through Whitley Wood and Whitley, whilst the other operates directly via the B3031 to Reading.

##### **BSIP Proposal (3) Simplify services and reduce journey times**

The Council will work with local bus operators and key stakeholders including Reading Borough Council and Reading University, to simplify the existing services and reduce journey times. The corridor may benefit from two services which interwork on a half hourly basis operating either via the B3031 or via the A33 offering a faster service into Reading and potentially reducing journey time by around 10 minutes.

The Council will bid for funding to support the recovery and growth of these local bus services and the enhanced frequencies to ensure both residents in existing and new communities have a range of travel options.

#### **4.1.4 THE CORRIDOR FROM HENLEY OR WOKINGHAM TO READING VIA TWYFORD AND SONNING;**

This corridor is currently served by two routes. One is an hourly commercial service operated by Arriva from High Wycombe, Henley-on-Thames, Wargrave and Twyford to Reading, whilst the other is a subsidised service operating approximately hourly from Wokingham to Reading via Hurst, Twyford, Sonning and Woodley.

##### **BSIP Proposal (4) Improve service frequency, bus/rail interchange and ticket inter-availability**

The Council will work with local bus operators to increase the Henley to Reading service to half-hourly where funding permits and it is viable to do so. With the introduction of the Elizabeth Line rail service, the Council is keen to enhance bus connectivity and frequencies at Twyford.

Before retendering the contracted service in 2022, the Council will review the services, and consider how it interworks with other commercial services in the area. A series of options have already been assessed, and subject to funding, could be taken forward to enhance services between Wokingham and Twyford and between Twyford and Reading, as well as between Woodley and Twyford.

Interchangeable tickets will be discussed with operators for services on this corridor to improve accessibility to the number of buses and/ or reduce the cost of travel.

Whilst technically challenging, the Council will investigate the potential for bus priority measures at Twyford and where funding permits improve bus facilities at Twyford Station.

At the Wokingham / Reading boundary consideration will be given to appropriate bus priority to improve journey times.

#### 4.1.5 IMPROVING SERVICES IN THE EARLEY/LOWER EARLEY/MAIDEN EARLEIGH AREA

Bus services in Lower Earley are provided by the 'Claret' route 21 and by the 'Little Oranges' routes 19a/19b/19c, the latter being partially supported financially by the Council. Although overall services to both the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Reading Town Centre are provided, there are some gaps in frequency and requests have been made to reconsider the routeings taken, for the latter service. Requests have also been made by residents for better links to local stations without the need to travel into Reading.

##### **BSIP Proposal (5) Improve service quality and coverage, improve vehicles and infrastructure and flexible ticketing.**

The Council will work with Reading Buses to review the general service patterns and routeings with the intention of providing a more evenly spaced service pattern and improved access to facilities.

Subject to funding and longer-term viability, consideration will be given to providing better bus coverage of the area in early mornings and late evenings. Consideration will also be given to bus links with Winnersh Triangle business park and Twyford Station.

The Council will work with local bus operators to promote new and improved flexible ticketing options, as in **Proposal 9(b)**, which meets the needs of residents.

Where necessary and subject to funding, the Council will upgrade bus stops and shelters in the area to an appropriate standard.

The Council will support Reading Buses in any future bid for electric buses in the area as detailed in **Proposal (11)**.

#### 4.1.6 IMPROVING BUS SERVICE QUALITY AND COVERAGE IN WOODLEY AND NORTH EARLEY AREA

Woodley is reasonably well served by the 'Orange' routes 13 and 14 and the 'Little Oranges' routes 19a/19c, which provide services to Reading Town Centre and, in the northern part of Woodley, route 128 to Twyford and Wokingham, although the latter route is not a direct way of reaching Wokingham. Subject to funding the frequency of routes in Woodley could be improved.

##### **BSIP Proposal (6) Improve service quality and coverage**

As in **Proposal (4)** above, the Council aspires to improve the level of service between Woodley and Twyford to provide improved connectivity with the rail service should funding permit.

The Council will work with local bus operators to consider the cost of travel and integrated ticketing, as detailed in **Proposals 9(a) and 9(b)**.

Subject to funding and longer-term viability, consideration will be given to providing an enhanced peak-time service and better bus coverage of the area in early mornings and late evenings.

Where appropriate and subject to funding the Council will upgrade information on local bus services in the area.

#### 4.1.7 IMPROVING BUS SERVICE QUALITY AND COVERAGE IN THE WOKINGHAM TOWN AREA

The current service pattern in the Wokingham Town area, apart from the main corridor covered by the 4/X4 'Lion' service, relies on contracted socially necessary services. These are not always regular or very frequent.

##### **BSIP Proposal (7) Improve service quality and coverage, integrated ticketing, integrated services, low emission vehicles**

Proposals to enhance local bus services in the Wokingham Town area subject to available revenue funding and have already been assessed and could be implemented subject to the retendering of the services in 2022. The advantages the improvements could provide include:

- Improving the level of service for North Wokingham, Woosehill and Emmbrook;
- Improving the reliability of route 121 and the Woosehill service;
- Improve the level of service between Finchampstead and Wokingham;
- Simplifying services in across the Wokingham network area;
- Creating more regular gaps, and allowing buses to be more reliable;
- Improving consistency between Weekdays and Saturday services,

It is forecast the revised service pattern may have the potential to improve demand by up to 21% in this area.

The Council will work with local bus operators to consider the cost of travel and integrated ticketing, as detailed in **Proposals 9(a) and 9(b)**.

Given that Wokingham Town and the surrounding areas are in an air quality management area and an urban air quality agglomeration zone, **Proposal 11** will be considered in relation to commercial operators. For vehicles which are provided under contract, the Council will require greener vehicles as part of any future tenders.

Future aspirations for enhancing services when demand for travel is lower, for example during early mornings and later evenings, include the provision of demand responsive services and their ability to connect with corridor services. Subject to funding the Council will undertake a feasibility study to determine if there is a role for demand responsive transport.

#### 4.1.8 RURAL AND LOW-DENSITY AREAS

Bus services in rural areas are generally infrequent and lack accessibility for many residents. In the north and the east of the borough this is a particular problem. There are similar rural and low-density areas in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and Bracknell Forest Borough Council. The Council has discussed with neighbouring authorities the potential for a joint Demand Responsive

Transport (DRT) operation, subject to suitable funding being made available. By sharing resources such as control centre, software and reservations process it may be more cost-effective.

**BSIP Proposal (8) Improve service quality and accessibility in rural areas**

Provide an innovative demand responsive transport service for the rural areas in north and south Wokingham in conjunction with neighbouring authorities. This would be intended to provide an on-demand service for those areas which have no public transport service and would be operated in co-ordination with the voluntary sector to ensure an optimum demand responsive transport service, integrated ticketing, potentially with daily capping, will be considered to allow better travel across Wokingham Borough.

## 4.2 THEME BASED POLICIES

### 4.2.1 IMPROVED FARES

**BSIP Proposal (9a) Improved Fares:**

The Council will work with local bus operators to ensure the right fares are set for the right groups of people and that when setting these fares, they are attractive and sustainable for encouraging bus travel.

Where appropriate, the Council will work with local operators to consider more equitable fares, enabled using daily fare capping and tap-on/tap-off ticketing.

For all urban areas and across all corridors the Council will work with operators to consider standardising fares for common sections of local bus routes.

To improve our young peoples' satisfaction with bus services and the affordability of buses, the Council will work with local bus operators to consider and promote attractive fare offers. The Council would like to see low fares extended to all under 18, not just those under 16.

For commuters the Council will work with local bus operators to consider and promote attractive fare offers to meet changing travel patterns.

The Council will review concessionary passengers' entitlements across all transport provisions, including the community and voluntary sectors

### 4.2.2 IMPROVED TICKETING

**BSIP Proposal (9b) Improved ticketing:**

The Council will work with local bus operators to support bids for accessible and seamless ticketing.

The Council will support local bus operators with bid for contactless payment systems to make boarding the bus simpler and easier.

Integrated ticketing in across the borough is highly desirable and as such the Council will work with local bus operators to try and achieve this. The aim is to make journeys effectively less expensive, improve accessibility and improve the frequency of bus services available to fare paying passengers.

In rural areas integrated ticketing will focus on the ability for passenger to connect to urban services and corridor services. Where integrated ticketing is achieved, the Council will commit to promoting the offers through the My Journey brand.

For young people and commuters who travel at peak times and want to use smart products or debit cards. Tap-on/ Tap-off technology will be investigated and provided subject to funding to reduced boarding times, making paying for bus travel easier and enabling daily capping for more equitable fares.

### 4.2.3 INTEGRATION WITH WALKING AND CYCLING NETWORKS

#### **BSIP Proposal (10a) Walking and Cycling:**

The Council will consider the connectivity of local bus stops to key walking and cycling corridors.

Access to bus stops for those who walk, and cycle will form part of the assessment undertaken for the Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan. Measures which will be considered are:

- Improved wayfinding
- Improved connectivity and permeability between residential areas and desirable destinations.
- Safe and secure pedestrian and cycle routes
- New and improved cycle parking at transport hubs and key bus stops

For area of new development, safe, secure, and direct access to local bus stops will be secured as part of the planning process. Routes which this proposal aims to support are those promoted in the Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan

### 4.2.4 INTEGRATION WITH RAIL NETWORKS

**BSIP Proposal 10 (b) Bus/ Rail Integration:** The Council will work with both bus and rail operators to make interchanging between bus and rail services more attractive at local rail stations.

Where feasible and subject to funding, the Council will work with stakeholders to consider the following measures to improve bus/rail integration:

- Expanding PlusBus ticketing arrangements for areas outside of existing zones
- Increasing early morning and late evening bus services to connect with rail services
- Increasing bus service provisions to stations where there is clear demand for their need.
- The feasibility of providing demand responsive services where there is insufficient demand for fixed line services.
- Improved bus stop infrastructure
- Improved wayfinding signage
- Installing live information screens within stations which details next bus departures
- Providing on bus information for next rail departures at approaching stops

- Greater promotion and publicity of bus / rail services through our My Journey behaviour change programme.

Target stations and communities which this proposal aims to support are:

- Twyford Station to improve seamless travel between bus and rail, the council will bid for any suitable funding to improve bus stop infrastructure on the southern side of the station, including the passenger waiting area and the provision of live passenger information.
- Communities surrounding Crowthorne Station, Wokingham Borough Council will work with Bracknell Forest Borough Council and Great Western Railways to improve connectivity for residents where feasible.
- Residents in urban and rural areas where fixed route buses services do not provide early morning or late evening services, the feasibility of demand responsive services will be investigated, and funding opportunities will be sort, to support its implementation.
- The Woodley area where funding will be bid for to improve the frequency of services to Twyford Station which allows faster bus journey times and cheaper rail fares to destinations such as London, when compared Reading station.
- The Earley area where funding will be bid for to improve the connectivity to Twyford Station and Winnersh Triangle business park.
- All stations which do not have live bus information screens and where it would be considered appropriate to install them, will be considered for any suitable funding bids to support their installation and on-going provision.

#### 4.2.5 PARK AND RIDE

**BSIP Proposal 10(c) Park and Ride Services:** The Council will continue to improve park and ride sites across the borough to help them to recover from the effects of the pandemic and become strategic transport interchanges.

To aid the recovery of existing Park and Ride sites, the Council will:

- Reconsider the fares and parking charges for each of the sites with a view to making them simpler and easier to understand.
- Improve signage from the highway network to existing and future park and ride sites
- Bid for appropriate funding to support the financial recovery the park and ride services within the borough.

To promote Park and Ride sites as strategic transport hubs for the future, the Council will:

- Work with local bus operators, neighbouring authorities, and other key stakeholders to bring into operation the Thames Valley Park and Coppid Beech, Park and Ride Site at an appropriate time.
- Complete the expansion and improvement works at Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride site.



- Subject to funding provide express park and ride services on the A329/A4 corridors which link with Reading Town Centre and other key destinations.
- Consider the feasibility of further bus priority which links the existing bus priority on the A329 and A4 corridors with Reading Borough Council's proposed bus priority scheme on the A4 London Road.
- Subject to funding we will work with neighbouring local authorities and local stakeholder to undertake a strategic need assessment for further Park and Ride provision within the Borough.

#### 4.2.6 DECARBONISATION

**BSIP Proposal 11: Greener Fleets and Reduced Emissions:** The Council will support transport operators to green their fleets and achieve zero emissions.

To achieve greener fleets and reduced carbon emissions the Council will

Work with local bus operators and energy providers to support bids for zero emission bus fleets and appropriate infrastructure.

Encourage and support new technologies which allow the bus operators to reduce their carbon emissions

Consider new ways of operating rural and low-density networks which aims to reduce any unnecessary mileage and reduce carbon emissions.

When installing new bus shelters, the Council will consider the feasibility of installing greener shelters, such as those with green roofs or solar panels.

Currently battery technology allows for 150-mile range for new electric buses. Given the operational mileages required for vehicles on key corridor routes, the increased numbers of electric vehicles required to operate these routes makes the use of electric vehicles economically unsustainable. Furthermore, the weight and space the batteries take up reduces the on-board seating capacity from around 80 seats to 68 seats, which could leave in-sufficient vehicle capacity for peak time flows. For this reason, the ambition for electric vehicles will be prioritised for shorter, urban area routes, where operational miles are lower and total on-board passengers are less until technology develops.

For corridor routes we will work with operators to seek new vehicles which make use of new technologies to reduce emissions but continue to allow for the daily mileages which these routes demand. Cleaner, newer vehicles on our corridor routes will benefit passengers on longer journeys with more comfortable vehicles, reduced noise, and reduced vibrations.

#### 4.2.7 NETWORK IDENTITY, PASSENGER INFORMATION, PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY

Wokingham Borough Council already presents all public transport services in the area in a comprehensive way through the 'my journey' branding. In addition, a Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system is shared with Reading Borough Council. Reading Buses are one of the most advanced bus operators in applying an extensive route branding to their services (the 'Lion', the 'Leopard', the 'Tiger', 'Little Oranges' etc).

#### **BSIP Proposal (12a) Strengthen network identity**

The Council will consider the branding of at stop infrastructure and the information provided at stop with the aim of strengthening brand identity, make information more useful and making the bus more attractive to passengers.

