South Gloucestershire Council

Your questions answered

13 December 2024

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Background

What are the improvements and who will be responsible for delivering them?

Our aim is to transform the A432 and A4174 route between Yate and the Coldharbour Lane junction, providing residents and visitors with better options for buses, walking, cycling, and using wheelchairs or pushchairs.

The scheme will deliver:

- Upgraded bus stops to improve accessibility and convenience.
- High-quality facilities for walking, wheeling (using wheelchairs, scooters, or pushchairs), and cycling along the route.

This project is part of a wider programme led by South Gloucestershire Council to enhance sustainable travel across the region. By linking to existing and planned tracks and paths, the improvements will help create an integrated network, making more destinations accessible via sustainable travel options.

The scheme is funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) Fund, managed by the West of England Combined Authority.

For further information on the CRSTS Fund, please visit the West of England Combined Authority's project webpage here.

Further information on the improvements can be found on scheme's website.

Why are you making these improvements along this route?

The A4174 ring road is an important local road, handling thousands of vehicle movements every day. It connects communities, provides access to amenities, and serves as a key route for people travelling to work, school, or college.

This ring road also supports major employers such as the MoD, the Bristol and Bath Science Park, and the UWE. Additionally, it acts as a critical link to Bristol city centre, surrounding towns and villages, and the wider motorway network.

Currently, provision for walking, wheeling and cycling along the A4174 consists of a shared use path that is not suitable for all users. Many people rely on their cars, even when they'd prefer not to, because other options may feel unsafe.

Feedback from the community has provided insight into the views of local people. In our consultation in spring 2022, you told us that:

- Shared paths feel unsafe for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Segregated paths would encourage more people to walk or cycle.
- Viable alternatives to cars would lead to more people choosing active travel and public transport.

This scheme includes a series of improvements to address these concerns:

- **A new, separate two-way cycle lane and dedicated footpath** to provide safer spaces for all users between Coldharbour Lane and Bromley Heath Roundabout, where space permits.
- **Widening of the existing shared-use path** in some areas to give space for a range of users.
- **Improved crossings** and a new speed limit in certain places to enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- A **new bus stop, west of Wick Wick Roundabout,** to improve access to public transport.
- An **additional left-turn lane at the Coldharbour Lane junction** to ease traffic flow and reduce journey times.

We are investing in these improvements, to deliver a step-change by making walking, cycling, and public transport safer, more reliable, and more appealing – especially for shorter journeys.

We can't simply carry on as we are. Population growth and increasing road use mean we need to rethink how we travel. This scheme is part of a broader effort to improve sustainable transport options, making it easier and more desirable for people to choose alternatives to the car.

Encouraging people to swap car journeys for walking, cycling, or public transport there will be less traffic on the roads for those people who do need to travel by car.

Why do we need to spend money on walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport? Why can't you just fix the roads?

We need to do both.

Right now, travelling by car is a convenient choice for many journeys. However, relying heavily on cars comes with significant drawbacks:

- **Environmental impact**: Cars are a major source of carbon dioxide emissions, contributing to climate change.
- **Air quality and health**: Vehicle pollutants harm the air we breathe, affecting our health.
- **Traffic and delays**: Cars occupy far more road space than alternative options like public transport or cycling, leading to congestion.
- **Rising road repair costs**: More cars mean more wear and tear on roads, reducing funds available for other positive initiatives.

As our population grows, these challenges will only increase.

The region's population is projected to grow from 1.1 million in 2016 to 1.3 million by 2036. Without action, modelling predicts a 26% increase in road trips by 2036, leading to 40% longer delays on average—especially on key routes like the A4174.

Currently in the West of England:

- Two in three commutes are by car, largely due to limited alternatives.
- Two in five commutes are under 2km, a distance easily walkable or cyclable for most people.

Transport is the largest contributor to local carbon emissions, accounting for 32% of CO2 in the West of England (compared to 26% nationally).

These changes are part of a wider regional programme to make walking, public transport and cycling not only viable, but the preferred way of getting around – especially for shorter journeys.

The West of England Combined Authority has secured funding from central government to deliver projects that can make the biggest difference. Local councils are working together to create an integrated active travel network, improving access to cycling and public transport across the region.

The funding for this project is specifically allocated for new transport infrastructure. It cannot be used for other purposes such as:

- Filling potholes
- Funding bus services
- Supporting council services like social care, education, or libraries

Importantly, this project will not impact the budget available in South Gloucestershire for other council services.

Why is there so much focus on walking and cycling?

