

North East Joint Transport Committee

Tuesday, 20th June, 2023 at 2.30 pm

Meeting to be held in the Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

AGENDA

Page No

1. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2023-2024**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**

Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form (to be given to the Democratic Services Officer). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2023** **5 - 10**
5. **Appointment of JTC Committees** **11 - 18**
6. **Programme of Committee Meetings 2023-2024** **19 - 24**
7. **North East Devolution** **25 - 104**
8. **North East Active Strategy - Approval to Publish** **105 - 192**
9. **Transport Plan Progress Report** **193 - 200**
10. **Bus Service Improvement Plan - Early Investments** **201 - 208**

11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Joint Transport Committee may wish to exclude the press and public during consideration of item 12 by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

12. Devolution Preparation - Professional Services

209 - 216

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 18 July at 2.30pm at Gateshead Civic Centre.

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NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

DATE: 18 APRIL 2023

Meeting held: Whickham Room, Gateshead Civic Centre

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor: M Gannon (Chair)

Councillors: E Gibson, A Hopgood, N Kemp and R Wearmouth

IN ATTENDANCE:

Statutory Officers: M Barker (Monitoring Officer – Transport)
P O'Reagan (Principal Accountant, NECA)
T Hughes (Managing Director, Transport North East)

Officers: J Bailes, J Blackburne, A Flynn, R Forsyth-Ward, J Fenwick,
A Graham, P Holmes, M Jackson, H Jones, L Keating, G Kelly,
S Lennie, T Male, C Mordue and E Reynard.

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Tracey Dixon, Councillor Carl Johnson, Councillor Graeme Miller and Councillor Glen Sanderson.

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

73. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2023

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

74. BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – FARES PACKAGE

The Committee received a report which outlined a Capped Fares Scheme to deliver cheaper and simpler bus fares in the North East. This report proposed a capped single bus fare for under 22 year olds. If agreed, the new under 22 capped fare will be introduced on 7 May 2023.

A variation to the Scheme will be presented to a future meeting of the Committee regarding the introduction of multi-operator, multi-modal day tickets which will coincide with the end of the capped £2 single fare scheme currently being supported by DfT.

Councillor Gibson felt that with the current cost of living crisis that this was a very good time to introduce the scheme.

Councillor Wearmouth agreed and added that the scheme would also encourage new passengers onto public transport, which would in turn would improve usage following the pandemic and ensure routes are properly utilised.

Councillor Kemp also agreed.

Councillor Gannon added that it was a really important step to encouraging behaviour change among young people.

Tobyn Hughes advised that a similar fare would also be introduced on Tyne and Wear Metro, and that this had already been agreed with the endorsement of members of the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee.

Councillor Hopgood believed that a streamlined fare scheme was a huge asset for the region and would encourage people to use more public transport. She added that region-wide schemes such as this were also hugely important and opened up more opportunities for employment and skills.

Councillor Gannon agreed and added that it is important that the region continues to work together to provide one public transport infrastructure.

Councillor Gibson asked whether the POP card would be the way for customers to access the Scheme. Heather Jones advised that as POP card was currently primarily used by passengers on the Tyne and Wear Metro, its use would not be required to access the Scheme – bus operators would apply the reduced fares to tickets sold in the usual manner.

Councillor Gannon put on record his thanks to Heather and the team at Transport North East for the hard work that has been put into developing the Scheme.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Approved the BSIP Capped Fare Scheme as described below and set out in Appendix 1;

- (ii) Agreed to delegate authority to the Managing Director, Transport North East, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, the Section 73 Officer and the Chair of the JTC to agree the individual reimbursement levels with each operator (shadow fare and ticket volumes);
- (iii) Agreed to delegate authority to the Managing Director, Transport North East, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 73 Officer, to review and adjust the shadow fare and ticketing volumes as required at the 6-month and annual review points;
- (iv) Agreed to delegate authority to the Managing Director, Transport North East, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 73 Officer, to carry out and agree any financial hardship discussions with operators throughout the life of the scheme;
- (v) Agreed to delegate authority to the Managing Director, Transport North East, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 73 Officer, to carry out and agree any additional costs that operators can demonstrate are due to the implementation of the Capped Fare Scheme;
- (vi) Agreed to delegate authority to the Managing Director, Transport North East, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 73 Officer, to make the periodic (every 4-weeks) payments to operators for participating in the Capped Fare Scheme.

75. TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on progress made across a number of Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

A celebration event to mark the arrival of the Tyne and Wear Metro's first new train took place on 17 March 2023, with Transport Minister Richard Holden MP among the guests getting a first look at the new train, the first of 46 on order. The second unit for the new fleet has also arrived and delivery is progressing according to plan.

Due to issues with the reliability of the current 43-year-old Metro fleet, Nexus have taken the decision to temporarily withdraw extra peak time services between Pelaw and Monkseaton. The Committee were advised that the transition period into the introduction of the new fleet will be challenging. Regular updates will be provided to the Committee.

The draft version of Transport for the North (TfN) second Strategic Transport Plan (STP2) was approved by TfN Board on 23 March 2023. A twelve week period of public consultation on the Plan will be held between May and August, prior to final publication in January 2024. The Plan sets out transformative proposals to improve transport across the north including support for restoration

of the Leamside line and investment in key road links (including the A19) that are affected by congestion and poor journey time reliability. The Committee agreed to invite a representative from Transport for the North to brief the Committee at a future date.

Rail performance has improved in respect of some of the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) serving the region, although Transpennine Express and Northern Rail services continue to be affected by reduced performance. Improvements to the frequency of rail services from Durham to Tees Valley have been delayed until later in the year, however this is still welcome news.

The region is due to receive £249,660 from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Capacity and Capability Fund which is to be spent on increasing capacity and capability for the planning and delivery of EV Infrastructure. A further indicative allocation of up to £15,829,000 capital and £1,137,340 capability funding has been awarded under the LEVI Fund to support chargepoint delivery across the next two financial years (FY), between 2023/24 and 2024/25, and is dependent on suitable plans agreed by the Department for Transport.

A second round of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement funding was announced in the budget on 15 March 2023. As a Mayoral Combined Authority, the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority will be eligible for a share of the £8.8bn figure.

Councillor Wearmouth welcomed the update regarding the proposals within the TfN Strategic plan regarding the improvements to the A19 junctions and added that he continued to support any progress regarding the reopening of the Leamside Line. Both projects are very important for the region.

Councillor Wearmouth added that improvements to local rail services are required along the East Coast Main Line in Northumberland, especially at Berwick. Currently it is often quicker for passengers in Northumberland to travel to Newcastle and then back to Morpeth.

Councillor Gannon agreed with the comments and added it was important to continue to highlight all of the improvements required across the whole rail and road network which would impact on economic growth in the region.

Councillor Gibson asked for an update on the Tyne Pedestrian Tunnels and the Shields Ferry landing.

Officers advised that work continues on the completion of the inclined lifts at the Pedestrian Tunnels, and it is hoped that it will be completed later in the year. The Tunnels remain open to the public 24 hours a day and are very well used.

Funding opportunities continue to be investigated to enable the relocation of the Ferry landing at North Shields to the Fish Quay. The existing landing continues to be maintained and assessed. Officers are considering options for the funding

of this project and a report will be presented to the Committee at a future date regarding progress on this issue.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee noted the report.

76. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 20 June at 2.30pm in the Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre.

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20 June 2023

Subject: Appointments to JTC Committees

Report of: Monitoring Officer - Transport

Executive Summary

This report seeks:

- (i) The approval of the membership of the JTC Committees for 2023/2024;
- (ii) The reappointment of the Independent Chairs and Vice Chairs for the JTC Audit Committee and the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the JTC Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee;
- (iii) The reappointment of representatives to the Transport for the North Rail North Committee and Transport for the North General Purposes Committee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Agree the appointment of committee members and sub-committee members for the municipal year 2023/2024 as set out in Appendix A.
- (ii) Agree the reappointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the JTC Audit Committee for one year;
- (iii) Agree the reappointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee for one year;
- (iv) Agree the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the JTC Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2023/2024.
- (v) Agree the reappointment of representatives to the Transport for the North Rail North Committee and Transport for the North General Purposes Committee.
- (vi) Agree to delegate any changes to membership necessary to accommodate political balance, or appointments to any outstanding vacancies, on any of the

Joint Transport Committees to the Lead Chief Executive (Transport) following consultation with the Chair of the Joint Transport Committee to comply with the relevant legislation and ensure any vacancies can be filled as soon as possible.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 In accordance with the Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018 (the **Order**), the North East Combined Authority (**NECA**) and the Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (**NTCA**) have appointed the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) to exercise functions as specified in the Order.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Order, the Joint Transport Committee must appoint an independent person to be Chair of its Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There is no provision in the Order for a Vice Chair, however it was considered prudent when the Committees were established to plan for occasions when the Chair was unavailable.
- 1.3 The Joint Transport Committee agreed the appointments of the Chair and Vice Chairs for both Committees for a term of two years in 2019. The term was extended for a further year at the JTC AGM held on 14 June 2021.
- 1.4 The Joint Transport Committee must also appoint a Chair and Vice Chair for the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee at its annual meeting. The Chair and Vice Chair must be members of the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee.

2. Joint Transport Committees and Sub-Committees - Municipal Year 2023/2024

- 2.1 Listed below are the JTC Committees for the municipal year 2023/2024:
 - JTC Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee: focuses on the Tyne and Wear area;
 - JTC Audit Committee: this Committee is a key component of the corporate governance arrangements and is an important source of assurance about the Joint Transport Committees arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment; and reporting on financial and other performance; and
 - JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee: providing effective scrutiny arrangements, ensuring accountability and transparency of decision making for the Joint Transport Committee.
- 2.2 Relevant terms of reference of the above committees and sub-committee are set out in the Joint Transport Committee's Standing Orders.
- 2.3 The nominations for the membership of the committees outlined in this report for the municipal year 2023/2024, including substitute members where appropriate, are set out as Appendix A.

3. Proposal – Chairs and Vice Chairs

- 3.1 To ensure consistency in the roles it is considered appropriate to reappoint Mark Scrimshaw and Stuart Green as Chair and Vice-Chair of the JTC Audit and David Taylor-Gooby and Andrew Clark as Chair and Vice Chair of the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee for one year.
- 3.2 The Joint Transport Committee is also invited to appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee from the committee membership. JTC appointed Councillor Carl Johnson as Chair, and Councillor John McElroy as Vice Chair for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

4. Transport for North Rail North Committee and Transport for the North General Purposes Committee

- 4.1 A single member is required to represent the interests of both the North of Tyne Combined Authority and the North East Combined Authority at Transport for the North's Rail North Committee and General Purposes Committee.
- 4.2 At its meeting on 14 June 2022, JTC appointed Mayor Jamie Driscoll as its main representative and Councillor Martin Gannon as the substitute representative for the LA7 area to the TfN Rail North Committee.
- 4.4 At its meeting on 14 June 2022, JTC appointed Councillor Gannon as its main representative and Mayor Driscoll as the substitute representative for the LA7 area to the TfN General Purposes Committee.
- 4.5 It is proposed that Mayor Driscoll and Councillor Gannon be reappointed to the TfN Rail North Committee and TfN General Purposes Committee for the municipal year 2023/2024.

5. Reasons for the Proposals

- 5.1 The proposals will enable the Joint Transport Committee to operate effectively and in accordance with the Order and the Standing Orders.

6. Alternative Options Available

- 6.1 The proposals are set out in the recommendations of this report. The alternative would be that alternative members are nominated.

7. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 7.1 The committee structure will be published on NECA's website, the Joint Transport Committee page and all stakeholders informed, as soon as practicably possible.

- 7.2 Transport for the North will be advised of the appointments relating to the Rail North Committee and General Purposes Committee as soon as practicably possible.

8. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 8.1 The appointments will enable the Joint Transport Committee and its committees and subcommittee to properly discharge its functions, thereby assisting in the delivery on its objectives.

9. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 9.1 The provision of the support arrangements for the Joint Transport Committee is contained within the existing financial resources available. Any allowances paid to Members from the constituent local authorities in attending a committee will be a matter for each of the constituent local authorities and their respective remuneration panels.
- 9.2 Independent Members remuneration will continue to be paid in line with current arrangements.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Joint Transport Committee is required to make arrangements to enable relevant decision-making responsibilities, overview and scrutiny arrangements, audit arrangements and associated functions to be fulfilled. These responsibilities arise under the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 and the Openness of Local Government Body Regulations 2014, as well as the provisions for the Order creating NECA and the recent Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018. The proposals set out in this report comply with these requirements.

11. Key Risks

- 11.1 There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 The proposals comply with the principles of decision-making. Relevant consultation processes have been held where applicable.

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Appendix A: Confirmed Committees and Membership 2023/2024.

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018
- 15.2 The Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Combined Authority Order 2014 (SI 2014 No.1012) as amended by the Second Order

16. Contact Officer

- 16.1 Mike Barker, Monitoring Officer – Transport.
mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk Tel: 0191 433 2100

17. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service: ✓
- Monitoring Officer: ✓
- Chief Finance Officer: ✓

18. Glossary

JTC – Joint Transport Committee
NECA – North East Combined Authority
NTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership: 14 (8 Members from North East Combined Authority and 6 Members from the North of Tyne Combined Authority)

Authority:	Political Affiliation / Member	Political Affiliation / Substitute Member
Appointments from the North East Combined Authority:		
Durham	Councillor Chris Lines (Independent)	Councillor Joyce Charlton (Independent)
	Councillor Jake Miller (Labour)	Councillor Kevin Shaw (Labour)
Gateshead	Councillor John Eagle (Labour)	Councillor Maria Hall (Labour)
	Councillor Amanda Wintcher (Lib Dem)	Councillor Dawn Welsh (Lib Dem)
South Tyneside	Councillor Angela Lamonte (Labour)	Councillor Stephen Dean (Labour)
	Councillor David Herbert (Green Group)	Councillor Sue Stonehouse (Green Group)
Sunderland	Councillor Katherine Mason-Gage (Labour)	Councillor Tracy Dodds (Labour)
	Councillor Antony Mullen (Conservative)	Councillor Lyall Reed (Conservative)
Appointments from the North of Tyne Combined Authority:		
Newcastle	Councillor Thom Campion (Liberal Democrats)	Councillor Philip Browne (Liberal Democrats)
	<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
North Tyneside	Councillor Jane Shaw (Labour)	Councillor John Harrison (Labour)
	Councillor Rebecca O'Keefe (Labour)	Councillor Louise Marshall (Labour)
Northumberland	Councillor Cliff Humphrey (Conservative)	Councillor John Beynon (Conservative)
	Councillor Les Bowman (Labour)	Councillor Brian Gallacher (Labour)

Joint Transport Committee, Audit Committee

Membership: 7 (4 Members from North East Combined Authority and 3 Members from the North of Tyne Combined Authority)

Authority:	Political Affiliation / Member	Political Affiliation / Substitute Member
Appointments form the North East Combined Authority:		
Durham	Councillor Alex Watson (Independent)	Councillor Joan Nicholson (Independent)
Gateshead	Councillor Leigh Kirton (Labour)	Councillor Rachel Mullen (Labour)
South Tyneside	Councillor Ken Dawes (Labour)	Councillor Alex Donaldson (Labour)
Sunderland	Councillor Katherine Mason-Gage (Labour)	Councillor Tracy Dodds (Labour)
Appointments from the North of Tyne Combined Authority:		
Newcastle	<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
North Tyneside	Councillor Anthony McMullen (Labour)	Councillor Tommy Mulvenna (Labour)
Northumberland	Councillor John Beynon (Conservative)	Councillor David Bawn (Conservative)

Joint Transport Committee, Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee

Membership: 5 (1 Member from each Tyne and Wear constituent local authority from the North East Combined Authority area and North of Tyne Combined Authority area).

Authority	Member	Substitute Member
Appointments from the North East Combined Authority:		
Gateshead	Councillor John McElroy	Councillor Malcolm Brain
South Tyneside	Councillor Fay Cunningham	Councillor Stephen Dean
Sunderland	Councillor Graeme Miller	Councillor Claire Rowntree
Appointments from the North of Tyne Combined Authority:		
Newcastle	Councillor Jane Byrne	Councillor Alex Hay
North Tyneside	Councillor Carl Johnson	Councillor Sandra Graham

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20 June 2023

Subject: Programme of Committee Meetings, Municipal Year 2023/2024

Report of: Monitoring Officer - Transport

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to invite the Joint Transport Committee to agree a programme of committee meetings for the Municipal Year 2023/2024

The programme of meetings is intended to assist the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) in discharging its functions effectively. The programme has been developed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Joint Transport Committee agrees the proposed programme of committee meetings, as set out in Appendix A.

North East Joint Transport Committee

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018 (the Order) requires NECA and NTCA to appoint a Joint Transport Committee in accordance with Schedule 2 to exercise functions specified by the Order.
- 1.2 To support an effective discharge of those functions, the Joint Transport Committee is invited to approve a programme of committee meetings, as set out in Appendix A.
- 1.3 The proposed programme of committee meetings was developed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities and is based around key areas of work, effective reporting structure, efficiency and requirements of internal and external audit.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The Joint Transport Committee and its committees are advised to meet according to the programme of meetings set out in Appendix A.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The Joint Transport Committee is required to have an effective committee structure. The proposals would help the Joint Transport Committee to discharge its functions effectively.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Whilst the programme of committee meetings was developed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and no alternative options are proposed at this stage, a level of flexibility is required to enable the committees to add, rearrange or cancel meetings in accordance with demand.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 If agreed, the programme of meetings will be published and shared with key stakeholders.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 As part of decision-making processes, the Joint Transport Committee is required to have an effective committee structure. Having a programme of meetings will assist in the delivery of objectives.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 The proposed programme of meetings was designed to minimise costs whilst supporting effective governance.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 The proposed programme of meetings is aimed at assisting the Joint Transport Committee with the operation of an effective governance structure. A published programme of meetings supports the effective planning of business and decision making and supports openness and transparency.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

11. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 11.1 The proposals comply with the principles of decision-making.
- 11.2 The proposals were designed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix A: Programme of Committee Meetings, Municipal Year 2023/2024.

13. Background Papers

- 13.1 The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.

North East Joint Transport Committee

- 13.2 The Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Combined Authority Order 2014 (SI 2014 No.1012) as amended by the Second Order.

14. Contact Officers

- 14.1 Mike Barker, Monitoring Officer - Transport
Email: mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk; Tel: 0191 433 2100

15. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service: ✓
- Monitoring Officer: ✓
- Chief Finance Officer: ✓

16. Glossary

- 16.1 The Order - The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.
- 16.2 NECA – North East Combined Authority

Joint Transport Committee
Draft Programme of Committee Meetings
Municipal Year 2023-2024

Committee	Date / Time	June 2023	July 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	June 2024
Joint Transport Committee (Pre at 2pm)	Tuesday 2.30pm	20 AGM	18	19	17	21	19	16	20	19	16		18 AGM
Joint Transport Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee (TWSC)	Thursday 2pm		13	14		9		18			11		
Audit Committee	Wednesday 10am		26			8				13			
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Thursday 10am		27		26		14			28			

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20 June 2023

Subject: North East Devolution

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

A public consultation on the 'minded to' devolution deal for the North East ran from 26 January 2030 to 23 March 2023. The findings have been evaluated and summarised in a North East Devolution Consultation Report.

A report providing an update on progress on the proposed creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the region was taken to NECA Leadership Board on 6 June. The report sought agreement from the Board to support the proposals, which include the abolition of the NECA and North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) to allow the new mayoral combined authority to come into existence.

A copy of the NECA Leadership Board report and North East Devolution Consultation Report are appended to this paper.

The purpose of this report is to notify North East Joint Transport Committee of the findings of the public consultation.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the report.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 On 28 December 2022 HM Government announced a “minded to” devolution deal with the seven local councils across the North East (i.e. Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland).
- 1.2 The “minded to” devolution deal would see a significant shift of powers, funding and responsibility which would enable the Councils to pursue their ambitions for inclusive growth.
- 1.3 The deal requires the creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the region.
- 1.4 A public consultation on the “minded to” devolution deal began on 26 January 2023 and closed on 23 March 2023. A summary of the consultation process can be found in the appended NECA Leadership Board report.
- 1.5 In total, around 3,235 people or organisations took part in the consultation and a summary of feedback can be found in the North East Devolution Consultation Report appended to this report.
- 1.6 A report providing an update on progress on the proposed creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the region was taken to NECA Leadership Board on 6 June. The report sought agreement from the Board to support the proposals, which include the abolition of the NECA and North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) to allow the new mayoral combined authority to come into existence. The report is appended to this paper.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The North East Joint Transport Committee are requested to note the report.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The report provides North East Joint Transport Committee with a summary of the public consultation on the creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the North East region.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 The paper is for information. Therefore, there are no alternative options available. Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 Following approval from NECA Leadership Board, the NECA Head of Paid Service will take the steps required to facilitate the creation of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 The creation of a new mayoral combined authority will support all five of the North East Transport Plan objectives.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 Implementing the devolution deal would enable the region to access over £4bn of funding over a 30-year deal cycle. Over time the region would also expect to benefit from access to additional funding streams reserved for mayoral combined authorities. Detailed discussions will be progressed with the local authorities, NECA and NTCA regarding the financial arrangements associated with the transition to the new arrangements.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 To implement the deal, it will be necessary to establish a new mayoral combined authority which covers the area of the seven councils and replaces the two existing combined authorities in the region.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 It is considered that failure to establish the mayoral combined authority would risk the region falling behind other major city regions such as Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region and Tees Valley, which have received new powers and funding.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 It is not expected that the proposals described in this report will have any adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics.
The formation of the mayoral combined authority is expected to generate inclusive growth within the North East.

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 There are no known crime and disorder implications arising from the contents of this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

- 12.1 The North East devolution deal has been subject to a public consultation exercise as outlined in the appended reports.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 None known

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Appendix 1 NECA Leadership Board, 6 June 2023, North East Devolution
Appendix 2 North East Devolution Consultation Report, March 2023

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 North East Devolution Deal [North East devolution deal \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](http://northeastca.gov.uk)

16. Contact Officers

- 16.1 Tobyn Hughes
Managing Director, Transport North East
Tobyn.hughes@transportnortheast.gov.uk

17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

All abbreviations have been explained in the body of the report.

Leadership Board

Date: 6 June 2023

Subject: North East Devolution

Report of: Monitoring Officer (Core)

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress on the proposed creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the North East region and seeks agreement from the North East Combined Authority (NECA) Leadership Board to support these proposals, which include the abolition of NECA and North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) to allow the new combined authority to come into existence.

Recommendations

The Leadership Board is recommended to:

1. note the content of this report and the attached consultation report;
2. endorse the proposals to establish a new mayoral combined authority for the North East region (NEMCA);
3. agree that NECA be abolished as a necessary step to allow NEMCA to be brought into existence;
4. agree to consent to the order to abolish NECA and NTCA and create NEMCA; and
5. authorise the NECA Head of Paid Service to take such steps as are required to facilitate the creation of NEMCA.

Leadership Board

1. Background Information

- 1.1 On 28 December 2022 HM Government announced a “minded to” devolution deal with the seven local councils across the North East (i.e. Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland).
- 1.2 The “minded to” devolution deal would see a significant shift of powers, funding and responsibility which would enable the Councils to pursue their ambitions for inclusive growth. In total, it is expected to provide £4.2 billion of additional investment to the region over 30 years, including a £1.4bn investment fund alongside significant funding for transport, education and skills, housing and regeneration.
- 1.3 The deal requires the creation of a new mayoral combined authority for the region. This will be dependent on the Secretary of State making a statutory order under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 to deliver the following proposals:
 - a. the abolition of the two existing combined authorities, i.e. NECA and NTCA (NTCA covers the areas of Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland); and
 - b. the creation of a new mayoral combined authority which covers the area of all 7 Councils, which will be called the North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA).

These changes would also entail the abolition of the Joint Transport Committee as NEMCA would be responsible for the exercise of transport functions across the regions in the future.

- 1.4 As the first stage of the statutory process, the North East Councils undertook a governance review regarding the proposals set out above. The results of the governance review were reported to their respective Cabinets in January 2023. On the basis of the governance review, each Council’s Cabinet concluded that the proposals were likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in accordance with sections 108 and 111 of the 2009 Act. The North East Councils therefore agreed to progress to the next stage of the statutory process by publishing a scheme relating to the proposals and then carrying out a public consultation exercise.
- 1.5 The public consultation began on 26 January 2023 and closed on 23 March 2023. A report setting out how the consultation was undertaken, a summary of the responses received, and issues raised is attached at Appendix 1. The key findings of that report are highlighted at section 3 below.

Each Council’s Cabinet will consider a report regarding the consultation exercise at meetings scheduled for the week commencing 29 May. The report recommends that

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- 1.6 the Councils agree to proceed to the next stage of the statutory process which is to submit the consultation report to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will then consider whether the consultation is sufficient before deciding whether the relevant criteria in the 2009 Act have been met.

- 1.7 This means that the Secretary of State must be satisfied that making an order to abolish the existing combined authorities (NECA and NTCA) and create the new mayoral combined authority (NEMCA) will be likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the North East region. Furthermore, in considering whether to make the order, the Secretary of State must have regard to the need: (a) to reflect the identities and interests of local communities, and (b) to secure effective and convenient local government.

- 1.8 As detailed below, it is considered that the findings of the consultation exercise demonstrate that these criteria have been met and therefore each Council's Cabinet is recommended to submit the attached consultation report to the Secretary of State.

Overview of the consultation process

2. As set out above, the public consultation began on 26 January 2023 and closed on 23 March 2023. It provided information about how the devolution deal would be implemented and the proposed changes to governance across the region, and allowed residents, businesses and other stakeholders to comment on these proposals.
- 2.1 Opportunities to take part in the consultation included the completion of surveys, attending an event or by submitting written comments. In total, around 3,235 people or organisations took part in the consultation process, with 2,579 opting to complete an on-line or paper survey.

- 2.2 The survey contained five closed-ended questions asking respondents whether they (i) agreed, (ii) neither agreed nor disagreed, or (iii) disagreed with the proposals in relation to the following five themes:

- changing how the seven councils work together (governance);
- devolution of powers to create an integrated transport system for the area;
- devolution of new housing and planning functions;
- new finance and investment powers; and
- devolution of matters relating to skills, employment and adult education.

- 2.3 In addition, the survey also included six open-ended questions which provided respondents with the opportunity to give more detailed views on the proposals if they wished to do so. As well as questions on the devolution proposals, both the online and paper survey questionnaires included nine demographic questions.

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2.4 The online survey was available on each local authority's website and on both combined authorities' websites. People were also able to submit their views by using a paper copy of the survey questionnaire, which was available in a range of public venues across the region. Finally, respondents could also submit their feedback via a letter or email.

2.5 Fifteen public events also took place across the area (with at least one event in each local authority area). These were mainly in-person sessions and allowed people to learn more about the proposed devolution deal and to ask questions. Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire, QR codes and links to the online consultation questionnaire were also provided at the events for those participants who wished to use them. The events were publicised on all of the local authority and combined authorities' websites, social media and via the local media. In total, 357 people attended the public consultation events.

2.6 In addition to the public events, nine bespoke on-line briefing events were held with key stakeholders. In total 263 people took part. The events were:

- Regional Business Partners on-line event (27 January 2023)
- Northumberland Energy Central Steering Group (27 January 2023)
- Regional Education Partners on-line event (13 February 2023)
- Voluntary And Community Partners event (15 February 2023)
- Voluntary Sector Organisations' Network North East Employment on-line focus group (16 February 2023)
- Transport event (17 February 2023)
- North East Chamber County Meeting – Northumberland (8 March 2023)
- Northumberland Association of Local Councils (representing Town and Parish Councils) briefing (9 March 2023)
- Northumberland Youth Cabinet and Youth Parliament briefing (22 March 2023)

Key findings of the consultation report

3. As set out above, it is proposed that the Councils submit the consultation report to the Secretary of State so that the Secretary of State can consider whether the consultation that has been undertaken is sufficient and whether the statutory criteria for the making the necessary legal order have been met. An overview of the consultation outcomes is set out below with the detail contained in the report at Appendix 1.

3.2 *Overall support for the proposals*

3.2.1 The scope and breadth of the consultation has ensured that opportunities to take part have been varied to suit the different needs of both residents and local areas. This has resulted in a good response rate that has demonstrated support for the devolution proposals across the region.

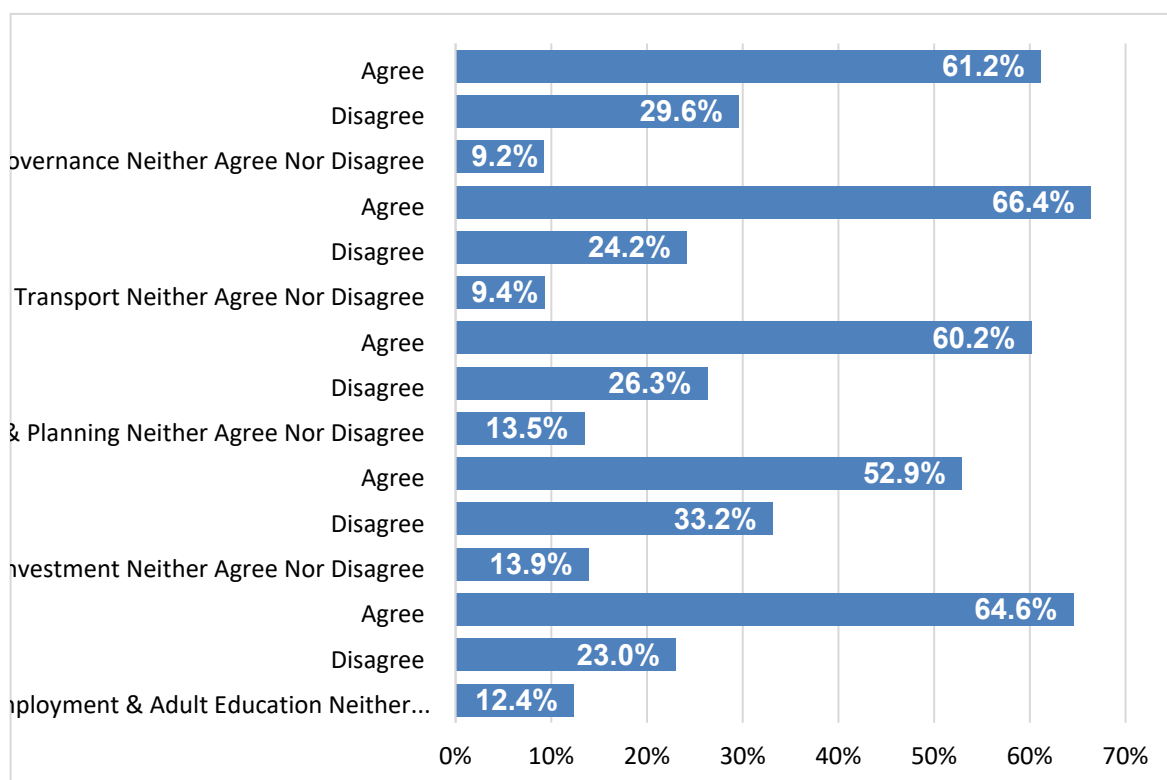
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3.2.2

The majority of responses from residents, businesses, the voluntary and community sector and other key stakeholder groups have been positive, and in agreement with the proposed governance changes as set out in the consultation. In addition, their comments have expressed strong support for the overall aims and objectives of the “minded to” devolution deal.

As set out over the page, the majority of responses have been positive for each of the five questions in the survey. There was particularly strong support for devolution around transport, skills, employment and adult education.

3.2.3



The table below sets out the number of responses to each of the above questions:

	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree
Governance	1595	772	239
Transport	1731	631	244
Housing and Planning	1563	684	350
Finance and investment	1373	860	361
Skills, Employment and Adult Education	1673	597	321

3.2.4 On governance, the responses have demonstrated support for increased regional power and local decision making through devolution together with the role of the Elected Mayor and the higher profile this will bring to the region as a whole.

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- 3.2.5 On transport, there was strong support and respondents felt that it made sense for areas to work together under a regional transport strategy and with an integrated transport system. People felt that the proposals offered a real opportunity to improve transport, particularly public transport.
- 3.2.6 On housing and planning, respondents felt that housing decisions for the region are best decided by local people and that they could see great potential for housing improvements, in particular the development of new affordable and social housing. There was also support for the opportunity that devolution created for improving environmental sustainability within housing.
- 3.2.7 On finance and investment, respondents felt that the proposals will create opportunities and improvement for the region as decisions can be made at a local level using local knowledge and appreciation of local need. There was support for devolution to attract strategic long-term investment that will improve the region.
- 3.2.8 On skills, employment and adult education there was strong support for the proposals with increased opportunities to work at a regional level to deliver on skills and training. Respondents felt that national delivery was too remote from local need and that the local authority level potentially could miss out on opportunities to create synergies across different partnerships, whereas working together at a regional level would provide this. Some respondents suggested further opportunities for regional working in this area in relation to education.
- 3.2.9 In addition, the comments from key stakeholders suggest there was recognition of the opportunity for the new Combined Authority and Elected Mayor to work closely together with others for the overall benefit of the region – for example with the Police and Crime Commissioners.

3.3 Areas of concern/objection

- 3.3.1 As reflected in the consultation report, a minority of respondents did not support the proposals. The key concerns which they raised – together with responses to these concerns - are set out below:
- a perception by some that the governance proposals would lead to greater bureaucracy and cost for local residents – it is considered that, to some extent, this may be based on the view that there will be another layer of local government that might duplicate the role of individual local authorities which is not the case;
 - the role of the Elected Mayor – this was considered in the Governance Review and the benefits of the “minded to” deal are dependent on moving to a mayoral combined authority. The proposals in the scheme which was published as part of the consultation process set out clearly the role and powers of the Elected Mayor

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but it will be important that these aspects are very clearly communicated to the public and other stakeholders going forward, particularly in the context of the mayoral election;

- some people have commented on the need for all areas (i.e. towns, cities and more rural areas) in the region to benefit from devolution – it is submitted that the “minded to” deal aims to achieve exactly that as it is intended to be a deal for the whole of the region;
- a minority of people have commented that the public should have had an opportunity to express a view on the “minded to” deal itself rather than the governance proposals – on this point, the proposals have been progressed in accordance with the requirements of the 2009 Act and the consultation exercise allows members of the public to express their views on the proposals as a whole since the changes to governance are needed to allow the “minded to” deal to be implemented.

3.3.2 In conclusion, the report to each Council’s Cabinet observes that none of the above issues represents a fundamental concern in terms of moving forward with the proposals but these issues will be taken into account when implementing the proposals and establishing the new Combined Authority. This will include the need for clear communication throughout with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders. In addition, it will be important to work effectively, efficiently and in partnership, with clear accountability demonstrated through the new Combined Authority’s Elected Mayor and Cabinet’s decision-making processes in line with the published scheme.

3.4 Summary

- 3.4.1 In terms of the statutory process, the governance review carried out by the North East Councils concluded that the creation of a new mayoral combined authority would meet the necessary statutory criteria under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, namely that it would improve the exercise of statutory functions across the region. It was on this basis that the North East Councils agreed to publish a scheme for the delivery of these governance changes and carry out the consultation exercise described in this report.
- 3.4.2 As set out above and in the appended consultation report, the public consultation has been extensive, and it is considered that the responses to that consultation support the view that the proposed governance changes would meet the statutory criteria mentioned above. On that basis, each Council’s Cabinet is being recommended to agree that it is satisfied that the consultation has been sufficient for the purposes of the legislation and that the statutory criteria have been met, and therefore to agree that the consultation report should be submitted to the Secretary of State.



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- 4.1 In order to establish the new regional NEMCA, the existing combined authorities – NECA and NTCA – will need to be abolished. The Leadership Board of NECA and the Mayor and Cabinet of NTCA will therefore also need to consent to the statutory order which provides for their abolition and the creation of NEMCA. It is envisaged that the existing combined authorities would be abolished and NEMCA established simultaneously when the elected mayor for NEMCA takes office in early May 2024.
- 4.2 As set out in the scheme which was published as part of the consultation exercise, the statutory order is expected to provide appropriate continuity and transitional arrangements so that any acts of the existing combined authorities are to be treated as the acts of the new mayoral combined authority. The order is also to provide for the staffing, assets, rights and liabilities of the existing combined authorities to transfer to NEMCA. This will ensure that the regional transport arrangements which are currently overseen by the Joint Transport Committee (and the existing funding programmes of NTCA) are maintained by the NEMCA without interruption. Officers from both combined authorities and the local authorities are liaising on the operational requirements of the transition, which will include the arrangements for Transport North East and the integration of the North East LEP in line with central government policy.

5 Impact on NECA Objectives

The new mayoral combined authority will build on the work and objectives of NECA. NECA Leadership Board has been clear and consistent as to the need for close collaboration with colleagues across the North East region. This was evident through the response to the coronavirus pandemic and recovery, in the development of transport priorities through the Joint Transport Committee, and in the development of the North East Devolution Deal. This willingness to commit time, resource and expertise has provided an important platform for securing the new Deal and will continue through the transition period over the next 12 months.

6 Key Risks

It is considered that failure to establish the mayoral combined authority would risk the region falling behind other major city regions such as Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region and Tees Valley, which have received new powers and funding.

It is a matter for the Secretary of State to decide whether to make the necessary statutory order but, for the reasons set out above, it is considered that the evidence demonstrates that the relevant statutory criteria have been met.



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7 Financial and other resources implications

Implementing the devolution deal would enable the region to access over £4bn of funding over a 30-year deal cycle, together with new powers to better shape local skills provisions to ensure these meet the needs of the local economy. This would include devolution of adult education functions and the core adult education budget, as well as input into the new local skills improvement plans. Over time the region would also expect to benefit from access to additional funding streams reserved for mayoral combined authorities. Detailed discussions will be progressed with the local authorities, NECA and NTCA regarding the financial arrangements associated with the transition to the new arrangements.

8 Legal Implications

The Monitoring Officer (Core) has contributed to the drafting of this report and the full legal implications are set out within the body of this report. To implement the deal, it will be necessary to establish a new mayoral combined authority which covers the area of the seven councils and replaces the two existing combined authorities in the region.

9 Equality and Diversity

In developing these proposals, the authorities have taken account of their obligations under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. the public sector equality duty). It is not expected that the proposals described in this report will have any adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics. Indeed, the aim of promoting inclusive growth within the region is expected to boost the efforts of the Councils to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. The Councils will continue to assess their responsibilities in this regard and ensure that the equality impact assessment will be reviewed throughout the process.

10. Crime and Disorder

There are no known crime and disorder implications arising from the contents of this report.

11. Consultation/Engagement

The proposals have developed from close collaborative working across the local authorities and combined authorities and have been subject to the public consultation exercise described in this report and the appendix.

12. Environmental and sustainability

The green agenda is a critical element of the minded to devolution deal and therefore the governance changes proposed in this report, if implemented, would help to deliver those

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initiatives identified in the minded to deal.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Consultation Report

15. Background Papers

NECA Leadership Board - NE Devolution Update – 23 January 2023.

[“Minded to” Devolution Deal](#)

[Governance review](#)

Consultation scheme

16. Contact Officers

Nicola Robason

Monitoring Officer (Core)

nicola.robason@southtyneside.gov.uk Tel: 0191 424 7050

17. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service: ✓
- Monitoring Officer: ✓
- Chief Finance Officer: ✓

17. Glossary

NECA North East Combined Authority

NEMCANorth East Mayoral Combined Authority

NTCA North of Tyne Combined Authority

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North East Devolution Consultation Report

March 2023

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1. Executive Summary

The leaders of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland councils have agreed in principle to a devolution deal which the Government has confirmed it is 'minded to' approve.

A devolution deal for the region means unlocking £4.2 billion of investment, over 30 years, and seeing additional powers transferred from Whitehall to local people with better knowledge and experience of our communities.

It is expected to create 24,000 extra jobs, generate 70,000 courses to give people the skills to get good jobs and leverage £5.0 billion of private sector investment.

This deal represents a significant opportunity to make a real difference to people who live and work in the North East and will have a hugely positive impact on the big issues that matter to people.

Whether that is new and better paid jobs, more affordable housing or placing ourselves at the forefront of Net Zero revolution, the chance of more decision-making powers and millions of pounds in funding devolved to a new Mayoral combined authority for the North East will have a major impact on the North East.

The new authority, which would cover an area which is home to around 2 million people, will have the power to make decisions on areas such as transport, skills, housing, finance and economic development.

The deal includes:

- **An investment fund of £1.4bn, or £48m a year**, to support inclusive economic growth and support our regeneration priorities
- **An indicative budget of around £1.8bn, or £60m a year**, for adult education and skills – to meet local skills priorities and improve opportunities for residents
- **A £900m package of investment to transform our transport system**, with £563m from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Fund, on top of funding already announced for our buses and metro system
- **£69m of investment in housing and regeneration**, unlocking sites to bring forward new housing and commercial development

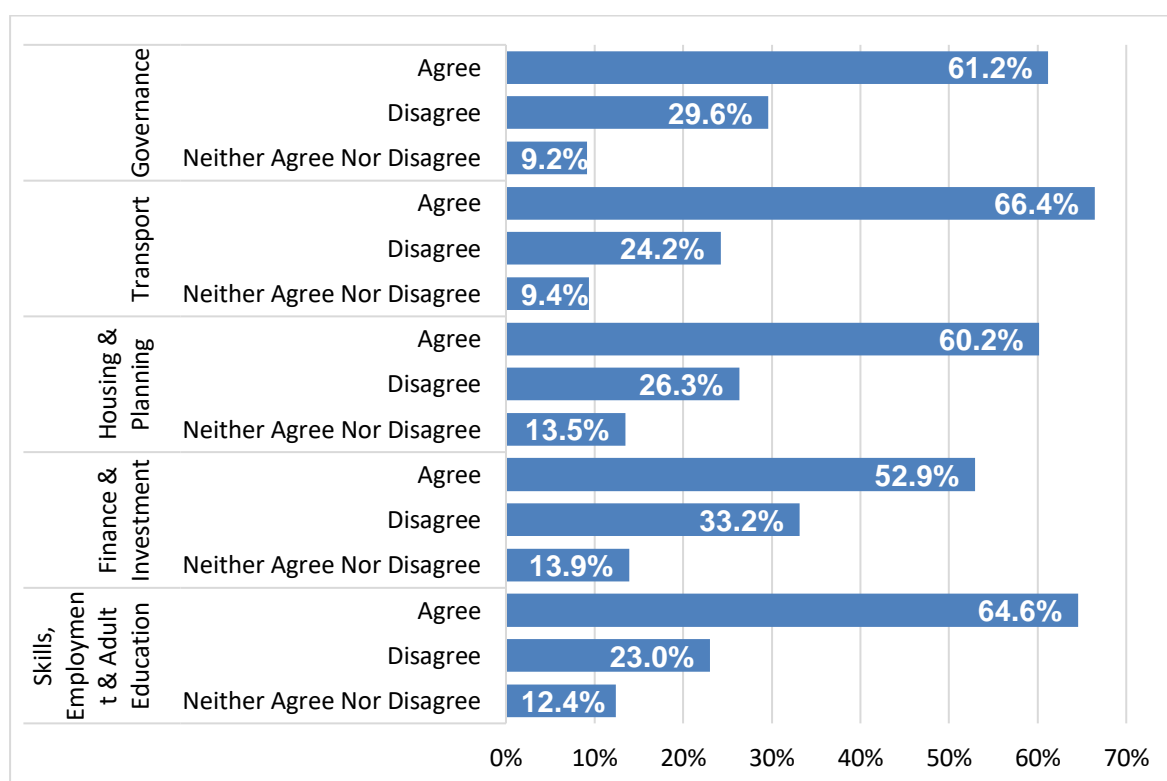
Local leaders have worked together to negotiate an offer which matches their ambition to make a difference for residents, communities and the economy.

A public consultation, which closed on 23rd March 2023, was a chance for residents, businesses and other stakeholders to understand and have their say about how the proposed devolution deal from government would be implemented in the region. This report outlines how the consultation was undertaken together with its findings.

Opportunities to take part in the consultation included the completion of surveys (via either online or paper based), attending an event or by submitting written comments.

In total, around 3,235 people or organisations took part in the consultation process, with 2,579 opting to complete an on-line or paper survey. An overview of responses across the five theme questions in the survey is shown in the table below.

Sentiment about the proposed devolution to North East Mayoral Combined Authority



Number of responses	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree
Governance	1595	772	239
Transport	1731	631	244
Housing and Planning	1563	684	350
Finance and investment	1373	860	361
Skills, Employment and Adult Education	1673	597	321

2. Introduction

On 28th December 2022, the seven North East Authorities (Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council) agreed a “minded to” devolution deal with HM Government.

The devolution deal sets out £4.2bn of government investment, which will be subject to local decision making, enabling spend on local priorities, together with a range of devolved functions. The deal is subject to the creation of a new mayoral combined authority involving all of the seven North East authorities.

The deal is described as “minded-to” as the proposals are subject to public consultation, formal consent from each constituent council and parliamentary approval of the relevant legislation to implement the proposals.

In January 2023, the Cabinets of the seven local authorities approved a Governance Review – an analysis of existing arrangements to establish whether or not a new mayoral combined authority would be beneficial for the region – and a scheme – the document which sets out the terms of how the deal would be implemented.

A public consultation subsequently launched on 26th January and ran until 23rd March 2023. The outcomes from this consultation are set out in this report.

3. Consultation method and process

The approach used to undertake the consultation complied with [Cabinet Office Consultation Principles](#). This approach gave consultees clear and concise information in order to respond to the consultation exercise (see Appendix A for more details about the questions that were asked).

The aim of the consultation was to provide the general public, the business and other key sectors and other stakeholders across the seven local authority areas with the opportunity to share their views on the proposals. The information provided to consultees focused on :

- changing how the seven councils work together
- devolution of powers to create an integrated transport system for the area
- devolution of new housing and planning functions
- new finance and investment powers
- devolution of matters relating to skills, employment and adult education

The consultation consisted of the following approaches (more details about how they were publicised can be found in Appendix B), delivery of which was informed by an equality impact assessment.

- **Survey**

The survey, which was available both online and via paper copies, contained five closed-ended questions asking respondents whether they agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed or disagreed with the proposals.

In addition, there were also six open-ended questions that provided respondents with the opportunity to provide more detailed views on the proposals if they wished to do so. As well as questions on the devolution proposals, both the online and paper survey questionnaires included nine demographic questions (see Appendix C for more information on who took part in the consultation).

The online survey was available on each local authority's website and on the North of Tyne combined authority website. People were also able to submit their views by using a paper copy of the survey questionnaire, which was available in a range of public venues across the region. Finally, respondents could also submit their feedback via a letter or email.

In total, 2,579 completed survey questionnaires were received.

- **Events**

Fifteen events also took place across the area. These mainly in person sessions allowed people to learn more about the proposed devolution deal and to ask questions. Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire, QR codes and links to the online consultation questionnaire were also provided at the events for those participants who wished to use them.

There was at least one event in each local authority area as set out below

- Northumberland County Council (six events¹ from 5 February – 22 March 2023)
- South Tyneside (13 February 2023)
- Durham (23 February 2023 and an on-line event 28 February 2023)
- Gateshead (28 February 2023 and an on-line event 9 March 2023)
- North Tyneside (8 March 2023)
- Sunderland (10 March 2023 and one for the Sunderland Deaf Society on 21 March 2023)
- Newcastle (13 March 2023 and one for the Newcastle Deaf Society 20 March 2023)

The events were publicised on all of the local authority and North of Tyne Combined Authority websites, social media and via the local media. Members of the public were offered the chance to attend by registering their details with the local authority hosting the event they wished to attend.

In total, 357 people attended the public consultation events as set out in table 1 below :

Table 1: Breakdown of consultation events by attendees

Local Authority	Attendees
Northumberland	93
South Tyneside	29
Durham	60
Gateshead	17
North Tyneside	43
Sunderland	45
Sunderland Deaf Society	12
Newcastle	50
Newcastle Deaf Society	11

¹ Members of the public attending events and meetings in Alnwick and Berwick, Castle Morpeth Local Area Council, Tynedale Local Area Council, Ashington and Blyth Local Area Council and Cramlington, Bedlington and Seaton Valley Local Area Council. ,

Each event consisted of a presentation which

- summarised the minded to devolution deal
- provided information on the Governance Review and the context for change
- explained the consultation process; and
- set out the next steps

This was then followed by discussions that focussed on gaining feedback from participants on the proposals and responding to any questions they had.

- **Stakeholder briefings**

In addition to the public events, nine bespoke on-line briefing events were held with key stakeholders. In total 263 people took part. The events were

- Regional Business Partners On-line Event (27 January 2023)
- Northumberland Energy Central Steering Group (27 January 2023)
- Regional Education Partners On-line Event (13 February 2023)
- Voluntary And Community Partners Event (15 February 2023)
- Voluntary Sector Organisations' Network North East Employment On-line Focus Group (16 February 2023)
- Transport Event (17 February 2023)
- North East Chamber County Meeting – Northumberland (8 March 2023)
- Northumberland Association of Local Councils (representing Town and Parish Councils) Briefing (9 March 2023)
- Northumberland Youth Cabinet and Youth Parliament Briefing (22 March 2023)

4. Response

This part of the report brings together the findings gathered from both the survey and the consultation events.