The Council will consider how the My Journey brand is perceived by bus travellers and if brand development is required to better tie-in local bus branding and the behaviour change branding so that it is engaging to all.

The Council will consider how the My Journey website can be further developed to make it as attractive and useful as possible for existing and further bus passengers.

#### **BSIP Proposal (12b) Improve bus information**

The Council will continue to work in co-operation with local bus operators to provide relevant bus information to existing bus passengers and residents who do not currently use the bus. The Council's ambition is to expand the My Journey programme, particularly the personalised travel planning element and the work with rail stations to promote bus travel to non-bus users.

The Council will discuss with Reading Transport the feasibility of providing a single application to cover all buses in areas jointly served by Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses.

### **4.2.8 MODERN BUSES AND INNOVATION**

#### **BSIP Proposal (13a) Invest in improved bus specifications**

Reading Buses commercial services are already equipped with Wi-Fi and USB charging points, and the Council would like to see these features as standard on all new buses in the area, together with visual and audible destination announcements.

#### **BSIP Proposal (13b) Supporting Innovation**

Wokingham Borough Council is very enthusiastic to support innovative ways to develop public transport services, such as automation and dynamic demand responsive transport. The Council will be pleased to co-operate with academic and research organisations on future developments with a view to their being tested and introduced in the Borough.

### **4.2.9 GIVING BUS PASSENGERS MORE OF A VOICE**

There are several groups and organisation in Wokingham which are consulted regarding proposed changes to bus services. These include community groups in Earley and Woodley and a number of parish councils, but there is no overarching representation of bus users. Wokingham's bus network has low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, but perception is important, and the Council wants the bus network to feel welcoming and safe.

### **BSIP Proposal (14a) Passenger Charter**

The Council will:

- Introduce a bus passenger charter (see Chapter 5)
- Introduce targets
- Establish a bus user group
- Establish a bus operator forum and Enhanced Partnerships between the Council and bus operators

### **BSIP Proposal (14b) Protect personal safety of bus passengers**

The Council will:

- Audit bus stops to ensure that they provide an environment that feels welcoming, accessible, clean and secure for waiting passengers and classify them according to the features required ensuring that those located in urban areas are well lit to enhance safety.
- Make it easier for passengers to report issues that make bus stops feel less safe, such as faulty lighting, vandalism and littering

## 5 PASSENGER CHARTER

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Wokingham Borough Council will commit to publishing a full Passenger Charter by April 2022. The charter will cover all local bus services in Wokingham Borough. Given the high proportion of local bus services which are cross-boundary, Wokingham Borough Council will work with neighbouring local authorities and all local bus operators to provide a clear and consistent approach to the passenger charter.

The purpose of the passenger charter will be to set out a clear and consistent set of standards which all bus services operating within Wokingham Borough should meet. Where local bus services do not meet these standards, the Council will promote accountability by providing information about how to complain. Where complaints are made, expected timeframes will be set in which passengers can expect a response.

The key areas covered in the Passenger Charter will include but not be limited to:

- The Council's commitment to passengers.
- Performance targets and where to find information on performance.
- How to plan journeys
- The standards passengers can expect
- How to complain when things go wrong
- How passengers can expect complaints to be dealt with
- Contact details for the Council and Local Transport Operators

BSIP targets, particularly on bus reliability and passenger satisfaction, will be cascaded down into the passenger charter along with information on where to find information on performance. Careful consideration will be given to setting a passenger charter which is both inclusive and accessible. The Passenger Charter will also be accompanied by an equalities impact assessment.

The Passenger Charter will be promoted on the Council's My Journey website as well as in the Council's printed publicity booklets. The Council will work with local bus operators to ensure the Passenger Charter is extended to their websites and potentially bus operators' publicity, including at stop publicity where appropriate.

Wokingham Borough Council will work with neighbouring authorities and local bus operators to establish a bus operator forum to ensure the delivery and monitoring of the Passenger Charter.

The passenger Charter will be reviewed every 12 months in consultation with local bus operators and local stakeholders. Revised versions of the Passenger Charter will be available to view on the My Journey website and sent to the Department for Transport if required.

## 6 REPORTING

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The Council will publish performance reporting in a clear, accurate and transparent way to demonstrate how well a future Enhanced Partnership is delivering against the proposals and targets set out in this BSIP. The Council will provide six monthly update reports which will be published on My Journey Wokingham <https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/bus-travel/enhanced-partnership/>

The BSIP will be a dynamic document throughout its life and the Council will review the BSIP annually to ensure that it continues to meet local needs and remains as ambitious as possible given any local constraints. Should the Council or a local bus operator determine that a review is needed outside of the annual review process then a further review and subsequent revisions may take place. When the BSIP is reviewed and revised the resulting document will be submitted to the Department for Transport and published on the Council's My Journey website at the above address.

In reviewing the document performance reporting will be used. Performance reporting will inform any modifications and refinements to the ambitions, targets, and policies, thus ensuring that they are working as intended or amended to achieve greater success in the future. Local bus operators have already indicated that they will support the review process through the sharing of data. The Council will work together with local transport operators to ensure feedback from the BSIP reviews is provided to operators to help inform local bus operators network reviews. The Council will also seek feedback from operators to help inform the Council's future programme of works.

## 7 OVERVIEW TABLE

This section summarises the key outputs of the BSIP and how it meets requirements set out in the National Bus Strategy based on the template table provided by the Department for Transport.

<b>Name of Authority or Authorities:</b>	<b>Wokingham Borough Council</b>
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both):	Enhanced Partnership
Date of Publication:	October 2021
Date of next annual update:	October 2022
URL of published report:	<a href="https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/bus-travel/enhanced-partnership/">https://www.myjourneywokingham.com/bus-travel/enhanced-partnership/</a>

<b>Targets</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Target for 2024/25</b>	<b>Description of how each will be measured (max 50 words)</b>
Journey time	256 minutes	256 minutes	236 minutes	As per Table 3.1, average journey times for morning and pm peak periods have been calculated for key corridors and urban services to set appropriate target reductions for 2024/25. This target represents the combined reduction across all services shown in Table 3.1.
Reliability	99.53%	99.45%	99.65%	Operator data for six monthly and annual reports.
Passenger numbers	2.8 million	2.8 million	3.0 million	Interim data from operators for six monthly reports and national data sets for annual monitoring.
Average passenger satisfaction	64%	67%	70%	Using Transport Focus surveys and

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				the National Highways and Transport survey.
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Delivery – Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/No	Explanation (max 50 words)
<b>Make improvements to bus services and planning</b>		
More frequent and reliable services		
Review service frequency	Yes	Section 2.2 reviews the frequency of existing services. BSIP Proposals (1), (2), (3), (4) and (7) address frequency. It is the Council's aspiration to enhance frequency, and this can be achieved through a combination of investment in services, bus priority measures and the reshaping of the network.
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	Section 2.1.3 sets out current bus priority measures in the borough. BSIP Proposals (1), (4) and (10c) identify where bus priority maybe necessary. The Council will further investigate the need for and type of bus priority where necessary, and then seek funding to provide it.
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	Sections 2.2 and 2.5 identify coverage of the existing network, with gaps identified in early mornings and late evenings in urban areas and poor coverage in rural / low density areas. Demand Responsive Transport could be used to fulfil BSIP Proposals (5), (6), (7) and (8). A feasibility study and funding would be required.
Consideration of bus rapid transport networks	Yes	Wokingham Borough Council does not propose to build any bus rapid transit networks, instead with over 50% of services travelling into Reading, services will make use of the existing and emerging bus rapid transit network in Reading Borough.
Improvements to planning / integration with other modes		
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	Section 2.7 considers integration with other modes. BSIP Proposals (4), (10a), (10b) and (10c) identify how bus integration with other modes will be improved. Integration will be through the LCWIP process, ticketing, connecting services, wayfinding and infrastructure provision.
Simplify services	Yes	Journey times from Shinfield and Spencers Wood into Reading are longer desired. Bus services in Wokingham Town and the surrounding area have a complex operating pattern resulting in uneven frequencies. In both cases the Council will work with operators to simplify services as detailed in BSIP Proposals (2) and (3).
Review socially necessary services	Yes	Social necessarily services are services which are tendered by the Council. These services are currently

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		provided in urban area and in the more rural and low-density areas of the Borough. BSIP Proposals (5), (6), (7), (7), (8) and (9a) have implications for socially necessary services.
Invest in Superbus networks	Yes	Higher frequencies and measures to address fares for targeted groups of passengers are desirable subject to funding for the A329 corridor and the A327 corridor. BSIP Proposals (1), (2) and (8) support development of a superbuss network.
<b>Improvements to fares and ticketing</b>		
Lower fares	Yes	Section 2.4 considers current local bus fares. Fares in the Borough are already lower than the national average (Table 2.6) and therefore a reduction to all fares is not proposed, instead targeted fares reductions for specific groups such as 18s and under is supported by BSIP Proposals (7), (9a) and (9b).
Simplify fares	Yes	Fares in Wokingham Borough are zonal or point-to-point. Further simplification of fares is desirable through daily capping and tap-on/tap-off technology. Better marketing and publicity of fares is proposed. BSIP Proposals (9a) and (9b) support simplified fares.
Integrate ticketing between operators and transport	Yes	Better integration of ticketing between bus and rail travel is desirable, particular at Twyford Station with the establishment or extension of a PlusBus zone. Integrated ticketing between fix line services and DRT services is desirable. BSIP Proposals (4), (9a) and (10b) support integrated ticketing.
<b>Make improvements to bus passenger experience</b>		
<b>Higher spec buses</b>		
Invest in improved bus specifications	Yes	Local bus operators already have very modern fleets with commercial services very well equipped with Wi-Fi, USB charging, on-board rail information, and audio and visual screens. BSIP Proposal (13b) supports bringing any buses all buses in the borough up to the same standards.
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	Yes	Accessible and inclusive buses are one of the highest scoring categories on the customer satisfaction surveys for local bus operators and the Council. BSIP Proposals (1), (2), (5), (6), (10b), (12b), (13a) will support further enhancements to vehicles and at stop infrastructure, with audio and visual information and accessible kerbs.
Protect personal safety of bus passengers	Yes	Personal safety on the bus and at bus stops scores very well on customer satisfaction surveys. BSIP Proposal (14b) supports further enhancements to personal safety, as does BSIP Proposal (10a) for journeys to and from bus stops.

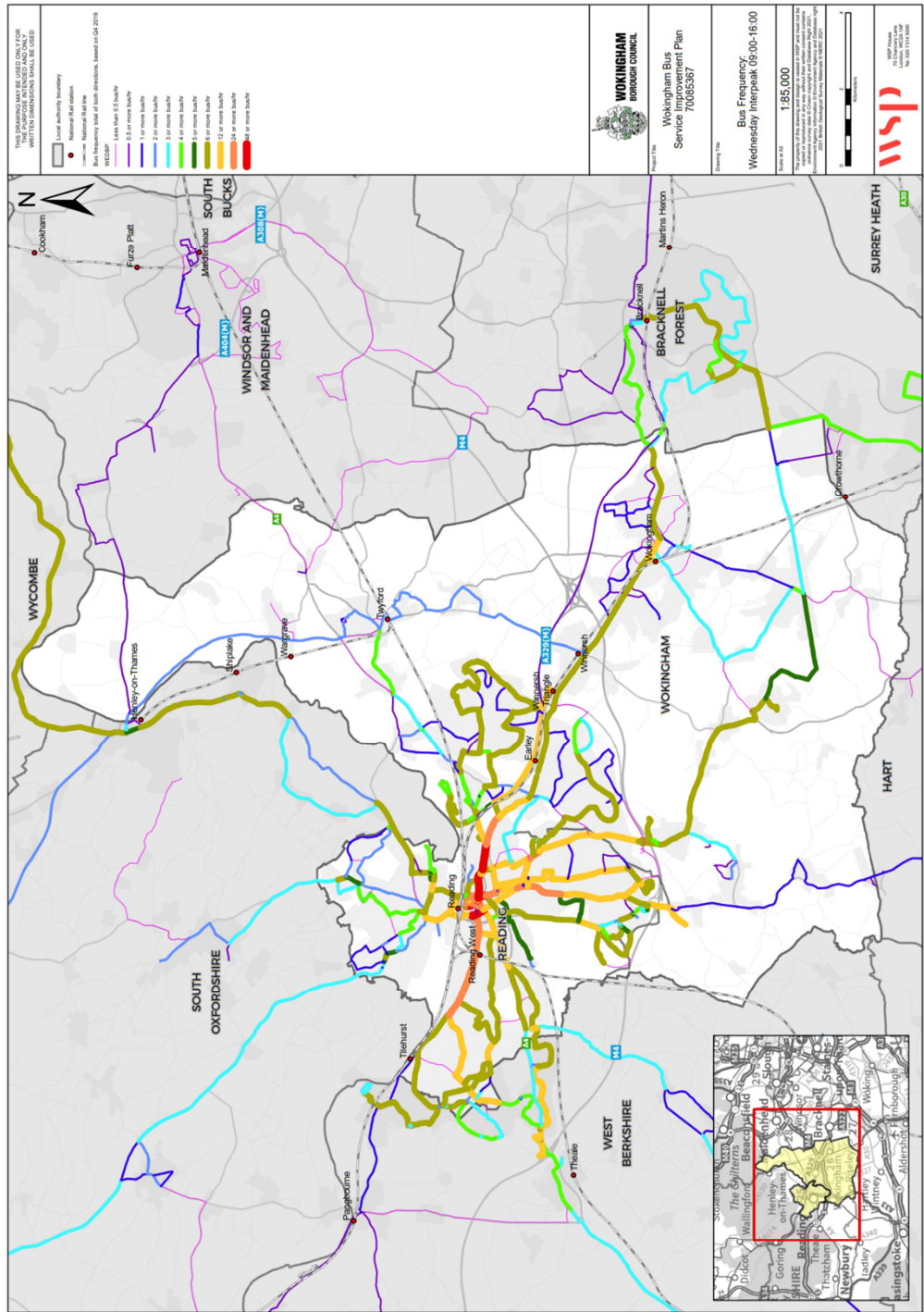


Improve buses for tourists	Yes	Wokingham Borough does not have many tourists. Hotels in the Borough are mainly in business parks and for business purposes. Enhanced accessibility to and from rail stations will support access to hotels and for visiting London and other destinations at the weekend, as will enhanced bus services to Henley-on-Thames.
Invest in decarbonisation	Yes	A large proportion of the local bus network is already Euro VI (Table 2.11). BSIP Proposal (5), (7), (11) and (13b) support zero emission vehicles and decarbonisation of bus fleets.
<b>Improvements to passenger engagement</b>		
Passenger charter	Yes	The Council is committed to creating a passenger charter. BSIP Proposal (14a) and Chapter 5 support the creation of a passenger charter.
Strengthen network identity	Yes	Section 2.6 provides information on current brands and how the network brands are reflected in infrastructure and marketing and publicity. BSIP Proposal (12a) looks to strengthen network identity further and consider a better way to tie local bus branding to the My Journey branding.
Improve bus information	Yes	BSIP Proposal (12b) supports improved bus information. Information will be improved by working with local stakeholders, providing targeted information, and using the My Journey behaviour change programme to disseminate information to residents, employees, and students.
<b>Other</b>		
Other (Innovation)	Yes	The Council is keen to trial new technology and work with partners to identify innovations which will improve the passenger experience and the efficiency of local bus services and as well as provide wider benefits in terms of congestion, air quality and decarbonisation. BSIP Proposal 13(b) supports innovation.
Other (Park & Ride)	Yes	Park & Ride provision and the development of these sites as transport hubs for interchanging between transport is an important element of the BSIP. BSIP Proposals (1) and 10(c) support the development of Park and Ride.