In 2020, the government introduced a long-term vision to make England a walking and cycling nation. This plan, called Gear Change, sets an ambitious target: by 2030, half of all journeys in towns and cities should be walked or cycled.

To achieve this, the government established Active Travel England (ATE), an organisation dedicated to driving this transformation. As part of its role, ATE evaluates and approves schemes like this one to ensure they align with the vision and deliver real benefits. It is a condition of the funding that ATE consider and authorise the scheme.

What does council policy say?

This scheme is part of a broader transport improvement package outlined in the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (2020-2036) for the West of England. Following a consultation in 2019, this plan was adopted as policy by local authorities in the region, including South Gloucestershire Council.

The Joint Local Transport Plan sets out the priorities for investment in the area including the A432 and A4174 corridor improvements. These enhancements aim to support walking, cycling, wheeling (using wheelchairs, scooters, or pushchairs), and improved bus services between Yate and Bristol.

Additionally, the West of England Combined Authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan identifies the A432 and A4174 as a 'High Priority Investment Corridor'. This designation reflects a commitment to working with bus operators through partnership agreements to deliver more frequent and reliable services along this key route.

Benefits to you

How will the scheme benefit me?

This scheme will provide a range of practical, health, and environmental benefits for local residents, both now and in the future.

New high-quality walking and cycling tracks will make it safer, easier, and more appealing to travel between communities along the route. These facilities will be designed for people of all abilities, ensuring everyone can enjoy improved access.

Encouraging people to swap car journeys for walking, cycling, or public transport will help free up space on the roads for those who need to drive. Without action, modelling from the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 predicts a 26% increase in trips on the road network by 2036. This would result in average delays per vehicle increasing by nearly 40%, with even greater congestion along busy routes like the A4174.

Walking and cycling have proven health benefits, helping to prevent long-term conditions and supporting active, healthy lifestyles. By making these options safer and more accessible, the scheme promotes better wellbeing for individuals while reducing demand on NHS services, saving millions of pounds each year.

Providing more travel options will encourage a shift away from car use, reducing congestion and emissions and improving air quality.
This will make it a more pleasant and healthier environment for those living near or travelling along the route.

How will bus stops be improved?

As part of the scheme, a new bus stop will be installed near the Wick Wick Roundabout, making public transport more convenient for people living and working in the Bromley Heath and Emersons Green areas.

We are working closely with the West of England Combined Authority, the region's public transport authority, to deliver on the commitments outlined in the Bus Strategy and Bus Service Improvement Plan. These improvements aim to enhance the accessibility and reliability of public transport across the region.

How will facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling be improved?

New segregated walking paths and two-way cycling tracks will be installed along the A4174 between the Coldharbour Lane junction and the Bromley Heath Roundabout. From Bromley Heath Roundabout to Wick Wick Roundabout, the existing shared-use path will be widened to enhance current facilities.

These improvements aim to make walking, wheeling (using wheelchairs, scooters, or pushchairs), and cycling safer, more accessible, and more attractive for everyone traveling between communities along the route. The facilities will be designed to suit people of all abilities.

Additional safety measures include reduced speed limits in certain areas to support increased walking, cycling, and wheeling.

New or upgraded crossing facilities will also be provided along the A4174 to improve access to bus stops and the new walking and cycling tracks. All improvements will adhere to the Department for Transport's Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance (Local Transport Note 1/20), ensuring high-quality, safe, and user-friendly infrastructure.

How will safety be improved?

Safety will be enhanced through the introduction of segregated facilities for cyclists, reducing the risk of collisions between cyclists and vehicles. Wherever possible, the cycle tracks will also be separated from footways and bus stops, minimising the potential for conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians, including waiting bus passengers.

New crossing facilities will be designed in line with the Department for Transport's Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance, prioritising safety for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Additionally, speed limit reductions along the route will help create a safer environment for all road users.

How will accessibility be improved?

Wherever possible, separation of cyclists from pedestrians will improve safety and accessibility for all. In areas where shared spaces are unavoidable, clear signage will remind cyclists to give way to pedestrians.

Dropped kerbs, tactile paving, clear road markings, and signage will be used at crossings to ensure improved accessibility for wheelchair users, as well as deaf and blind people.

How will the improvements affect air quality?

Schemes like this are necessary to make walking or travelling by bike or on a bus safer and more viable. In encouraging more people to use active and sustainable ways of travelling for more of their journeys – especially short trips – we can reduce use of cars.

This will improve air quality. Enhancements to the Coldharbour Lane junction will also improve air quality by reducing queuing traffic at peak times.