It should be noted that all questions in the survey were voluntary and not everybody completed all of the questions. This means that the total responses² to specific questions may not add up to the total number of overall respondents.

In addition to the closed-ended questions (i.e., where respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed, disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed), respondents were also asked open-ended questions to set out their reasons. The responses to the open-ended questions were coded to key themes. The top results per theme are included in this section. All the issues that were raised are included in Appendix D. It should be noted that, where figures are included, this is an indication of how many times the issue was raised.

Some respondents took the opportunity to state their views on an issue across more than one question. This means that some issues are often repeated across multiple questions. This was the case with regard to responses to the final open question which asked 'Are there any comments you would like to make that you do not feel you have addressed in your response so far?'. However all of the issues raised are highlighted in sections 4.1-4.5 and appendix D of this report.

In conducting surveys using closed and open-ended questions, it is commonly found that people who disagree with a proposition in the closed-ended question will be more likely to respond to the accompanying open-ended questions to explain their reasoning. This has generally been the case in this consultation.

² Please note "respondents" is used to describe the person/organisation that responded to the survey. The phrase "responses" is used to refer to the issues raised within each contribution. For example, one respondent may have commented on several issues within one contribution. This means that one respondent could be the author of more than one response.

4.1 Changing how councils work together

Summary

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposals. These respondents felt the proposals made sense, would allow beneficial working together and bring more power to the region
- Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing suggested changes to, or clarity around the non-voting cabinet members, requested more information, or agreed in principle but had concerns, questions or caveats
- Those disagreeing felt the proposals would be unfair to some areas, would create additional bureaucracy, or lacked trust in local or national government

Figure 1: Do you agree or disagree with our proposals for the revised arrangements for the Combined Authority, as set out and in the Scheme, in particular the proposed arrangements for a Mayor, mayoral combined authority, and the councils, working together?

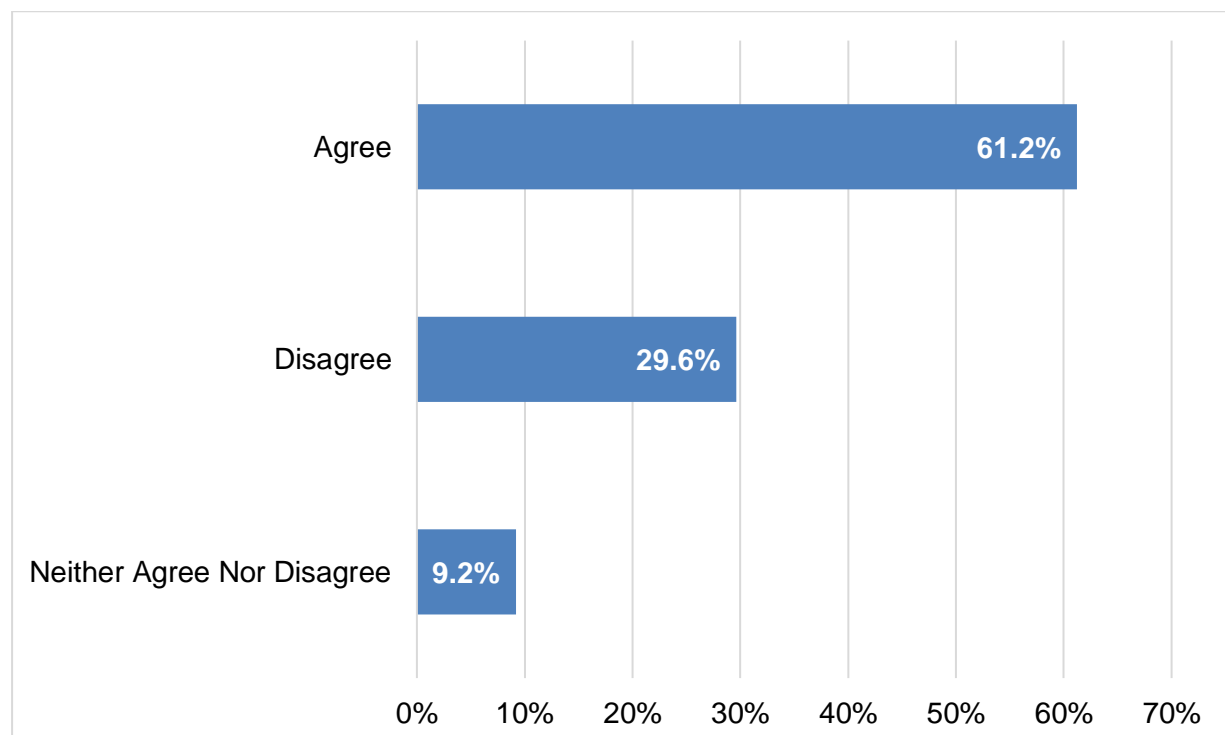


Figure 1, which is based on the data from the survey, shows the overall majority of people agreed with the proposals for the revised arrangements for the Combined Authority, as set out and in the Scheme, and the proposed arrangements for a Mayor, mayoral combined authority, and the councils, working together.

4.1.1 Feedback from the survey

Overall: 1,472 respondents to the on-line and paper questionnaires explained why they had either agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Their views are summarised below: (some respondents gave more than one reason and this is reflected in the totals shown below).

Agree: Those agreeing with the proposed changes believe:

- **The proposals make sense** (275 responses). These comments stated that the proposals make sense, will create efficiencies, increase resources, ensure a coordinated strategy and are the best option for the region.
- **The proposal will increase regional power** (218 responses). These comments welcomed the increased powers and local decision making the deal will bring and were positive about the role of the mayor and the higher profile they would help to create for the region.

Working together benefits the region (190 responses). These comments said the proposals were an opportunity for local authorities and stakeholder organisations to work together for the benefit of the region.

Disagree: of those who disagreed with the proposals the main reasons given were –

- **Lack of trust** (230 responses). These comments raised concerns that creation of the Combined Authority would result in the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people and the organisation being unaccountable. Lack of trust in politicians (locally and nationally), local authorities and the national government were also highlighted.
- **Additional bureaucracy** (226 responses). These comments said the proposals would result in an extra layer of bureaucracy with associated additional costs.
- **The creation of the Combined Authority would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (179 responses). These comments said that implementation of the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas and County Durham. Concerns were also raised that Newcastle or larger places would unfairly benefit.

Neither agree nor disagree: Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals, their comments referred to –

- **Agreement in principle but with some concerns, questions or caveats** (79 responses). These comments were broadly in favour of the proposals but raised specific areas of concern, had questions or showed support for the proposals if one or more conditions were met.
- **A need for more information** (65 responses). These comments requested more information or details about the proposals and how they would be implemented.
- **Changes or clarity to the non-voting roles on the Cabinet of the Combined Authority** (59 responses). These comments asked for more representatives from the business and voluntary and community sectors, education or cultural sector representation, thought these representatives should have voting rights or wanted clarity about how they would be appointed.

4.1.2 Feedback from the consultation events

The issues raised at the consultation events were consistent with the responses from the survey.

However, a number of additional points were raised by small numbers of participants, across the region, including:

- engagement with town and parish councils
- the location of the headquarters for the Combined Authority
- how the impact of the Combined Authority will be evaluated including its social value and return on investment

4.2 Transport

Summary

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposals. They felt it made sense for areas to work together under a regional transport strategy and with an integrated transport system
- Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing suggested priorities for improving transport or said they needed more information on the proposals
- Those disagreeing felt the proposals would be unfair to some areas, especially rural areas, or were opposed to having a mayor or the devolution deal

Figure 2: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer transport functions and new transport related functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

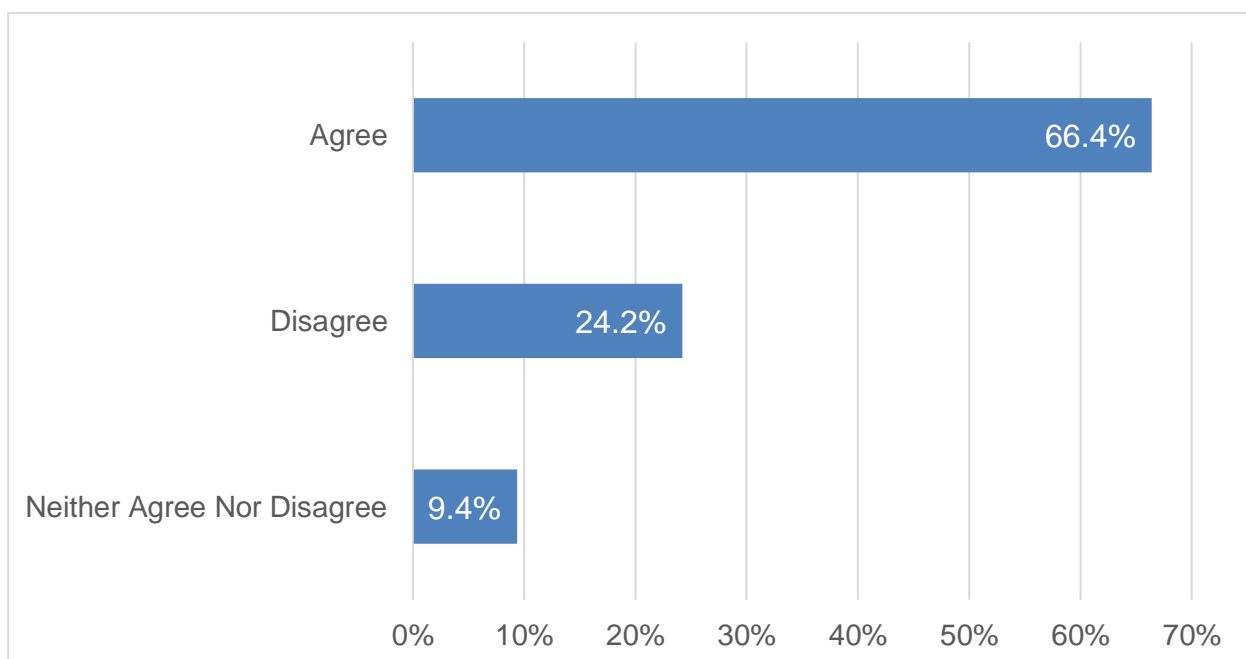


Figure 2, which is based on the data from the survey, shows that the overall majority of people agreed with the proposals to confer transport functions and new transport related functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority.

4.2.1 Feedback from the survey

Overall: 1,350 respondents to the on-line and paper questionnaires explained why they had either agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Their views are summarised below: (some respondents gave more than one reason and this is reflected in the totals shown below).

Agree: The reasons given by those agreeing with the proposed changes, showed they believe

- **The region needs an integrated transport system** (174 responses). These comments said it was important to have an integrated transport system, with different modes of transport working together, including ticketing.
- **Working together as a region makes sense** (156 responses). These comments said it made sense for areas to work together, with a regional approach or strategy for transport.
- **The proposals were an opportunity to improve transport in the region** (135 responses). These comments said the proposals were an opportunity to improve transport, particularly public transport. Many of the comments referred to poor services which people felt needed to be improved.

Disagree: of those who disagreed with the proposals the main reasons given were –

- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (148 responses). These comments said the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposals being too large or diverse.
- **Not wanting a North East Mayor or concentration of power** (62 responses). These comments said they did not want a North East Mayor or the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people.
- **It would not lead to improvements** (53 responses). These comments said the proposals would not improve transport in the region. Many of the comments said bringing together local authorities that had been unable to address transport problems or had made things worse or would not change anything.
- **Opposition to the devolution deal** (52 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with many referring to the result of the 2004 devolution referendum or wanting to keep the existing arrangements.

Neither agree nor disagree: Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals, their comments referred to –

- **Suggested priorities to improve transport** (30 responses). These comments suggested priorities for improving transport, including creating dual lanes along the full length of the A1, better public transport and extending the Metro system to more areas.
- **A need for more information** (23 responses). These comments said they needed more information on or details of the proposals and how they would be implemented.
- **Conditional support** (20 responses). These comments said they would support the proposals if one or more conditions were met. These included the proposals leading to better, cheaper public transport, efficiencies or being fair to all areas.

4.2.2 Feedback from the consultation events

The issues raised at the consultation events were consistent with the responses from the survey.

4.3 Housing and planning

Summary

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposals. These respondents felt that housing decisions in the North East were best decided by local people
- Of particular merit was the potential for the development of new affordable and social housing
- Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing were concerned with corruption, fairness and accountability or said they needed more information on the proposals
- Those disagreeing felt the proposals would be unfair to some areas, especially rural areas, or were opposed to having a new mayor or combined authority

Figure 3: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer housing functions and new housing related functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

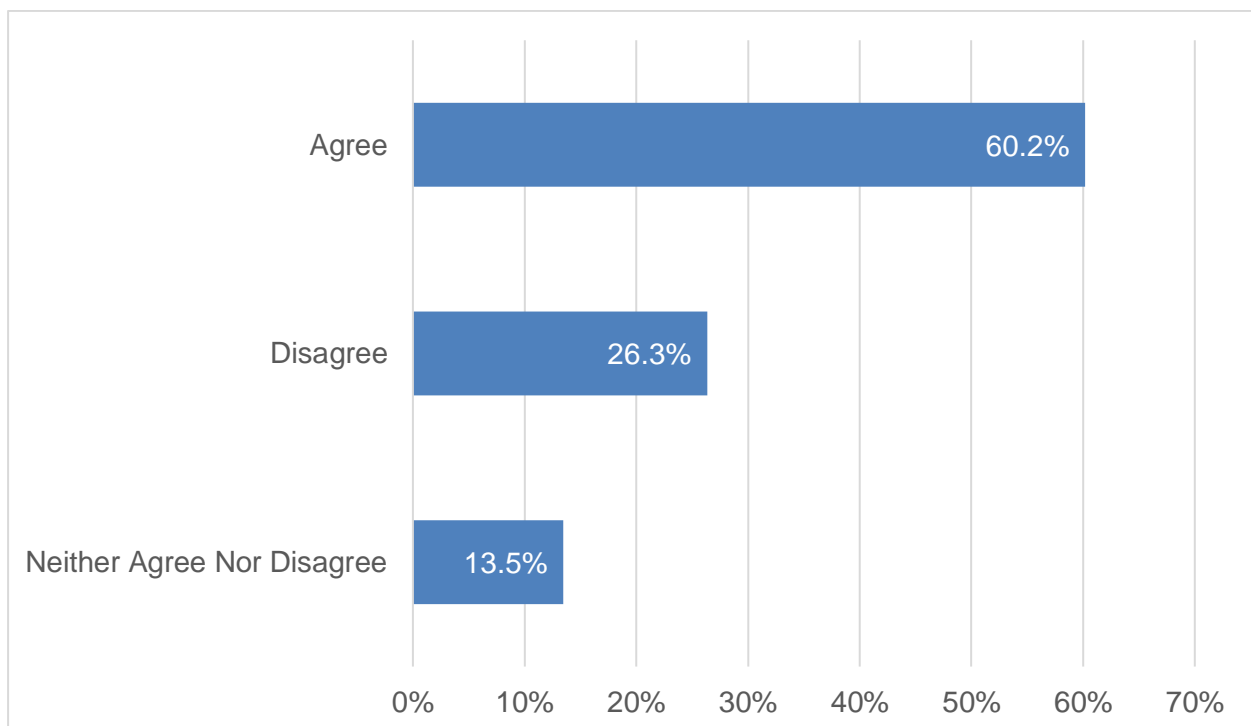


Figure 3, which is based on the data from the survey, shows that the overall majority of people agreed with the proposals to confer housing functions and new housing related functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority.

4.3.1 Feedback from the survey

Overall: 1,226 respondents to the on-line and paper questionnaires explained why they had either agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Their views are summarised below: (some respondents gave more than one reason and this is reflected in the totals shown below).

Agree: The reasons given by those agreeing with the proposed changes, showed they believe

- **The region needs an integrated housing approach** (104 responses). These respondents said it was important to have an integrated housing strategy, with a combined approach to issues impacting the North East
- **The provision of more affordable and social housing** (100 responses). Respondents believed that the proposals would be an impetus for the building of more affordable and social housing, something that was seen to be very much needed
- **Local people are best placed to make local decisions** (90 responses). Respondents welcomed the prospect of having the power to control budgets and make decisions locally, as opposed to in Westminster
- **Environmental sustainability and the protection of green belts** (63 responses). Respondents said the proposals were an opportunity to improve environmentally sustainability within housing. Many were concerned with Net Zero targets and the protection of green belts

Disagree: of those who disagreed with the proposals the main reasons given were –

- **Not wanting a North East Mayor or concentration of power** (141 responses). These comments said they did not want a North east Mayor or the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people
- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (105 responses). These respondents said the proposals were unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposals being too large or diverse

- **Housing to remain under the control of individual authorities** (54 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with many wanting to keep the existing arrangements
- **Environmental sustainability and the protection of green belts** (41 responses). These respondents said the proposals would not improve environmental sustainability in the region. Many of the respondents were concerned that green belts would not be protected and that new properties would be substandard in terms of sustainability.

Neither agree nor disagree: Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals, their comments referred to –

- **Conditional support** (67 responses). These respondents said they would support the proposals if one or more conditions were met. These included the proposals leading to the provision of more affordable and social housing, environmental sustainability and a consistent approach to housing strategy within the region
- **A need for more information** (46 responses). These respondents said they needed more information on or details of the proposals and how they would be implemented
- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (25 responses). These comments said the proposals could be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposals being too large or diverse

4.3.2 Feedback from the consultation events

The issues raised at the consultation events were consistent with the responses from the survey.

However, a number of additional points were raised by small numbers of participants, including:

- The need to support innovation

4.4 Finance and investment

Summary

- Just over half of respondents agreed with the proposals. They believe it will create opportunities and improvement for the region as decisions can be better made locally by people who 'know' the area
- Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing suggested they need more information about the deal to make an informed opinion. They also raised concerns about possible increased costs to local people to fund the deal
- Those disagreeing felt the proposals would increase costs to local people and the distribution of funding would be unfair. It was also suggested that the deal is a waste of money and undemocratic

Figure 4: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer additional finance functions on a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

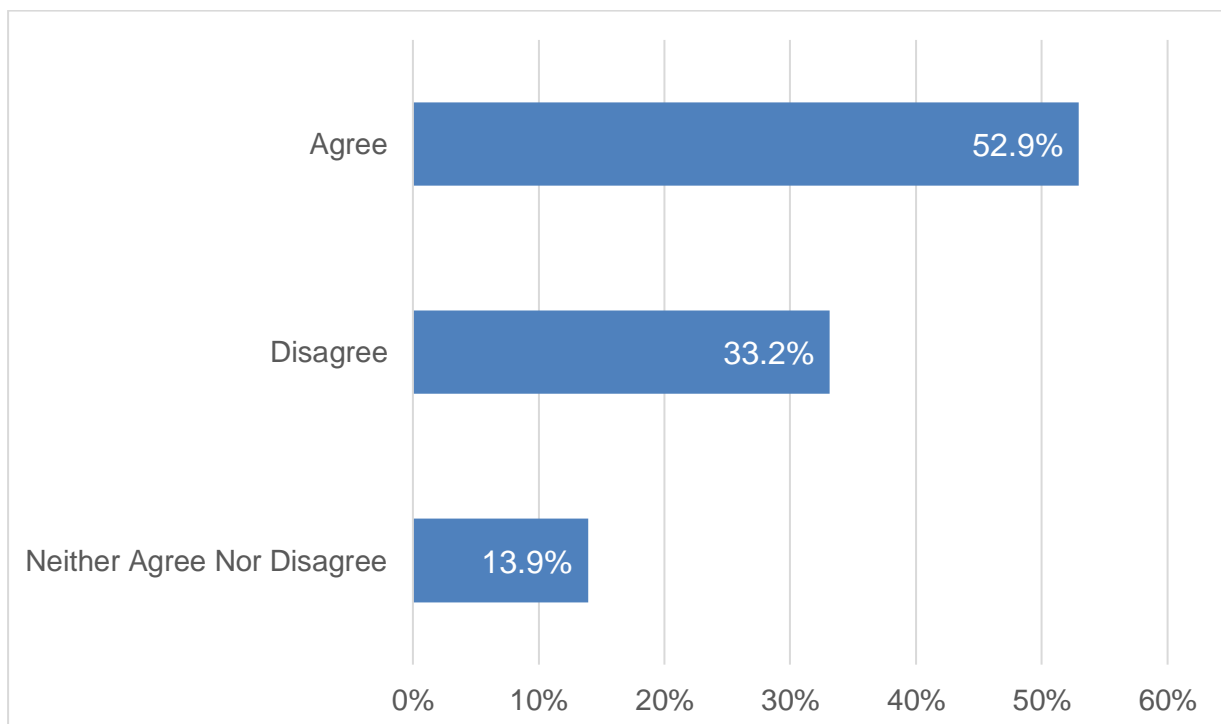


Figure 4, which is based on the data from the survey, shows that just over half of respondents agreed with the proposals to confer additional finance functions on a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority.

4.4.1 Feedback from the survey

Overall: 1,132 respondents to the on-line and paper survey explained why they had either agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Their views are summarised below: (some respondents gave more than one reason and this is reflected in the totals shown below).

Agree: The reasons given by those agreeing with the proposed changes, demonstrated their belief that the proposals will:

- **Lead to long-term investment that will create opportunities and improvement in the region** (110 responses). These comments suggested that devolution would attract strategic long-term investment that would improve the region by creating better infrastructure (e.g., transport) and opportunities for employment, thereby helping to close the North / South divide
- **Result in fair distribution of funds** (63 responses). These comments agreed that devolution would be positive for the region as long as the finances were distributed evenly across the area without the need for a rise in council tax or other costs to local people
- **Support better decisions based on local knowledge** (53 responses). These comments believe that devolved finances will allow better decisions to be made by local representatives who 'know' the area better than Whitehall
- **Ensure transparency and accountability** (32 responses). These comments agreed with the idea of devolution but wanted reassurance about the transparency and accountability of decision making

Disagree: of those who disagreed with the proposals the main reasons given were:

- **It would increase costs to local people** (244 responses). These comments said the proposals were unfair as it would inevitably mean more costs for local people in order to fund the new Mayor's activities and result in higher council tax
- **Concerns with distribution** (60 responses). These comments suggested that devolution would bring an unequal distribution of funds with the bigger city areas getting a higher proportion of resources compared to more rural areas

- **Bureaucracy** (39 responses). These comments said that devolution would create more bureaucracy which would inhibit delivery
- **Waste** (38 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with respondents suggesting the deal is a waste of money and things should be kept as they are
- **Undemocratic** (30 responses). These comments highlighted a belief that the process for agreeing a devolution deal is undemocratic as a referendum has not been held

Neither agree nor disagree: Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals, their comments referred to:

- **They did not understand the proposals** (39 responses). These comments suggested respondents did not understand the proposals and that more information was needed to make an informed decision about whether or not the devolution deal would be beneficial
- **Concerns with increased costs** (36 responses). These comments said they were not sure about the devolution deal and were concerned that it may lead to increased costs for local people, including higher council tax

4.4.2 Feedback from the consultation events

The issues raised at the consultation events were consistent with the responses from the survey.