# APPENDIX A: BUS FREQUENCY MAPS

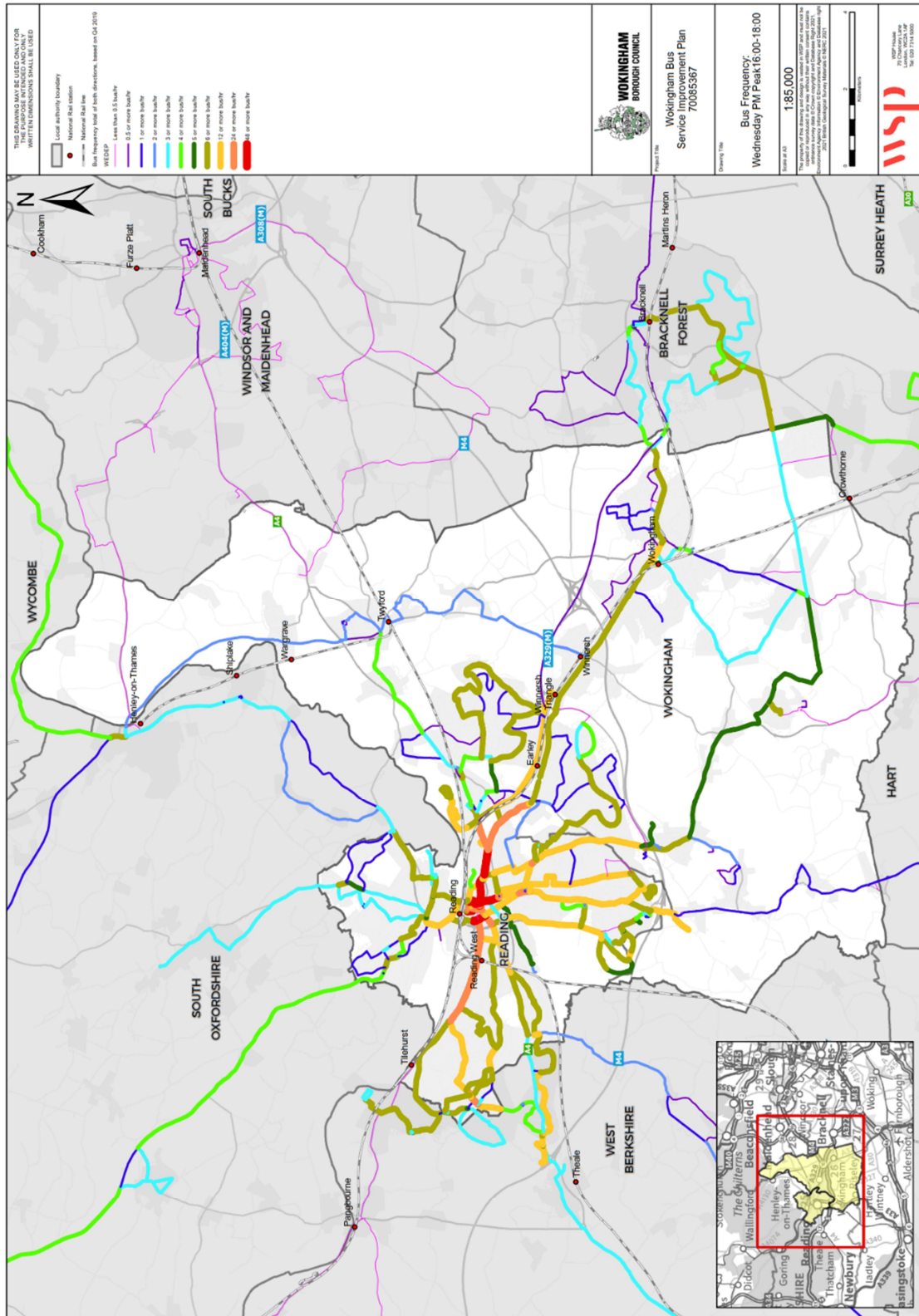
## Bus frequency map: Wednesday Inter Peak 09:00-16:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

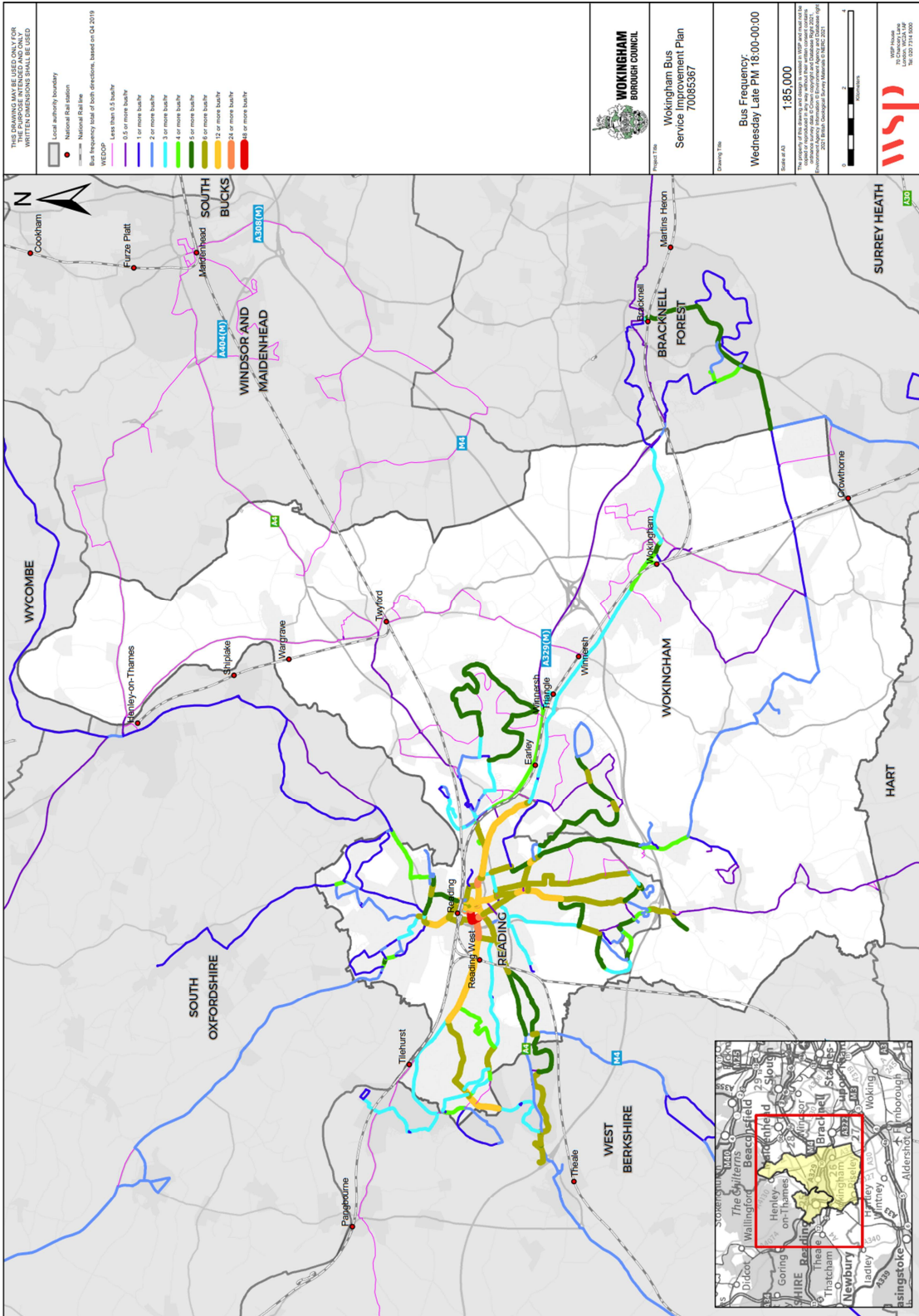


# Bus frequency map: Wednesday PM Peak 16:00-18:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

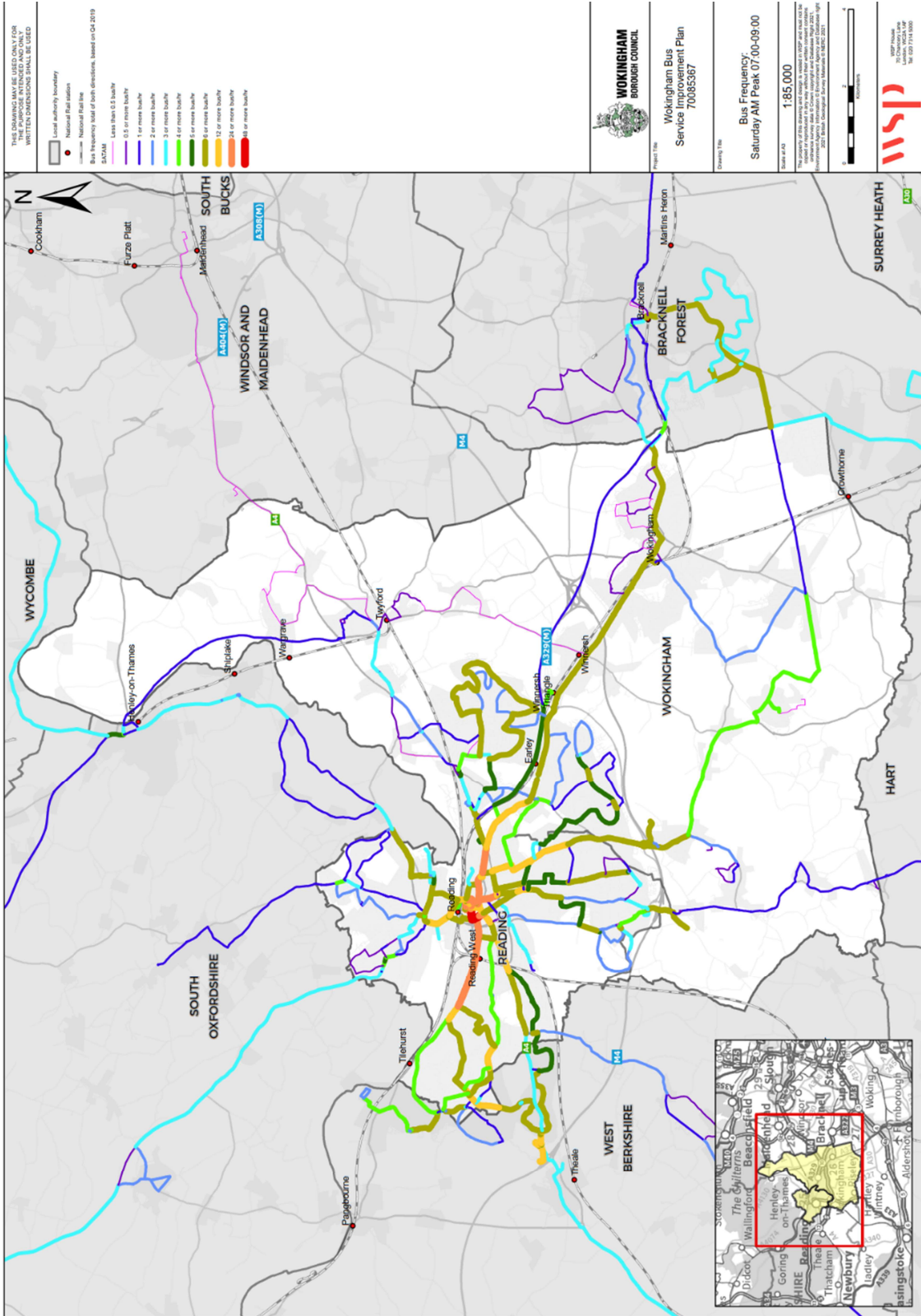
# Bus frequency map: Wednesday Late PM 18:00-00:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

