



## Minister for Transport travels the Fastway



(Left to right) Minister for Transport Karen Buck; Fastway Champion Kay Hammond, Surrey County Council; Chairman of the Fastway Steering Group, Lt. Col. Tex Pemberton and Managing Director of BAA Gatwick, Paul Griffiths.

With construction work on the project now at an end, Minister for Transport, Karen Buck, visited Crawley and Horley, (Wednesday 22 February) hopping on board Fastway to take a tour of the high quality public transport system that links the towns.

Karen Buck met with the Fastway Partners during her visit, to congratulate them on the successful delivery of the Fastway route 10 and 20 service, and to mark the completion of a four year construction programme that has seen the introduction of sections of bus guideway, dedicated bus lanes and associated infrastructure improvements in the area.

Minister for Transport Karen Buck said: "I'm delighted to be able to join the Fastway Partners in celebrating the completion of the Fastway project. By providing quick, convenient journeys around the local area, the scheme has already been far more popular with passengers than anyone expected. This proves what we all know – that well thought out, reliable, integrated public transport can

provide people with a real alternative to the private car.

"I hope more and more people will soon discover the benefits of travelling by Fastway, and the scheme will continue to benefit local residents, visitors and businesses alike."

Lt Col Tex Pemberton, Chairman of the Fastway Steering Group and Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at West Sussex County Council said: "We are delighted to reach the end of the construction programme for Fastway and would like to say a big thank you to all the local residents and businesses for their patience and understanding during the works. We could not have achieved what we have without some unavoidable disruption to traffic and while there has been short-term pain, I hope that Fastway will now be of benefit to everyone in the long term.

"We have worked together to give this area of West Sussex and Surrey something that the rest of the Country is striving to achieve - a high quality, efficient and reliable bus service that offers real choice. A choice to use public transport every day of the week, where frequency is such that people can confidently leave their car at home when travelling around the local area."

Fastway Champion Kay Hammond, Surrey County Council said: "Fastway is a beacon for the intelligent, integrated transport so essential for the area's future development. While we are delighted that Fastway is now operating as we originally envisaged, this is just the beginning. We are already looking forward to see how we may be able to build on the success of Fastway, offering more people in the wider Horley, Redhill, Crawley and East Grinstead area a real alternative to the private car."

With construction for Fastway now complete, the Project Team will continue to carry out finishing works such as the commissioning of new traffic signals and tidying up the construction sites in Crawley and Horley. Landscaping and planting of new trees and shrubs will then take place along the Fastway routes in the spring.



**Fastway Partners chat through the highlights of the high-tech system**

## Why Fastway?

The result of several years of consultation and research, Fastway will help to combat the problems of high volumes of traffic travelling to and from home and work in Crawley, Horley and Gatwick.



### WHY A PART-GUIDED SYSTEM?

The Fastway Partners investigated several forms of public transport in developing the Fastway proposals, including tram and light rail. Studies confirmed that a part-guided bus system was the most appropriate for the area because it would be more cost effective, flexible, with faster delivery and minimum planning procedures.

By giving buses priority at traffic lights if they are running late, plus the use of guided sections, means that services can be protected from congestion and delay. The actual infrastructure is adaptable and has been varied to reflect levels of congestion. The system has also been delivered in a comparatively short amount of time. A tram system would have taken ten years to build and cost ten times as much!

A part-guided bus system offers greater accessibility by providing more penetration into residential areas and buses are not constrained by a costly fixed infrastructure and power supplies. Services can also be extended to other towns and locations in the future, adapting the network to suit local changes and demands.

Designed to have a competitive edge over the car for some journeys,

Fastway aims to offer people real choice and the infrastructure has been designed to benefit all users, including cyclists, pedestrians and fellow motorists. The system also complements existing rail, coach and bus services.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

Fastway aims to provide an alternative mode of transport that will help reduce the number of private cars on our roads, so protecting the environment and enhancing the quality of life for people who visit, live or work in the region. The Fastway fleet comprises low emission, low noise buses.



**A bus can carry the same number of people as 20 fully occupied cars or more than 30 cars at typical occupancy rates!**

### DESIGN

Perhaps best described as a cross between a bus and a tram, Fastway travels in dedicated bus lanes and specially constructed guideways, designed exclusively for use by Fastway vehicles. The physical guidance system is controlled through small guidewheels protruding from both sides of the bus that



locate the sides of the adjacent kerbing and automatically steer the bus. The system is necessary since a bus driver would find it very difficult to control and steer the bus smoothly through this very narrow section of dedicated guideway. When driving through the guideway, bus drivers are instructed not to steer but continue to keep their hands on the steering wheel in case of emergencies.

While bus lanes have been used for many years and provide buses with a dedicated lane so that traffic queues can be bypassed the benefits are greatly reduced through misuse by unauthorised vehicles and by illegal parking. Guideways shorten journey time by enabling Fastway buses to bypass traffic hotspots at major junctions, providing an effective means for buses to bypass traffic queues, without causing delay to other traffic. They are also self-enforcing, preventing unauthorised traffic from using them. The guideways are not required along all stretches of road where buses can travel unhindered in dedicated bus lanes.

### KEY FACTS

- the Fastway route stretches 24km
- there are several sections of guideway on the Fastway route, with a combined length of 1.5km
- there is over 5.8km of conventional bus lane on the route