However, a number of additional points were raised by small numbers of participants, including:

- the impact of inflation on the funds provided by central government.
- the nature of the formula for allocating funds across the area.
- whether there will be formal fiscal devolution including revenue raising powers
- the need to fund existing businesses as well as those that are new, incoming businesses or currently prioritised sectors such as green and digital

4.5 Skills, Employment and Adult Education

Summary

- The majority of respondents agreed with the proposals. They felt it made sense for areas to work together and integrate with local education providers and businesses
- Most of those neither agreeing nor disagreeing said they needed more information on the proposals
- Those disagreeing felt that a combined authority was the wrong geographical area in which to make these decisions or that some areas would be poorly served, particularly rural areas or County Durham

Figure 5: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer skills, employment and adult education functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

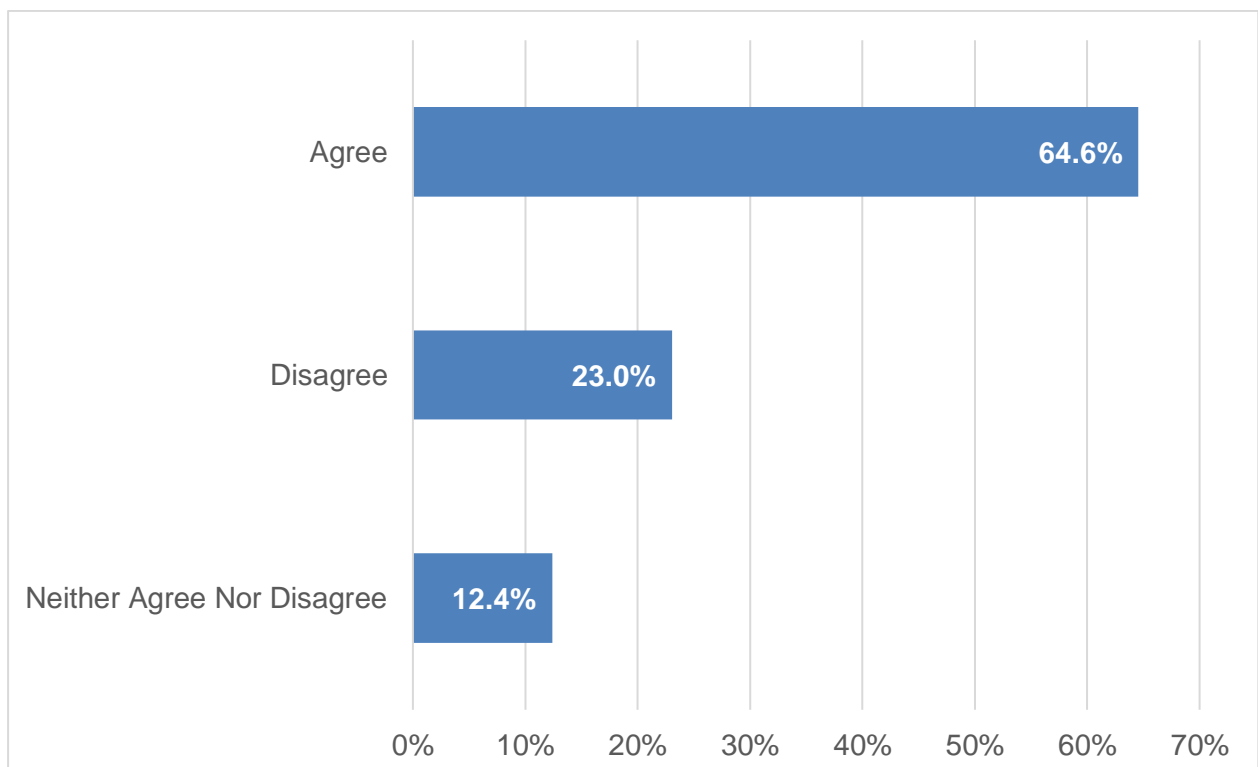


Figure 5, which is based on the data from the survey, shows that the overall majority of people agreed with the proposals for skills, employment and education.

4.5.1 Feedback from the survey

Overall: 863 respondents to the on-line and paper questionnaires explained why they had either agreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals. Their views are summarised below:(some respondents gave more than one reason and this is reflected in the totals shown).

Agree: Among those respondents agreeing with the proposals and who offered further information the following key themes are seen:

- **Skills and training should be delivered at the NEMCA level.** (327 responses). Respondents felt that national delivery was too out of touch with local needs and/or local authority level delivery was too small to be efficient or lacked synergies. Integration with other partners was often felt to be enhanced at this geographic level, as was efficient use of funding
- **Agree with the proposals but with some caveats.** (108 responses). Respondents felt that apprenticeships should be included in scope; governance should include education providers and businesses and funding should be shared fairly across local authorities
- **Increase in funding welcomed.** (43 responses). These respondents only cited the extra funding available

Disagree: of those who disagreed with the proposals the main reasons given were –

- **NEMCA is too large an area for skills planning and delivery** (95 responses). These respondents felt that Local Authorities were best placed to deliver these proposals
- **Concerns around governance** (79 responses). These comments said these respondents did not want a North East Mayor; or were worried about the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people; many expressed distrust of politicians in general or noted that these proposals had not been subject to a referendum
- **NEMCA was too small an area for skills planning and delivery** (39 responses). Respondents stated that the proposed activities were best coordinated and funded at a national level
- **Felt the proposals would not work** (38 responses). These respondents stated that the proposed activities would not achieve improvements within NECMA. Often citing insufficient funding or inadequate scope

- **Unfair or detrimental to some areas** (32 responses). These comments said the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas or specific local authorities

Neither agree nor disagree: Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals, their comments referred to –

- **A request for more information** (87 responses). These respondents wanted further information to help them form an opinion either about skills training in the region or the devolution proposals. Others wanted to understand more about how funding would be shared fairly between local authorities
- **Will not improve** (22 responses). These respondents felt that these proposals would have no impact
- **Should be a wider scope** (17 responses). A variety of levels of activity were offered including that proposals should include Higher Education; higher level qualifications; lower-level qualifications or schools

4.5.2 Feedback from the consultation events

The issues raised at the consultation events were consistent with the responses from the survey.

However, a number of additional points were raised by small numbers of participants, including:

- the impact the new arrangements would have on the current post-16 procurement process
- education provision for the deaf community

5. Views from Stakeholders

Business

- **Advance Northumberland:** is an economic growth and inward investment company, wholly owned by Northumberland County Council. It submitted a letter of support for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority Devolution.

The letter offers a commitment to help devolution achieve benefits for Northumberland and the wider region.

It also says devolution will stimulate and accelerate economic growth and job creation opportunities and help shape Northumberland for the benefit of residents.

- **Bionow:** is a not-for-profit specialist business development and services company serving the biomedical and life science sector across the North of England. It has over 320 members and direct links to approximately 1,300 life science organisations across the North of England, employing more than 50,000 people.

It believes that strong engagement between regional and local authorities and the sector is crucial to a vibrant life sciences sector and that other devolved authorities have a positive impact on the local and regional ecosystem in developing the skills, investment and infrastructure needed for the region and the sector to thrive. They therefore support the devolution deal and look forward to the positive impacts.

- **Confederation of British Industry (CBI)** responded on behalf of businesses, higher and further education providers, and regional institutions. The response is endorsed by the CBI North East Regional Council.

The region's business community overwhelmingly support a devolution deal involving all seven local authorities. A single Mayoral Combined Authority would be an opportunity to deliver cohesive, integrated regional change, reflective of the local economic and political geography.

In addition to broadly agreeing with all five policy proposals, CBI members are pleased that the principles across each policy area meet the ambitions of the CBI Seize the Moment framework.

The response also contains requests for the proposed North East Mayoral Combined authority on each of the policy areas set out in the consultation. These include a robust partnership with North East business, long-term strategies for

transport and business investment, a simplified regional planning system and partnerships to deliver a skills programme that services regional demands.

- **Dynamo North East:** are the region's tech sector membership body with over 130 members. They advocate for the needs of businesses and learners and work to develop and deliver programmes that underpin the success of the digital economy. Dynamo are delighted to support the proposed North East Devolution Deal on behalf of the tech sector, which they explain has a crucial role to play in driving the innovation economy and jobs underpinning growth and shared prosperity in the North East and across the UK.
- **Federation of Small Businesses (FSB):** confirm their support for the North East devolution deal and welcome the agreement that this will cover the seven local authority areas and will deliver significant benefits to the region.

The FSB agree with the policy proposals in the devolution consultation. They say the continued role of the Local Enterprise Partnership is welcome, but it is essential to broaden the scope of the proposed Mayoral Combined Authority's Business Board to include the voice of small business through the inclusion of business representatives. They feel it is essential that small businesses and representative bodies are consulted in the design and development of skills support programmes.

- **Institute of Directors:** support the proposed North East Devolution deal as the deal will help directors across the North East to fulfil the mission to build a better world.

The Institute of Directors say transferring powers from Whitehall to local people with detailed knowledge and experience of the region, people and communities will create a better environment for business.

They feel a chronic and systemic skills shortage is holding back business growth and the devolution deal promises to address this by providing funding to train local people to meet the skills priorities of the Institute of Directors' members.

- **Nissan:** sees the creation of the new combined authority as a positive development that will support the future success of the business and help to attract future inward investment opportunities. It believes that the creation of a directly elected mayor will provide strategic direction and act as a strong champion for the region.

The company recognises that the Authority's ability to allocate funding for skills, infrastructure, innovation, transport, regeneration and housing will support

Nissan's ambition to enhance its investment in the region, to reskill and upskill its workforce, and to export more electrified vehicles.

In particular they: welcome the deal's commitment to investing in electric vehicle infrastructure and look forward to engaging with the combined authority on its 'Institute of Future Mobility' initiative; recognise that similar skills are needed for the manufacture of both vehicle and off-site modular housing and wish to explore opportunities for regional collaboration with NEMCA; want to work closely with the combined authority and partners to develop a business case for forming an industrial cluster to support the growth of low emission manufacturing across the region; and would like to explore further the development of a new skills facility to support the development of advanced manufacturing skills.

- **North East Business and Innovation Centre (BIC):** gives its unreserved support to the proposal to create the devolution deal and is looking forward to seeing significant powers transferred to the North East from central government. The BIC highlights that as well as bringing multi-billion-pound investment into the area, allowing it to work together ever more closely, 24,000 extra, good jobs will be created and tens of thousands of local people supported with increased skills to fill them.

BIC believes the deal will give businesses more confidence to invest and the anticipated £5bn of private sector investment will be transformational. It concludes the scale of the opportunity the deal presents cannot be over-estimated and is massively to be welcomed and that this feeling is echoed by many others in the business community.

- **North East of England Chamber of Commerce (NEECC):** express support for the North East devolution deal. NEECC members see the area of the seven local authorities included in the deal as a coherent economic area. They believe the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority would enable more collaborative working across the region and help it speak to government with a unified voice. They say there is also the potential to promote greater equality and spread the benefits of growth more equally which would enable more local businesses to flourish.

The NEECC support the policy proposals set out in the North East devolution consultation, including the creation of a Business Board. However, feel it is important that any new governance arrangements do not create added complexity for individuals and organisations engaging with the public sector and that the Mayoral Combined Authority is easy to do business with. Careful allocation and monitoring of the proposed investment fund and any subsequent funding will be vital to ensure it had the maximum positive impact for local people and

communities. The NEECC would also welcome a commitment to procure from local firms wherever possible.

- **North East Enterprise Agency (NEEAL):** is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, and special purpose vehicle that champions enterprise support and provides a single service to anyone starting a new business or in their early stages of growth. Over the last two years it has supported the establishment of over 5,500 businesses and supported nearly 16,000 to develop and grow.

NEEAL offers its unreserved support to the proposal to create a devolution deal. It believes that the North East has long lagged behind a lot of the rest of the UK in terms of both its business stock and the number of new businesses created here. They feel this deal, when implemented, will see significant powers transferred to the region, together with a multi-billion-pound investment that will create the conditions to drive a more entrepreneurial culture and, as a result, significantly increase the level of new business activity.

NEEAL believes that having the ability to exercise control over such key economic levers as transport, skills, housing, finance and economic development will give the region's two million residents real power over the decisions which affect their everyday lives and the economic wellbeing of the area. It will give businesses more confidence to invest and residents more confidence to set up businesses and as a result has the capacity to be truly transformational. It concludes that 'the scale of the opportunity which this presents cannot be over-estimated and is massively to be welcomed.'

- **North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP):** The Board of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) confirms its strong support for the progress made towards devolution in the region, as expressed in this deal and welcomes the policy proposals set out in the consultation. The LEP welcome the deal for its content and opportunity to deepen devolution in the region in the future. They welcome the agreement covers the area of the seven local authorities.

The LEP look forward to working with partners to form the new Mayoral Combined Authority. It is strongly committed to playing its role as the new Business Advisory Board and facilitating a business voice to provide advice and support to the Mayor and Cabinet. It is important to include leaders from education, who have been a critical pillar of their current partnership.

- **Sunderland Empire and Sunderland Culture:** strongly welcome the proposed arrangements for the North East Mayoral Combined Authority, and ask that

consideration be given to representation of the creative and cultural sector on advisory boards.

They highlight the role that cultural infrastructure can play as a catalyst for regeneration, inclusive economic growth and community development, and would like the cultural sector to benefit from the Investment Fund, particularly with regard to infrastructure and workforce development.

- **Sunderland Software City:** is a not-for-profit company driving the tech economy in the North East, supported the proposed North East Devolution deal. It believes the deal would help unlock opportunities to grow the tech sector and ensure more businesses, people and communities across the region could share in its success.

They believe the deal provides a strong basis on to drive forward the tech ecosystem in the North East, ensuring businesses across the region are able to benefit from digital innovation and it will enable government, industry and local partners to work together to support the skills and talent base of the region's communities.

They say the devolution deal will help raise aspirations, encouraging more people in the region to consider tech employment and starting up businesses.

Understanding and reacting to local need is vital to a flourishing tech ecosystem and local empowerment to support inclusive growth and skills would produce this.

- **Taylor Wimpey:** agree with the proposals for the North East Combined Authority (NEMCA) and believe that collaborative working between the constituent councils is key for securing and maximising the long-term prosperity of the region. They believe appropriate resources and political backing should be made available to the NEMCA Mayor from the outset and clear conflict management and resolution procedures should be established.

Taylor Wimpey supports the proposal to confer transport functions to the NEMCA. They say Local Transport Plans should be closely aligned with the NEMCA's growth plans and there should be a transport and growth working group including all key stakeholders.

Taylor Wimpey generally supports the proposals to confer housing and planning functions from government to the NEMCA. However, new acquisition powers should be directed to areas where the market was failing and the possibility of a single Spatial Development Strategy for the NEMCA area should be explored.

Taylor Wimpey had no specific comments on the additional finance functions in the devolution deal but welcome the investment from the government in the North East region.

Taylor Wimpey agree that employment and adult education functions should be conferred to the NEMCA. It supports the commitment to produce Local Skills Improvement Plans and the recognition of the challenges facing the North East employment market. They believe Local Skills Improvement Plans need to highlight the range of skilled jobs in the house building and construction industry. They say there is also a need to ensure consistency between local education institute offerings and the skills and knowledge required by the North East employment market. Taylor Wimpey would welcome any future engagement with the NEMCA on adult education, employment and skills.

- **TEDCO Business Support Ltd:** offer unreserved support for the North East devolution deal. They say the North East has long failed to keep pace with the rest of the UK in terms of its business stock and the number of new businesses created. The devolution deal would potentially bring multi-billion-pound investment into the region which would create conditions that would drive a more entrepreneurial culture and significantly increase the level of new business activity.

Trade Unions

- **Trades Union Congress:** looks forward to working with NEMCA and supports the transfer of government functions to the combined authority. It welcomes the proposal for NEMCA to have non-voting members and asks that trades unions be represented. They would also like to see the creation of additional advisory boards to cover transport, education and skills, housing, public service provision and Net Zero, and broadening of the Inclusive Economy Board remit.

The creation of a co-ordinated transport body for the region would be welcomed. While the TUC support bus franchising as an interim measure, they aspire to public ownership of bus services. Additional proposals made by the TUC include: housing stock to be improved through retro-fitting, increased collaboration with the TUC on learning and skills funding, that the Adult Education Budget prioritise disadvantage groups, and the combined authority apply good employment principles to the delivery of its work agenda.

- **UNISON:** is in principle supportive of devolution, however feel that the North East devolution deal presents some issues.

UNISON is keen to see strengthened accountability and democratic processes and does not want to see individual local council roles eroded to consolidate powers in a single individual.

UNISON is also concerned that the deal omitted workforce issues, health inequalities, police and fire services, the role of communities and trade unions and promoting equality and diversity. It is also concerned about the level of funding in the deal and this being subject to five-yearly gateway assessments.

UNISON would like to see greater community engagement before any deal is finalised and applauds the work done to get the deal to this point. Provided its concerns are addressed, UNISON supports a devolved future for the North East and hopes to be able to work with government, the Mayor and the constituent councils.

Community and Voluntary Sector:

- **Children North East (CNE):** welcome the North East Devolution Deal as a potential major stepping stone towards improving the lives of babies, children and young people in the region. They believe that it presents a huge opportunity to join up regional infrastructure and provision to enable all babies, children and young people to grow up happy and healthy.

It particularly welcomes the transport investment and devolved powers to design and manage transport services around the needs of local people. They highlight the need for frequent, affordable, reliable public transport and safe walking and cycling routes and think integrated ticketing is a potential 'game-changer.' The organisation also wants to ensure that the voices of young people and low-income families are heard in the refresh of the Regional Transport Plan.

CNE believe that increased planning powers at a regional level has the potential to bring in investment and ensure planning decisions reflect the needs of the community. They hope this might be a catalyst for building more social housing and genuinely affordable family homes close to amenities and public transport.

They are delighted that the deal becomes the first in the country to contain a specific commitment to addressing child poverty and look forward to continued collaboration in the North East leading the way to prevent and tackle child poverty.

CNE urge that regional integration does not result in centralisation if this moves opportunities out of local communities and makes them harder to access for people dependent on public transport or trying to balance caring responsibilities.

Similarly, they would not want financial powers granted to the NECMA to result in an additional financial burden on struggling families. The charity would therefore welcome any future opportunities to work with NECMA to make the voices of babies, children and young people they work with heard, and ensure decision-making keeps children, particularly those growing up in poverty, at their heart.

Education

- **Durham University:** welcomes the North East devolution deal, which would bring together the economic strengths of County Durham with that of the broader North East region. It would also enable Durham University to support the business and skills agenda more readily within the region and enable collaboration with other universities in the region to deliver innovation support, including the 'Inclusive Innovation Deal' programme identified in the draft devolution document.

Given the critical importance of the regional universities in delivering an economic transformation, it asks that consideration be given to representation of the sector on the Business Board or at the immediate decision-making level below – an appropriate nominee within the Business Board with an expanded remit.

- **Newcastle College Group (NCG):** support over 30,000 learners and employing over 2,000 people across a network of seven colleges and wishes to show support for the creation of a North East Mayoral Combined Authority.

It states that with responsibility for skills and funding already moving towards a regional system to ensure the skills needs of local areas are met, a devolved government would mean the Adult Education Budget (AEB) would now lie completely with the North East Mayoral Combined Authority. NCG hope this will offer more flexibility, as the proposed combined authority would have a much clearer understanding of local needs and demands.

NCG conclude that if approved, the devolution deal could provide a significant opportunity for them to work closely with employers across the area and collaborate with other local education providers. They therefore offer their full support for the deal and look forward to working with the combined authority for the benefit of its local communities.

- **Newcastle University:** is pleased to see that the proposed North East devolution deal includes areas in which it had strengths in research and innovation. Key among these are sustainable transport and net zero, inclusive economic growth, longevity, addressing inequalities and education and skills. These are areas

where it already enjoys strong collaborations with partner organisations and universities in the region.

Devolution is an opportunity to build on and further develop these collaborations, drive up productivity and deliver real impact for everyone in the region as well as at a national and global level.

The university therefore strongly supports the formation of the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority, which will benefit residents, communities and the region's social, cultural and economic prosperity into the future.

- **Northumbria University:** fully supports the North East devolution deal and the creation of a North East Mayoral Combined Authority.

They say the greater powers and funding to be devolved to the North East have the potential to make a huge impact on the region's communities and businesses and the university recognised the opportunity devolution gave to deliver coordinated and inclusive economic growth.

Northumbria University is keen to build on the North East's strong track record of regional collaboration and innovation and play a role in helping to jointly unlock new jobs, skills, economic development and investment. It is keen to work with the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority to enable more people in the region to access opportunities through employment and education that met the skills needs of the region's economy.

- **Regional Universities Business and Engagement (RUBE) Group:** brings together the North East's universities, focusing on opportunities for collaboration to strengthen the region's economy.

The RUBE Group welcome the proposed North East devolution deal and strongly support the formation of the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority. Adopting this governance model would benefit the region's residents, communities and social, cultural and economic prosperity.

It is particularly pleased that the deal included areas in which the universities had strengths in innovation and skills. Key among these were sustainable energy, health and life sciences, data and digital culture and creative arts. These are areas where the universities enjoyed strong collaborations with partner organisations in the region.

Devolution is an opportunity to build on and further develop these important collaborations, drive up productivity and deliver real impact for everyone in the region, as well as at a national and global level.

- **Tyne Coast College:** support the devolution deal and are very excited to work together with the proposed combined authority to create jobs and courses that will enable people to thrive in the local economy.

As a key stakeholder, they wholeheartedly support the devolution deal and support the vision to create 24,000 extra jobs and the flexibility of offering education and training that meets local needs. The college also recognises the benefits of a united vision for the area and believes that a devolved funding system would enable a fairer delivery of qualifications in a responsive, flexible and agile way, with a key focus on positive outcomes for learners, leading to sustained employment.

- **University of Sunderland:** strongly supports the proposal for a North East devolution deal and the opportunity it presented to improve productivity and reduce disparities within the region.

It is working with the NHS and city partners to develop the Sunderland Health Innovation Zone and hope the deal will provide local leadership with the powers and access to funding and investment incentives to build on and progress this important work.

A deal that attracts new businesses and international investment into the city and supports them thorough developing the skills base they needed to succeed and grow would be 'game changing' for Sunderland, the North East and the UK.

Sport and Culture:

- **Active Partnership for County Durham:** is Sport England's representative in the county. It works at a local, countywide and regional level with its partners to bring about sustained system change in approaches to physical activity.

The organisation wrote to offer its support to the proposed combined authority. As it works in many of the thematic areas identified as important in the devolution deal, including climate change and active travel, with a range of communities including rural communities and in areas experiencing multiple deprivation and inequalities, the Active Partnership states it can 'make a significant contribution to the success of devolution. Working in complex systems, showing impact and addressing inequalities is our business and we look forward to supporting the development of this major regional project and ensuring its success.'

- **New Writing North:** wrote to support the Devolution Deal for the North East and in support of the seven local authorities coming together to achieve this ambition. It suggests that devolution is 'our best bet' to ensure that the North East gets a

fairer financial settlement and can define and deliver its own future. Furthermore, that collaborative working at this scale will depth charge possibilities for co-operation and smarter working to address some of the huge challenges the region has around skills, employment, Net Zero and in how it represents and sells itself to the rest of the UK and beyond.

- **Rise North East:** is the active partnership for Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. It works with partners address issues facing communities, using the power of physical activity to tackle inequalities.

Rise North East supports the approach set out in the North East devolution deal and could see the benefits devolution would bring to enable the region to make its own decisions.

Rise North East is particularly interested in, and excited by, the areas of the devolution deal on transport, housing, land and planning and skills, employment and education. Rise North East hope for the appointment of an Active Travel Commissioner and the use of Active Design Principles in planning. It also welcomes the reference to a potential vehicle to support and promote grassroots sport and physical activity and to a new Radical Prevention Fund for population health.

- **Sport England:** support people to be active so that everyone can benefit from the profound physical and mental health benefits it brings and encourage the proposed combined authority to do the same.

Sport England has supported other devolution deals across England where a health-in-all-policies approach has been taken. It would encourage the proposed combined authority to ensure that any devolution deal provides a clear and codified framework for collaboration between national and local partners – alongside a clear focus on sport and physical activity, defining the additionality this could bring - it looks forward to working with Authority to deliver such an agenda.

Public Sector

- **Durham Constabulary:** agree with the principle of devolution and are pleased to see the investment the deal will bring to the region. They believe that economic growth can only be achieved by having localised decision making and creating the right conditions for investment and look forward to receiving feedback on the progress being made.

- **Durham Enable:** is a supported employment service which supports the creation of a combined authority. They want to see additional funding to support those furthest away from the labour market (highlighting their service model as an example of good practice) and consultation with disabled people and those with long term health conditions on the combined authority's adult education and skills initiatives.
- **North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO):** is the North East's public buying organisation, funded and governed by the twelve North East local authorities.

The North East Devolution deal would help leverage more investment into the region, tackle skills challenges, ensure the transport system is fit for purpose and deliver the jobs of the future.

Public procurement would be a bedrock for delivering the devolution deal and NEPO would play a central role in delivering the ambitions of the deal.

NEPO is fully supportive of the North East devolution deal and NEPO looks forward to working in partnership to make it a success.

- **Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner:** submitted a letter of support for the North East devolution deal. Elements of the deal give the region the tools to address the challenges of unemployment, economic inactivity, health inequalities and child poverty. These include investment in the transport system, the investment fund and oversight of the skills agenda.
- **Pegswood Parish Council:** offer their support for the proposals contained in the scheme for North East Devolution and is keen to see good governance in place, accountability by the Mayor and seven representative members and efficient use of funds to the best advantage of North East population.
- **Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority:** offer their support for the current devolution proposals for the North East area. They believe that investment in the North East to date has not matched the challenges faced and the potential inward investment and greater say in determining local matters will be a positive step.