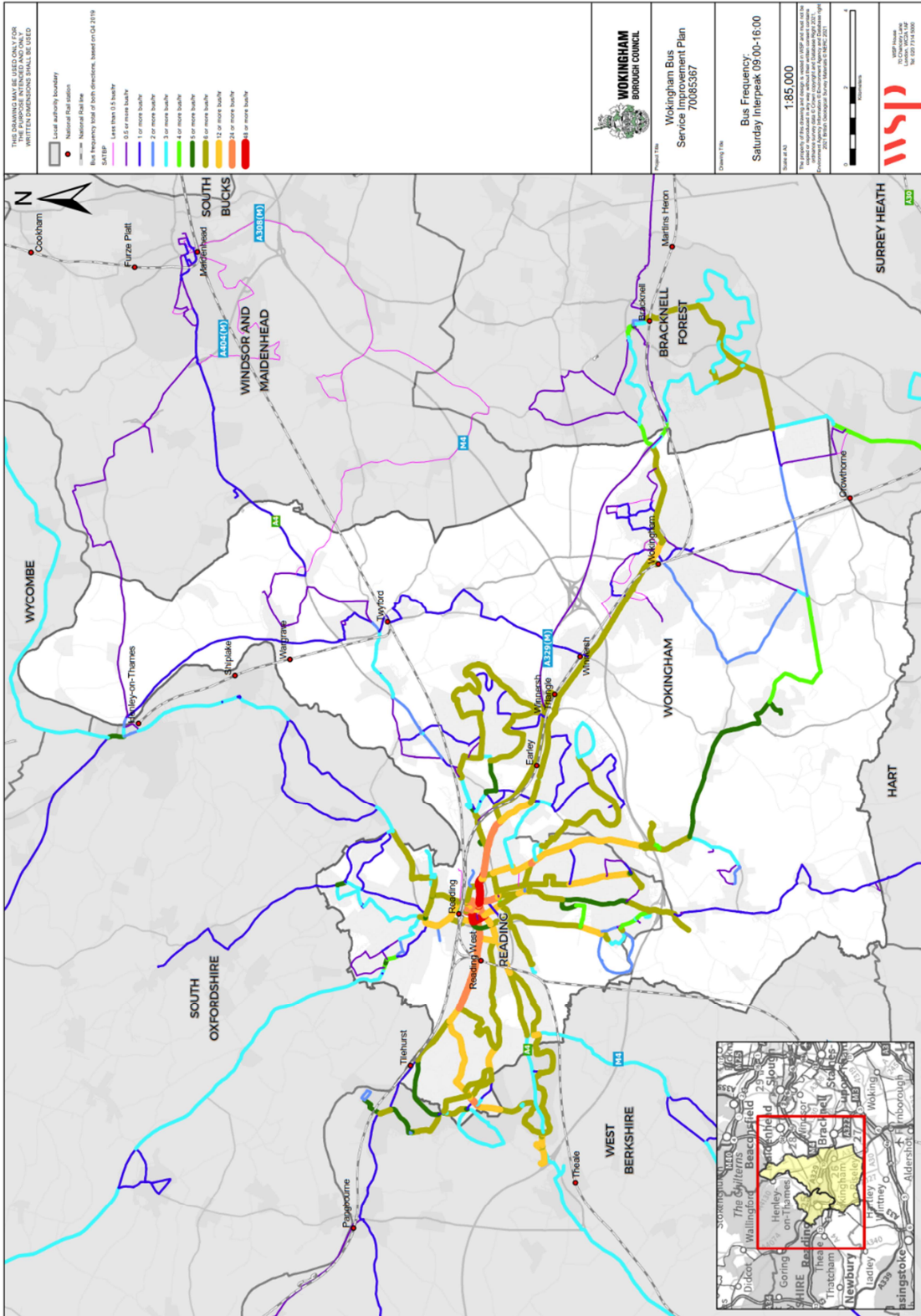


# Bus frequency map: Saturday AM Peak 07:00-09:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

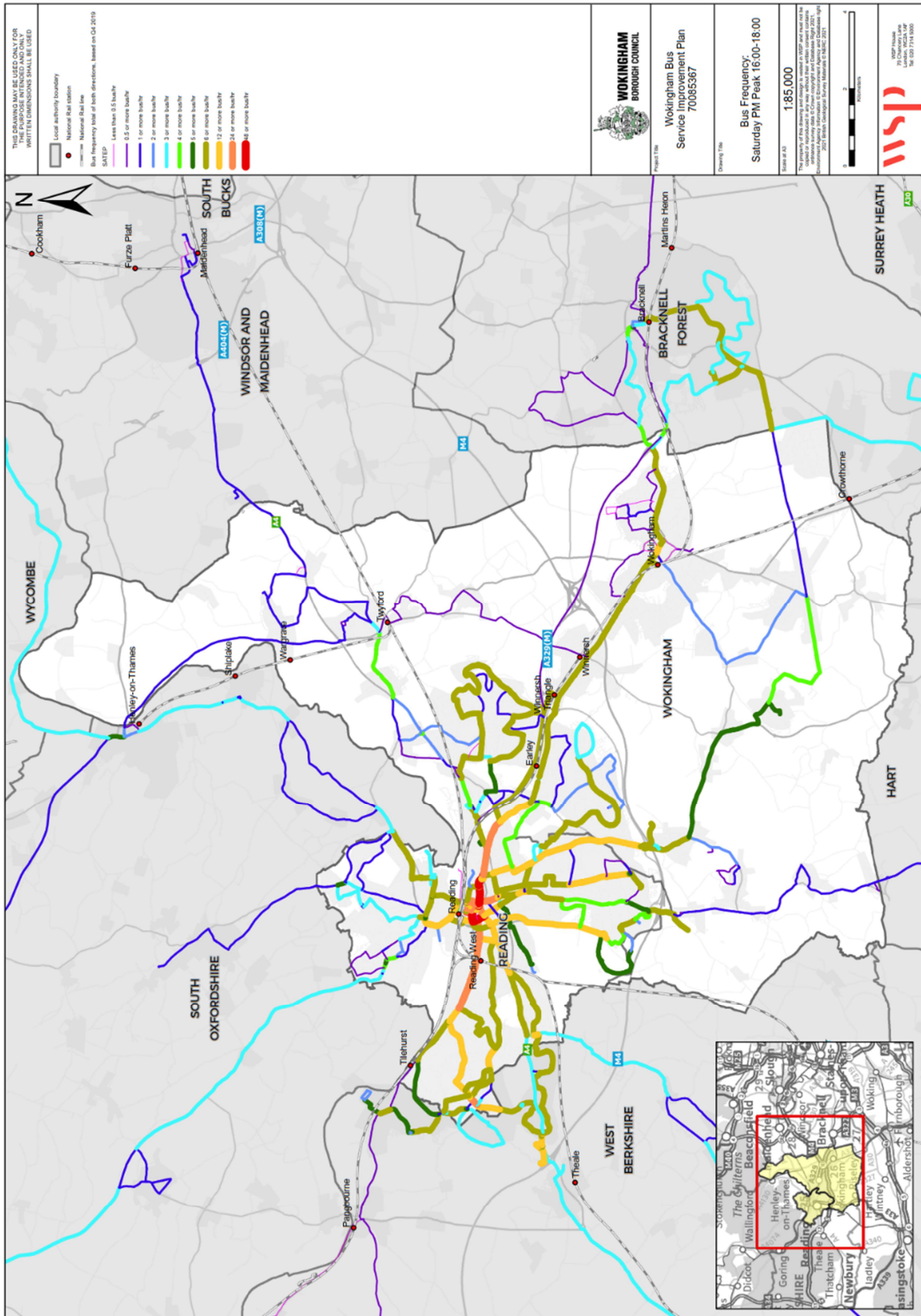
# Bus frequency map: Saturday Inter Peak 09:00-16:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.



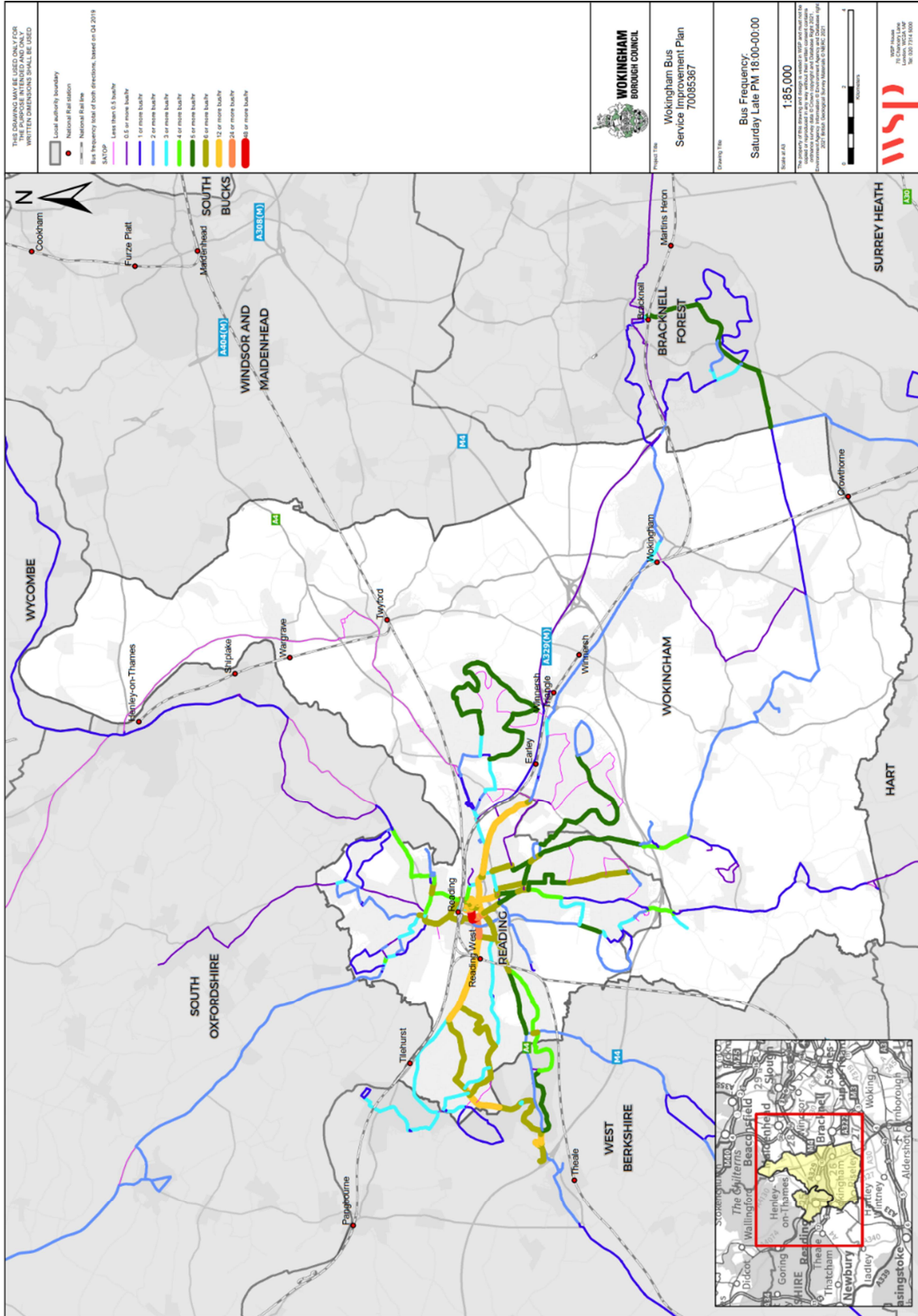
# Bus frequency map: Saturday PM Peak 16:00-18:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.



# Bus frequency map: Saturday Late PM 18:00-00:00

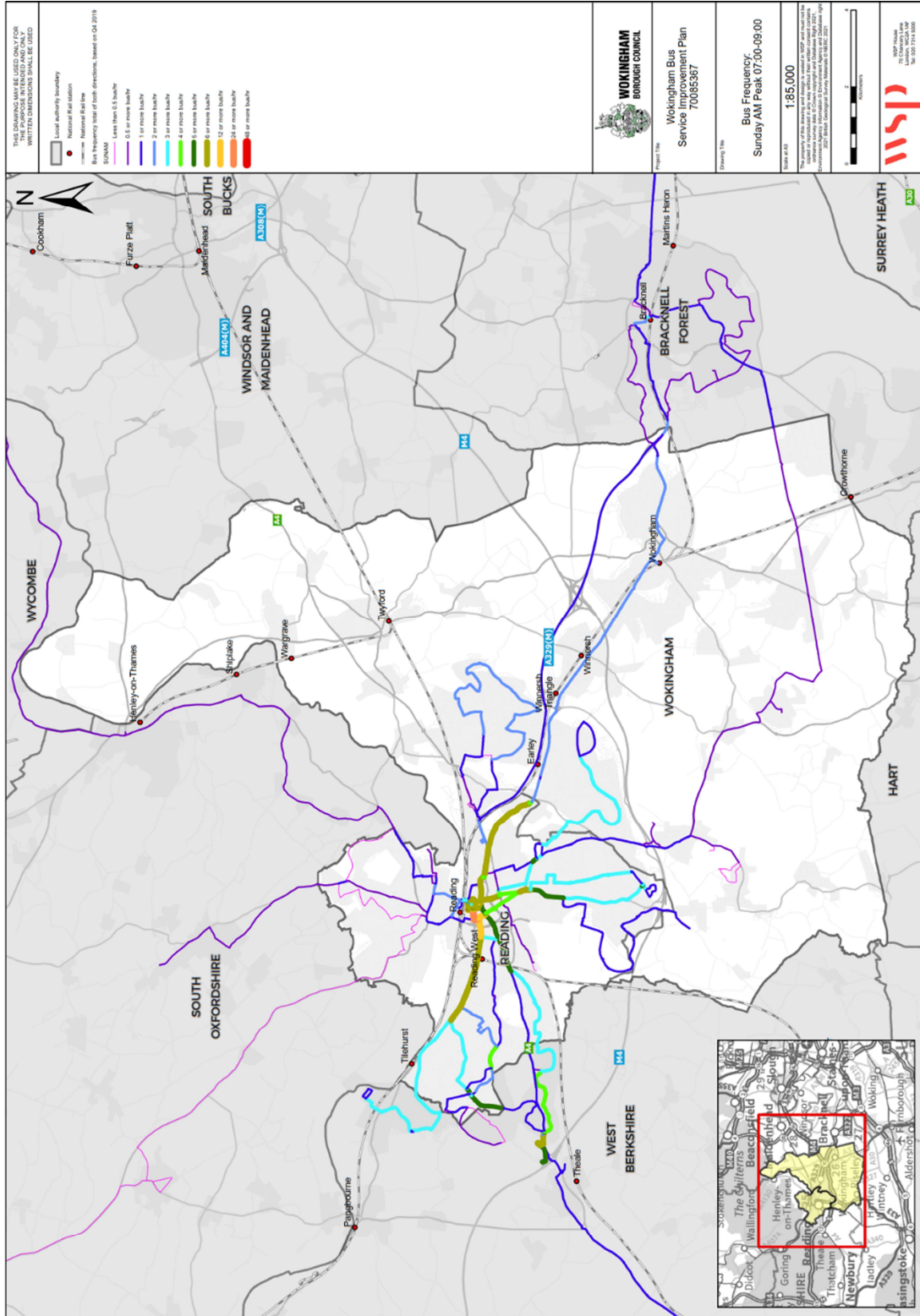


Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.





