

Arborfield Village Improvements Scheme – March 2022

The Arborfield Village Improvements (AVI) Scheme is the final stage of the delivery of the Arborfield Cross Relief Road (Observer Way) project by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC). The AVI is intended to deliver traffic calming and environmental improvements within Arborfield Village for local benefit.

A period of two years was set for the delivery of AVI as part of the planning consent for Observer Way, from the opening of the Relief Road in November 2020. As we are now well into 2022, we are pleased to confirm that this scheme is planned to be delivered within the set timeframe.

The first stage of planning for the improvements was in 2019, when residents of Arborfield and other interested parties were consulted on their priorities for changes and this was followed up with a workshop at Arborfield Village Hall which was very well attended and provided a high level of detail for the representatives from Wokingham Borough Council to work into a scheme.

The planned scheme designed by WBC went to a second consultation with residents and key stakeholders in August/September 2020, detailing the planned features and requesting feedback on each element. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with residents being strongly in favour of both the scheme overall and each of the detailed elements, and so the scheme was taken forward for review and approval by Highways and Planning at WBC, the Safety Audit Committee and Thames Valley Police. Once approved, the work was briefed to the WBC Highways Alliance partner, Volker Highways, for delivery.

The elements of the scheme comprise:

1. Village gateway features at the entries to the village on Reading Road, Sindlesham Road, Swallowfield Road, Eversley Road, including gateway signage and “dragons’ teeth” road markings
2. Priority workings (build outs) that favour traffic leaving the village on Reading Road, Eversley Road, Church Lane, Sindlesham Road and Swallowfield Road
3. Modal filter with turning heads, verge parking, and enhanced cycling access on School Road
4. Road narrowing at the approach to Eversley Road at the roundabout junction with Langley Common Road
5. Road marking alterations to visually narrow the carriageway on Eversley Road near Londis and the Village Hall
6. Speed restrictions of 40 to 30 on Reading Road, Church Lane, Eversley Road and Swallowfield Road, 50 to 30 on Sindlesham Road from near the junction with Church Lane, and 30 to 20 on School Road
7. Planting in areas where it can complement the existing tree planting to visually narrow the carriageway and grass and flowers by gateways and elsewhere to provide ecological benefits.

The delivery of the AVI scheme starts in the last week of June 2022 in Church Lane, moving onto Swallowfield Road then Reading Road, Mole Road and Eversley Road. The School Road work begins

in the last week of July 2022 to ensure it takes place during the school holidays. The roadworks are anticipated to be finished by the last week in August. The final element of the scheme is the planting, for which the ideal time is early October to give the new plants and trees the best chance of success.

We are very pleased to be able to confirm to you now that the Arborfield Village Improvements scheme, which is strongly supported by residents, is now just months from delivery. We would like to thank Angelica Posada Pulgarin, Graduate Civil Engineer at Wokingham Borough Council and Malcolm Pinto, Capital Programme Manager at Wokingham Borough Council for their focused and detailed work in delivering the project, achieving the aim of reducing the external traffic that passes through Arborfield Village, to protect the historic buildings and landscapes and make it a safer and more environmentally friendly place to live, go to school, work, and spend time.