The Fire and Rescue Authority welcome plans to invest in infrastructure, transport and regeneration projects, for as well as driving up the area commercial, domestic and visitor offer the deal has the potential to improve life chances and opportunities for young people, support vulnerable communities and improve skills and employment opportunities across the area.

- **County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)** welcome the investment into the North East region from the proposed devolution deal and the intention for councils to work together. It also welcomes any opportunities for further consultation on issues arising as the devolution deal comes into force and for developing relationships with key stakeholders.

As the proposed governance arrangements do not refer to existing combined orders, the CDDFRS anticipates that in the medium term the direct impact of the devolution deal on the Combined Fire Authority for County Durham and Darlington would be minimal.

Housing

- **North East Housing Associations:** collectively manage 12,000 homes in the region and view the deal as a hugely exciting opportunity for the North East. They believe that powers and funding are best held with local decision makers who understand their region, its strengths and the challenges it faces, and this is an opportunity for the North East to take its future into its own hands.

The Associations believe that the social housing sector has an integral role to play in the future of the North East by developing more affordable homes, shaping sustainable communities and supporting the wider economy through training and job opportunities, together with our significant spending power. This broad contribution would be enhanced by the range of powers that the devolution deal unlocks:

- the £69 million allocated in the deal for housing and regeneration would support their plans to build more good quality homes where people need them most
- the £1.4 billion investment fund could support further regeneration projects that they are well placed to act as delivery partners on.
- the £1.8 billion identified for adult education and skills which links with the emerging need for skilled employees who can deliver the large-scale programmes of decarbonisation investment required in the region, creating high quality employment opportunities.

The North East Housing Associations acknowledge the benefits that other combined authorities have brought to the areas they serve and the significant convening powers they have to bring together partners to address long-standing issues, therefore they look forward to being a key part of those partnerships.

Other stakeholders

- **Tyne Task Force:** brings together MPs, councillors, businesses, the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult, the Port of Tyne, local authorities and the North of Tyne Combined Authority to focus on issues, challenges and opportunities offered by the River Tyne. Members of the Task Force welcome the deal for both its content, and for the opportunity it presents to deepen devolution to the region. They note the evidence that this is both a genuine functional economic area enclosing both labour market and sectoral geographies, and one with genuine scale and a combination of assets across business, education, and labour force, particularly in relation to marine and maritime assets, skills, investment and employment.

The Tyne Task Force strongly back the deal's focus on the delivery of a 'Green SuperPort' structure and the proposal to address the electricity pylons that cross the river. They also strongly wish to engage collectively with the opportunities afforded to the river by the advanced Skills and Investment Zone Status. The Taskforce believe that together these proposals give the region a real chance to make long lasting positive change for the river, associated businesses, the citizens of the region and to support UK aspirations for Net Zero, Renewable Energy, long term sustainable employment, defence and shipbuilding amongst other policy positions and believe a collective voice under a newly devolved combined authority will be an essential pillar towards this end.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

North East Devolution Consultation

We would welcome your views on the proposed changes to the way the councils in the North East work together. Please take a few minutes to complete the following questions. The consultation finishes on **23 March 2023**. All information provided will be treated as confidential and will not be attributable to you.

In order to help you answer each of the questions on the proposed changes to the way councils work together in the North East, we have provided a summary of the key points. Further details on these can be found on the North of Tyne Devolution website.

To begin the questionnaire, please press the 'next' button below.

Changing how councils work together (governance)

To implement the devolution deal and access the long-term funding and devolved powers for the area we are proposing that the following changes are made to the way in which the seven councils work together across the North East region:

- The abolition of the two combined authorities which currently exist in the area of the seven councils; and
- The creation of a single new mayoral combined authority to cover the area of all seven councils.
- The Mayor for the new NEMCA will be elected by the local government electors for the seven council areas and the first Mayor is to be elected in May 2024.
- Each term of the Mayor will be four years.
- It is proposed that the Cabinet of the Combined Authority will comprise 8 members made up of:
 - The Mayor
 - Seven elected members, one appointed from each council

This group are known as voting members.

In addition, the Cabinet will be supported by a representative of the business community and a representative of the community and voluntary sector; these will be non-voting Members.

Q1 Do you agree or disagree with our proposals for the revised arrangements for the Combined Authority, as set out and in the Scheme, in particular the proposed arrangements for a Mayor, mayoral combined authority, and the councils, working together?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

Please give your reasons here:

Transport

The new Combined Authority would use a full package of devolved transport investment and powers to create an integrated transport system.

If the (North East Mayoral Combined Authority NEMCA) is created it will be the designated Local Transport Authority for the area under the Transport Act 2000. As North East Combined Authority (NECA) and North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) will be abolished, the Joint Transport Committee will also cease to exist. NEMCA will exercise the transport functions for the Combined Area which were previously held by NECA and NTCA.

The following functions are the responsibility of the Mayor and are referred to as "Mayoral Functions":

- Power to draw up a Local Transport Plan and strategies
- Bus franchising powers
- Ability to pay grants to bus service operators
- Ability to pay grants to the Constituent Councils for exercising transport functions.
- Develop and agree a strategy for the key route network of roads

Q2 Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer transport functions and new transport related functions to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

Please give your reasons here:

Housing and planning

While the individual local authorities would continue to discharge their housing responsibilities, with new powers the NEMCA would work to improve the supply and quality of housing; to support in other ways the creation, regeneration and development of communities or their continued well-being and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and good design.

Mayoral functions will be:

- Power to designate Mayoral Development Areas and establish Mayoral Development Corporations
- Housing and land acquisition powers [including compulsory purchase] to support housing, regeneration, infrastructure and community development and well being
- Power to draw up a Spatial Development Strategy (subject to NEMCA agreeing to allocate the power to the Mayor) .

Q3 Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer housing and planning functions from central government to a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

Please give your reasons here:

Finance and investment

It is proposed that the new combined authority will have new finance powers to help deliver a long term investment plan to support employment and growth opportunities across the region.

These include:

The power to issue to the Constituent Councils levies under section 74 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to meet the expenditure that is reasonably attributable to the exercise of its functions. It is proposed that NEMCA will be able to issue three transport levies, as is currently the case across the Combined Area, ie a levy for Durham, a levy for Northumberland and levy for the Tyne and Wear area.

It is proposed that the Mayor will have the power to issue a Council Tax Precept on behalf of NEMCA to provide for the costs of the Mayor that are incurred in, or in connection with, the exercise of Mayoral Functions. The Cabinet will be able to amend the proposal for a precept if at least 5 Members of the Cabinet oppose them.

Q4 Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to confer additional finance functions on a North East Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree

Please give your reasons here:

Skills, employment and adult education

The devolution deal gives the region more control and funding to shape skills and help people into jobs and careers.

It is proposed that NEMCA will be given devolved functions in respect of Adult Education and will control the Adult Education Budget from the academic year 2024/2025. (These arrangements will not cover apprenticeships training or persons subject to adult detention.)

Q5 Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move these skills, employment and adult education functions to a North East Mayoral Combined Authority?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree or disagree
- ☐ Disagree

Please give your reasons here:

Q6 Are there any comments you would like to make that you do not feel you have addressed in your response so far?

About You

By answering the questions below you will help us to make sure we are consulting with and can take into consideration the views of our diverse communities (please note this section contains routing so some questions may be skipped depending upon your answers).

Q7 In which of the following are you primarily completing this questionnaire?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> As a resident | <input type="radio"/> As a housing and development representative |
| <input type="radio"/> As a business representative | <input type="radio"/> As a transport representative |
| <input type="radio"/> As a member of the Voluntary and Community sector | <input type="radio"/> Trade Union |
| <input type="radio"/> As an education provider | <input type="radio"/> Other |

Q8 Which one of the following Local Authorities do you pay your Council Tax to?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Durham County Council | <input type="radio"/> North Tyneside Borough Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Gateshead Borough Council | <input type="radio"/> South Tyneside Borough Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Newcastle City Council | <input type="radio"/> Sunderland City Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Northumberland County Council | <input type="radio"/> Not applicable |

Q9 Please provide the name of your business or organisation in the space below:

Q9a Which one of the following Local Authorities is your organisation or company based in?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Durham County Council | <input type="radio"/> North Tyneside Borough Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Gateshead Borough Council | <input type="radio"/> South Tyneside Borough Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Newcastle City Council | <input type="radio"/> Sunderland City Council |
| <input type="radio"/> Northumberland County Council | <input type="radio"/> Not applicable |

Q10 Are you...?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Prefer not to say

Q11 Which of the following age ranges do you fall into?

☐ 15 or under

☐ 45-59

☐ 16-24

☐ 60-74

☐ 25-34

☐ 75 or over

☐ 35-44

☐ Prefer not to say

Q12 Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

☐ Arab

☐ Mixed Heritage: White and Black African

☐ Asian or Asian British: Indian

☐ Mixed Heritage: White and Asian

☐ Asian or Asian British: Pakistani

☐ Any other Mixed Background

☐ Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi

☐ White British

☐ Asian or Asian British: Chinese

☐ White Irish

☐ Any other Asian Background

☐ Gypsy / Traveller

☐ Black or Black British: Caribbean

☐ Any other White Background

☐ Black or Black British: African

☐ Other ethnic group

☐ Any other Black Background

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Mixed Heritage: White and Black Caribbean

Q13 Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to say

Q13a If yes, do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day to day activities?

☐ Yes a lot

☐ Yes a little

☐ Not at all

Q14 What is your religion/belief?

☐ Buddhist

☐ Hindu

☐ No religion

☐ Christian (includes
Church of England,
Catholic, Protestant and
all other Christian
Denominations)

☐ Jewish

☐ Other

☐ Muslim

☐ Sikh

Q15 Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

☐ Bisexual

☐ Straights/Heterosexual

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Gay or Lesbian

☐ Other

Q16 Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

☐ Yes

☐ No (if you wish please
write in your gender
identity below)

☐ Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix B: How the consultation was promoted

Pre-consultation

The announcement that a devolution deal had been reached was made on 28th December 2022 and was first announced nationally by government. Localised statements were issued by the seven constituent councils aimed at local media outlets.

Standardised local press releases were published by each of the seven councils, but for the purposes of this report, links to published releases will be provided from Newcastle City Council's website:

- [New North East devolution deal](#) – 28th December 2022.

The announcement of the 'minded to' deal achieved widespread media coverage, including [on the BBC](#) and in [The Guardian](#) as well as among local titles.

This was also further publicised through the respective social media channels of the seven local authorities involved.

Consultation period

The consultation period began on 23rd January 2023, after the Cabinets of each of the seven local authorities had approved the governance review and scheme and had agreed to move to public consultation.

Each council promoted the consultation through their own websites.

Two press releases were issued at different stages of this process. The first provided an update to highlight that the seven local authority Cabinets were set to meet to discuss the deal and be asked to approve to move to consultation:

- [North East devolution deal set to progress](#) – 13th January 2023

The second formally announced the start of the consultation period. This set out how people could take part in the consultation, how and where they could provide feedback, and what specifically they were being asked to provide their views on:

- [£4.2bn devolution deal for the North East](#) – 26th January 2023.

There was again significant local media coverage across the region, including by the [Hexham Courant](#) (Northumberland), [Chronicle Live](#) (Newcastle) and the [Northern Echo](#) (County Durham).

A further press release was issued in the week before the end of the consultation period to remind people to have their say before the opportunity was gone:

- [North East devolution consultation reaches final stages](#) – 16th March 2023

Social media

Each of the seven local authorities made use of their considerable social media followings to promote the public consultation across the entire region.

These channels were used to share press releases which had been sent to media outlets, publish an explainer video which detailed what the consultation was about, weekly reminders that the consultation was in process, details about other offline opportunities people had to provide feedback, and issue reminders across the region ahead of the consultation coming to a close.

Content was standardised to ensure that people in all parts of the region were receiving the same information in a consistent manner throughout the consultation period.

In-person events

At least one in-person consultation event was held in each of the seven local authority areas.

Members of the public were invited to attend these events to hear a presentation explaining what was in the deal, how the new Mayoral Combined Authority would function, what its powers were and how this would impact anybody who lives or works in the region. Attendees were also invited to put questions to senior councillors and officers in attendance, while they also had the chance to provide their consultation responses in person instead of having to submit them online.

These events were publicised through councils' respective social media channels to reach audiences within their own local authority area.

Regional stakeholder events aimed at specific sectors such as the voluntary and community sector, business, transport and education sectors were also held.

Other

A communications toolkit was produced ahead of the launch of the consultation to enable partner organisations and key stakeholders of each council to help promote the consultation to their own internal and external audiences.

This included:

- social media assets
- website and newsletter content
- e-mail footers
- key contacts
- FAQs

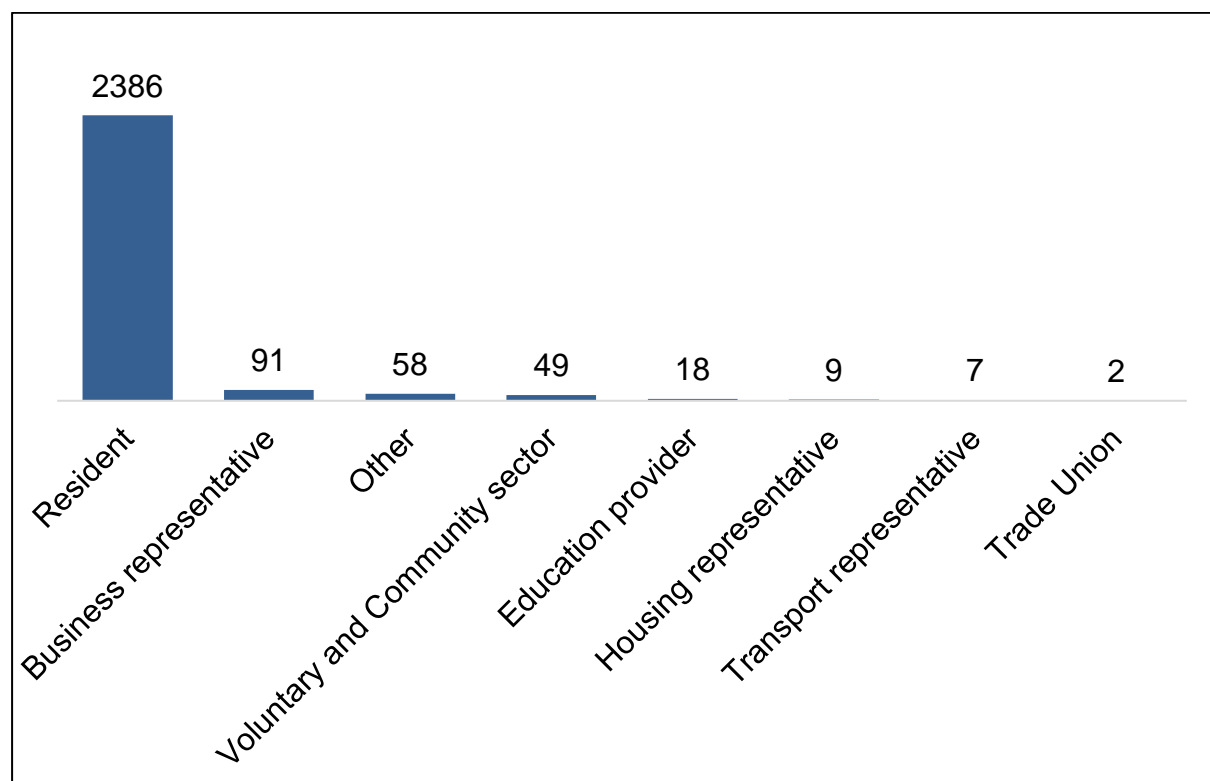
Easy-read versions of key consultation documents were also produced to make the process more accessible to respondents.

Appendix C: Demographics

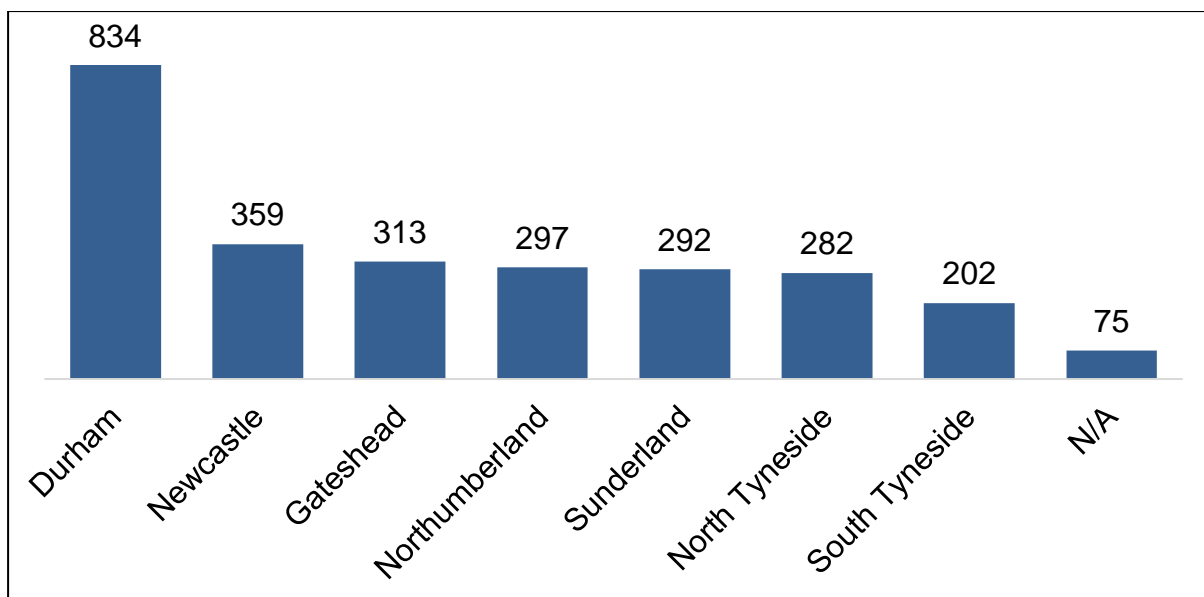
Profile of who took part in the survey

Responding as: The clear majority of people who took part in the survey did so in their capacity as residents. 2,386 responses were from residents.

Of the 58 respondents identifying as other, 31 did not provide any further information, 20 were from other types of organisation (e.g. local authorities, other public sector organisations), 5 stated their job role (e.g. councillor, local authority officer), 2 were residents.



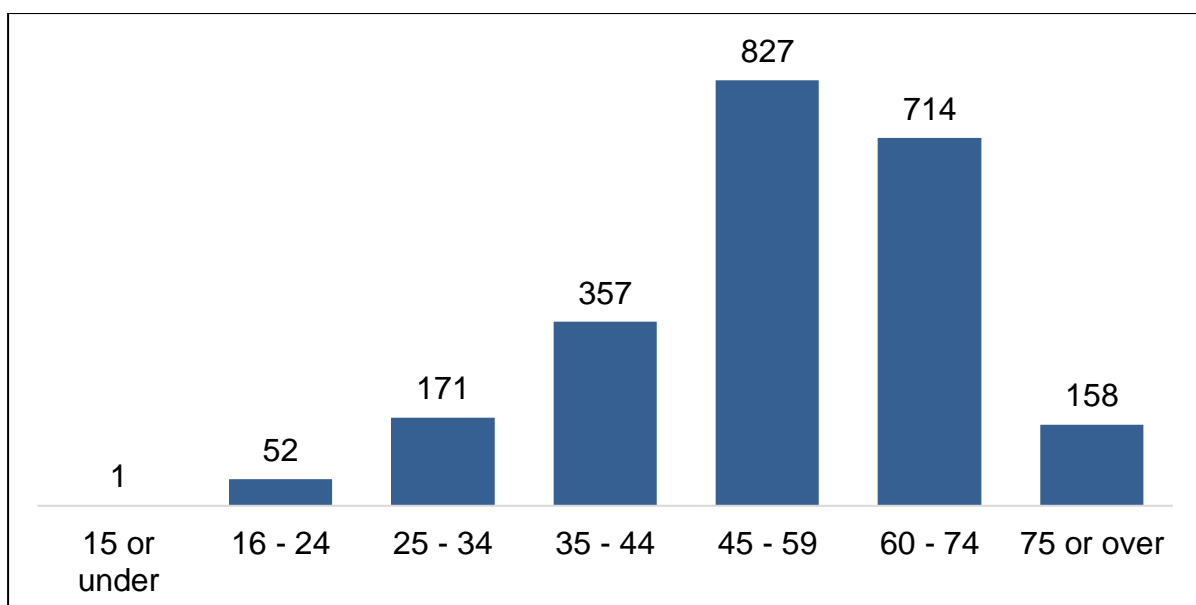
Local authority: Just under a third of responses came from County Durham.



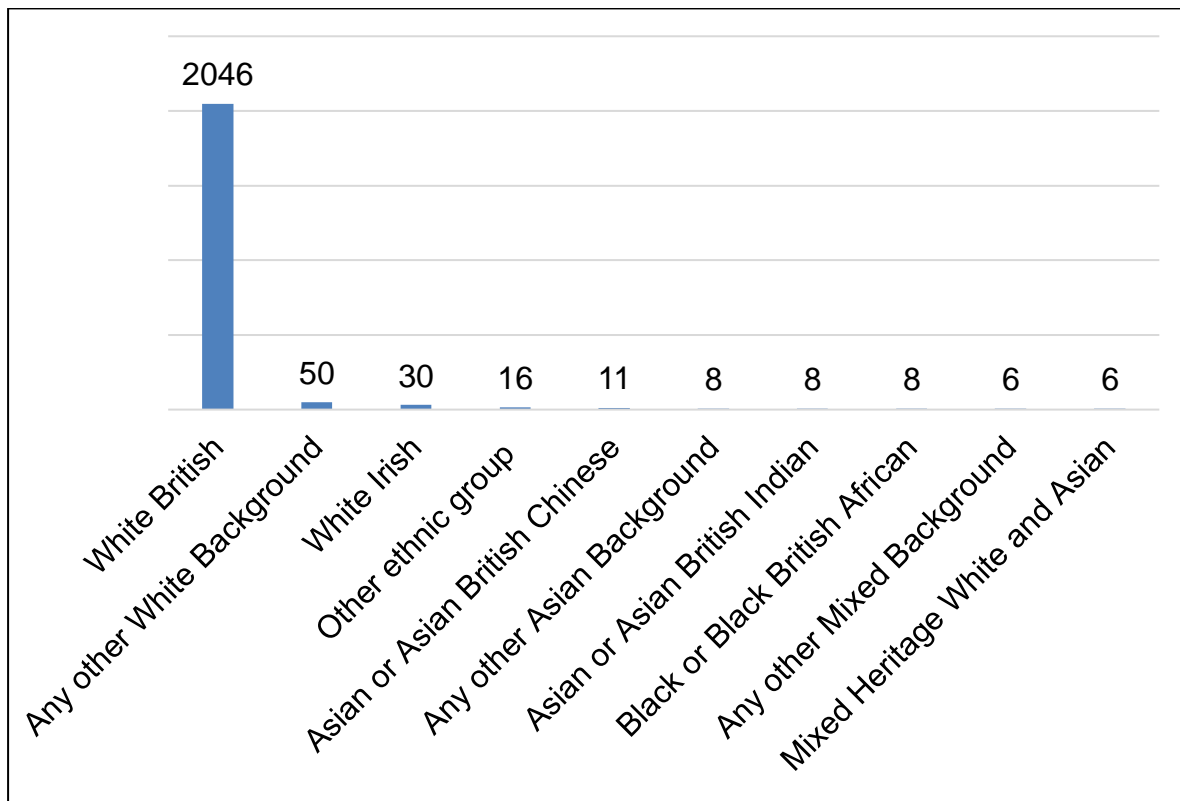
Sex: 895 respondents identified as female and 1,206 as male, 239 preferred not to say.

Gender: 16 respondents said that their gender is not the same as their sex registered at birth.

Age group: Almost two-thirds of respondents were aged 45-74 years old.