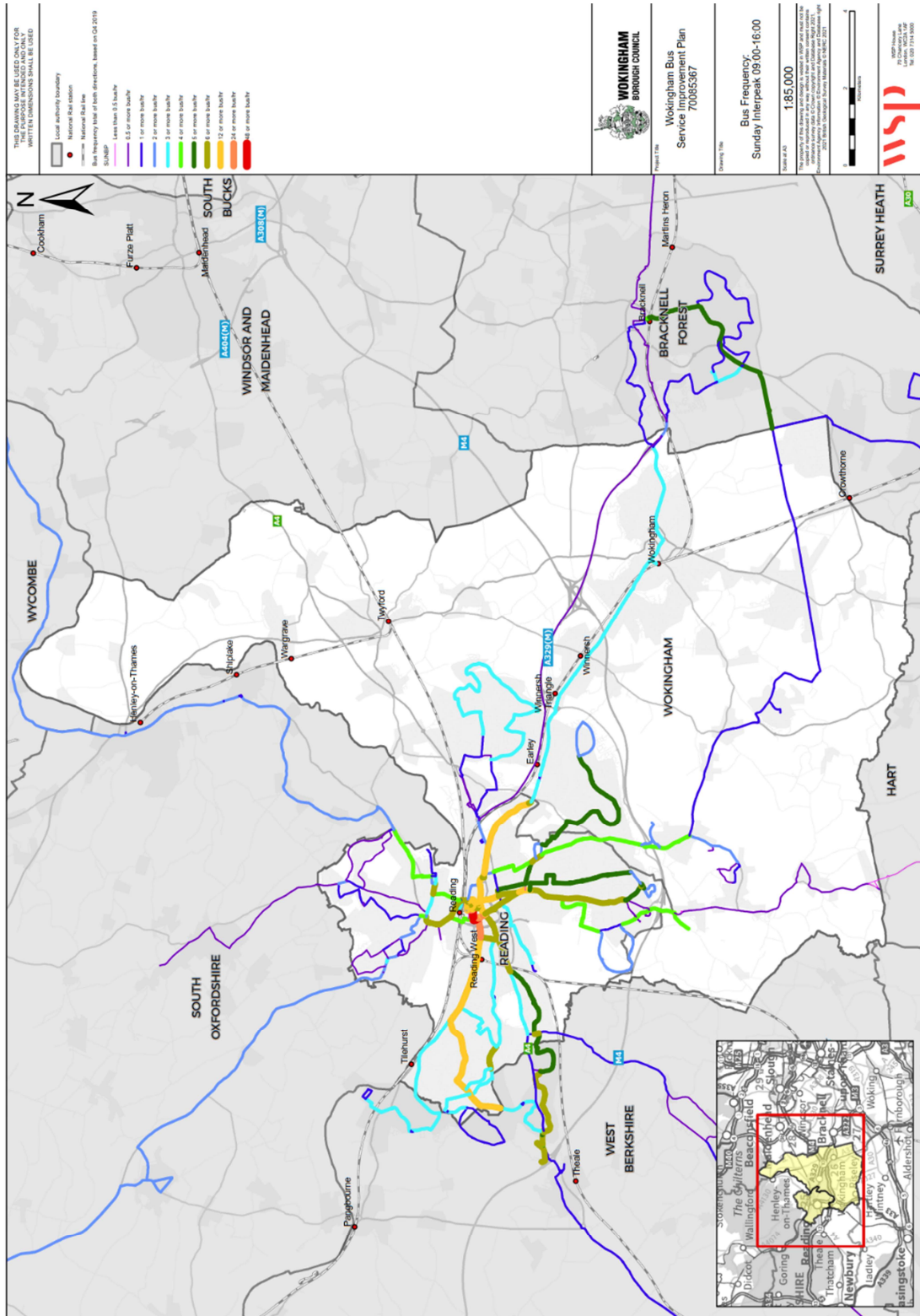
# Bus frequency map: Sunday AM Peak 07:00-09:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

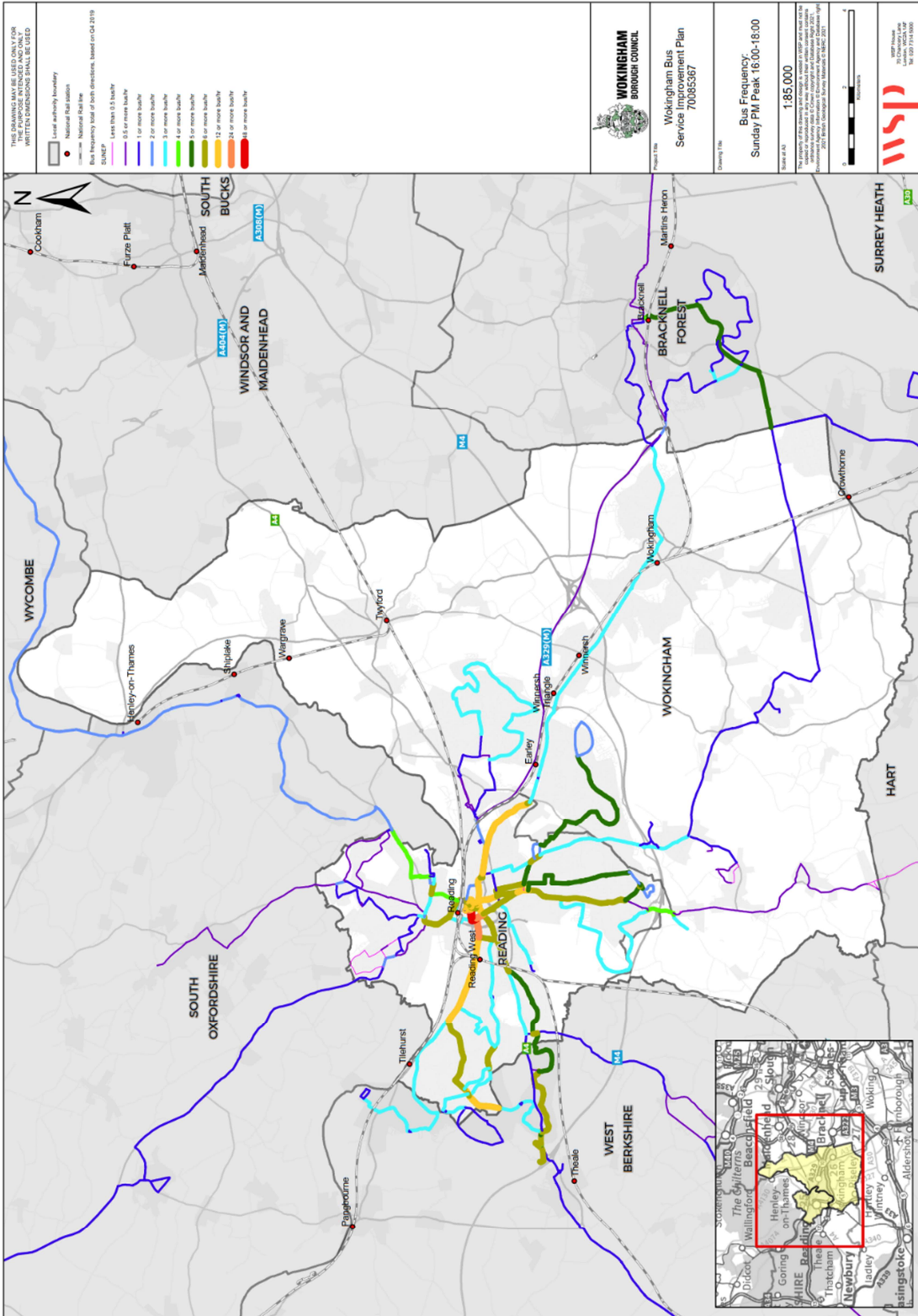


# Bus frequency map: Sunday AM Inter Peak 09:00-16:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

# Bus frequency map: Sunday PM Peak 16:00-18:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.



## APPENDIX B: ACCESSIBILITY MAPS

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### BSIP Podaris accessibility mapping software settings:

Public transport network source, age, area: Basemap DataCutter, Q4 2019, Wokingham & Reading

Wait times: Timetable

Road network: Streets

Max access distance: 400m

Royal Berkshire Hospital: arrive by 9 – for point use the centre of this block from Wikipedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Berkshire\\_Hospital#/map/0](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Berkshire_Hospital#/map/0)

Twyford Station: **arrive by 8** – for point, use the red logo of the National Rail station

University of Reading: arrive by 9 – for point use this from Wikipedia

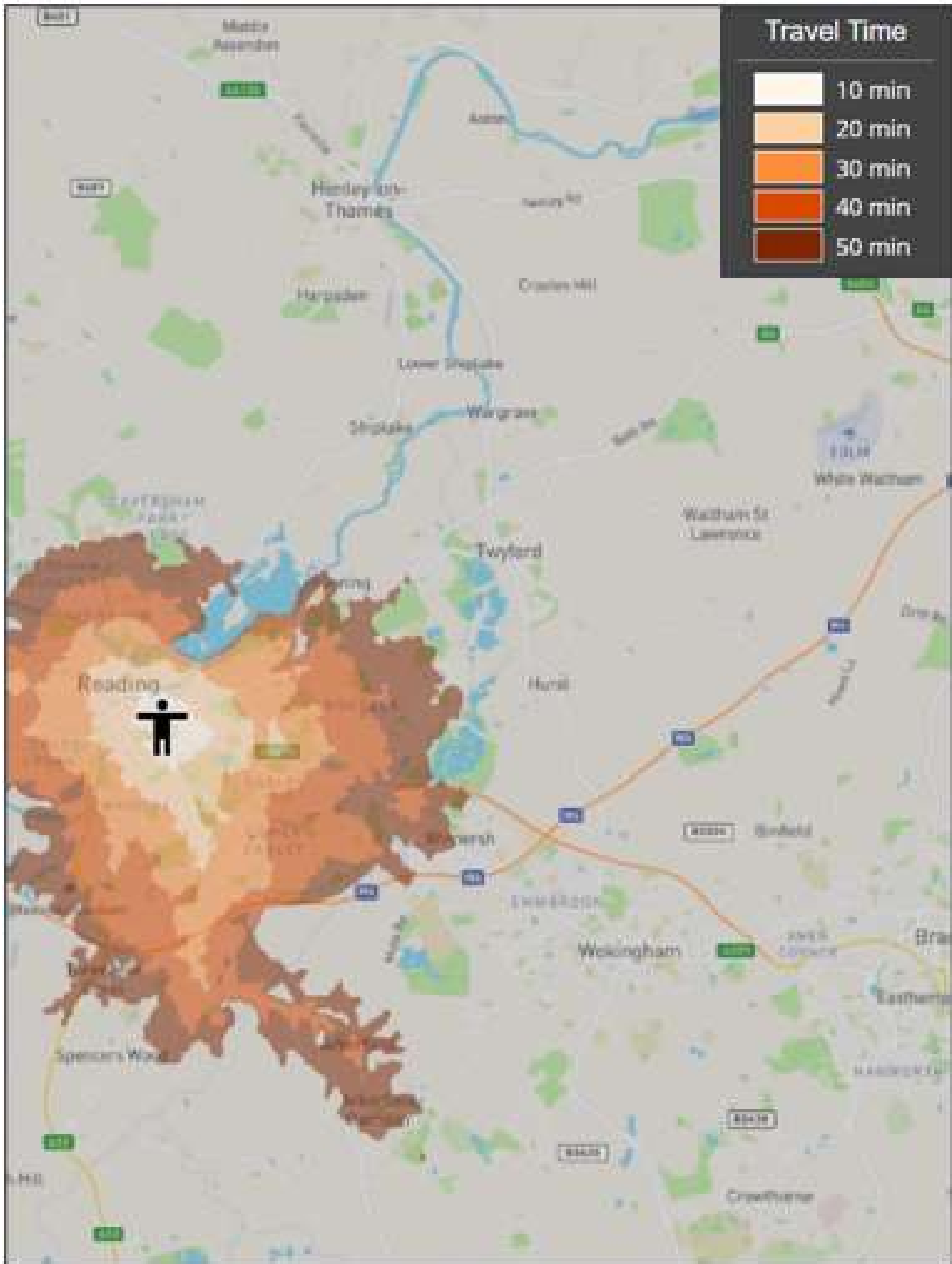
<https://www.google.com/maps?ll=51.441944,-0.945556&q=51.441944,-0.945556&hl=en&t=m&z=15>

Winnersh Triangle Station: arrive by 9 – for point use the red logo of the National Rail station

Wokingham town centre: arrive by 9 – for point, use this Wokingham Town Hall point from Wikipedia

