

## **Response to Department for Transport call for ideas to support the development of an Integrated National Transport Strategy for England**

**Description:** The Department for Transport is developing a strategy which will set the high-level direction for how transport should be designed, built and operated in England over the next 10 years.

It will set out a single national vision which will put people who use transport and their needs at its heart and empower local leaders to deliver integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of their local communities.

*What is the name of your organisation?* Railfuture Ltd

*We would like to have further contact with you on this subject beyond this call for ideas. This communication will principally be by email.*

*You are:*

- *content to continue contact via email (specify email)* [roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk](mailto:roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk)

*What is the approximate total number of employees in your organisation?* None

*What best describes your organisation?*

- *Another type of organisation (specify)* National independent voluntary campaign

*In your opinion, how could the transport network be better 'joined-up'?*

As the transport network is the physical expression of a means towards achieving societal ends, aspirations and priorities as expressed through various levels of representative government – national, devolved, local – must be brought together in joined-up, cross-portfolio policy-making and decision-taking at all levels.

By way of example, given the new government's economic growth agenda and specifically its ambitious housing targets, alignment is vital between the investment decisions on the locations for new housing at scale – eg New Towns, a MHCLG portfolio – and on the locations for strategic sustainable transport capacity and connectivity – eg Transpennine Route Upgrade, East West Rail, a DfT portfolio. Tempsford may now be cited as an exemplar of what a successful joined-up transport network might look like.

If where people work is the other side of the economic growth coin to where people live then, using central government departments as role models for the application of the principle, departments in addition to DfT and MHCLG must become more overtly 'joined-up transport aware.' We therefore note with appreciation that the Department for Business and Trade has a Head of Rail.

*Data in the context of the next question can mean having better information about journeys, such as but not limited to departure times, journey planning, traffic information and accessibility information.*

*How could data be used to improve the transport network?*

Improving the transport network through better use of data applies at two levels, at least – users (freight / logistics as well as passengers), and providers (operators and planners).

From users' perspective, we suggest that data must increasingly be deployed to assist in the evaluation and improvement of passengers' and freight operators' journey experiences, the qualitative dimension as well as the essential quantitative dimension, in the face of increasingly-discerning customers presented with a growing array of choices.

[www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk) [www.railfuturescotland.org.uk](http://www.railfuturescotland.org.uk) [www.railfuturewales.org.uk](http://www.railfuturewales.org.uk)  
[www.railwatch.org.uk](http://www.railwatch.org.uk)

From providers' perspective, data to better inform not just current travel habits and experience but to better understand motivating factors behind travel choices, so that forecasting becomes a progressively more dependable quantitative analysis of historical data and statistical methods to estimate future trends, with greater accuracy and reliability over a longer timeframe.

*Technology in the context of the next question means new and innovative ways to complete journeys, for example but not limited to the use of autonomous vehicles, electric scooters and e-hailing rides. How could technology be used to improve the transport network?*

We welcome the spread of contactless payment and look forward to it becoming the new normal over coming years. One particular shortcoming which needs addressing urgently is the current inability to benefit from discounts offered for example through the range of railcards.

*How, if at all, would you improve the way decisions are made about the transport network?*

We look forward to the unitarisation of local government and the devolution of central government roles, responsibilities and resources to strategic authorities improving the way in which decisions are made about the transport network in a more policy-integrated, non-siloed environment which is responsive to regionally and locally-articulated priorities, nevertheless recognising the astute balances to be struck between them and national objectives as well as between economic, social and environmental considerations.

*Any other comments?*

As an organisation, we have understood this "Call for Ideas to support the development of an Integrated National Transport Strategy" to mean the development of an Integrated National Strategy for transport, not a national strategy for integrated transport, and have sought to frame our responses to questions accordingly. We note that the questions for members of the public lean more towards the latter emphasis, and trust that an amalgam of the two, plus feedback from frontline transport workers, will combine to give a comprehensive balance of perspectives which can be brought together into a coherent whole.