

# NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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## **New residents set to join town's bus network as council reviews bus routes**

Bus routes in Wokingham town could be extended to serve new housing under a proposal that is part of a review of bus routes across Wokingham borough.

Wokingham Borough Council, which subsidises most of the services it is reviewing, is seeking residents' views on the proposed new bus route, along with changes to some existing services, because its existing contracts end in May so new ones must be drawn up soon.

The council launched a survey today (16 December) that reviews existing bus service across the borough to look at what is currently working for residents and what might need changing. The council is proposing several changes, to try and better serve its residents.

The consultation is open until 16 January and is on the council's new engagement platform at [engage.wokingham.gov.uk](https://engage.wokingham.gov.uk). For anyone needing help with the survey, please contact the council by calling 0118 974 6000 or emailing [myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk).

The council suggests extending a circular section of Thames Valley Buses' 121 route, which covers the Norreys estate off London Road, to serve new homes off Diamond Jubilee Way and Oak Drive.

A new route, bus 126 is proposed that could be funded by companies building new homes in the council's North Wokingham major development. The new route 126 would form a loop serving the Norreys estate via Binfield Road. This would return to the town centre via Toutley Road, Matthewgreen Road, Milton Road, Holt Lane and Reading Road, stopping at both The Emmbrook School and The Holt School on the way.

The existing 122/123 routes from the town centre to Woosehill, extending to Emmbrook in the off-peak, would be unchanged, as would the 128/129 route from Reading to Wokingham town via Twyford. However, the latter's Saturday service between Twyford and Maidenhead could be reviewed.

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Minor changes are proposed to the 125/A/B routes to ensure consistency while the 124, an off-peak service covering London Road and Easthampstead Road, could be withdrawn as it has only one or two passengers daily and might be better served by voluntary groups.

Reading Buses' Leopard services 3, 8 and 9 from Reading to Shinfield, Arborfield, Finchampstead and Wokingham would be mostly unchanged, although it might be possible to run buses between Arborfield and Wokingham twice per hour instead of hourly.

Again, this could be funded by housebuilders working in the council's major development at the former Arborfield Garrison. Routes 8 & 9 may also be changed with funding available from the Shinfield and Spencers Wood developments.

The Government may also contribute as the authority recently published its bus service improvement plan and hopes to agree enhanced partnerships with operators by the end of March.

This ambitious strategy sets out to help services recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic by increasing passenger numbers while encouraging bus firms to adopt greener technologies.

Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, said: "It's vital that all our residents have access to a range of transport options including buses, which we're looking to make more attractive through our bus service improvement plan.

"By linking new housing to the bus network as soon as possible, we're building integrated communities while taking a key step towards tackling congestion and keeping traffic in the borough moving.

"In conjunction with our ongoing efforts to make buses greener, it will also help to reduce emissions and improve the borough's air quality while doing all we can to make it a net-zero carbon producer by 2030."

The consultation runs until 16 January and residents can have their say by visiting the council's new engagement platform [engage.wokingham.gov.uk](https://engage.wokingham.gov.uk). For residents who need help with the survey, please contact the council by calling 0118 974 6000 or emailing [myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk).

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**Further information:** More from Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, at [pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk)