

Transport for the South East draft Transport Strategy Public Consultation – for Organisations

About your Organisation

Q What is the name of your organisation? Railfuture

Q What type of organisation do you represent? Third sector

Q I confirm that I am authorised to respond to this consultation on behalf of my organization Yes

Q What is your name? Roger Blake

Q What is your job title? Board Director, Infrastructure & Networks

Q Please tell us your email address roger.blake@railfuture.org.uk

Challenges

Since TfSE published its first Transport Strategy in 2020, the context has evolved significantly. National and local policy changes, intensified decarbonisation efforts, post Brexit trade dynamics, and shifts in travel behaviour due to the pandemic all present new challenges.

Our research has identified several key challenges that need to be tackled if the region is to succeed.

You can find full details of the challenges our region faces on page 6 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and from page 25 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Q Do you agree that the challenges we have outlined above are the right ones that the Transport Strategy should be seeking to address? Agree.

Q Do you think there are any other challenges we should consider? No.

Q Are there any other comments you would like to make on the challenges? No.

Vision and Goals

Our vision is to create a region that not only leads the way in sustainable, net zero carbon growth but also offers its residents, businesses, and visitors the highest quality of life.

This vision is supported by three goals, addressing the pillars of sustainable development: fostering a competitive economy, improving social outcomes, and safeguarding the region's natural and historic environment.

Together, these goals ensure that growth in the South East is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

You can find full details of our vision and goals on page 7 of the draft Transport

Strategy summary document, and page 35 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Q How strongly do you support the visions and goals in the draft Transport Strategy? Support.

Q Do you have any further comments on the vision or the goals? No.

Strategic Connectivity Mission

Connectivity refers to the speed, frequency, and ease by which people and goods move between places. TfSE's focus is on strategic and regional connectivity, as local connectivity is led by our local authority partners.

You can find full details of our strategic connectivity mission on page 10 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 44 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Strategic Connectivity Mission



We will boost connectivity in the South East by enhancing strategic regional corridors and ensure all communities can access high-quality transport links and key services.

We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ The connectivity of all the South East's strategic corridors – in terms of journey times and reliability – is comparable to those corridors that serve London.
- ▶ Key towns, cities, and international gateways are as accessible by public transport as they are by car, and rail freight is as competitive as long-distance road freight.

Short-Term Priorities

We will improve the existing network to better serve passengers and freight by:

- ▶ Enhancing incentives for long-distance public transport through optimised fares, flexible ticketing, and improved amenities.
- ▶ Refining timetables to cater to leisure travel demand and minimising disruption from maintenance schedules.
- ▶ Advancing key connectivity projects to improve regional transport links.
- ▶ Restoring international rail services from Ebbsfleet and Ashford to ease pressure at St Pancras.
- ▶ Expanding rail capacity to support growth at Gatwick and Southampton airports.
- ▶ Safeguarding critical areas and aligning policies to enable long-term transport improvements.

Long-Term Priorities

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to improve connectivity by:

- ▶ Upgrading the roads and railways serving the Brighton–Southampton coastal corridor to strengthen economic ties between the regions two largest built-up areas..
- ▶ Cutting journey times between London and less well-connected coastal communities.
- ▶ Improving ferry services to islands, including the Isle of Wight.
- ▶ Strengthening freight links from Southampton and the Channel Ports to the Midlands and North.
- ▶ Expanding rail connections to international gateways, including Heathrow and Gatwick.
- ▶ Reviewing the configuration of regional rail services to leverage opportunities at Old Oak Common.



Q How strongly do you support the strategic connectivity mission in the draft Transport Strategy? Strongly support.

Q How important are the key outcomes of the strategic connectivity mission to your organisation?

Journey time and reliability on strategic corridors is comparable to those serving London – **very important.**

Key towns, cities and international gateways are as accessible by public transport as they are by car – **very important.**

Rail freight is as competitive as road freight – **very important.**

Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve strategic connectivity? Strongly support.

Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission? Advancing key connectivity projects to improve regional transport links.

Resilience Mission

The resilience of the South East's transport network is vital to the region's economic, social, and environmental well-being.

You can find full details of our resilience mission on page 12 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 52 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Resilience Mission



We will safeguard the South East's connectivity and enhance the reliability and resilience of our transport systems for future generations.

We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ The transport network delivers comfortable, reliable journeys between key towns, cities, and international gateways.
- ▶ The transport network has the capacity and agility to manage, absorb, and recover from major disruptions quickly, and when the risk of major failures occurring is reduced.

