

Guided Busway Update

June 2009

Welcome to the June 2009 edition
of The Busway newsletter from
Cambridgeshire County Council.



The busway hits national headlines as Cambridgeshire give it the thumbs-up

The first Cambridgeshire residents got a chance to glide along the guide in April as over 500 people tried out the system.

Initially 135 'golden tickets' that allowed two people to ride on the busway were up for grabs, but due to a huge number of people entering a draw for tickets extra trips were arranged with the help of Stagecoach, who will run most of the bus services on the busway.

Ticket winners got to test out a section of the track between Cambridge Regional College and Histon with the vast majority of people being impressed with how quickly buses travelled along the busway and how smooth the journey was.

Here is what just three people had to say about the trip:

Selena Chapman, 28, from Orchard Park, Cambridge, said: “The ride was very smooth. The Busway will provide me with a quick and easy journey into town and to Histon without having to use my car.” She added, “As the buses will run late into the evening, it will be a safe way to get home.”

Sheila Arnold from Cambridge, who was one of the people on the last passenger train to run on the old St Ives to Cambridge railway line, said: “I was very impressed with the speed and comfort of the trip, it was excellent. This will be an excellent addition to the public transport on offer in Cambridge.”

Chris Pope, 39, a resident of St Ives said: “Me and my family were very excited to see how we can get from St Ives to Cambridge using a fast, efficient and environmentally friendly form of public transport.”

Local and national media also had their first chance to test out the busway at the same time as residents. Local newspapers, radio and television news channels gave the busway rave reviews and it even featured on BBC national news.

Bob Menzies, Head of Delivery for The Busway, added, “This is a day we have all been waiting for. To see members of the public riding on the busway for the first time is fantastic, and we have had some very positive feedback.”



Final beam laid in St Ives

The final beam of the northern section busway track has been laid. The guideway from Cambridge to the new St Ives Park & Ride site is now complete, and on course to open in the late summer.

Bob Menzies, Head of Delivery for The Busway, said: “Completing this section of the guideway is a major landmark and we are right on track to open in late summer. It is an exciting time for the project and the site is a hive of activity. Platforms and shelters are being built and bike racks are being installed at stops.

And that is just a few examples. We are certainly on the home straight.”

The busway is going to give people in St Ives and Huntingdon a reliable, fast and frequent genuine public transport alternative to driving into Cambridge. It will take just 20 minutes on the busway to get from St Ives to the Science Park in Cambridge.

The photo above shows the gantry laying the last few beams towards St Ives, over the new viaduct that crosses the River Great Ouse.

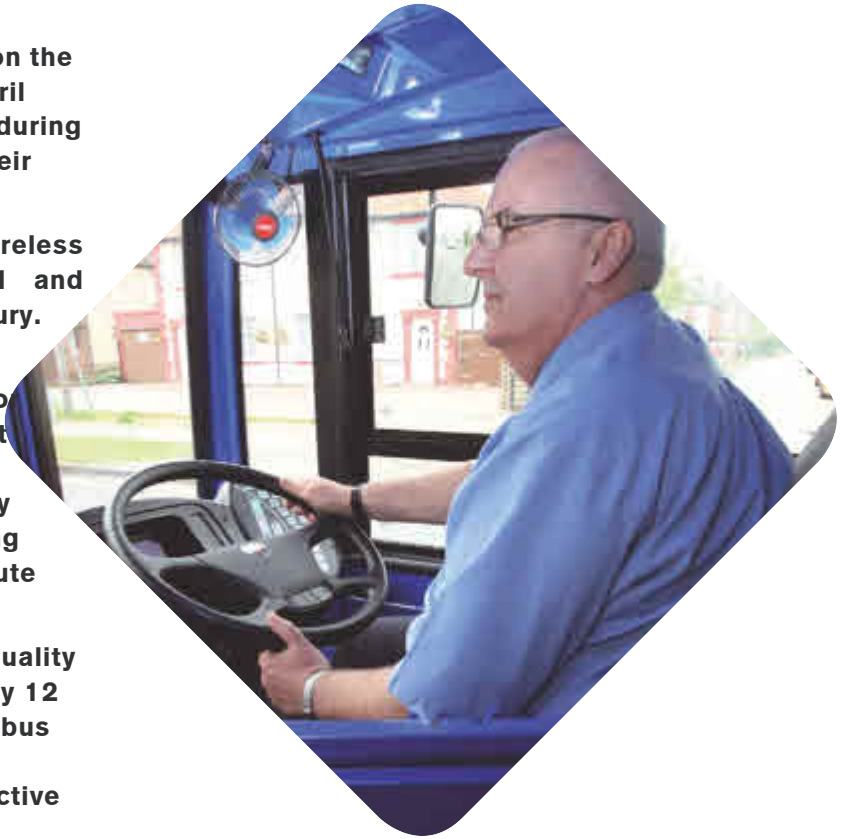
New buses hit the roads

The first new Stagecoach buses that will run on the busway were delivered at the beginning of April and put through their paces on the guideway during a two-week period when bus drivers began their training.

The new high quality buses feature free wireless Internet access, air conditioning/air chill and leather seats, so passengers can travel in luxury.

Philip Norwell, Commercial Director for Stagecoach, said: "This was an opportunity for our staff to experience the busway for the first time. They were instructed in the technique needed to offer a fast and comfortable journey for customers. It is part of the ongoing training that those chosen to drive this prestigious route will undergo."

To allow passengers to get used to the high quality new buses they began to be used from Sunday 12 April on Stagecoach's existing 15, 45 and 55 bus routes between Huntingdon, St Ives and Cambridge. You can spot them by their distinctive green and blue livery.



New bus and cycle lane opens on Milton Road

A new bus and cycle lane has recently been opened to help speed up journeys by bypassing congestion at the A14 end of Milton Road. This also marked the completion of works on the new junction that will help guided buses join Milton Road. Safety barriers have been improved, opposite where guided buses will join Milton Road, which will allow cyclists and pedestrians to have a safe and dedicated path.

New traffic lights have been installed at the new junction that will be connected and tested ahead of the busway opening in late summer. The lights will detect a guided bus approaching and give priority for it to join Milton Road. Traffic will only need to stop for 20 seconds.



Progress on works

Longstanton to St Ives

The final beam has been laid connecting St Ives to Cambridge. The guideway for the northern section is now complete. Finishing touches are now being made and testing will soon be taking place along the track.

Longstanton to Cambridge

The track in this section is complete and testing began during driver training in April. The bus stops along the route are being built with the raised platforms taking shape. The new stop at Oakington is on course to be the first stop to be completed. (The photo below shows the stop at Oakington, with the raised platform. Finishing touches are currently being made, including adding glass to the shelter).

Orchard Park Link

The foundations have been dug for the new link and foundation construction is at an advanced stage, with the concrete busway surface now being laid. The link will be completed by late summer when the busway opens between St Ives and Cambridge. There will be some temporary traffic management in operation at the Kings Hedges Road and Histon Road junction commencing mid June, so that the busway near the junction can be safely built.

Cambridge Railway Station to Trumpington and Addenbrooke's Hospital

The new bridge over Hobson's Brook is well underway with the supports that the deck will sit on complete. The bridge has been rebuilt so it is strong enough for guided buses to cross.

Foundation pads are being laid between Hills Road and Long Road in preparation for laying the guideway beams. The gantry that lays the beams will soon be dismantled and moved to begin laying beams on the southern section.





Update on road works

Hills Road Bridge

The final phase of piling work that restricts the bridge to a single lane is now complete. One lane in each direction will be kept open at all times until the work to construct the bridge deck is complete in late summer.

Work will then continue underneath the bridge, without disruption to traffic, to complete the underpass. This underpass will allow guided buses to travel from Trumpington Park & Ride to Addenbrooke's Hospital and the Railway Station in just four minutes.

A1096, St Ives Bypass

The work on the bypass is progressing well, and will be completed in the coming weeks. There will continue to be off-peak, single lane restrictions to complete this work safely. (The photo above shows the work on the St Ives Park & Ride taking shape, along with the bypass).

B1050, Longstanton

Work to create new access lanes to the new park and ride is due to be completed in late summer. To make it safer the road near the new park and ride entrance will be straightened out. The road will be restricted to a single lane when required to help complete this work quickly and safely. Single lane restriction will only be done when absolutely necessary.

Construction news in brief

The northern section of The Busway will be open late summer 2009. The timetable for the opening of the southern section will follow. As more resources become available from the northern section they will divert onto the southern section.

What's happening now?

The guideway running from St Ives to Cambridge is now complete.

Work on Milton Road, to make it easy for guided buses to get on and off the guideway is complete, and a new bus and cycle lane is now open.

On the southern section foundations for the guideway are being laid near Hills Road and Long Road so it is ready for guideway beams to be laid.

Finishing touches are being made to complete the new junction of the St Ives Bypass.

What's happening soon?

First new stop along The Busway complete at Oakington, followed by others.

CCTV will continue to be installed and tested at stops and junctions along the route.

Traffic lights will be set up to give buses priority at road junctions for when The Busway opens.

Buses will be testing more sections of the track between St Ives and Cambridge.

The surface of the Orchard Park link will soon commence being laid.

Final road markings will be added to the new park and ride site at St Ives.

How can I find out more?

If you want to know more about the guided busway project or if you have questions or concerns about anything to do with construction, please contact the guided busway team on 01223 716972, e-mail us on guidedbusway@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or write to us at

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Castle Hill
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There are also lots of details about the project on our webpages at

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/guidedbusway

If you would like a copy of the text in this newsletter in large print, Braille, audiotape or another language please contact the guided busway team using the details above.