Listening to you

How have you considered my views?

In early 2022, we invited your feedback on proposals for the A432 and A4174 route. Your responses were carefully analysed and have played an important role in shaping the detailed design of the scheme.

Key feedback and our response

- **Segregation of pedestrian and cycle traffic:** You agreed with the need for the scheme and highlighted concerns about safety when pedestrians and cyclists share

the same paths. In response, we have included dedicated segregated spaces for each group in the designs.
- **Improved pedestrian crossings:** You expressed a desire for more crossing points to enhance pedestrian safety. We are introducing improvements to crossings at multiple locations along the route, including the addition of a new crossing at Wick Wick roundabout.
- **Bus stop proposals:** Concerns were raised about the earlier proposal to install new bus stops near the Bromley Heath roundabout. You told us they were not suitably located and would be difficult for local people to access. Based on this feedback, the bus stop proposals have been removed from the scheme.

For more information about the results of the consultation visit:
Yate, Chipping Sodbury, A432 and A4174 improvements - South Gloucestershire Online Consultations

A second public consultation took place in 2023 and found there was majority support for all the measures included within the proposals, except for the proposed speed limit changes. Local residents and people who travel by walking, wheeling or bike and bus passengers are especially supportive of the changes. However, support was not unanimous, and many people hold strong opposing views.

Key feedback and our response

- **Segregation of pedestrian and cycle traffic:** As with the 2022 consultation, you agreed with the need to create a new cycleway (or widening existing cycleways/shared use paths) in order to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists. To do this, the scheme has been designed in a manner that caters for a 3m wide bi-directional cycle track, 2m footway and 0.5m separator between the path and carriageway. This conforms to relevant guidance, as set out in Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20)
- **Improved crossings:** You expressed support for new crossings and upgrading existing ones to allow pedestrians and wheelchair users to get where they need to more quickly and safely. Your feedback highlighted that local people would be the main beneficiaries of these changes. Where crossings have been upgraded, these have been designed to allow for separation (where viable) of both cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Speed restrictions:** You questioned the requirement for speed limit changes and cited limited enforcement and vehicle speeds being far lower than the speed limit at peak times as additional reasons for why a change is not required. To enable the introduction or widening of cycleways, as supported by the majority of respondents, the scheme must be designed to conform to LTN 1/20. This places a minimum width restriction and speed limit when designing footpath, cycle path and buffer widths adjacent to the carriageway.
- **Congestion:** The most opposed are people who drive along the route, who are frustrated by current levels of congestion and do not want any further disruption to their journeys. The Coldharbour Lane junction was cited as a congestion hotspot.

Introducing a new-two lane exit should help alleviate this, with more people being in support of this measure than against.
- **New bus stop:** You expressed support for a new bus stop near to Wick Wick roundabout and feedback around where this should be sited has been considered in designs.

For a summary of the consultation findings and a detailed explanation of how your feedback has influenced the updated designs, visit our consultation homepage.

Why are you informing people now so close to the start date of the project?

We have worked hard over the past few years to ensure that residents and businesses are aware of the project to improve the A4174, with multiple rounds of consultation and publishing updates as regularly as possible. Whilst we want to inform people as early as possible of potentially disruptive work in their area, we must also work within the timescales of our contractors, with changes possible at short notice.

We want to see the project completed sooner rather than later to minimise disruption in the long-term and are now moving forward at pace to deliver these much-needed highways improvements.

The CRSTS project has a specific timescale for delivery, with all projects funded through to March 2027. To ensure these timescales are met, construction is planned to start in early 2025 for the A4174.

The improvements

Why is a two-way cycle track with segregated pathway being installed along the A4174?

Where space permits, we aim to provide separate paths for cyclists, pedestrians, and other slower-moving users to improve safety and accessibility.

An exception to this approach is the section between the Bromley Heath roundabout and Wick Wick roundabout, where the existing shared-use path accommodates equestrians. In this area, the path will be widened to safely cater to cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians together.

The new cycle tracks, between Coldharbour Lane and Bromley Heath Roundabout will largely be two-way, allowing cyclists travelling in both directions to pass each other safely. These improvements are designed to reduce the risk of collisions, minimise delays for cyclists, and create a more pleasant experience for all users.

Why are there shared-use paths in some places?

In certain areas, space constraints mean it is not possible to provide separate paths for cyclists and pedestrians. In these locations, shared-use paths are being installed to ensure there is enough width for everyone to use the route safely and comfortably.

The existing shared-use path between the Bromley Heath roundabout and Wick Wick roundabout will also be retained and widened, as it accommodates equestrians, and their access needs to be maintained.

Additionally, short sections of shared-use path are being included near pedestrian and cyclist crossings. These sections are designed to make it easier for all users to navigate the crossings seamlessly.

Why are you reducing speed limits in some places?

Speed limits are being reduced in the following specific locations along the route to improve safety and encourage more walking and cycling:

- **Bromley Heath roundabout**: Reduced from 50mph to 40mph
- **Hambrook junction**: Reduced from 50mph to 40mph
- **M32 J1 to Coldharbour Lane**: Reduced from 50mph to 40mph
- **Coldharbour Lane to Abbey Wood roundabout**: Reduced from 50mph to 40mph

Reducing speeds is especially important where roads are narrower, and there is less separation between cyclists and vehicles. Slower traffic speeds help to maintain safety for all road users, including cyclists.

Legislation directs what speed limits should be implemented where this separation is not possible. The table below illustrates the distances and speeds required.

Table 6-1: Minimum recommended horizontal separation between carriageway and cycle tracks*

Speed limit (mph)	Desirable minimum horizontal separation (m)	Absolute minimum horizontal separation (m)
30	0.5	0
40	1.0	0.5
50	2.0	1.5
60	2.5	2.0
70	3.5	3.0

*Separation strip should be at least 0.5m alongside kerbside parking and 1.5m where wheelchair access is required.

Table from LTN 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design (DfT, July 2020)

Why are you installing a new bus stop?

As part of the West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan, the A4174 has been identified as a site in need of improvements for bus infrastructure.

We investigated the potential for three new bus stops along this route. We are taking forward the stop west of the Wick Wick roundabout, which helps connect local residential properties to bus services improving access to Bromley Heath and Emersons Green. The other two proposed locations have been removed from the scheme as they were less likely to be used given the distance and long walk from houses.

Why are you installing new crossings at the Wick Wick roundabout?

We aim to make it safer and easier for pedestrians and cyclists to cross this busy roundabout. New crossings are being installed on the A432 arm of the roundabout to connect existing shared-use paths with the upgraded walking and cycling routes along the A4174.

More information on the types of crossings is available in the detailed designs.

Why are you changing the road layout on the A432 arm of the Wick Wick roundabout?

During peak times motorists experience congestion and delays to their journeys when traveling from the A432 Badminton Road onto the Wick Wick roundabout. To help alleviate this issue, we are introducing two lanes for vehicles travelling southbound onto the roundabout, following the re-opening of the M4 overbridge, with one lane northbound, towards Yate.

Why are you changing the Coldharbour Lane junction?

The Coldharbour Lane junction is heavily congested during peak times. The introduction of an additional left-turn lane seeks to reduce the impact of left-turning vehicles towards UWE. Having two left-turn lanes at this busy junction will reduce congestion and journey delays currently experienced by other motorists who want to continue travelling along the A4174.

How will the improvements affect journeys by other vehicles (including motorcycles, cars, vans, lorries)?

The improvements are not expected to impact on other road users, although there will be some disruption during the construction phase. Upon opening, it is anticipated that changes to the Coldharbour Lane junction will help improve traffic flow.

Why are the cycle tracks not being extended further west along the A4174 towards Filton?

This scheme seeks to build a link for sustainable modes between Yate and Coldharbour Lane, providing a defined geographical scope of works.
The council will continue to develop proposals to support walking, cycling and bus travel across the council area and will bring these forwards as part of the wider programme to enhance sustainable travel across the region.

What is happening at the Hambrook Junction?

In 2019 a national assessment of local authority roads identified the A4174 ring road between the M32 Junction 1 and the Bromley Heath roundabouts as being above the annual mean limit value for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) 40 µg/m3 (micrograms per cubic metre).

We were required by government to assess if there were any actions that could be taken to reduce the high NO2 to meet the legal limits in the shortest time possible, where some restrictions to traffic movements were put in place.

This junction is still being monitored by the Government Joint Air Quality Unit and therefore no changes can be implemented at this junction. Earlier proposals for a new bus gate at this site have been removed from the scheme as a result of this, however tie-ins will be implemented either side of the junction.

You can read the latest on the Hambrook junction on our website at https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/hambrook-lights-changes-to-traffic-movements/

Construction

How much will these changes cost?