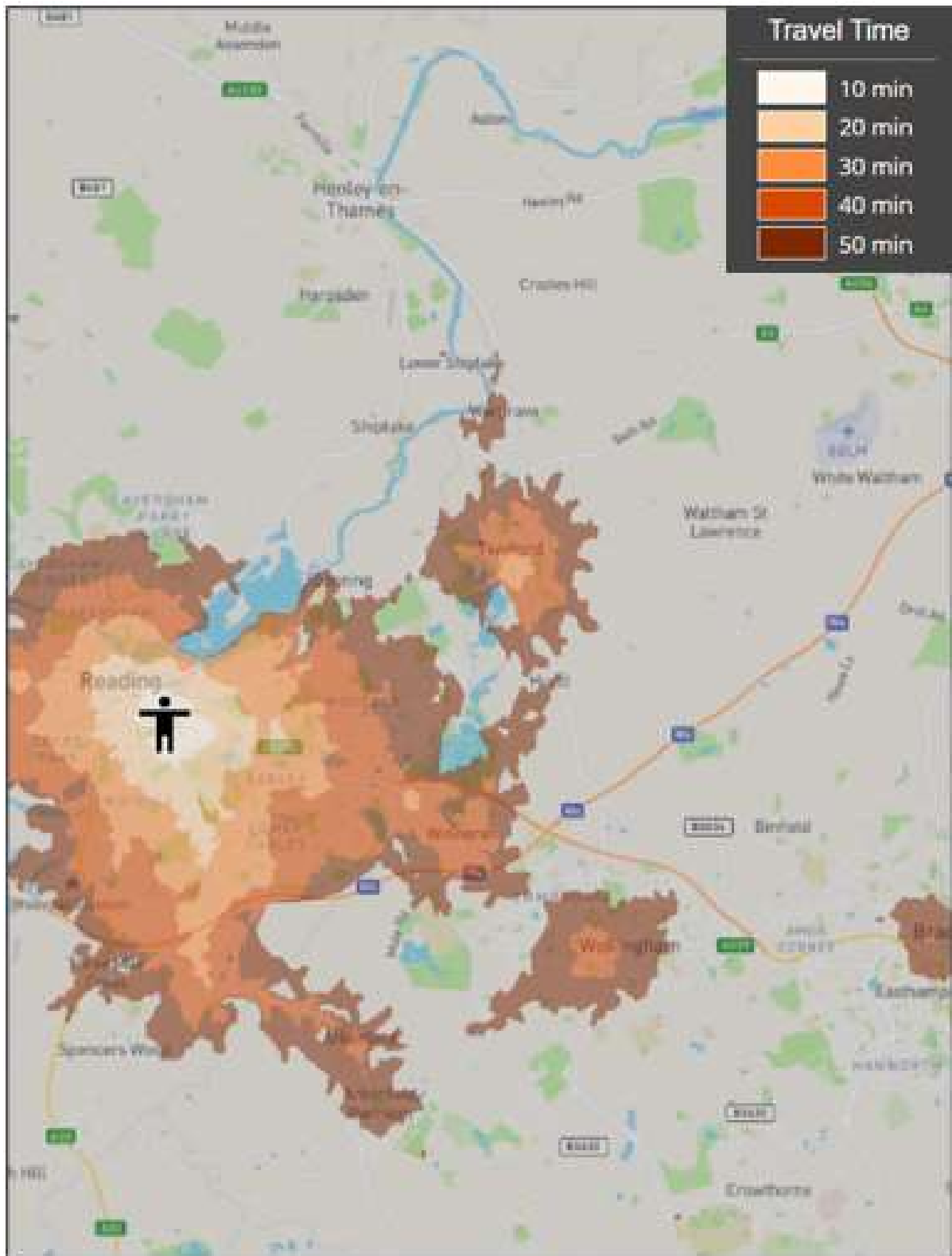
<https://www.google.com/maps?ll=51.4102,-0.8338&q=51.4102,-0.8338&hl=en&t=m&z=15>

Accessibility map: Royal Berkshire Hospital, travel by bus, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



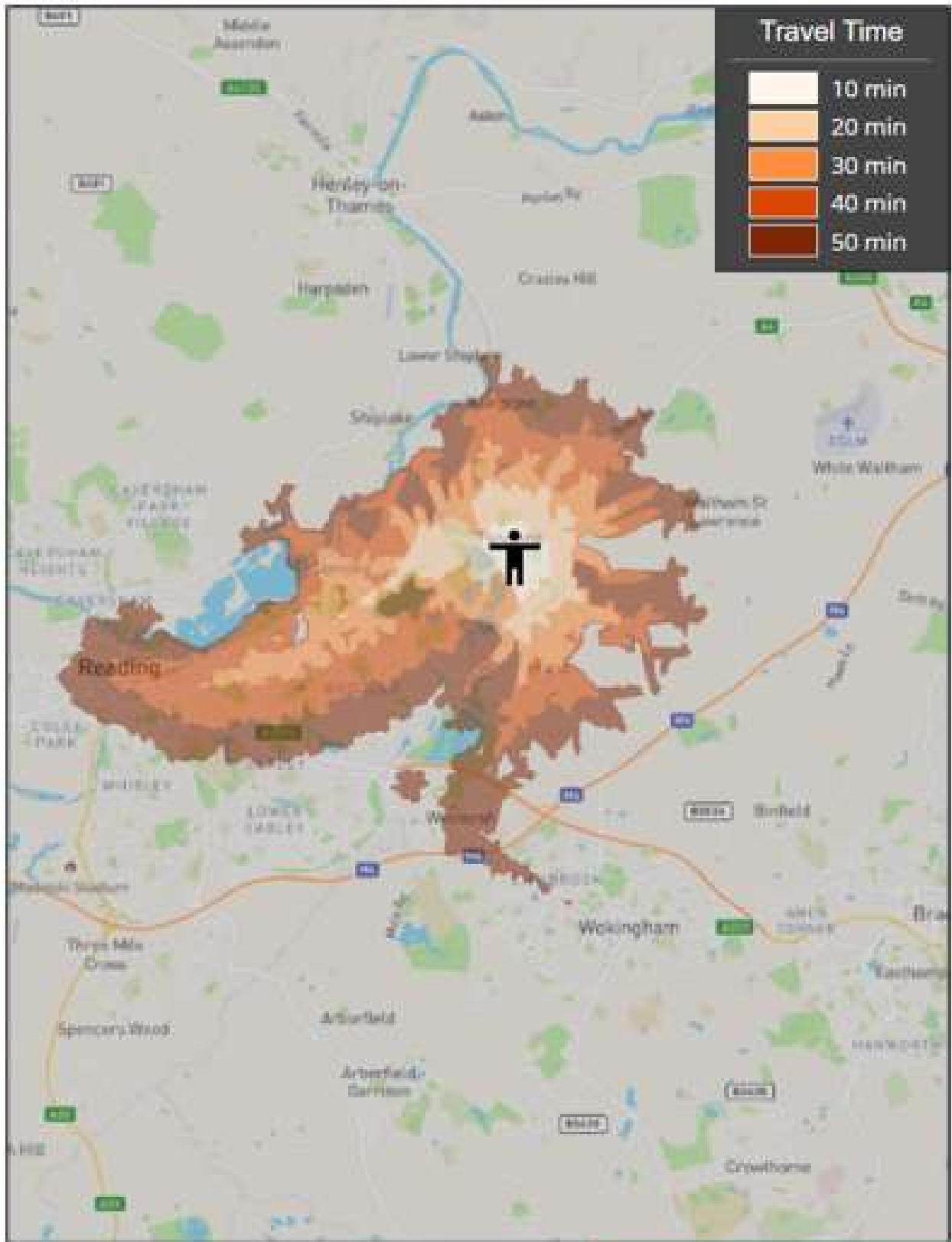
Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: Royal Berkshire Hospital, travel by bus and/or train, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

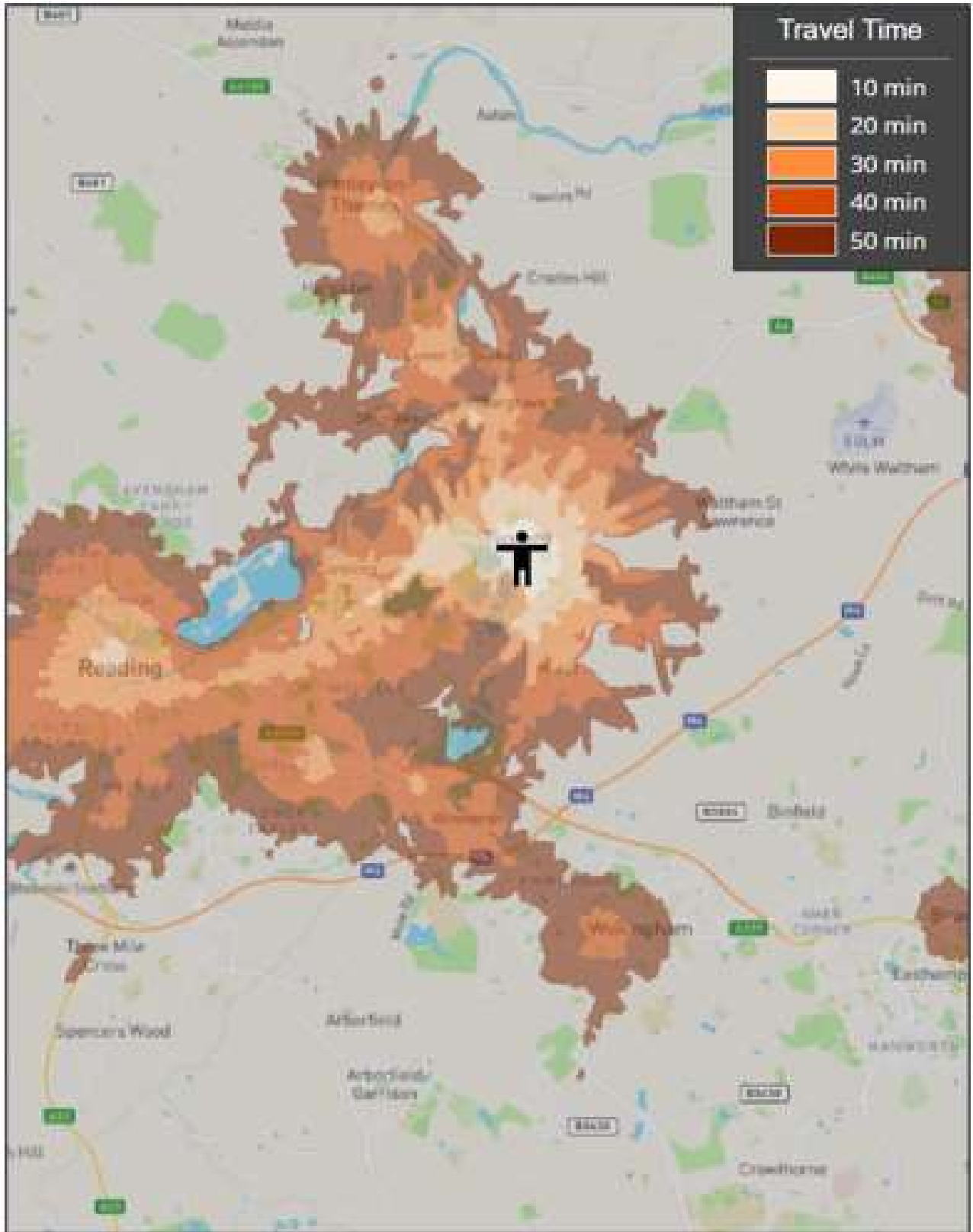
Accessibility map: Twyford Station, travel by bus, arrive by Wednesday 08:00 – note earlier time



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

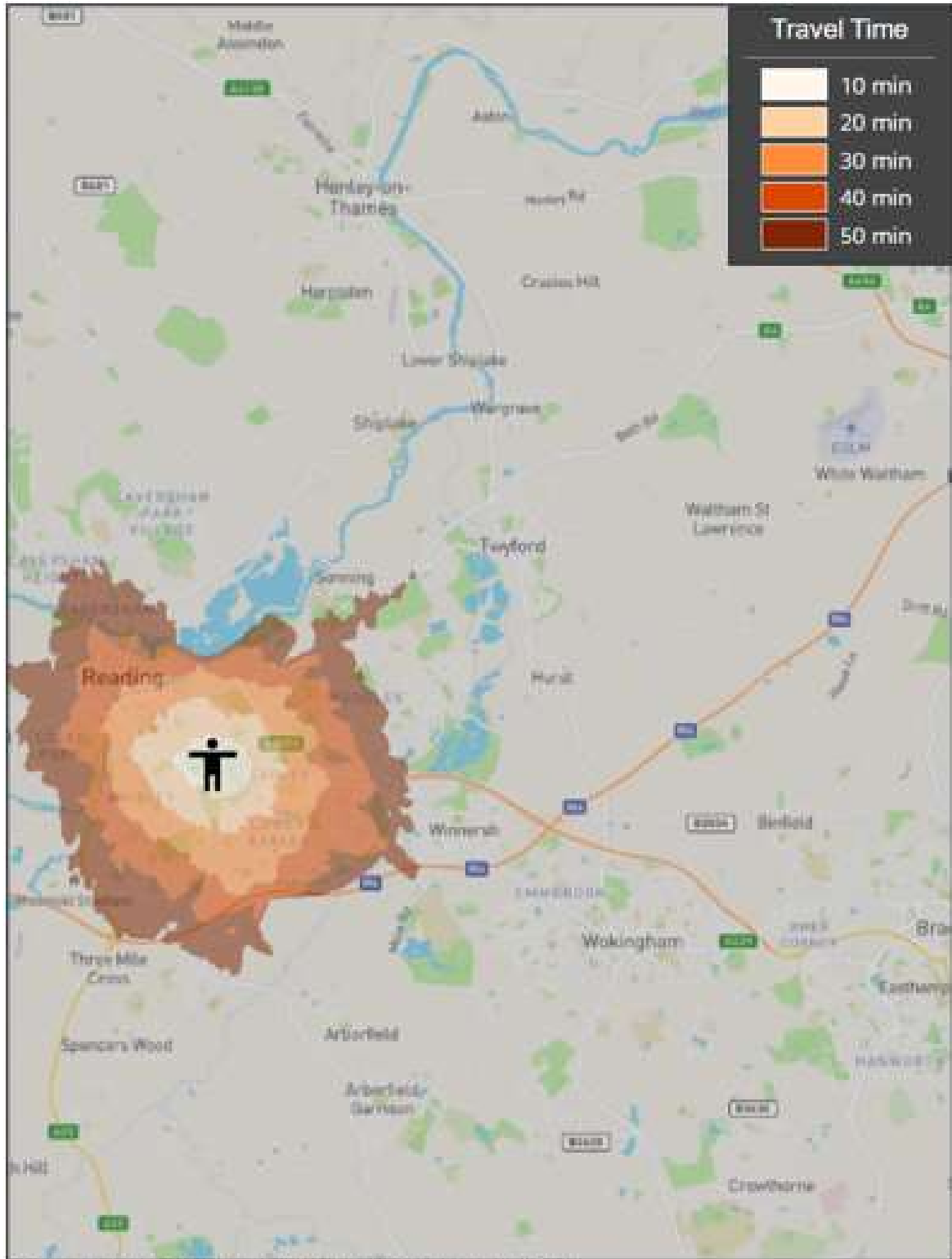


Accessibility map: Twyford Station, travel by bus and/or train, arrive by Wednesday 08:00



