

Pop-up bus priority measures announced in south east Scotland

More than £1.2m in funding has been awarded to local authorities in the south east of Scotland for emergency measures to prioritise public transport.

Transport Scotland has allocated the funding from its £10m [Bus Priority Rapid Development Fund](#), which will support temporary changes to improve bus journey times and reliability on some of the region's most congested routes.

A package of interventions has been developed by the South East Scotland Transport Transition Group, which involves Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife, Scottish Borders, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire councils.

These aim to encourage and incentivise bus travel as an attractive, sustainable mode of transport as lockdown restrictions are lifted and traffic begins to return to previous levels. Amongst proposals are the introduction or extension of bus lanes including on the A90 citybound between Cramond Brig and Barnton and on the A89 eastbound approach to Newbridge, various signalling improvements for smoother flow of traffic and enhanced bus stops at key locations.

Led by the City of Edinburgh Council, the South East Scotland Transport Transition Group has worked with bus operators and SEStran to develop the measures, which it is estimated could

reduce journey times by up to 12 minutes in some areas.

The City of Edinburgh Council's Transport and Environment Vice Convener Councillor Karen Doran said: "This funding award is extremely welcome and demonstrates the value of months of close partnership working between neighbouring local authorities, bus operators and SEStran.

"The way we travel has significantly changed over recent months and it's clear commuting patterns won't be returning to 'normal' anytime soon. This funding allows us to quickly prioritise public transport into and around the region, improving bus journey times and making bus travel a reliable, attractive mode of transport as restrictions are eased."

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson said: "I'm pleased that passengers across the south east of Scotland will soon experience the benefits of these temporary bus priority infrastructure measures. These measures will remove pinch points and keep buses moving, resulting in faster end to end journeys.

"We know that in some cases, bus passengers have fewer alternative travel options, and so it's right that buses are prioritised to help improve journey times and reliability across congested routes.

"While these measures will help make bus journey times faster on pinch points and undoubtedly makes bus travel more attractive, let's continue to leave public transport for those that need it most. Walk, wheel or cycle where possible and use temporary active travel infrastructure which helps with physical distancing. Plan ahead if using public transport to help manage demand. By thinking about how and when we travel – collectively, we can keep Scotland moving during the COVID-19 crisis."

Changes will be implemented using Temporary Traffic Regulation

Orders and engagement with local stakeholders will be carried out before any proposals are put in place.

Detailed designs and additional traffic modelling work are ongoing, with further information on the next steps for each of the schemes to be made available in the coming weeks.

The [Bus Priority Rapid Development Fund was announced](#) by Transport Scotland in July and aims to provide immediate relief to some of the most congested bus routes in line with the Scottish Government's route map through the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Proposes measures include:

Citybound A90 bus lane from Cramond Brig to Barnton

- Extension of westbound bus lane on Hillhouse Road towards Blackhall
 - Optimisation of Blackhall bus priority scheme
- Temporary bus lane on A89 eastbound approach to Newbridge
- Temporary bus lane on A8 westbound approach to Newbridge from airport on-slip
 - Short temporary bus lane on citybound approach to Maybury
 - Temporarily lengthen bus stop at Drum Brae Roundabout and increase waiting bays
- Full/part signalisation of Riccarton Mains Road roundabout at Hermiston to aid bus access and egress from Park & Ride
- Temporary kerb build out in bus stops e.g. North Bridge and South Bridge, Bathgate and in Uphall and Broxburn
- Use layby areas as passenger waiting areas and temporary kerbs in Mid Calder on Bank Street
 - Extended bus lane operating hours on A71 heading towards Hermiston Park & Ride site
 - A70 westbound bus lane on approach to Gillespie Crossroads
 - Introduction of temporary traffic signals at Melville Dykes Rd/B704 Hillhead junction (Lasswade) give more priority to A7 and A6106 approaches
 - Gilmerton crossroads – parking restrictions on approaches to junction
 - Changed signal timings and yellow box markings at Straiton junction to aid entry of traffic to the junction from B702 Loanhead Road
- Introduction of continuous bus lane on A701 southbound approach to Kaimes Crossroads
- Introduction of bus lane on Captain's Road westbound approach to Kaimes Crossroads
 - Extension of northbound bus lane on Duddingston Park (A6106) northbound approach to Milton Road (A1)
- Bus lane on Linkfield Road between racecourse and Musselburgh High Street
- Parking/waiting restrictions on Prestonpans and/or Tranent High Streets to ease congestion and reduce delays to buses
- Split bus stop outside Musselburgh Police Station into two stops.