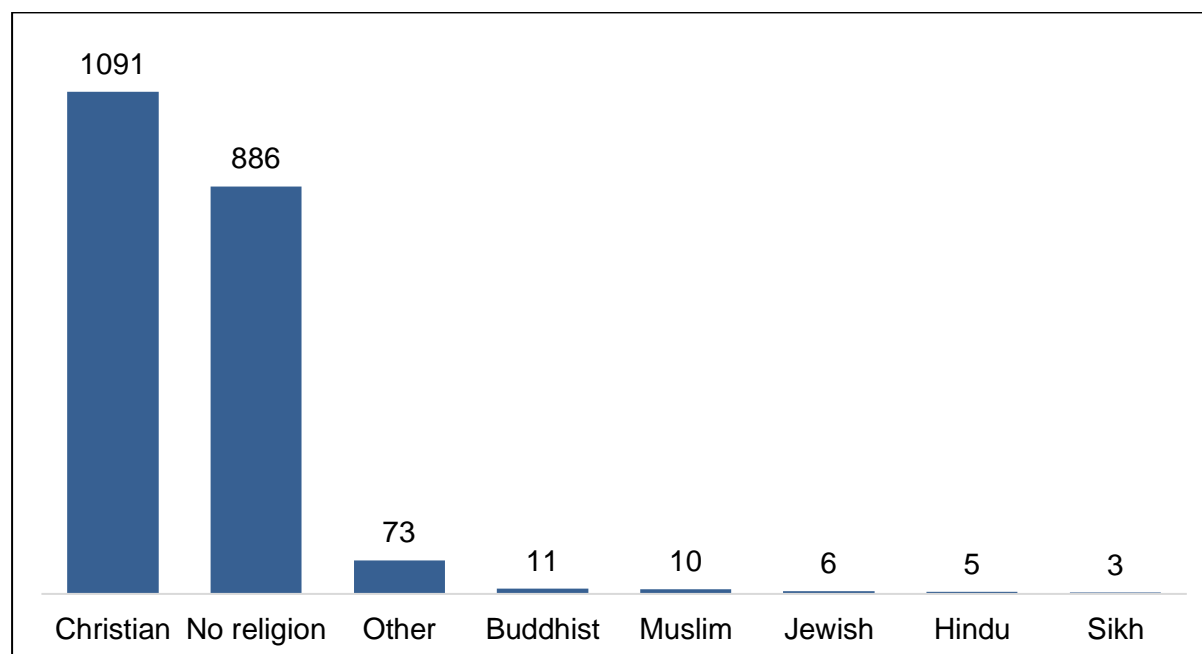


Ethnicity: 97.1% of respondents identified as white, 2.9% of respondents identified as being from all other ethnic groups combined.

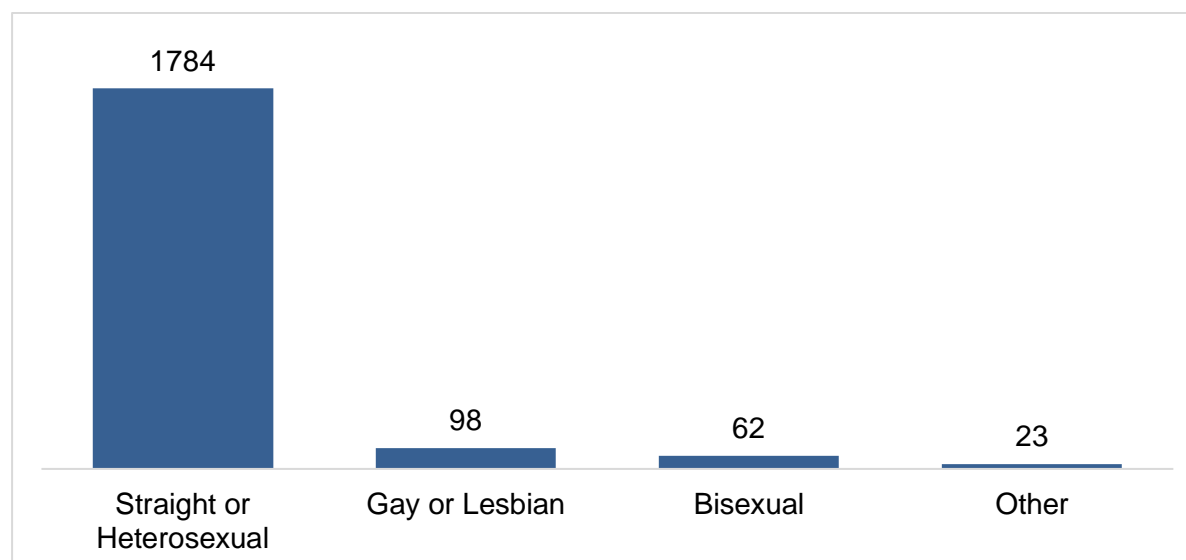


Disability/long term condition: 346 people (16.4% respondents answering this question) said they had a physical or mental health condition or illness that has lasted (or is expected to last) longer than 12 months and reduce their ability to carry out day to day tasks.

Religion: 52% of respondents answering this question identified as Christian, while 42.5% said they have no religion.



Sexual orientation: 9% of respondents identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or other.



Appendix D: Full list of issues from the consultation

All comments to the consultation were read and coded into themes.

Section 4 in the report highlights the key issues that people raised, per theme and by view, during the consultation.

This appendix includes the full list of issues that were raised during the consultation survey.

1. Changing how councils work together

Agree

- **The proposals make sense** (275 responses). These comments stated that the proposals make sense, will create efficiencies, increase resources, ensure a coordinated strategy and are the best option for the region.
- **The proposal will increase regional power** (218 responses). These comments welcomed the increased powers and local decision making the deal will bring and were positive about the role of the mayor and the higher profile they would help to create for the region.
- **Working together benefits the region** (190 responses). These comments said the proposals were an opportunity for local authorities and stakeholder organisations to work together for the benefit of the region.
- **Change is needed** (25 responses). These comments said that change was needed as the current system wasn't working.
- **Missed out due to delays** (20 responses). These comments said that the area had missed out due to devolution not happening earlier and wanted the proposals to proceed as quickly as possible.
- **Other** (29 responses). These comments referred to saving money, increased accountability and positivity around the inclusion of non-voting members.

Neither agree nor disagree

- **Agreement in principle, but with some concerns, questions or caveats** (79 responses). These comments were broadly in favour of the proposals but raised specific areas of concern, had questions or showed support for the proposals if one or more conditions were met.

- **Other** (78 responses). These comments referred to a variety of issues, including a desire to see the proposals go further and replacing/changing existing local authorities.
- **A need for more information** (65 responses). These comments requested more information or details about the proposals and how they would be implemented.
- **Changes or clarity to the non-voting roles on the Cabinet of the Combined Authority** (59 responses). These comments asked for more representatives from the business and voluntary and community sectors, education or cultural sector representation, thought these representatives should have voting rights or wanted clarity about how they would be appointed.
- **Cabinet arrangements** (38 responses). These comments thought there should be more councillors from each local authority in the cabinet. Clarity was also sought about how cabinet members would be appointed alongside a desire from some for Cabinet Members to be directly elected.

Disagree

- **Lack of trust** (230 responses). These comments raised concerns that creation of the Combined Authority would result in the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people and the organisation being unaccountable. Lack of trust in politicians (locally and nationally), local authorities and the national government were also highlighted.
- **Additional bureaucracy** (226 responses). These comments said the proposals would result in an extra layer of bureaucracy with associated additional costs.
- **The creation of the Combined Authority would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (179 responses). These comments said that implementation of the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas and County Durham, concerns were raised that Newcastle or larger settlements would unfairly benefit.
- **Undemocratic** (109 responses). These comments said the proposals were undemocratic, that there was no mandate for the proposals or that they/the North East had previously voted against devolution.
- **Will not or do not work** (64 responses). These comments believe the proposals will not work or that combined authorities elsewhere do not work, with some respondents feeling that the proposals were simply a bad idea.

- **Too big or different** (62 responses). These comments said the area involved was too large and that the areas were too different to be able to make the proposals a success and to ensure the benefits were felt in all areas.
- **Unnecessary** (48 responses). These comments didn't agree with the proposals as they believed them to be unnecessary and the current system should not be changed.
- **Not enough money** (32 responses). These comments said the deal did not provide enough money or investment to be worth the conditions attached.

2. Transport

Agree

- **The region needs an integrated transport system** (174 responses). These comments said it was important to have an integrated transport system, with different modes of transport working together, including ticketing.
- **Working together as a region makes sense** (156 responses). These comments said it made sense for areas to work together, with a regional approach or strategy for transport.
- **An opportunity to improve transport** (135 responses). These comments said the proposals were an opportunity to improve transport, particularly public transport. Many of the comments referred to poor services which needed to be improved.
- **General support** (89 responses). These comments offered general support for the proposals, including the view that they were in the best interests of the region, would cost less than existing arrangements and would bring investment.
- **Suggested priorities** (87 responses). These comments suggested priorities for improving transport, including affordable and reliable public transport, control of buses through franchising, fully dualling the A1 and reopening the Leamside rail line.
- **Locally designed and accountable** (58 responses). These comments said transport should be locally designed or controlled and locally accountable.
- **Conditional support** (54 responses). These comments offered support for the proposals if certain conditions were met. These included fair funding for all areas, reduced costs and improved public transport.

- **Public transport problems** (27 responses). These comments referred to problems with public transport, particularly buses, and poor services in some areas, particularly rural areas.
- **Works well in other areas** (27 responses). These comments said the proposals would bring improvements in transport seen in areas such as London and Manchester to the region.
- **Extend Metro system** (20 responses). These comments called for the Metro system to be extended to other areas, including Washington and beyond Tyne and Wear.
- **Other** (48 responses). These comments referred to a variety of issues, including that transport should be nationalised or taken into public control, a need for more information and opposition to road schemes such as clean air zones, low traffic neighbourhoods and 15-minute cities.

Neither agree nor disagree

- **Suggested priorities** (30 responses). These comments suggested priorities for improving transport, including fully dualling the A1, better public transport and extending the Metro system to more areas.
- **Need more information** (23 responses). These comments said they needed more information on or details of the proposals and how they would be implemented.
- **Conditional support** (20 responses). These comments offered support for the proposals if certain conditions were met. These included being fair to all areas, improvements to public transport and lower costs.
- **Other** (103 responses). These comments referred to a variety of issues, including that the proposals would not lead to improvements, would be unfair or detrimental to some areas including rural areas, the need for an integrated transport system, problems with public transport, the proposals were an opportunity to improve transport, and opposition to road schemes such as clean air zones.

Disagree

- **Unfair or detrimental to some areas** (148 responses). These comments said the proposals were unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposals being too large or diverse.

- **Not wanting a North East Mayor or concentration of power** (62 responses). These comments said they did not want a North East Mayor or the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people.
- **It would not lead to improvements** (53 responses). These comments said the proposals would not improve transport in the region. Many of the comments said bringing together local authorities who they feel had been unable to address transport problems, or had made things worse, would not change anything.
- **Opposition to the devolution deal** (52 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with many referring to the result of the 2004 devolution referendum or wanting to keep the existing arrangements.
- **More bureaucracy** (47 responses). These comments said the proposals would lead to an unnecessary additional layer of bureaucracy or administration in the region.
- **Democratic deficit** (28 responses). These comments raised concerns including political infighting and self-interest, perceived corruption, lack of accountability and poor decision making.
- **Road schemes** (28 responses). These comments expressed opposition to road schemes such as clean air zones, bus and cycle lane and 15-minute cities. Some comments referred to not wanting to follow the approach taken in London.
- **Local control** (23 responses). These comments said decisions and control of transport should be the responsibility of individual local authorities rather than a regional body.
- **Other** (125 responses). These comments referred to a variety of issues, including problems with public transport, suggested priorities for improving transport, needing more information and nationalising transport or taking it into public control.

3. Housing and planning

Agree

- **The region needs an integrated housing approach** (104 responses). These respondents said it was important to have an integrated housing strategy, with a combined approach to issues impacting the North east.
- **The provision of more affordable and social housing** (100 responses). Respondents believed that the proposals would be an impetus for the building of

more affordable and social housing, something that was seen to be desperately needed.

- **Local people are best placed to make local decisions** (90 responses). Respondents welcomed the prospect of having the power to control budgets and make decisions locally, as opposed to in Westminster.
- **Environmental sustainability and the protection of green belts** (63 responses). Respondents said the proposals were an opportunity to improve environmentally sustainability within housing. Many comments were concerned with Net Zero targets and the protection of green belts.
- **Regeneration** (46 responses). These respondents highlighted potential benefits to regeneration in the region.
- **Support for devolution & the new deal** (22 responses). These respondents showed support for the new authority, mayor or devolution deal.
- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (19 responses). These respondents agreed with the proposals on the condition they were fair and that there was accountability within decision making.
- **Other** (69 responses). These respondents referred to a variety of issues, including the need for compulsory purchase orders (CPOS), homelessness and the role of housing associations.

Neither agree nor disagree

- **Conditional support** (67 responses). These respondents said they would support the proposals if one or more conditions were met. These included the proposals leading to the provision of more affordable and social housing, environmental sustainability and the need for compulsory purchase orders.
- **A need for more information** (46 responses). These respondents said they needed more information on or details about the proposals and how they would be implemented.
- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (25 responses). These comments said the proposals could be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposal being too large or diverse.
- **Other** (47 responses). These respondents referred to a variety of issues, including regeneration, rogue landlords and cost implications.

Disagree

- **Not wanting concentration of power or opposed to a new deal** (141 responses). These comments said they did not want a North East Mayor or the concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people.
- **It would be unfair or detrimental to some areas** (105 responses). These respondents said the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas. Some comments referred to the area included in the proposals being too large or diverse.
- **Housing to remain under the control of individual authorities** (54 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with many wanting to keep the existing arrangements.
- **Environmental sustainability and the protection of green belts** (41 responses). These respondents said the proposals would not improve environmental sustainability in the region. Many of the respondents were concerned that green belts would not be protected and that new properties would be substandard in terms of sustainability.
- **The provision of more affordable and social housing** (24 responses). Respondents believed that the housing needs of the North East would not be met. Many expressed the need for new affordable social housing but were uncertain whether this issue would be resolved.
- **Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)** (21 responses). These respondents expressed opposition to compulsory purchase orders. Some comments outright rejected the devolution proposal based on this power.
- **Other** (100 responses). These comments referred to a variety of issues, including problems with new costs, rogue landlords, regeneration and some made suggestions on how to improve current housing issues.

4. Finance and investment

Agree

- **Long-term investment that will create opportunities and improvement in the region** (110 responses). These comments suggested that devolution would attract strategic long-term investment that would improve the region by creating better infrastructure (e.g., transport) and opportunities for employment, thereby helping to close the North / South divide.

- **If there is fair distribution of funds** (63 responses). These comments agreed that devolution would be positive for the region as long as the finances were distributed evenly across the area without the need for a rise in council tax or other costs to local people.
- **Support better decisions based on local knowledge** (53 responses). These comments believe that devolved finances will allow better decisions to be made by local representatives who 'know' the area better than Whitehall.
- **Ensure transparency and accountability** (32 responses). These comments agreed with the idea of devolution but wanted reassurance about the transparency and accountability of decision making.

Neither agree nor disagree

- **They did not understand the proposals** (39 responses). These comments suggested respondents did not understand the proposals and that more information was needed to make an informed decision about whether or not the devolution deal would be beneficial.
- **Concerns with increased costs** (36 responses). These comments said they were not sure about the devolution deal and were concerned that it may lead to increased costs for local people, including higher council tax.

Disagree

- **It would increase costs to local people** (244 responses). These comments said the proposals were unfair as it would inevitably mean more costs for local people in order to fund the new Mayor's activities and result in higher council tax.
- **Concerns with distribution** (60 responses). These comments suggested that devolution would bring an unequal distribution of funds with the 'bigger' cities getting a higher proportion of resources compared to more rural areas.
- **Bureaucracy** (39 responses). These comments said that devolution would create more bureaucracy which would inhibit delivery.
- **Waste** (38 responses). These comments were opposed to the North East devolution deal, with respondents suggesting the deal is a waste of money and things should be kept as they are.

- **Undemocratic** (30 responses). These comments highlighted a belief that the process for agreeing a devolution deal is undemocratic as a referendum has not been held.

5. Education, skills and employment

Agree

- **Skills and training should be delivered at the NEMCA level.** (327 responses). Respondents felt that national delivery was too out of touch with local needs and/or local authority level delivery was too small to be efficient or lacked synergies. Integration with other partners was often felt to be enhanced at this geographic level, as was efficient use of funding.
- **Agree with the proposals but with some caveats.** (108 responses). Respondents felt that apprenticeships should be included in scope; governance should include education providers and businesses and funding should be shared fairly across local authorities.
- **Increase in funding welcomed.** (43 responses). These respondents only cited the extra funding available.

Neither agree nor disagree

- **A request for more information** (87 responses). These respondents wanted further information to help them form an opinion either about skills training in the region or the devolution proposals. Others wanted to understand more about how funding would be shared fairly between local authorities.
- **Will not improve** (22 responses). These respondents felt that these proposals would have no impact.
- **Should be a wider scope** (17 responses). A variety of levels of activity were offered including that proposals should include Higher Education; higher level qualifications; lower-level qualifications or schools.

Disagree

- **NEMCA is too large an area for skills planning and delivery** (95 responses). These respondents felt that Local Authorities were best placed to deliver these proposals.
- **Concerns around governance** (79 responses). These comments said these respondents did not want a North East Mayor; or were worried about the

concentration of power in the hands of one person or a small group of people; many expressed distrust of politicians in general or noted that these proposals had not been subject to a referendum.

- **NEMCA was too small an area for skills planning and delivery** (39 responses). Respondents stated that the proposed activities were best coordinated and funded at a national level.
- **Felt the proposals would not work** (38 responses). These respondents stated that the proposed activities would not achieve improvements within NECMA. Often citing insufficient funding or inadequate scope.
- **Unfair or detrimental to some areas** (32 responses). These comments said the proposals would be unfair or detrimental to some areas, particularly rural areas or specific local authorities.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20th June 2023

Subject: North East Active Travel Strategy – Approval to publish

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval to adopt the North East Active Travel Strategy following a period of consultation. The strategy aims for active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday travel and to combine with public transport for longer journeys.

A total of 4,037 pieces of engagement were received as part of the consultation. 2,900 responses were received from the online survey, 393 comment cards were submitted at pop-up events held in each of the seven local authority areas, 676 comments were via social media comments, and over 20 pieces of detailed stakeholder feedback were received. In addition, 58 people registered the online events which we hosted. The majority of responses were in favour of the proposals that were consulted upon.

A mixture of online and in-person engagement took place throughout the consultation period which ran from 4 January 2023 to midnight on 5 March 2023.

Following the consultation period, some changes have been made to the strategy document.

A Consultation Feedback summary report, which sets out the key changes made to the strategy, is appended to this report.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the responses to the consultation as outlined in this report and in the Consultation feedback report (Appendix two); and,
- ii. Formally adopt the North East Active Travel Strategy set out in Appendix one, as one of the suite of strategies expanding on the North East Transport Plan.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The North East Transport Plan (NETP), published March 2021, set out the North East's transport ambitions up to 2035. Within the Plan, a commitment was made to develop and publish a North East Active Travel Strategy by 2023.
- 1.2 Delivery of an Active Travel Strategy will help achieve the Transport Plan's vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' and the Plan's five objectives. It also builds on the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy, published November 2022.

2. Strategy Content

- 2.1 The North East Active Travel Strategy aims to encourage more active travel; walking, wheeling and cycling, across the North East and sets out proposals to help people travel actively more often.

The strategy sets an aim for active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday trips and to combine with public transport for longer journeys and sets a target for over half of all shorter journeys in the North East to be made by active travel by 2035, up from 37% in 2018/19.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this strategy, 'shorter journeys' refers to trips of less than 5 miles, which is aligned to the UK government's second cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS2), published in July 2022.
- 2.3 It is these shorter journeys that are currently made by car that have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel. Based on pre-pandemic (2018/19) trip behaviours, we can see the major opportunity for journeys 1-2 and 2-5 miles in the North East.
- 2.4 The strategy has referenced the need for active travel to combine with public transport in the strategy aim to cover journeys that might be too far to walk, wheel or cycle.
- 2.5 By achieving an increase of 45% in the number of active travel journeys, the region could see the following benefits:
 - Preventing approximately 1,000 premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels;
 - Reduction in carbon emissions, potentially saving around 80,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year;
 - Benefiting the region's economy by around £350 million a year.
- 2.6 The Active Travel Strategy covers the period up until 2035 and sets a £500 million package of regional interventions that would help get more people in the North East to cycle, walk and wheel more often. The strategy also identifies schemes which connect active travel to public transport stations and interchanges, enabling people to make part of their journey by active travel and part by public transport. If funded, the delivery of this ambitious programme of investment would help to achieve our target.

2.7 Consultation approach and response.

On 20th December 2022, JTC members approved the draft North East Active Travel Strategy for consultation. The consultation began on 4th January 2023 and ran until 5th March.

In order to reach out to as many members of the public and stakeholders as possible, a multi-faceted approach was used. Furthermore, to ensure the consultation was inclusive different formats of the strategy were available upon request including an audio version.

In all, a total of 4,037 pieces of engagement were received as part of the consultation. 2,900 responses were received from the online survey, 393 comment cards were submitted at pop-up events held in each of the seven local authority areas, 676 comments were via social media comments, and over 20 pieces of detailed stakeholder feedback were received. In addition, 58 people registered the online events which we hosted.

As part of the consultation feedback evaluation, an external report has been produced and is appended to this agenda item.

The majority of respondents expressed support for the strategy's key aim, commitment statements and intervention list. More respondents expressed support for the headline target than did not. For those who disagreed with the headline, this was often divided between those who felt the target was too ambitious and those who felt it was not ambitious enough. Overall support for the strategy was also clearly reflected in the qualitative responses.

2.8 Summary of feedback received from members of the public

Feedback theme	Insights
Accessibility and connectivity	Safety and security - High levels of feedback on unsafe routes were received, particularly in regard to insufficient lighting, uneven surfaces, potholes etc.
	Rural concerns - Some responses from those living in rural communities identified distance of travel to work and/or amenities as a barrier to active travel which can sometimes be exacerbated by reduced public transport provision.
	Infrastructure - Infrastructure (both absence of and maintenance of) was seen as a barrier – e.g., poorly maintained paths, cycle lanes, road crossings etc. This has been raised as a key barrier to active travel by those with disabilities and/or mobility issues.
	Facilities - Lack of facilities at destinations and on route to support active travel journeys was seen to be detrimental in the take up of active travel.
	Mobility - Active travel is not considered to be a viable option of travel for everyone, especially those with mobility

	issues. The term “wheeling” used within the strategy was often poorly understood by wheelchair and mobility scooter users.
	Access to equipment – Some respondents have raised concerns about their ability to afford a bicycle and the necessary equipment.
Opportunity / cost	Cost of living - There are some responses from people that believe the desired funding should be redirected to tackle the current cost-of-living crisis.
	Wasteful - Some respondents stated that they believe that investment in active travel is simply a waste of capital and are against active travel provision. Some have referred to perceptions of current infrastructure usage and believe extended funding is unwarranted.
	Modal friction - There are tensions between different forms of travel, both in reallocation of road space and friction at shared use provision.
	Public transport - Some feel that requested funding should be redirected to improve public transport, such as metro extensions and enhancements to bus services.
Support for the strategy	Benefits - People are aware of the benefits of active travel and many are supportive of the aims of the strategy.
	Excessive car usage - There is a feeling (particularly among those that mention they are cyclists) that modern life is overly reliant on cars for short journeys.
Partnership working	Tourism opportunities – Some respondents suggested that stronger partnership working with the tourism sector could be highly advantageous when promoting active travel across the region.
	Community groups - Collaboration with community organisations and events was seen to be beneficial to further extend the reach of the Active Travel Strategy and help to support take-up.
	Local and regional partners - Liaising with partners to ensure shared goals and objectives are met across the region and to set the overall direction of travel was suggested
	Educational services - Working with educational institutions, including North East universities and schools to help facilitate active travel was a common suggestion amongst responders.

General feedback	Inconsistencies in terminology – Some feedback was received regarding conflicts with language used in parts of the strategy and the confusion that could be created as a result. Particularly when mentioning "walking, wheeling and cycling".
	Best practice examples – Many responders have voiced opinions on best practices, referring to examples elsewhere, both nationally and internationally, as examples of best practice.
	Clarity - Some feel that sections include too much jargon that could take away from the overall understanding of the strategy.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The proposal is for JTC to agree to endorse the North East Active Travel Strategy which has been updated to reflect consultation feedback.

4. Reasons for the Proposals

- 4.1 Delivery of an Active Travel Strategy will help achieve the Transport Plan's vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' and the Plan's five objectives. .

5. Alternative Options Available

- 5.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 3.1 above.
- 5.2 Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may choose not to accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 3.1 above.
- 5.3 Option 1 is the recommended option.

6. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 6.1 Following formal adoption, the document will be published on the Transport North East website and work will begin to deliver the key outcomes of the strategy.

7. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 7.1 The adoption of the North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve all five of the region's agreed transport objectives. A set of key indicators, linked to the North East Transport Plan also form part of the strategy monitoring process.

8. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 8.1 Schemes and projects developed to deliver the strategy outcomes will be subject to individual finance and resource assessments within the delivery programme.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

10. Key Risks

- 10.1 The schemes and projects developed to deliver the strategy outcomes will be subject to individual risk assessments as part of the delivery programme.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 The proposals in the strategy are seeking a positive impact on equality and diversity in relation to access to transport.

12. Crime and Disorder

- 12.1 The proposals in the strategy are seeking a positive impact on the safety and security of users of the region's active travel network, infrastructure and services.

13. Consultation/Engagement

- 13.1 In addition to the 8-week public consultation the drafting of the strategy was assisted through a steering group consisting of key stakeholders and local authority representatives.
- 13.2 The North East Active Travel Sub-group consisting of local authority and Nexus offices also gave policy steer.
- 13.3 The North East Active Travel stakeholder forum meetings were also used to discuss the draft strategy. Membership of the forum consists of walking, wheeling and cycling charities, disability groups, local active travel campaign groups, and transport user groups.

14. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 14.1 No further impacts to consider.

15. Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix 1 – North East Active Travel Strategy (Final)
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Consultation feedback report

16. Background Papers

- 16.1 Item 6- North East Active Travel Strategy – Agreement to Consult.
North East Joint Transport Committee, 20th December 2022
<https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022.12.20-JTC-Agenda-Pack.pdf>

17. Contact Officers

- 17.1 Rachel Forsyth-Ward,
Interim Assistant Director, Transport Strategy
Transport North East
rachelle.forsythward@transportnortheast.gov.uk

18. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

19. Glossary

NECA- North East Combined Authority

NE MTRTC- North East Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy

NETP- North East Transport Plan

NTCA- North of Tyne Combined Authority

TNE- Transport North East

‘Wheeling’ – to ensure that the strategy takes an inclusive approach we have followed Sustrans’ lead in grouping ‘walking and wheeling’ together.

We recognise some people, for example wheelchair or mobility scooter users, identify with the term wheeling instead of walking.

We have therefore used the terms walking and wheeling together throughout the strategy and consider walking and wheeling to include the use of mobility aids and pushchairs.

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North East Active Travel Strategy

June 2023



Foreword



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**Cllr Martin Gannon, Chair,
North East Joint Transport Committee**

We all need to be more active.

Active Travel - walking, wheeling and cycling – is good for our health, good for the environment, and good for the economy.

People in our region are the least physically active in England, contributing to poor health outcomes (both physical and mental), unnecessary premature deaths, and an additional cost burden to our NHS services.

And yet we live in the most beautiful part of the country with amazing natural, cultural and historical sites, an abundance of parks, coastline and river banks, open countryside, and attractive town and city centres.

But active travel isn't just for leisure journeys. Not only healthy and often fun, it also reduces unnecessary car trips that create carbon emissions, road injuries and deaths, air pollution, and traffic congestion.

Better still, economists estimate that each active trip generates £1.50 for the local economy, and Sustrans say that there could be up to 26p per mile benefit for walking and wheeling and a 1.15p per mile benefit for cycling.

So, why don't we travel actively more often?

This strategy sets out the opportunities and benefits of active travel, asks people what it would take to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, and sets out an ambitious programme of investment that would help us to achieve our target of over half of shorter journeys being made by active travel by 2035.

This updated version of the strategy outlines our final proposals, taking into consideration feedback from the early 2023 public consultation, in which we received over 4,000 pieces of engagement. Thank you to everyone who shared their views on the proposals which have really helped to shape the strategy.

Now we must take this strategy and turn it into action to meet our ambitious target for over half of all shorter journeys to be made by active travel by 2035, and to achieve our vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East'.

Thank you.

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Executive summary

This strategy aims to encourage more active travel – walking, wheeling and cycling – across the North East and sets out proposals to help people travel actively more often.

Our aim is for active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combine it with public transport for longer journeys.

We have set an ambitious target for over half of all shorter journeys to be made by active travel in the North East by 2035 – good news for the environment, public health and our economy.

To achieve this, we would need a 45% uplift on 2018/19 levels.



To make this a reality, we will work with the seven North East local authorities and other key stakeholders to bring in significant funding to transform and improve active travel.

The strategy will allow us to make a strategic case for investment in our active travel network. It contains an initial list of active travel schemes up to the year 2035, worth a total of approximately **£500 million**. The list is a 'live pipeline' of schemes which is expected to further develop over time.

As we move to deliver this strategy, we will also make active travel more inclusive, by working to remove the barriers that make it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle to their destination.

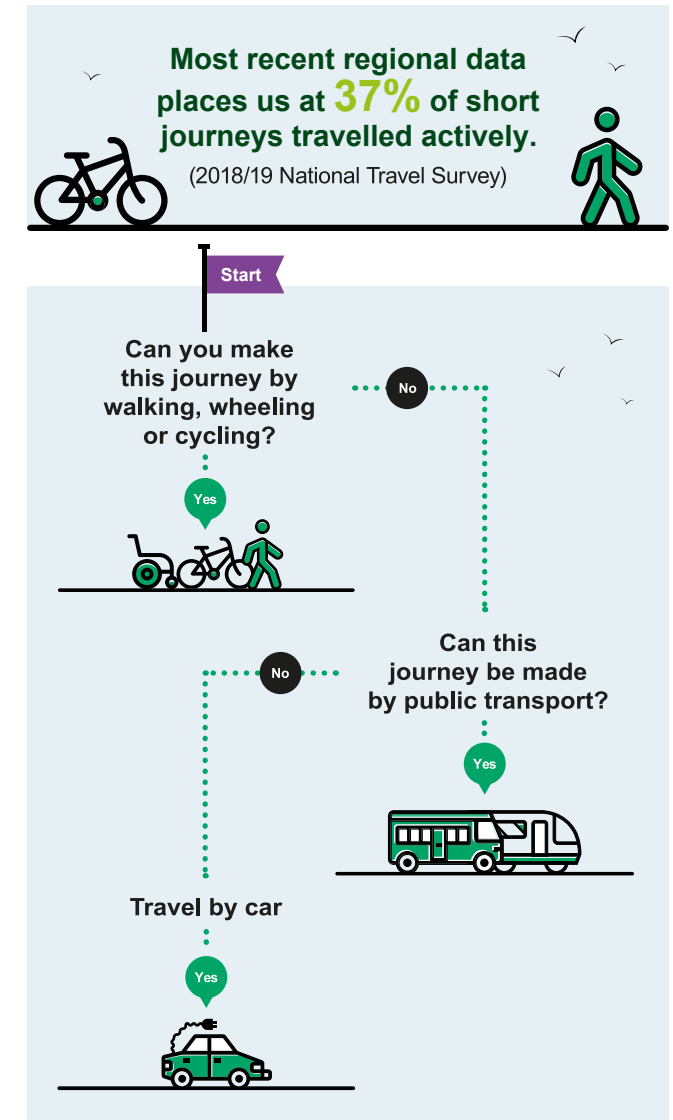
Increasing walking, wheeling and cycling

The Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy (2022) set a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably.

The 'decision tree' to the right was produced to help people to consider their travel options.

The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve this switch to sustainable travel by enabling more active journeys – making them easier, safer and more enjoyable.

Shorter journeys currently made by car have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel. Walking is a good way to increase levels of activity and has the greatest potential to improve public health.



Making the right travel choice – decision tree

The benefits

Over half of all shorter journeys being made by active travel in the North East by 2035 could result in the following benefits:

- Grow the region's economy by around **£350 million a year**.
- **Reduce carbon emissions**, potentially saving around **80,000 tonnes of CO2** emissions per year.
- Prevent in the region of **1,000** premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels in the population.
- Help more people become active, improving public health outcomes including healthy life expectancy.
- Improve connectedness and cohesion of communities and decreased social isolation.
- Better air quality by reducing pollution from traffic emissions.
- Lower noise levels as congestion is eased on our road network.
- Save petrol and diesel drivers money by reducing car use.



Barriers

There are some barriers – both real and perceived – that we will need to overcome to boost active travel. These are:

- Safety and security (including perceptions of this).
- Accessibility and maintenance – for example of walking and cycling routes and infrastructure.
- Affordability – such as the cost of cycling and/or safety equipment.
- Coordination and integration – including integration with transport hubs or local bus and Metro services.
- Journey times and perceptions of convenience – including the feeling that cycling or walking ‘takes too long’ or aren’t good options in poor weather.

Delivery

Policy areas and commitment statements

We have created six active travel policy areas with commitment statements aimed at supporting delivery of this strategy and how active travel will achieve the [North East Transport Plan](#) vision and objectives:

- **Active travel friendly places;**
- **World-class active travel network;**
- **Greater integration;**
- **Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle;**
- **Improving access to equipment;**
- **Partnership working.**

Chapter 5 sets out where we want our region to be by 2035. Building on the interventions set out in the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy, we have included an initial pipeline of schemes to be taken forward which are subject to funding (see 42-51).

These include new and upgraded infrastructure such as improving the National Cycle Network and links to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels, increasing access to equipment by launching new cycle hire schemes, maintaining the network through regular maintenance and cleaning, and targeted behaviour change initiatives to support and upskill local people.

Some of the things we intend to achieve are:

- **The creation of a brand-new regional cycle network – with consistent signage and strong recognisable branding to make it easy to use for all.**

- **Improve the pedestrianisation and ‘walkability’ of local towns and cities, encouraging more active travel and increased footfall to amenities and businesses.**

- **The introduction of a new region-wide cycle hire scheme (including e-bike hire) which will integrate with the transport network.**

- **Social Prescribing – working with NHS providers to prescribe more active travel to boost public health.**

Introduction and context

What is active travel?

Active travel means making journeys in physically active ways that burn energy such as cycling, walking and wheeling. Widely accepted as an inexpensive and accessible form of transport, encouraging and enabling more active travel is a key way of improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

Why is this strategy needed?

Making journeys is good: most physical trips, no matter what the form of travel, stimulate the economy by getting people to employment, education, healthcare, retail, or social opportunities.

However, making journeys leaves an impact on our environment and plays a big role in our health and wellbeing, so **how we choose to travel is very important.**

Active travel and public transport are the best ways to travel for public health and the environment. Trips taken by diesel or petrol cars create carbon emissions, air pollution, and traffic congestion and can create unsafe environments for people travelling actively because of the potential for collisions.

The North East's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is being powered by increased car and internet use.

The way many people work and socialise has changed, with far more activity taking place online. Whilst this has many benefits including allowing people to work flexibly, it has had a detrimental impact on levels of physical activity.

The lockdowns introduced during the pandemic, gave us a glimpse of quieter and less polluted streets, and people walked and cycled more.

However, the recovery period has seen road traffic volumes grow to up to **20%** higher than pre-pandemic levels, whilst public transport usage lags behind.

Switching existing shorter journeys that are currently made by petrol or diesel cars to active travel is one of the most cost effective ways of reducing transport emissions, as outlined in the Government's 2021 Transport Decarbonisation Plan. We believe that there is an opportunity in the North East for people to convert some of their journeys to cycling, walking and wheeling, especially shorter journeys that are made by car.

We want to make it easier for people to make more active travel journeys, regardless of their age or ability. This includes combining active travel with public transport where required.

This strategy describes an ambition for growing active travel in the North East. In it we set out the opportunities and benefits of active travel, consider what it would take to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, and set out an ambitious programme of investment that would help us to achieve over half of all shorter journeys being made actively by 2035, up from **37%** in 2018/19.



Types of active travel

Walking and wheeling

Walking and wheeling are some of the cheapest ways to travel and they have the greatest potential to boost levels of active travel in the region. Walking and wheeling represent people moving at a pedestrian's pace, whether someone is standing or sitting, walking or wheeling unaided or using any kind of mobility aid, including walking aids, wheeled aids (such as mobility scooters and wheelchairs), personal assistants or guide dogs. By adopting the term wheeling we can take a more inclusive approach, ensuring that active travel is for people of all ages, location, and mobility.

To ensure that this strategy takes an inclusive approach we have followed Sustrans' lead in grouping 'walking and wheeling' together throughout this strategy.

Cycling

Cycling is widely acknowledged as an effective and efficient way of travelling, especially for shorter to medium-length distances. There are millions of short car journeys made every day which could easily be travelled by bike, if people were enabled to make the switch. We know that there are many barriers which prevent people from cycling in the region and this strategy aims to help tackle them.

Cycling can enhance individual independence and wellbeing. As well as conventional two-wheel bikes, there are a wide range of non-standard and adapted cycles available such as hand cycles, low-step bicycles, wheelchair cycles, child-carrying cycles, and cargo and e-cargo cycles (for personal or business use).

Electrically-assisted pedal cycles (known as e-bikes) are also within scope of this strategy. E-bikes are cycles which have a small electric motor fitted and could help introduce cycling to even more people. Research in 2019 found that physical activity gains from e-bikes are similar to cycling.

Cargo bikes (and e-cargo bikes) allow for goods to be delivered over short distances in place of small vans.



Other micromobility

E-scooters and other forms of 'micromobility' that interact and have links with active travel are also included within the scope of this strategy.

Regulated e-scooters are currently being trialled in Newcastle (Neuron Mobility) using geofencing technology to define the riding area and is set to continue until May 2024. In May 2023, e-scooter journeys can now only end in designated parking stations located across the city. This is following partnership working with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and the Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) to make sure that the parking system is more accessible and works for all members of the community by helping to reduce street clutter.

E-scooter rentals were also trialled in Sunderland between March 2021 and May 2023.

Trial guidance from the Department for Transport enables regulated e-scooters to use the same road space as cycles except motorways and in cycle lanes and tracks. Outside of the regulated e-scooter trials, it is illegal to use an e-scooter on public roads, cycleways and pavements. It is however perfectly legal to buy and sell e-scooters.

As a consequence of this rather disjointed position, it is increasingly common to see them being used illegally across the North East.

Following the end of the trials the UK government is planning to create a Low-Speed Zero Emission Vehicle (LZEV) category, as well as introducing an e-scooter rental licensing framework. We therefore await further guidance and potential new legislation from the Government before we are able to develop a meaningful regional policy on this issue.



Image credit: Neuron Mobility 2022'

Strategy scope

What is covered in this strategy?

- Walking for all journey purposes.
- Wheeling for all journey purposes (including wheelchair and mobility scooters, as well as other mobility aids).
- Cycling for all journey purposes (including use of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes).
- Encouraging active travel for part of a journey such as those combined with public transport.
- E-scooters and other forms of 'micro-mobility' that interact and have links with active travel.
- A series of key commitment statements setting out how we will work with partners to move forward.

What is not covered?

- Non-active travel transport interventions (The North East Transport Plan and other regional transport strategies cover this).
- Detailed scheme design guidance (National LTN 1/20 guidance is in place).
- Planning reform (this strategy gives high level guidance from a transport policy perspective).
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans which are local authority owned documents.

Area covered

The geographical area addressed by this strategy comprises the seven local authorities in the North East, covering two Combined Authorities, which are brought together by the North East Joint Transport Committee (NEJTC):

The North East Combined Authority (NECA)

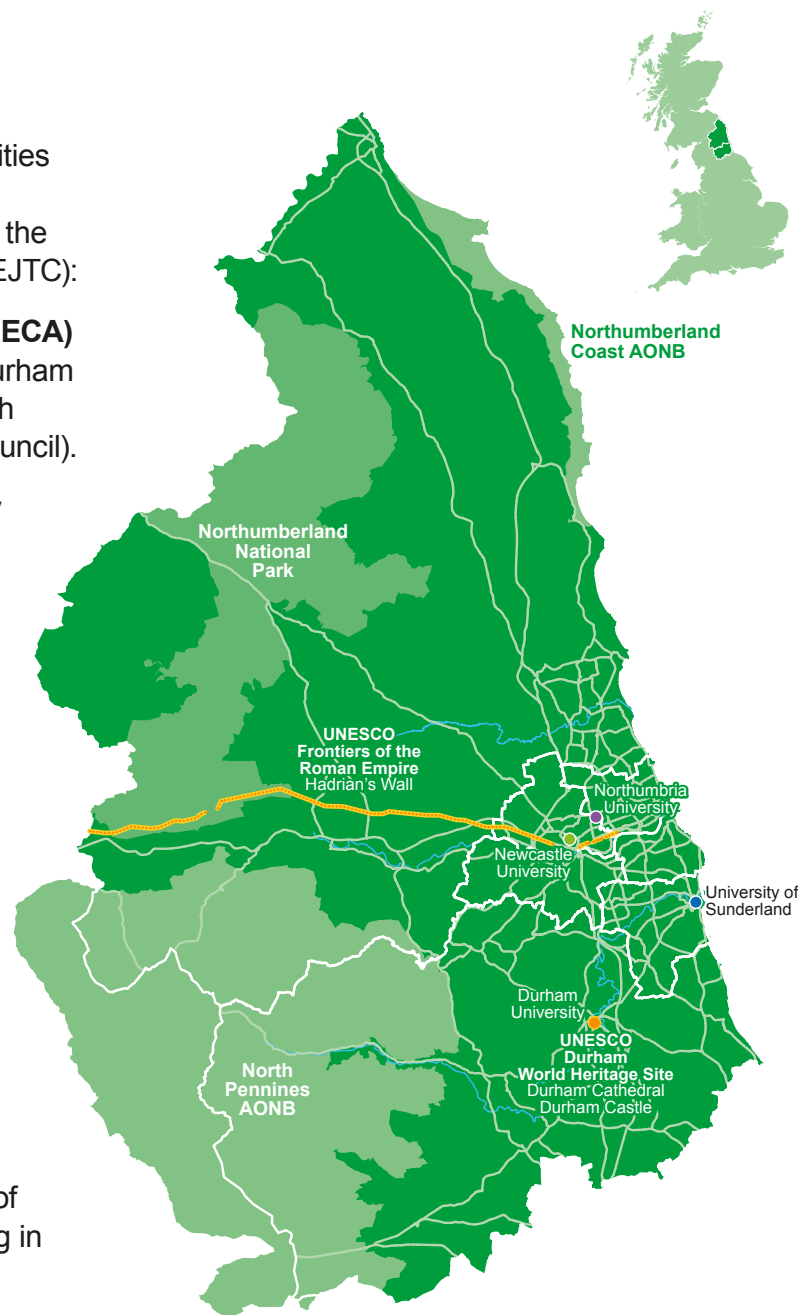
(comprising the local authority areas of Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council).

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA)

(comprising the local authority areas of Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland County Council).

Our region

North East England is a unique and very diverse geographical region encompassing large and densely populated urban conurbations, a surrounding landscape of sub-urban towns and semi-urban villages and a much larger area of former mining villages and beyond them sparsely populated rural and coastal communities. According to the 2021 Census, our region has a population of 1.97 million with **79%** of people living in urban areas and **21%** living in rural locations.



The region's current active travel network connecting our communities is as equally diverse, from national trails and long distance walking routes, bridleways and permissive paths, with a variety of former railway routes and waggonways that are currently serving as active travel paths and cycle routes.

The North East is fortunate to have an abundance of long distance active travel routes, many stretching from the west coast to the east coast, as well as providing important connections between rural communities. For example, Northumberland National Park has over 600 miles of marked footpaths and bridleways for residents and visitors to explore.

The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in County Durham and Northumberland contains large sections of the Pennine Way national trail. Visit Britain data for 2019 indicates the total value of tourism day visits to the North East (including Tees Valley) was £3.32 billion with the value by foot being £85.1 million and by bike £0.5 million.

The region has an historic 19th century Waggonways network which were once used to transport coal from mines to ships at our rivers. Our Waggonways are now significant active travel assets, giving opportunities for people to walk, wheel and cycle between different communities off the carriageway.

Detailed and [interactive active travel](#) maps of the region have been produced showing the walking and cycling network.

For cycling specifically, the region has a mixture of traffic-free and on-road cycle routes.

Our growing network also includes 16 routes that are part of the National Cycling Network (NCN), a UK-wide network of active travel routes for everyone, connecting cities, towns and countryside, which the Shields Ferry crossing forms part of.

The Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels which first opened to the public back in 1951 are also still widely used today linking North and South Tyneside. **Our unique geography also means that the challenges and barriers are different based on location with distinct active travel challenges in rural, suburban, and urban areas.**

In recent years, the North East has successfully bid for and been awarded funding to unlock investment in active travel which has been used to improve the network and get more people walking, cycling and wheeling. But we know so much more needs to be done. That is why this strategy aims to build on this track record of delivery and drive further improvements and take up.

Local policy context

Local authorities in the region have two vital documents relating to active travel:

- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

An LCWIP complements the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) and outlines long-term approaches to developing local cycling and walking.

In the North East, most councils have completed, or are currently in the process of developing LCWIPs, with some areas working on version two of their plans. A May 2023 summary which provides an update on each LCWIP in each of the seven local authority areas is appended to this strategy.

Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs)

ROWIPs set out how improvements made by Councils to their public rights of way network will provide a better experience for walking, cycling, horse riding, horse and carriage drivers, and people with mobility barriers.

Local authorities have legal highway powers for building new or maintaining existing infrastructure. This means that this strategy is heavily influenced by local authorities and their LCWIPs and ROWIPs.

This regional strategy will help enable the success of the local LCWIPs and ROWIPs by making the case for funding.

Regional policy context

The North East Transport Plan, published in 2021, sets out our regional transport ambitions up to 2035 and includes a live programme of local transport improvements which will make a big difference to our environment, our health and our economy.

A North East Active Travel Strategy is required to meet a commitment set out in the region's Transport Plan and its vision and objectives.

National policy context

This strategy will ensure that the region is well placed to meet the goals and objectives of funding opportunities to develop our active travel infrastructure.

The Government's current policy for England is set out in [Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking for 2020-25](#), published in July 2020. The policy set the ambitious goal that cycling and walking will be the natural choice for many journeys, with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled and walked by 2030.

In July 2021 the Government published Gear Change: one year on. The report stated that since Gear Change was published, hundreds of school streets, at least 150 Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, and more than 100 miles of new segregated cycle lanes had been delivered.



Our targets match the medium to long-term targets set out in the Department for Transport's (DfT) Walking and Cycling Plan for England (Gear Change) and the second national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2).

The second national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) published in July 2022, has key objectives to ensure that **50%** of trips in our towns and cities are walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030 and to **55%** by 2035.

The North East Active Travel Strategy will also assist the region and its partners in meeting (where physically and financially possible) expected standards set out in national design guidance (LTN 1/20) and help with scheme design engagement with Active Travel England (ATE).

ATE is the UK government's new executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.

Manual for Streets is a publication which provides guidance for practitioners in England and Wales involved in the planning, design, provision and approval of new streets, and modifications to existing ones. It aims to increase the quality of life through good design which creates people-oriented streets. It is expected that this guidance will be refreshed by the DfT later in 2023, helping to enhance the design of schemes to benefit and support active travel.

'Low-traffic neighbourhoods' (LTNs)

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are schemes which help create more pleasant and safer environments for people to walk, wheel and cycle. LTN's open up spaces within communities whilst also helping to connect people to local services and amenities by active travel.

LTNs work by minimising vehicle traffic in residential areas by restricting "through traffic" or "rat running" in which a neighbourhood is used to get to another destination. Although through traffic is significantly reduced, every resident can still drive onto their street and exemptions can apply to many including emergency service vehicles, blue badge holders and delivery vehicles.

The Government's 2020 [Gear Change Strategy](#) included a commitment to create more LTNs and to consult on implementation.



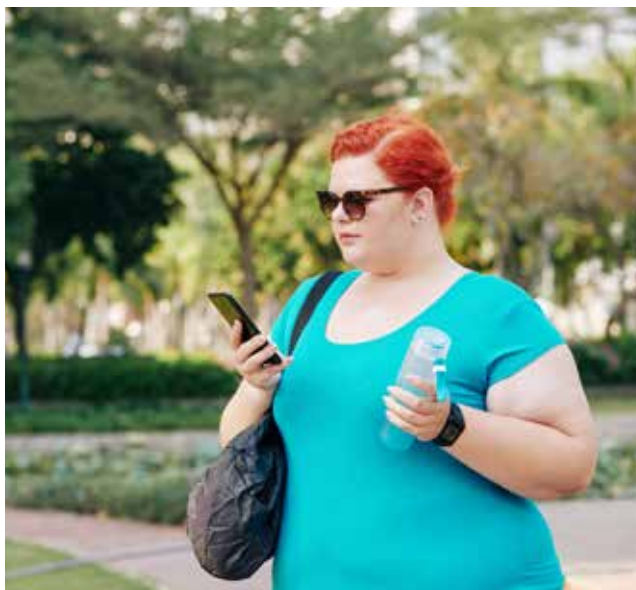
The UK Government's road network management guidance states that proposed LTN schemes must have effective engagement and consultation with communities.

In [Gear Change: one year on](#), it was evident that there had been significant reductions in traffic, and significant increases in cycling and walking within LTNs.

