

Traffic and Transport

Car use in the UK has risen by 85 per cent in the past 20 years, while walking has fallen by 20 per cent and bus journeys by 23 per cent. Surrey has the highest car ownership and most congested roads in the country outside London, with more and more commuters trekking daily both into and out of Guildford.

This makes traffic and transportation related issues a high priority.

Issues raised in public consultation

- The need to relieve town centre congestion.
- A network of safe cycle lanes, especially at junctions and roundabouts; children to be allowed to cycle on pavements.
- Safe walking routes to school and walking buses; a school bus service for state and private schools.
- More sophisticated signalling at junctions; more pedestrian crossings and dropped kerbs.
- Public transport to be improved and electric buses, trams and a light railway introduced; more pedestrianisation and park and ride.
- Bus, train, pedestrian links and roads to be integrated; viable alternatives to the car to be in place before vehicle restrictions imposed.
- Good subsidised bus service with modern bus station.
- Speed restrictions and parking controls to be enforced.
- Improvements to the A3; relief and ring roads around the town.
- Better maintenance of roads and footpaths, especially rights of way.

The action plan

Surrey County Council (SCC), the transport authority in Guildford, is working closely in partnership with Guildford Borough Council (GBC), the planning authority, to tackle the challenges of travel and transport through the development of joint strategies and joint agreement of transportation projects. (The Highways Agency, a branch of Central Government, is responsible for the A3.)

Both SCC's Local Transport Plan for Surrey and the Guildford Borough Local Plan accept the impossibility of meeting demand for car travel as it is incompatible with the principle of sustainable development.

The two authorities' strategies for developing a sustainable approach to transportation include:

Parking, and Park and Ride

The Parking Strategy Working Group is exploring the whole issue with key stakeholders such as the business community. Current initiatives include:

- A joint approach to the development of Park and Ride sites on all major roads leading into Guildford.
- Park and ride at Artington is now operating. Work on the site at Merrow will begin as the associated development is implemented. New sites are being sought on other routes into Guildford.
- Spectrum Park and Ride will have 259 extra spaces.
- Parking policies that put road safety first and protect residents from problems of commuter parking.
- A financial approach to parking charges that protects Guildford's viability as a shopping centre and uses surplus income to subsidise Park and Ride.



Bus and train

- SCC supports bus operators so that they can run socially necessary services in addition to commercial services.
- Support for public transport via bus lanes and other bus priority measures, better passenger information and improved interchange between bus and train services including linked rail/bus tickets.
- The Shuttle Bus contract has been renewed and new flags erected.
- Bus passes are available.
- Pegasus (School Bus) Project to be piloted in 5 local schools from 2003.

Cycling

The updated Cycling Strategy, due for publication shortly, supports:

- Extension of the borough's cycle network.
- Installation of additional cycle stands.
- A cycle forum to discuss borough cycling issues.
- New Egerton Road, Woking Road and Aldershot Road Cycle Routes.
- Improvements to Greyhound roundabout at Tongham.



Walking

A new Walking Strategy has been adopted by GBC as a joint strategy with SCC. It aims:

- To make sure walking routes are the most direct, pleasant and safe.
- To identify and prioritise key routes, for example to schools and shops, ready for improvement schemes to be implemented.
- To provide new pedestrian signing in the town centre
- To improve pedestrian links between railway station and town centre.

Green Travel Plans

- Businesses are encouraged to introduce Green Travel Plans. Where planning applications increase the need to travel, they form part of the planning conditions.
- SCC's and GBC's Green Travel Plans encourage alternative modes of transport including car sharing, pool bikes and cars; park & ride and shuttle buses; interest-free loans for train season tickets; and changing facilities for cyclists.
- Promotions such as 'In Town Without My Car Day', 'Bike to Work Week'.
- Regular meetings of the Public Sector Travel Plan Group.

Community safety

- The Safer Guildford Partnership's Community Safety Strategy recognises the important link between transport and traffic issues and people's sense of safety and security. The partnership has established two multi-agency groups looking into traffic speeds and safer public transport.

Initiatives to be developed

- Motorcycle parking.
- More cycle routes across the borough
- Cycle loans; business mileage for cyclists.
- Arriva bus discount ticket scheme.
- Bus Quality Partnerships.
- A steering group has been set up to consider the brief for development of The Friary Shopping Centre.
- Provision of improved public transport links to leisure facilities.