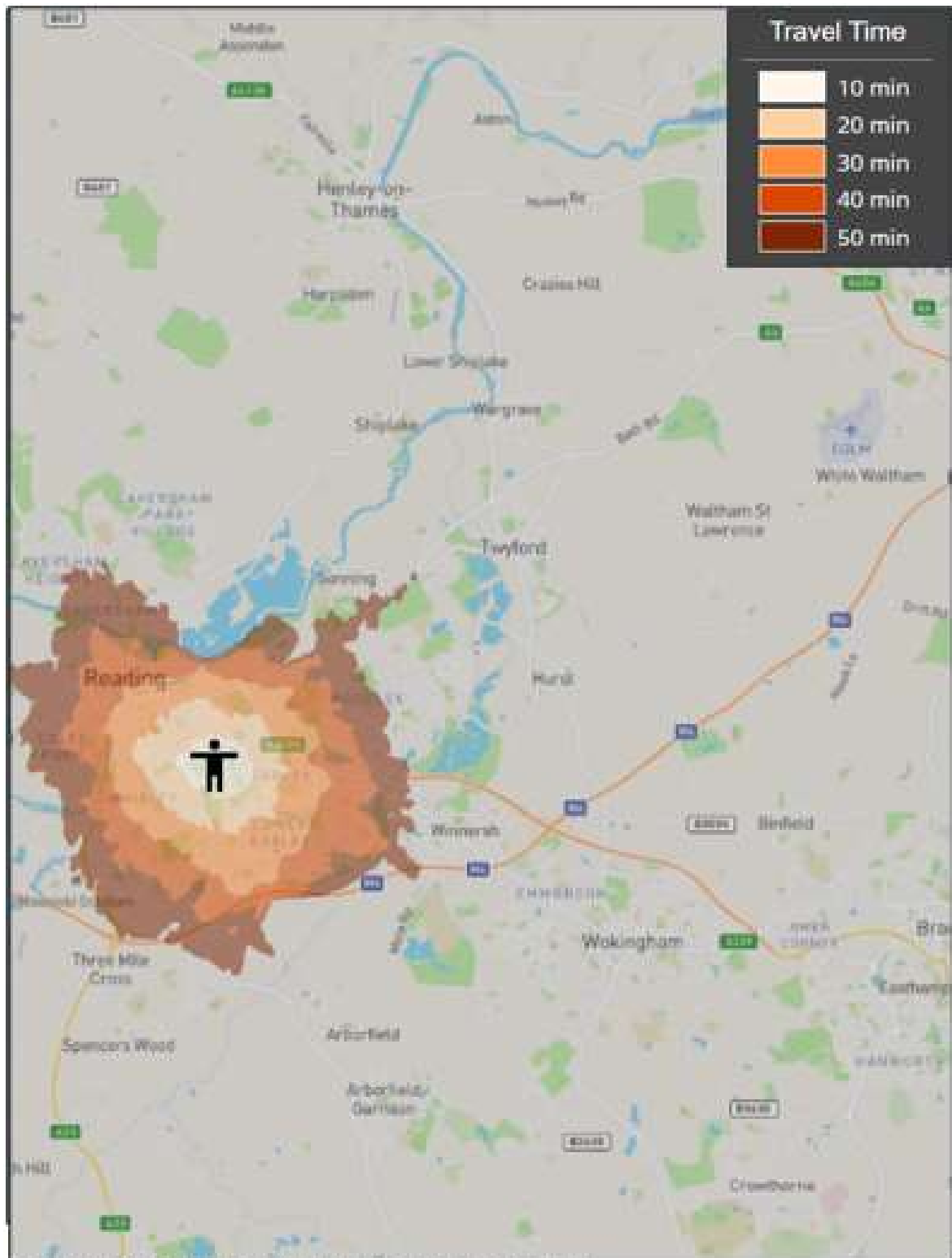
Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: University of Reading, travel by bus, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



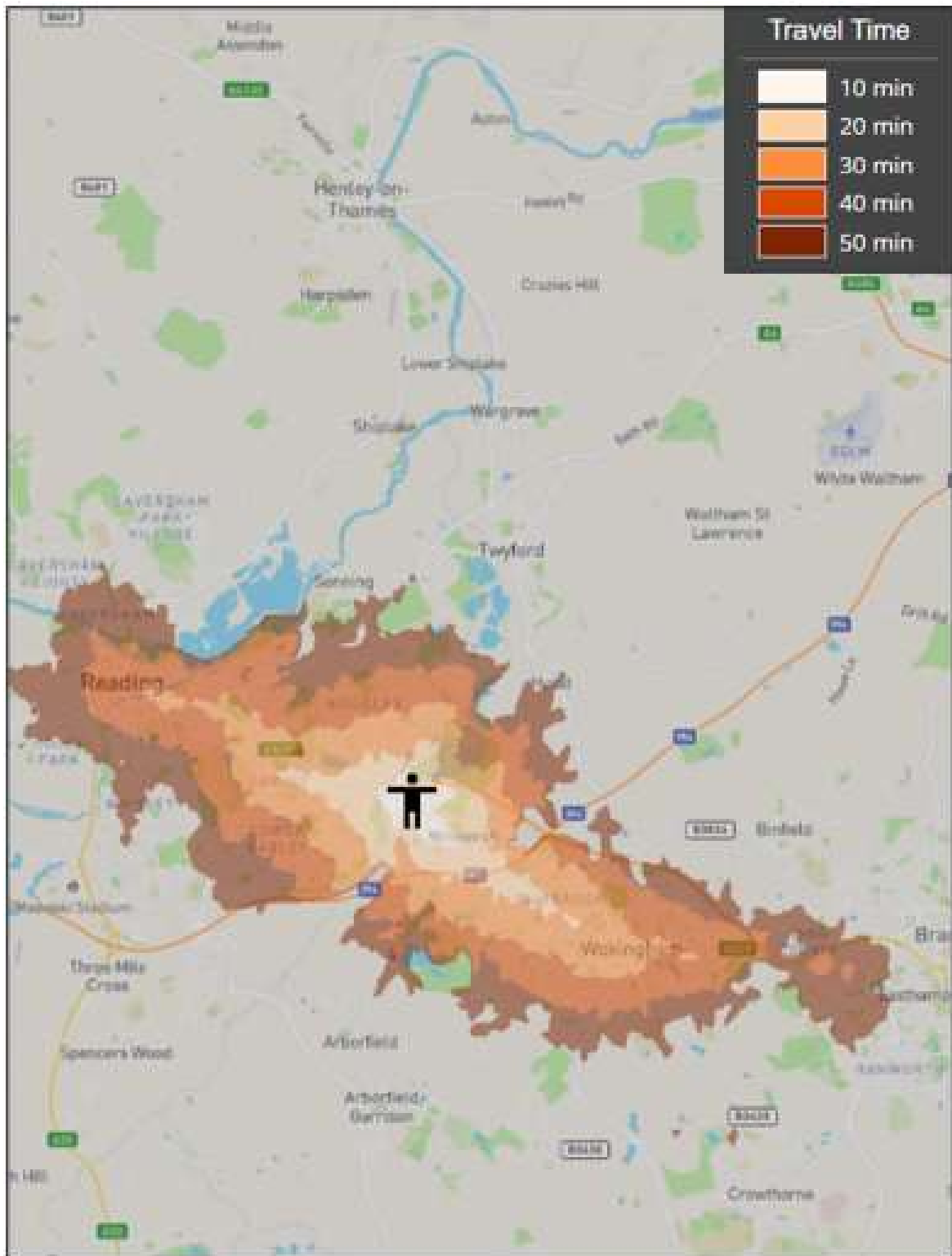
Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: University of Reading, travel by bus and/or train, arrive by Wednesday 09:00

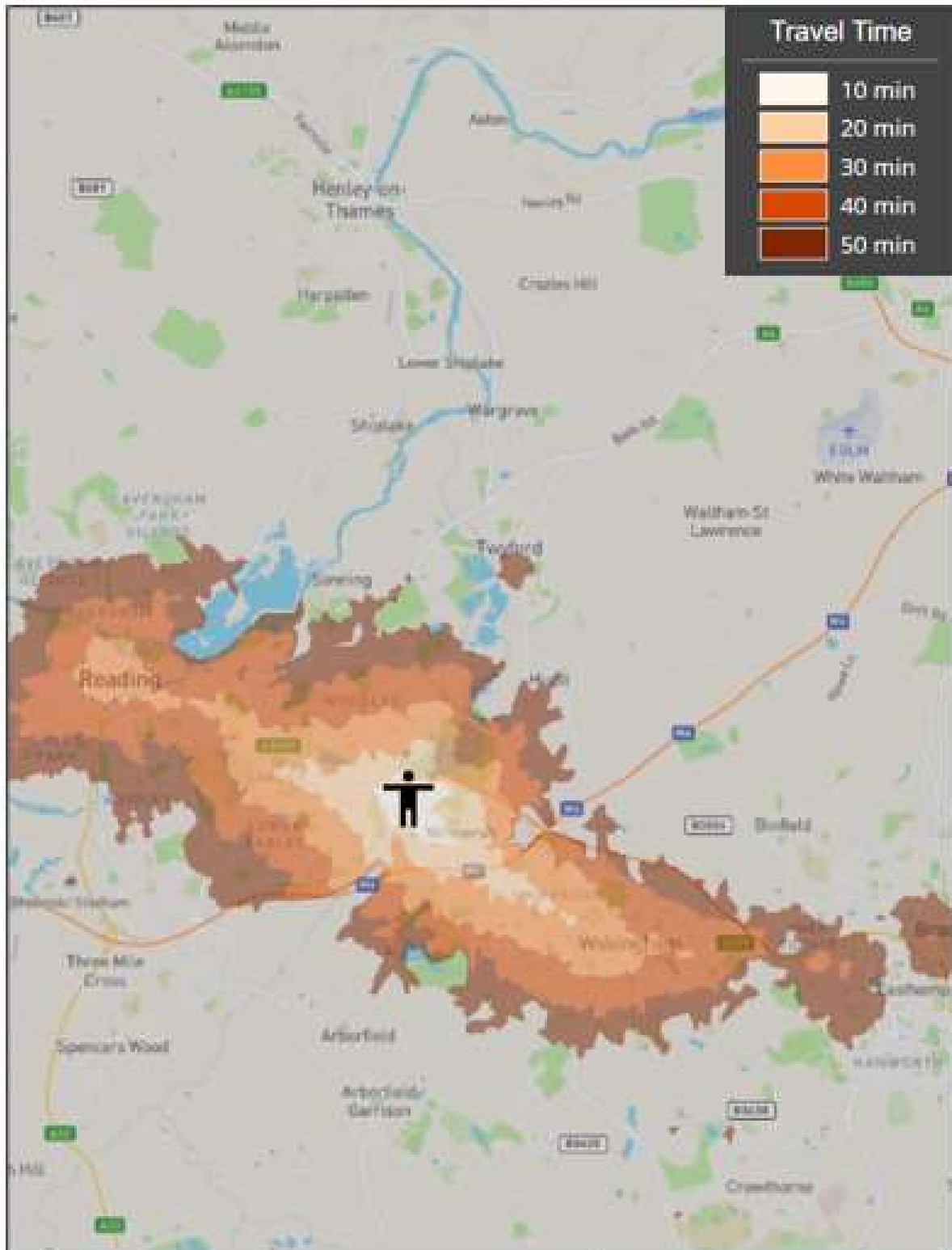


Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: Winnersh Triangle Station, travel by bus, arrive by Wednesday 09:00

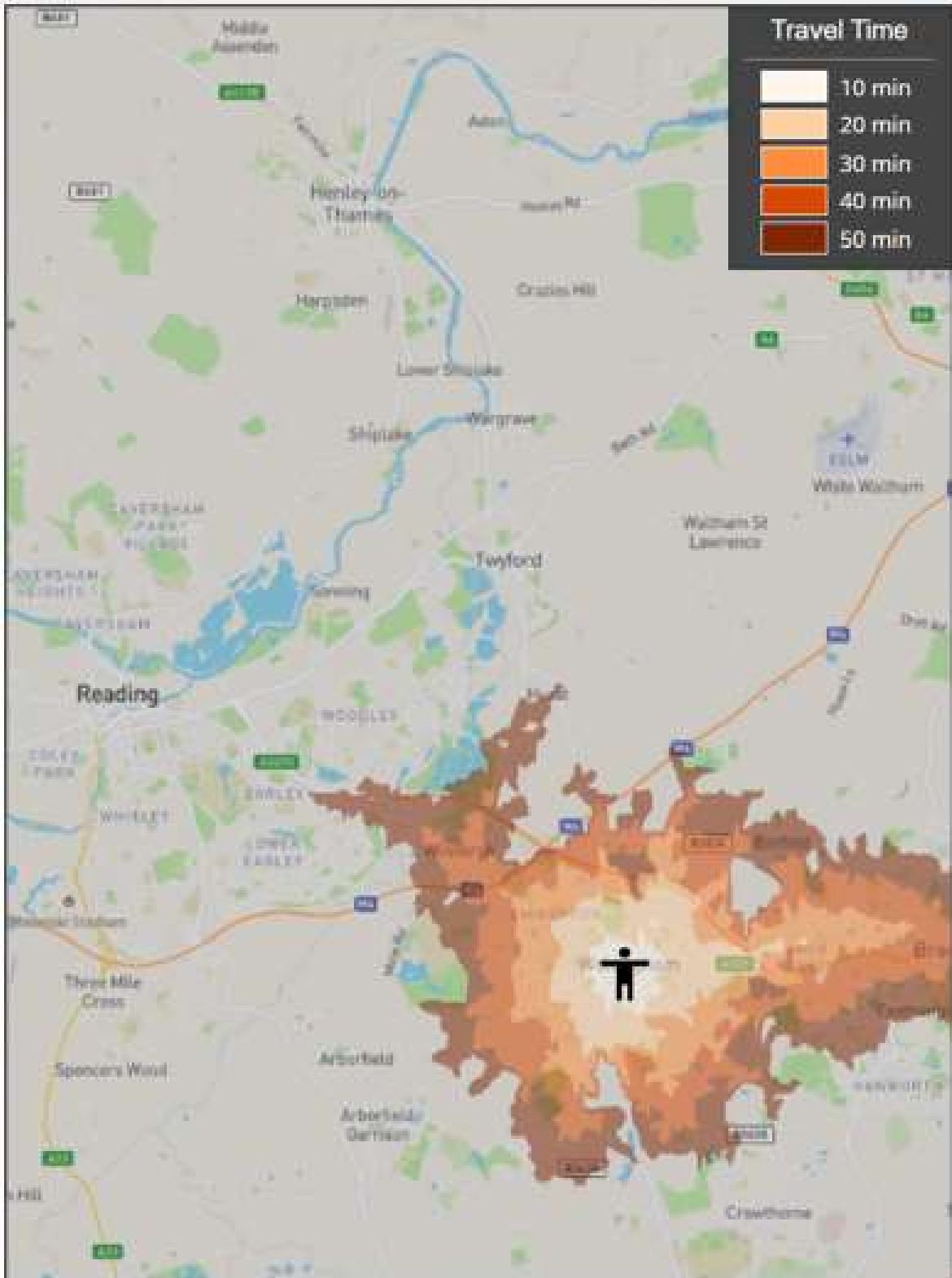


Accessibility map: Winnersh Triangle Station, travel by bus and/or train, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



