

13 October 2021

Stephen Hosking
Assistant Transport Planner
Transport Planning
Strategy & Infrastructure
Place & Community
Slough Borough Council
Observatory House
25 Windsor Road
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Dear Stephen

On behalf of Thames Valley Buses, I would like to add our general support for the bus lanes along the A4 corridor. The bus lanes have had a noticeable effect on journey times and punctuality, which has been more evident as we move out of lockdown measures.

The opening of the bus lanes prompted us to revise our timetables and reduce our running time between Slough and Langley on services 702 and 703 by two minutes in each direction from November, a saving of over 16% on this leg of the journey. Whilst modest, this is a benefit of over two hours each day, and with average patronage of 30 passengers, this becomes some considerable benefit in total.

However, we were disappointed by the changes made in December 2020 to modify the bus lanes from 24 hour operation to peak hours only. Transformational change in travel habits post Covid are suggesting that traditional peak periods are less spiked and there are more off-peak movements than previously. Timed operation is more confusing and bus lanes are most effective when there is no ambiguity around their use. The eased restrictions have led to an increase of mis-use which defeats their objective of providing reliable journey times for scheduled public transport.

The same applies to allowing private hire vehicles to use the lane, as it will give the impression of the lane being available to general traffic, and will reduce many of the benefits that it is aiming to achieve.

We need to make public transport journeys as attractive as possible to help encourage people to switch from less sustainable means, leading to the ideal outcome of reduced congestion and pollution.

Kind regards
Simon Fisher
General Manager