Short-Term Priorities

We will strengthen the current network's resilience by:

- ▶ Assessing road disruption impacts and securing sustainable funding for maintenance.
- ▶ Establishing long-term funding pipelines for infrastructure renewals.
- ▶ Strategically planning for future risks to enhance network adaptability.
- ▶ Advocating for consistent funding for maintenance and prevention projects.
- ▶ Coordinating with utility providers to minimise disruption from roadworks.

Long-Term Priorities

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to strengthen resilience by:

- ▶ Tackling rail bottlenecks in areas like Croydon and Woking to boost reliability on key corridors.
- ▶ Creating alternative routes, such as the Uckfield-Lewes line, to maintain connectivity during disruptions.
- ▶ Implementing the Kent Bifurcation Strategy to ease pressure on the Thames crossings and strengthen links between Channel and M25 – including improving Operation Brock and Stack.
- ▶ Resolving highway pinch points to improve flow for all users, including buses, boosting resilience to future risks.



Q How strongly do you support the resilience mission in the draft Transport Strategy? Strongly support.

Q How important are the key outcomes of the resilience mission to your organisation?

The transport network delivers comfortable, reliable journeys between key towns, cities and international gateways – **very important.**

The transport network has the agility to manage and absorb disruptions quickly – **very important.**

Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve resilience? Strongly support.

Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission? Creating alternative routes, such as the Uckfield-Lewes line, to maintain connectivity during disruptions.

Inclusion and Integration Mission

Creating an inclusive and integrated transport network should be a fundamental part of planning and decision-making. However, TfSE's engagement with socially excluded groups has revealed that many communities across the region still face barriers to access, putting them at risk of exclusion.

You can find full details of our inclusion & integration mission on page 14 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 60 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Inclusion & Integration Mission



We will create an inclusive, affordable, and integrated transport network across the South East, providing safe and seamless door-to-door connectivity for everyone.

We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Everyone can affordably travel where they need to go when they need to go.
- ▶ Customer satisfaction with all aspects of the transport network is high across all sections of society.

Infrastructure Priorities

We will target infrastructure upgrades by:

- ▶ Designing inclusive infrastructure to improve accessibility for socially excluded groups.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity in North and East Kent and East Sussex coastal areas to reduce social exclusion.
- ▶ Upgrading interchanges and providing step-free access at transport hubs for seamless connections.

Service Priorities

We will improve affordability and accessibility by:

- ▶ Offering affordable fares and concessions for vulnerable groups to improve accessibility.
- ▶ Simplifying fares with unified ticketing to lower costs and streamline journeys.
- ▶ Providing socially necessary transport to connect isolated communities with essential services.
- ▶ Implementing Bus Service Improvement Plans and exploring franchising models to better serve communities.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity to islands and peninsulas, focusing on the Solent and Medway.



Q How strongly do you support the inclusion and integration mission in the draft Transport Strategy? Strongly support.

Q How important are the key outcomes of the inclusion and integration mission to your organisation?

Everyone can affordably travel where they need to go and when – **very important.**

Customer satisfaction with the transport network is high across all sections of Society – **very important.**

Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve inclusion and integration? Strongly support.

Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission? Enhancing connectivity in North and East Kent and East Sussex coastal areas to reduce social exclusion.

Decarbonisation Mission

The UK Government, TfSE, and all local authorities in the South East are committed to achieving net zero transport emissions by 2050.

You can find full details of our decarbonisation mission on page 16 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 68 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Decarbonisation Mission



We will lead the South East to a net zero future by 2050 by accelerating the shift to zero-emission travel, incentivising sustainable travel choices, and embracing new technologies to reduce emissions and combat climate change.

We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ All surface transport trips made across the South East are net-zero emission by 2050 (at the latest).
- ▶ We have not exceeded our carbon budgets for surface transport by 2050.
- ▶ The South East is seen as a world leader in decarbonising transport.

Short-Term Priorities

We will accelerate the transition to low-carbon transport by:

- ▶ Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure for private and freight vehicles.
- ▶ Increasing the availability of electric and hydrogen vehicles through collaborating with industry.
- ▶ Supporting EV and battery recycling to reduce the environmental impact of EVs.
- ▶ Improving public transport and active travel infrastructure to provide attractive sustainable travel options.
- ▶ Transitioning bus, freight, and ferry fleets to zero-emission vehicles.
- ▶ Promoting integrated land use and transport planning to minimise unnecessary car travel.