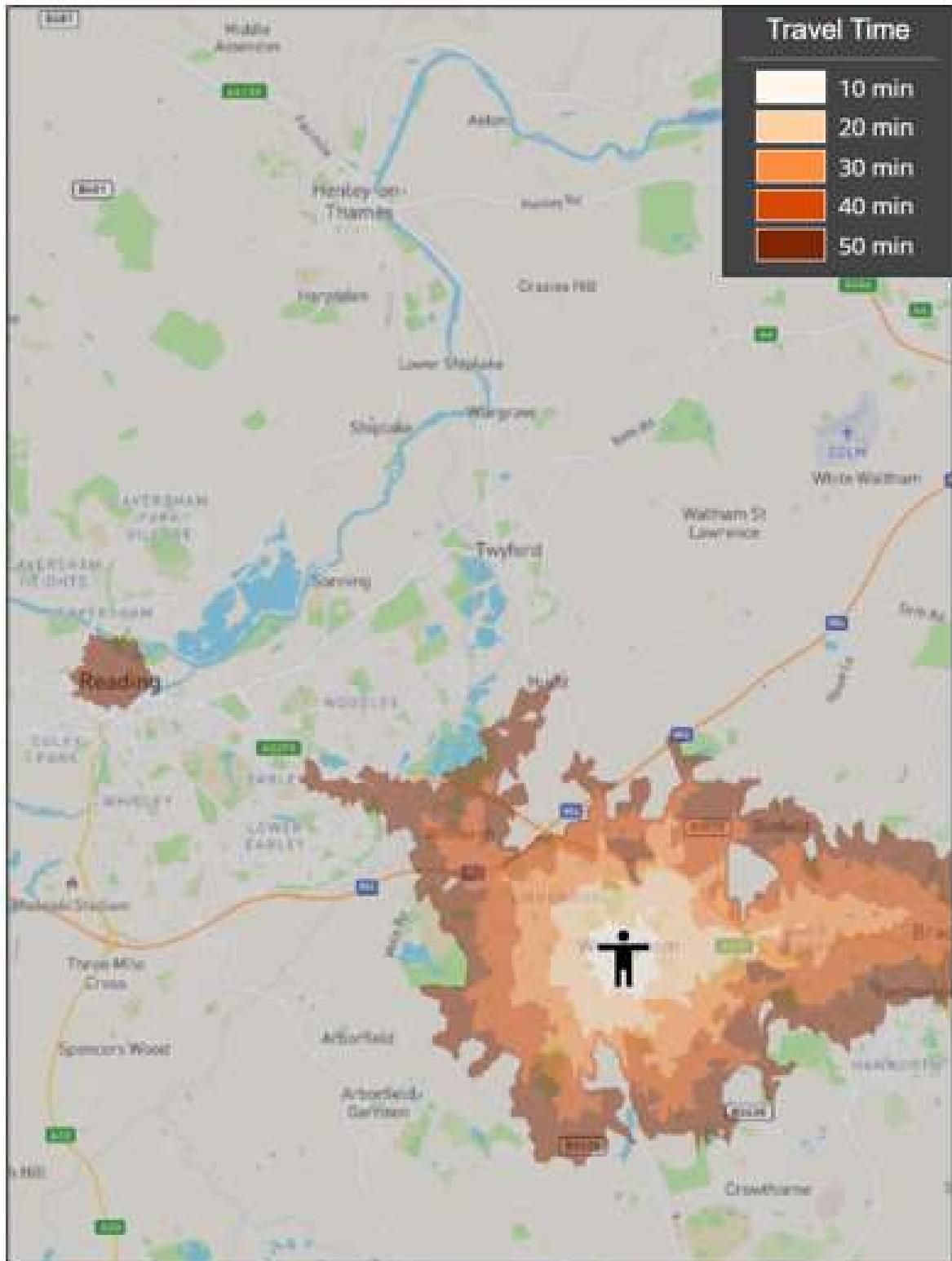
Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: Wokingham Town Centre, travel by bus, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Accessibility map: Wokingham Town Centre, travel by bus and/or train, arrive by Wednesday 09:00



## APPENDIX C: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

### Thames Valley Buses (formerly Courtney Buses) Customer Satisfaction

Source: [Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey Autumn 2019 Report](#)

Satisfaction (%)	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither/nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
<b><u>Overall journey satisfaction</u></b>						
<b>All passengers</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>272</b>
Fare-paying passengers	94	50	44	4	3	91
Free pass holders	95	66	29	4	1	179
Passengers not commuting	94	60	34	5	2	200
Passengers saying they have a disability	94	57	37	4	2	87
<b><u>Value for money</u></b>						
All fare-paying passengers	62	24	38	19	19	86
<b><u>Punctuality and time waiting for the bus</u></b>						
Punctuality of the bus	82	51	31	12	5	240
The length of time waited	83	44	39	12	5	257
<b><u>On-bus journey time</u></b>						
Time journey on the bus took	90	61	29	7	3	269
<b><u>On the bus</u></b>						
Route/destination information on the outside of the bus	92	66	26	6	2	252
The cleanliness and condition of the outside of the bus	91	56	35	8	1	253
The ease of getting onto the bus	97	70	27	2	1	257
The length of time it took to board	96	72	24	3	1	252
The cleanliness and condition of the inside of the bus	92	58	35	6	2	262

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.



Satisfaction (%)	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither/nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
The information provided inside the bus	67	37	31	27	6	262
The availability of seating or space to stand	91	63	28	8	2	260
The comfort of the seats	87	48	40	9	4	256
The amount of personal space you had around you	90	53	37	6	4	254
Provision of grab rails to stand/move within the bus	89	54	34	8	2	250
The temperature inside the bus	87	51	36	10	3	255
Your personal security whilst on the bus	91	60	31	8	1	256
Ease of getting off the bus	95	65	30	4	1	260
<b><u>The bus driver</u></b>						
How near to the kerb the driver stopped	96	71	25	4	0	265
The driver's appearance	94	70	24	5	1	261
The greeting/welcome you got from the driver	86	59	27	10	3	262
The helpfulness and attitude of the driver	86	59	27	11	3	258
The time the driver gave you to get to your seat	92	65	26	5	3	262
Smoothness/freedom from jolting during the journey	80	48	32	11	9	266
Safety of the driving (i.e. speed, driver concentrating)	92	65	27	6	2	263

## Reading Buses Customer Satisfaction

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Satisfaction (%)	2016 all satisfied	2017 all satisfied	2018 all satisfied	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither/nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
<b><u>Overall journey satisfaction</u></b>									
<b>All passengers</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>844</b>
Fare-paying passengers	92	86	93	<b>91</b>	50	41	8	1	471
Free pass holders	96	93	96	<b>94</b>	62	31	4	2	364
Aged 16 to 34	91	86	92	<b>88</b>	46	42	10	2	161
Aged 35 to 59	94	85	94	<b>93</b>	50	43	5	1	254
Passengers commuting	94	84	92	<b>93</b>	52	41	5	2	335
Passengers not commuting	93	92	95	<b>91</b>	54	37	8	1	475
Passengers saying they have a disability	94	90	91	<b>90</b>	56	34	7	2	216
<b><u>Value for money</u></b>									
<b>All fare-paying passengers</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>459</b>
Aged 16 to 34	58	63	69	<b>61</b>	33	28	19	20	151
Aged 35 to 59	68	67	70	<b>74</b>	33	41	17	9	223
Passengers commuting	64	64	64	<b>65</b>	34	31	18	17	299
Passengers not commuting	60	69	81	<b>71</b>	34	37	16	12	156
<b><u>Punctuality and time waiting for the bus</u></b>									
Punctuality of the bus	79	73	81	<b>78</b>	51	27	11	12	770
The length of time waited	80	74	80	<b>75</b>	47	28	13	11	820
<b><u>On-bus journey time</u></b>									
Time journey on the bus took	87	82	89	<b>86</b>	53	33	11	4	845
<b><u>On the bus</u></b>									
Route/destination information on the outside of the bus	90	85	89	<b>88</b>	58	29	11	1	810

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

Satisfaction (%)	2016 all satisfied	2017 all satisfied	2018 all satisfied	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither/nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
The cleanliness and condition of the outside of the bus	88	86	84	<b>86</b>	47	38	12	3	800
The ease of getting onto the bus	-	-	91	<b>94</b>	65	29	5	1	827
The length of time it took to board	93	90	91	<b>91</b>	64	27	6	3	817
The cleanliness and condition of the inside of the bus	84	84	83	<b>84</b>	38	46	10	6	832
The information provided inside the bus	85	81	80	<b>76</b>	43	34	20	3	773
The availability of seating or space to stand	92	84	86	<b>91</b>	58	33	6	4	821
The comfort of the seats	84	83	82	<b>85</b>	42	42	12	4	825
The amount of personal space you had around you	84	76	80	<b>79</b>	41	38	13	8	819
Provision of grab rails to stand/move within the bus	89	83	85	<b>87</b>	46	42	11	2	800
The temperature inside the bus	85	79	82	<b>85</b>	44	41	10	5	811
Your personal security whilst on the bus	89	88	84	<b>89</b>	54	35	10	0	814
Ease of getting off the bus	-	-	88	<b>92</b>	57	35	5	2	825
<b><u>The bus driver</u></b>									
How near to the kerb the driver stopped	94	95	94	<b>94</b>	68	27	4	1	824
The driver's appearance	92	94	91	<b>90</b>	66	24	9	1	808
The greeting/welcome you got from the driver	84	86	82	<b>85</b>	57	28	11	3	825
The helpfulness and attitude of the driver	84	85	82	<b>84</b>	56	28	13	3	805
The time the driver gave you to get to your seat	85	86	84	<b>85</b>	53	32	11	4	810
Smoothness/freedom from jolting during the journey	84	80	83	<b>83</b>	47	36	11	5	811

Satisfaction (%)	2016 all satisfied	2017 all satisfied	2018 all satisfied	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither/nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
Safety of the driving (i.e. speed, driver concentrating)	92	92	90	93	63	30	6	1	818

Source: [Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey Autumn 2019 Report](#)

## Wokingham Borough Council – Customer Satisfaction

### 2020 NHT Public Satisfaction Survey Report for Wokingham Borough Council

Results by Theme

Public Transport

Indicator Results

Ref	Indicator	Result	Trend	Average	Gap
<b>Key Benchmark Indicator</b>					
KBI06	Local bus services (overall)	61%	-3%	60%	1%
KBI07	Local bus services (aspects)	64%	-3%	57%	7%
KBI08	Public transport information	46%	-7%	44%	2%
KBI09	Taxi/mini cab services	64%	-1%	66%	-2%
KBI10	Community transport	56%	-2%	58%	-2%
<b>Key Quality Indicator</b>					
KQI03	Responsive transport	54%	-2%	55%	-1%
KQI05	Public transport information (aspects)	57%	-4%	56%	1%

Benchmark Indicator					
PTBI01	Frequency of bus services	59%	-4%	60%	-1%
PTBI02	Number of bus stops	71%	-1%	70%	1%
PTBI03	The state of bus stops	64%	-1%	60%	4%
PTBI04	Whether buses arrive on time	60%	-4%	56%	4%
PTBI05	How easy buses are to get on/off	78%	-2%	73%	5%
PTBI06	The local bus service overall	66%	-2%	61%	5%
PTBI07	Bus fares	58%	2%	50%	8%
PTBI08	Quality and cleanliness of buses	71%	-2%	63%	8%
PTBI09	Helpfulness of drivers	75%	-1%	68%	7%
PTBI10	Personal safety on the bus	73%	-1%	68%	5%
PTBI11	Personal safety at bus stops	68%	-1%	63%	5%
PTBI12	Raised kerbs at bus stops	71%	-1%	66%	5%
PTBI13	The amount of information	55%	-6%	56%	-1%
PTBI14	The clarity of information	57%	-5%	58%	-1%
PTBI15	The accuracy of information	59%	-5%	58%	1%
PTBI16	Ease of finding the right information	55%	-5%	55%	0%
PTBI17	Information about accessible buses	53%	-5%	53%	0%
PTBI18	Info to help people plan journeys	60%	-4%	59%	1%
PTBI19	Reliability of electronic display info	57%	-3%	52%	5%
PTBI20	Provision of public transport info	58%	-3%	56%	2%
PTBI21	Availability of taxis or minicabs	71%	1%	71%	0%
PTBI22	Reliability of taxis or minicabs	71%	3%	70%	1%
PTBI23	Cost (fares) of taxis or minicabs	51%	4%	54%	-3%
PTBI24	Availability of community transport	57%	1%	56%	1%
PTBI25	Community transport fares	57%	3%	56%	1%
PTBI26	Reliability of community transport	60%	4%	58%	2%

Source: *National Highways and Transportation Survey 2020*



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