

# NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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## **£8MILLION INVESTMENT IN ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN 2020-21**

Wokingham Borough Council will invest £8million in improving its road network in 2020-21, with almost 100 roads earmarked for resurfacing or treatments to prolong its life in the coming months.

Work originally scheduled to start in May was brought forward to early April, with the programme accelerated due to the Government's COVID-19 guidance. The lockdown measures caused road usage in the borough to drop by 50 per cent and roadworks by utilities companies to drop by more than 33 per cent, providing an opportunity to complete work in potentially disruptive locations.

The council has already carried out improvement works on some of the borough's key commuting routes, including Showcase roundabout in Winnersh, the A4 Bath Road in Sonning, Finchampstead Road and Molly Millars Lane in Wokingham and Thames Street in Sonning, a key route between Berkshire and Oxfordshire, during the lockdown period. Work on site has followed Government and construction industry social distancing guidance and will continue to do so.

Across the programme there will be a significant increase in full resurfacing schemes, with more than 50 roads earmarked for works, compared to less than 20 last year. This is where the top layer of road surface will be removed and replaced to provide a smooth road for vehicles.

Other key travel routes around the borough are still to be completed with improvements planned on parts of Nine Mile Ride in Finchampstead/Wokingham Without, Butts Hill Road in Woodley, Eversley Road in Arborfield, Basingstoke in Swallowfield, Betchworth Avenue in Earley and Old Forest Road in Wokingham.

Roads have been selected by the council's highways team by identifying the roads most in need of attention. Works will be taking place through the summer.

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The breakdown in estimated spend this financial year on road improvements is as follows:

- About £6.1m on structural maintenance
- About £900,000 on capital projects on the roads and pavements
- About £1m fixing potholes

As part of this year's programme we will also complete 21 roads which had been planned for 2019-20 but were delayed due to winter weather. This year's programme is planned for the summer months, reducing the chance of any delays.

"Investing in our highway network is a top priority for us and our residents so we made the most of the lockdown period to accelerate our maintenance work, when road usage dropped off significantly, helping us to reduce disruption," said Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport. "This programme of improvements across almost 100 roads in our borough, with a significant spend on key transport routes, ensuring our residents are safe and their journeys are smooth when traveling in their own vehicles or by public transport.

"Our comprehensive surveying of all of the borough's roads by our highways teams means works are not allocated on a ward-by-ward basis and guarantees we spend money on the roads which most need our attention. As always we will minimise disruption on busy roads by working at night or outside peak travel times during the day as far as possible."

It's part of a series of highway investments in Wokingham Borough including the council's £124million major highways programme and new or improved park and ride car parks and services across the area. The council is also beginning its work to invest £20million in tackling congestion over the next five years.

Almost 50 roads will have surface dressing and micro-asphalt surface treatments applied. The former adds protection to the carriageway surface, sealing it from water while also enhancing its skid resistance. Micro-asphalt is a preventative maintenance treatment, used to seal the existing road surface, improve the texture and help water evaporate. Both these types of surface treatment will prolong the life of a road by up to seven years.

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These vital works usually take place off-peak during the day, from 9.30am to 4pm, but some schemes work is allowed between 8am and 6pm during the Covid-19 outbreak so more works can be completed when the roads are less busy. In key strategic locations we also reduce disruption by working overnight, from 8pm to 6am. Residents who live on streets where works are taking place will receive letters notifying them in advance and signs will be placed on streets where work is happening.

Full details of this year's programme, including which roads will be resurfaced or redressed and when, can be found by visiting [www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/roadworks-and-road-maintenance/pothole-and-road-repairs-schedule](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/roadworks-and-road-maintenance/pothole-and-road-repairs-schedule) Details of road closures will also be available on [www.one.network](http://www.one.network)

- ENDS -

**Further information:**

1. More from Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, on [pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk)
2. More information on the roads we are working on here: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/roadworks-and-road-maintenance/pothole-and-road-repairs-schedule](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/roadworks-and-road-maintenance/pothole-and-road-repairs-schedule)