Long-Term Priorities

We will solidify the transition to a zero-emission system by:

- ▶ Decarbonising rail through delivering electrification, battery, and alternative fuel trains.
- ▶ Promoting low-carbon infrastructure with sustainable materials and practices.
- ▶ Supporting Government in the event they commit to roll out national road user charging, providing a financial incentive for more sustainable choices while reducing congestion.
- ▶ Working with industry to deliver a decarbonised, resilient power networks for rail and electric vehicles.
- ▶ Advancing alternative fuels for aviation and long-haul freight.



Q How strongly do you support the decarbonisation mission in the draft Transport Strategy? Support.

Q How important are the key outcomes of the decarbonisation mission to your organisation?

All surface transport trips are net zero emission by 2050 – **important.**

We have not exceeded our carbon budgets by 2025 - **important**

The South East is seen as a world leader in decarbonising transport – **important.**

Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve decarbonisation? Support.

Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this. Promoting integrated land use and transport planning to minimize unnecessary car travel.

Sustainable Growth Mission

The sustainable growth mission aims to deliver prosperity without harming the welfare of future generations. It supports the UK Government's first mission, to “kick start economic growth”.

You can find full details of our strategic growth mission on page 18 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 76 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Sustainable Growth Mission



We will champion transport interventions that unlock investment opportunities, enable sustainable growth, and create healthy, vibrant, and well-connected communities.

We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Population growth and economic development in the South East is underpinned by sustainable transport and infrastructure,
- ▶ The South East has created well-connected communities with easy access to key services and employment opportunities.

Policy Enablers

- We will promote integrated land use and transport planning and enablers by:
- ▶ Concentrating development in areas with strong transport infrastructure.
 - ▶ Coordinating housing and transport planning across authorities.
 - ▶ Leveraging value capture and other mechanisms to forward-fund transport.
 - ▶ Using demand management measures to improve air quality and fund services.
 - ▶ Strengthening local planning capacity.

Transport Intervention Priorities

- We will prioritise essential transport projects to support sustainable growth by:
- ▶ Expanding concessionary schemes to make sustainable travel more affordable.
 - ▶ Developing mass transit systems in high-density areas to improve access and reduce congestion.
 - ▶ Enhancing Sussex Coast and Solent suburban rail services to compete with road travel.
 - ▶ Delivering Local Cycling Walking Improvement Plans and embedding active travel in all new developments..



Q How strongly do you support the sustainable growth mission in the draft Transport Strategy? Strongly support.

Q How important are the key outcomes of the sustainable growth mission to your organisation?

Population growth and economic development is underpinned by sustainable transport and infrastructure – **very important.**

The South East has well connected communities with easy access services and employment – **very important.**

Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve sustainable growth? Strongly support.

Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this. Enhancing Sussex Coast and Solent suburban rail services to compete with road travel.

Q Do you have any further comments on any of the five missions? No.

Global Policy Interventions

You can find full details of our global policy intervention on page 84 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Q How strongly do you agree that the global policy interventions are needed? Strongly agree.

Q Are there any other global policy interventions you think should feature in the Transport Strategy? No.

Delivery

The following tables outline the key actions TfSE must take out until 2030 to achieve our missions, and tackle known, cross-cutting delivery challenges.

You can find full details of TfSE's roles as part of our delivery plan from page 91 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Q How strongly do you agree with the actions that TfSE has set in the Delivery Plan? Strongly agree.

Q If you disagree or strongly disagree please tell us more about this? N/a

Indicators

There are a number of indicators we propose to use to measure the progress of the strategy.

You can view the full table of indicators on page 95 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

Q Are the indicators that we have identified the right ones to measure? Yes.

Q If you have answered 'no' above, please tell us more. n/a

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal represents a through assessment of the draft Transport Strategy? Agree.

Q Do you have any specific comments regarding the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal? No.

Overall Views

Q To what extent do you agree that the draft Transport Strategy sets out an ambitious yet achievable strategy to improve transport across the South East? Agree.

Q Are there any additional comments you would like to make on the draft Transport Strategy? The draft could not but the final version should reference the potential implications for the sub-national transport body and its new Strategy arising from the changes, and potential opportunities, coming through local government re-organisation and as a result of devolution – as best understood at the time the Strategy is finalised.