The current allocated budget for the entirety of the A432 and A4174 scheme is £34.7 million.
The A4174 was successfully awarded £15.32m of CRSTS funding to deliver the scheme by January 2026 by the West of England Combined Authority, following the development of the Full Business Case, in September 2024. Further details can be found here: Agenda for West of England Combined Authority Committee on Friday, 20th September, 2024, 1.00 pm - Modern Council.

Where is the money coming from to pay for these improvements?

Funding for the improvements is being provided by the West of England Combined Authority's funding from Central Government, via the City Region Sustainable Transport

Settlement, and will not impact on funds available in South Gloucestershire for other council services.

The financial restrictions on public spending mean that capital funding from Government (such as this funding opportunity) must be spent on improving highway assets and cannot be used for other purposes such as:

- Filling potholes
- Funding bus services
- Supporting council services like social care, education, or libraries

When will construction take place and how long will it last?

Construction is planned to commence in early 2025 and be completed by the end of 2025.

How will roadworks during construction affect journeys along the A432 and A4174?

South Gloucestershire Council is working to minimise disruption to traffic and maintain access to properties. We are awaiting confirmation of an exact construction schedule including a start date. Once this is available, we will provide a more detailed programme including traffic management arrangements as part of our ongoing community engagement.

We realise these works will have an impact on users of the A4174 and other routes, and we are doing everything we can to minimise disruption and delays while construction takes place. However, this needs to be balanced with ensuring safety for the public and workforce around work sites.

Why aren't you progressing the A432 now while the Badminton Road M4 overbridge is closed?

The A432 Full Business Cases have been submitted to the West of England Combined Authority for review.

If approved, it is anticipated that works on the A432 will commence from Spring 2025, as the overbridge closure provides an opportunity to progress proposals whilst vehicle volumes are low in this area.

Will any bus routes or timetables be changed as a result?

No changes to bus services are proposed as part of the scheme, other than through the provision of an additional bus stop, west of Wick Wick roundabout.

The Combined Authority is working with operators to establish an Enhanced Partnership to improve bus services across the West of England which will cover both commercially operated services and those operated with financial support from the Combined Authority.

A list of supported services is provided at Appendix 2 of the West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan. Any future changes to bus services will be consulted upon separately by the relevant operators and the Combined Authority.

How does the scheme fit in with the council's declared climate emergency and carbon targets?

Since declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, the council has been taking urgent action to minimise environmental damage, prepare for the local impacts of climate change, and reduce carbon emissions. Transport is a major contributor to carbon emissions and represents the largest source of emissions in our district.

To address this, we are committed to delivering a step-change towards walking, cycling, and public transport as not just viable options but the preferred ways to travel—especially for shorter journeys. Achieving this requires making these alternatives to car travel safer, more reliable, and more convenient. This scheme is a key part of our investment in sustainable transport.

We are committed to developing this project in a way that reduces environmental impact wherever possible. A tailored Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will be created to protect and enhance biodiversity and the local landscape during and after construction.

The project will also include a carbon management process during design and construction, aiming to reduce carbon emissions wherever possible. The scheme's carbon performance will be calculated, assessing potential emissions savings from road user changes, such as mode shift to walking, cycling, or public transport, against the capital carbon costs of construction. These findings were included in the business case submitted to the West of England Combined Authority.

How do the improvements take into account the COVID-19 pandemic and changing travel attitudes and behaviours?

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on travel behaviour, with significant increases in journeys on foot or by bike.

During the first lockdown in March and April 2020, car and bus journeys declined sharply, and further decreases were observed during subsequent lockdowns in September 2020 and January 2021. The reduction in vehicle traffic led to widely welcomed improvements in air quality, congestion, and noise pollution.

We want to embed and strengthen the positive behavioural shifts seen during the pandemic by providing genuine, safe, and convenient alternatives to car travel. These improvements encourage walking, cycling, and wheeling as viable options for everyday journeys.

Although bus journeys are gradually recovering, they have not returned to pre-pandemic levels as quickly as car trips, which has resulted in the return of congestion and delays for all road users. As bus usage is expected to continue increasing, improving bus services and infrastructure remains essential.

The scheme is designed to support long-term modal shift by improving facilities for walking, cycling, and wheeling, ensuring the behavioural changes brought about by the pandemic are reinforced and sustained over time.

Next steps and more information

What are the next steps for the scheme?

We are awaiting confirmation of an exact construction schedule including a start date from our contractors. Once this is available, we will provide a more detailed programme including traffic management arrangements as part of our ongoing community engagement.

How do I find out more about the scheme?

If you have any questions, please email A432-A4174-improvements@southglos.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can write to us at: Department for Place, PO Box 1954, Bristol, BS37 0DD.