According to Sustrans, many benefits can be gained through implementing LTNs including improvements in air quality, increased levels of physical activity, strengthened community cohesion and safer environments for children to play and socialise.

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing. Local agencies such as health services, social care and community groups refer people to a social prescribing link worker who spends time with them to develop a personalised care and support plan. A growing body of evidence shows that social prescribing improves people's health and wellbeing and reduces pressure on NHS services such as GP consultations and hospital attendances.



Integrating health and transport planning with active travel prescriptions

Gateshead Council is one of 11 local authorities nationally that will be taking part in nationwide pilots to help improve the mental and physical wellbeing of communities in the most deprived areas by enabling GPs and health professionals to offer walking and cycling activities. The scheme will embed active travel coordinators in to local primary care networks who will work with people to understand their needs and link them to opportunities to take up walking and cycling.

The pilot aligns to Gateshead's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and will include developing active travel hubs supported by trained volunteers, cycle hire schemes, bike loans, community cycle and walking activities, and cycle training. The pilot will incorporate an evaluation to understand what works and how the programme can be improved for future work.

North East Transport Plan 2021-2035

The Vision

‘Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’

The objectives



Carbon neutral North East

We will take action to make travel in the North East net carbon zero.

We will address our air quality challenges and aim to tackle the climate emergency.



Overcome inequality and grow our economy

We will return the region to pre Covid-19 levels of employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), then move towards the ambitions set out in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's [Strategic Economic Plan \(SEP\)](#).



Healthier North East

We will encourage active travel (such as cycling, walking and wheeling) to help our region reach public health levels that are at least equal to other parts of the UK.



Appealing sustainable transport choices

We will introduce measures that make sustainable transport a more attractive, and an easy way to get around the North East.



Safe, secure network

We will improve transport safety and security, ensuring that people are confident that they feel safe and secure when travelling.

These five objectives are also the guiding objectives of this strategy. Proposals we have made in this strategy are aligned to and will support progress towards achieving these five objectives.

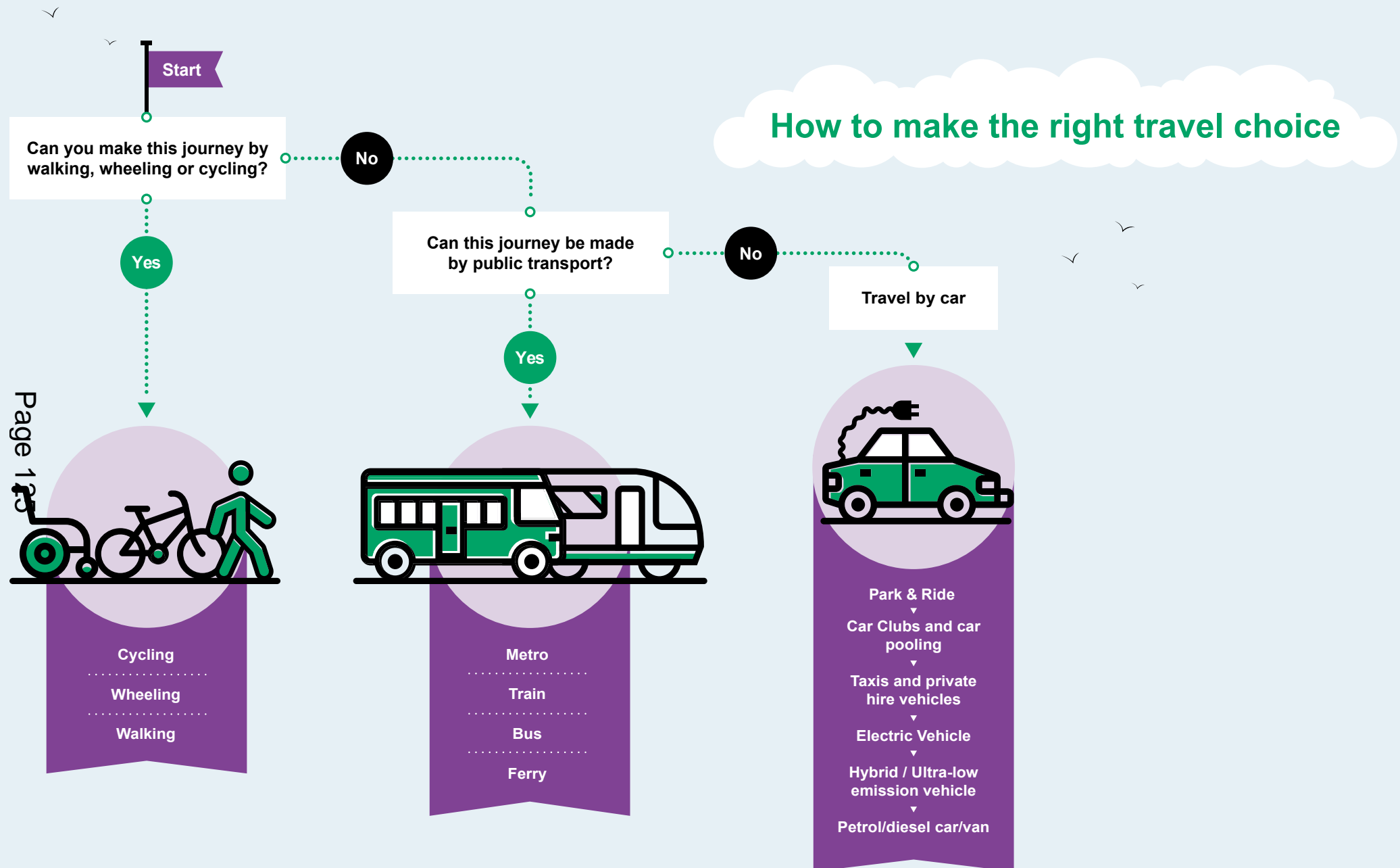


Figure 1: Making the right travel choice – decision tree

The vision

‘Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’

The objectives

- Carbon neutral North East.
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy.
- Healthier North East.
- Appealing sustainable transport choices.
- Safe, secure network.

(See page 14 for further information on these objectives.)

The lead policy of the Transport Plan is ‘helping people to make the right travel choice’. The region has a ‘decision tree’ (see figure 1 on page 15) which helps people to consider their travel options when they need to make a journey.

At the start of the decision tree, people are asked to consider whether the journey they are planning to make can be made by walking, wheeling or cycling, and then consider whether their journey can be made by public transport or a combination of both.

The region’s subsequent **Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy** (2022) sets a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don’t have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably.

The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve this aim by ‘enabling more active travel journeys’.

New North East Devolution Deal

A new devolution deal for the North East has been agreed that will see the allocation of significant new funding and powers to the region from May 2024.

In total, the deal is expected to provide £4.2 billion of additional investment to the region over 30 years, including a £1.4 billion investment fund alongside significant funding for transport, education and skills, housing and regeneration.

The deal would involve the creation of a new mayoral combined authority covering County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland, and is projected to create 24,000 additional jobs in the area and unlock £5 billion additional private sector investment into the region.

In respect of commitments to Active Travel, the devolution deal offers:

- A step-change in high-quality active travel provision by prioritising investment in the cycling and walking networks identified through Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).

- An ambitious active travel plan creating a regional network of LTN 1/20 compliant routes, connecting active neighbourhoods to local hubs.
- Option to appoint an Active Travel Commissioner.
- A sequenced pipeline of active travel infrastructure schemes.

Introduction and context – chapter summary

As we decarbonise transport, making cars and vans zero emission is part of the solution, but relying solely on zero emission road vehicles isn’t enough.

To help avoid a car-led recovery from the pandemic, we want active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combine it with public transport for longer journeys. This strategy highlights the significant potential to grow the number of active trips taken.

Recent local, regional and national policy decisions and guidance mean that the time is now to bring forward a North East Active Travel Strategy which sets out how we will work with partners to provide and promote safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure to enable and encourage more active travel.

Benefits of active travel

Why is active travel important?

Active travel is often the cheapest and most sustainable travel option and can provide environmental, health, social, and economic benefits for people living in the North East.

This chapter describes these benefits in more detail and outlines the potential impact we could see in the North East if people make more journeys by active travel.

Health benefits

Journeys taken by walking, wheeling or cycling involve periods of physical activity which improve health and wellbeing for most people. People who are physically active tend to live longer and spend more of their lives in good health. Physically active people have a reduced risk of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions, disability, and mental health conditions (figure 2).

“If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and treat.”

UK Chief Medical Officer guidelines 2019

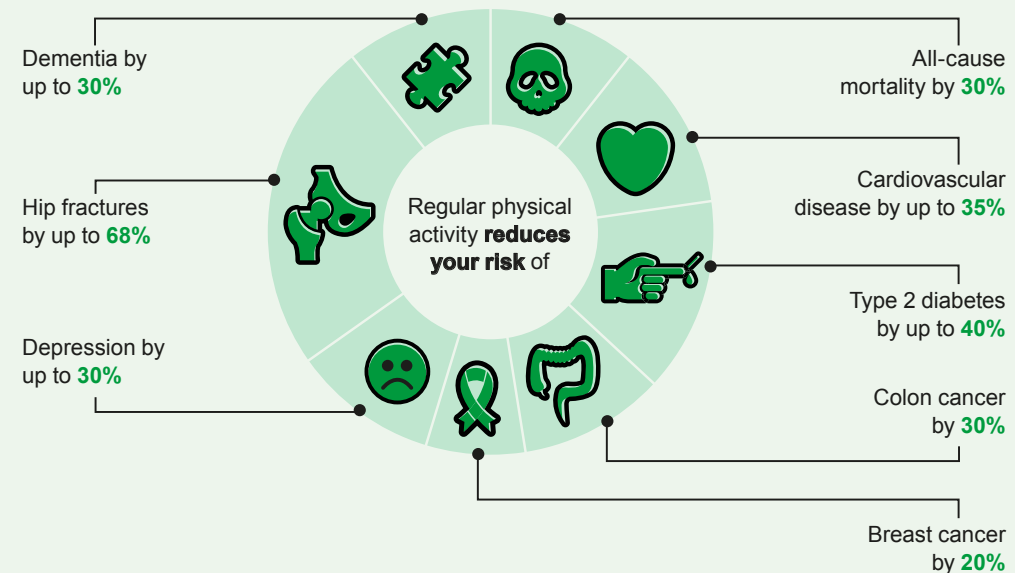


Figure 2: What are the health benefits of physical activity?
(Public Health England, Health Matters)

While the UK chief medical officer recommends that each week adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity, national surveys have shown that **in the North East 1 in 4 adults are physically inactive**, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. Active travel is one of the most accessible and practical ways for many people to move more and work towards and achieve recommended activity levels.

Mental health and wellbeing

Physical activity also has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. Being physically active has been found to reduce depression by up to **30%**. Analysis of the British Household Panel Survey found that people making the switch from car journeys to active travel experience improved mental wellbeing, and that active journeys tend to be more enjoyable, less stressful and more relaxing than car journeys.

“Walking to work sets you up for the day, if you’ve something on your mind, it gives you 5 minutes to yourself.”

North East commuter

“I do find walking is quite good for mental wellbeing and just getting out – and especially with the little one in the pushchair.”

North East resident

Being physically active is also recognised as an important way of managing a wide range of long-term health conditions, disability and promoting healthy ageing. For some people, active travel can provide an opportunity for this, particularly when walking and cycling infrastructure is inclusive and the needs of people with limited mobility are considered from the outset in their design.

Most people would benefit from doing more physical activity such as walking, wheeling, and cycling, however the greatest benefits are gained by those moving from lower levels of activity to increased levels (see figure 3).

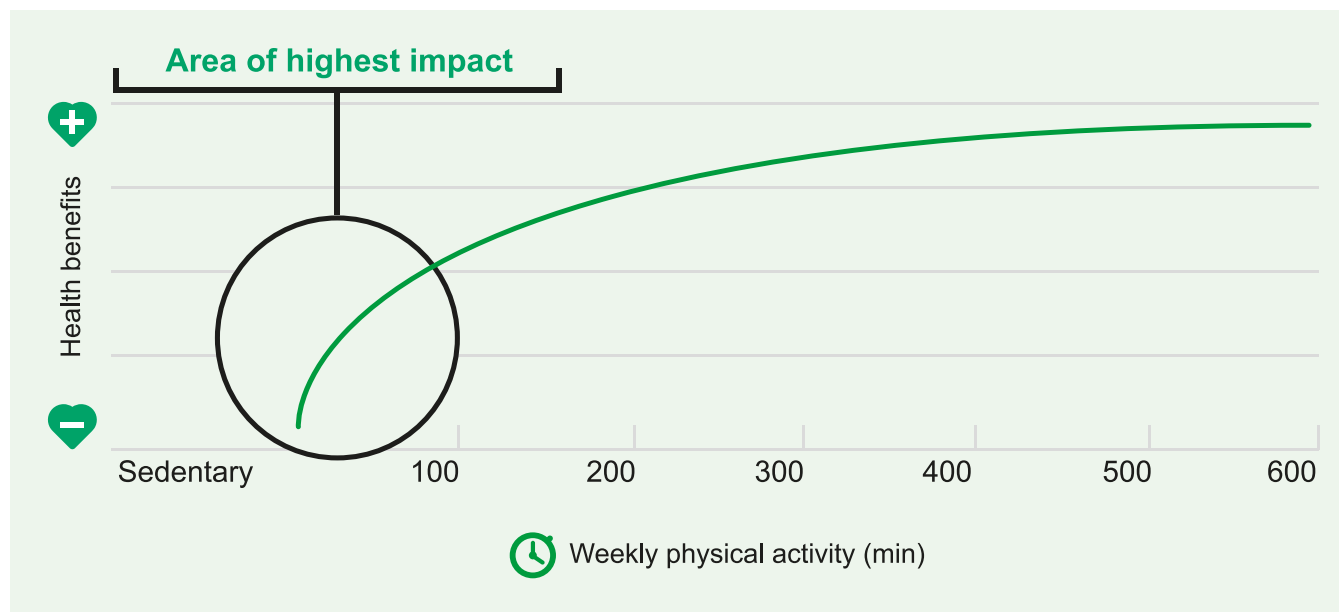


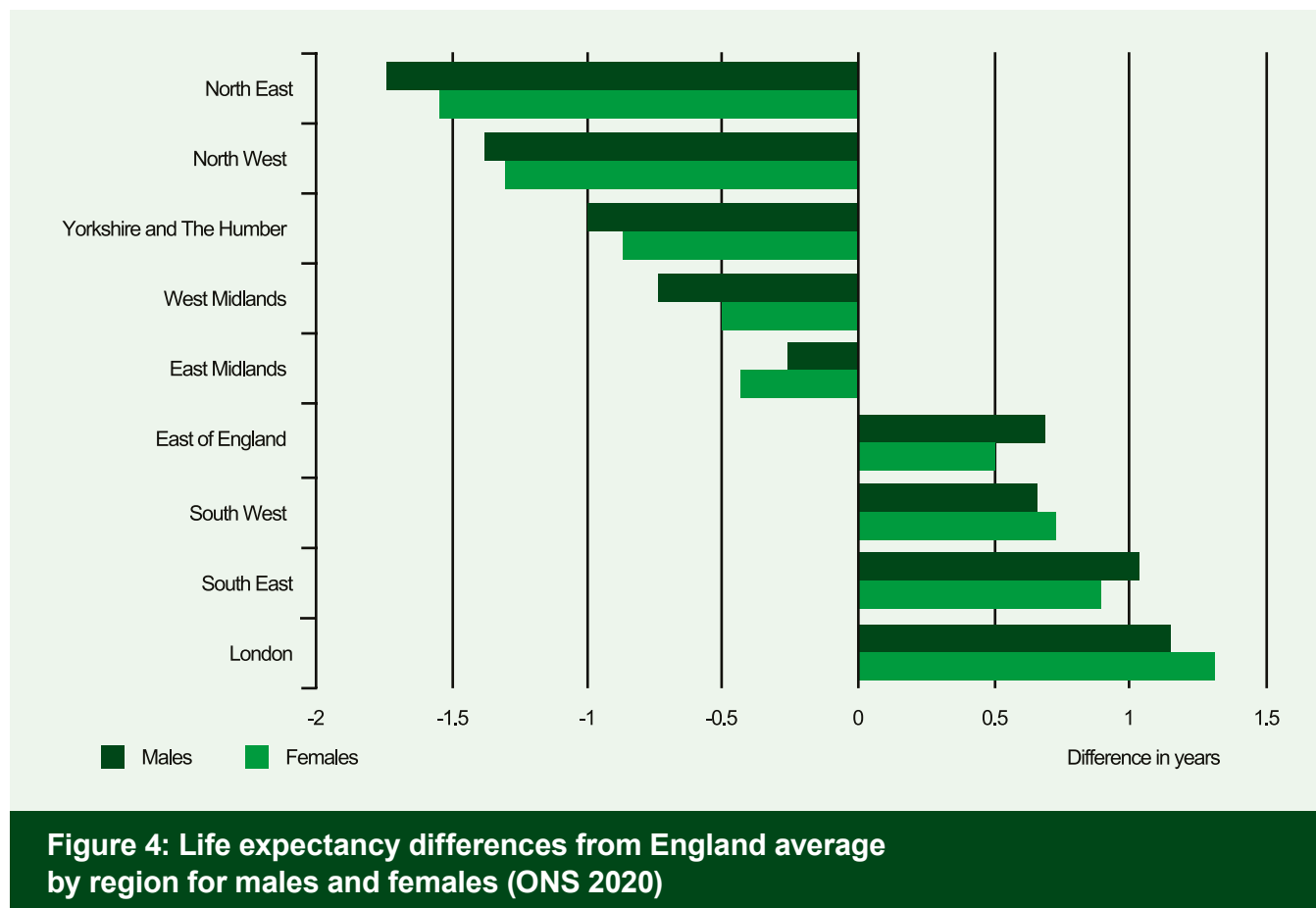
Figure 3: Dose response curve of physical activity (UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines)

North East – public health metrics

Our region is in poorer general health compared to other regions in England, having the lowest average life expectancies (see figure 4) and the highest rates of adult obesity (**32%** of adults), physical inactivity (**26%** of adults), and long-term musculoskeletal conditions (**21%** of people).

Within the North East there are also significant health inequalities. Compared to the least deprived areas, men living in the most deprived areas could expect to live on average 12 fewer years, and women could expect to live on average 9.5 fewer years.

Page 129



Being the least expensive and most accessible form of transport, active travel (particularly walking) can play a part of reducing health inequalities across our region. More active travel may also help reduce pressures on health and social care systems.

It has been estimated that physical inactivity is costing the NHS in the North East in excess of £19 million per year.

Social benefits

Increased levels of active travel could also offer social benefits for our region. Active travel can play an important part in helping connect people, reduce separation between groups, and improve cohesion and integration of communities.

Enabling more people to walk, wheel and cycle, and combining active travel with public transport for longer journeys could also help better connect people to opportunities such as employment, education, health and care, and leisure services (see figure 5 transport related social exclusion). Active journeys also provide greater opportunity for social interaction with others in public spaces and a reduction in vehicle traffic can create safer, quieter and more attractive places for people to spend time in.

Research has shown that social isolation has been associated with a **30%** higher likelihood of mortality compared to the general population and also increases the risk of developing depression.

For children, walking, wheeling or cycling from an early age can help them build confidence in their environment, their role in their community and road safety. It can also help establish healthy physical activity behaviours for life, and address childhood obesity. In the North East almost 1 in 4 children are classified as obese when starting secondary school.

Furthermore, there is growing evidence that being active improves educational attainment, concentration in school and improves social cohesion.

Supporting the implementation of more and better active travel initiatives in the region's towns, cities and neighbourhoods could improve the quality of life for people in the North East.

Transport related social exclusion

Transport for the North have recently published a report that investigated transport related social exclusion (TRSE) in the north of England. This is where people are unable to access opportunities, key services, and community life due to poor transport links.

In the North East, **31.5%** of people are at high risk of TRSE, which is significantly higher than other regions.

In our region, we have areas with poor access to jobs, education, health, and basic services by all types of transport. Often, these areas with poor access overlap with areas with high levels of vulnerability to social exclusion.

The report also highlighted that people with disabilities, caring responsibilities, and those on low incomes are disproportionately affected by transport-related social exclusion.

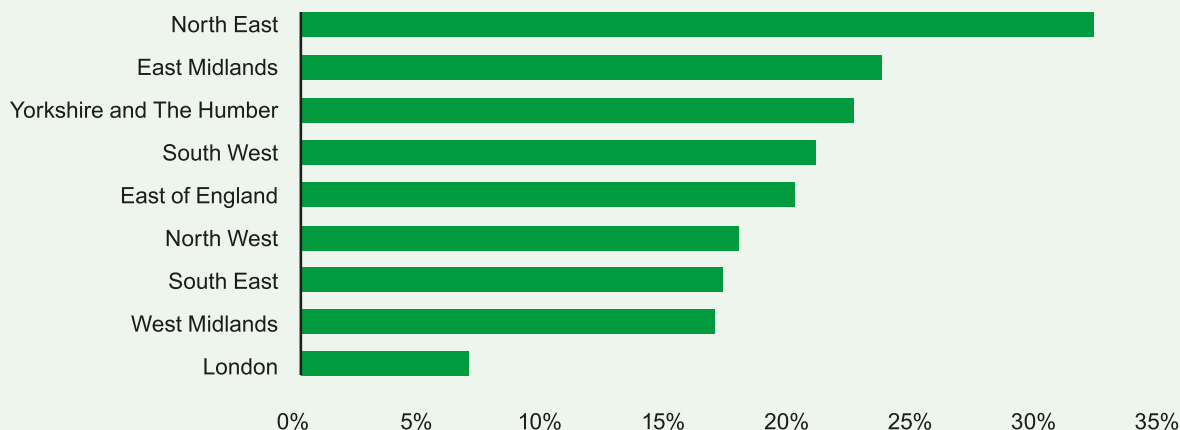


Figure 5: Population at high risk of transport related social exclusion in regions of England (Lower super output areas). Source Transport for the North 2022.

School Streets

School Streets is a temporary restriction on motorised traffic on roads outside schools at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic. The initiative aims to reduce traffic congestion, help tackle air pollution, improve road safety and encourage more active travel within journeys to school.

The School Streets initiatives have been adopted by many local authorities across the country and is being trialled across areas of the North East including in Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle and Sunderland.

In Newcastle, two School Streets have been implemented on a signage-only basis, enabled by intensive behaviour change and engagement activity carried out by Sustrans. Activities included the Sustrans Big Street Survey; events; assemblies and Q&A sessions for children; regular on-street information pop ups; bike servicing and Learn to Ride and Cycle Skills holiday club.

Sustrans' Walking and Cycling Index showed that **49%** of residents in Tyneside supported School Streets, and this is borne out in the response to Newcastle's first School Street.

Public response to the scheme at Hotspur Primary School in the east of the city showed that **86%** of respondents supported the scheme being made permanent, with more than half of text responses citing improved safety.

According to bike and scooter counts, levels of active travel at the school have significantly increased. Motor traffic has visibly decreased, and children report feeling happier, safer, calmer, and more connected to nature and community around their school.

The success of the scheme has led to a commitment from Newcastle City Council to roll out School Streets to more primary schools in the city and requests for School Streets from schools and families across the city.



©2022, Sustrans, all rights reserved.
All children in the photo have signed parental photo consents.

Cycling for Health

Cycling UK run a Cycling for Health scheme that aims to help people get started with cycling and improve their health and wellbeing. People are referred to the scheme by community organisations and health and social care professionals and enrolled on a 12-week instructor led course to provide a route into regular activity through cycling. Designed for adults identified as having poor mental health, the course involves working together with others to develop a new skill and grow in confidence.

Evaluation of the Cycling for Health scheme in West Yorkshire found that at the end of the programme **63%** of attendees increased cycling levels and **49%** reported they now cycled more than once a week. Those meeting the Chief Medical Officer Physical Activity Guidelines (150 minutes per week moderate activity) rose from **22%** to **69%** immediately after completing the programme, and mental health and wellbeing indicators have consistently improved over the past 5 years.

Community Cycle Hub – Cycling Minds, Northumberland

Cycling Minds was launched in 2021 to provide community cycling opportunities, operating from 'The Link' Community Cycle Hub from April 2022. Charitable guided e-bike rides are provided along with workplace training, mainly for young people who have had struggles such as social exclusion, a lack of education, employment or training (NEET), and poor mental health. Workplace training includes bike servicing, bike hire, guided cycle rides for paying customers and selling second hand bikes, and new and second-hand clothing, components and accessories. Young people are initially engaged with to encourage cycling as a sport, this helps to develop the basic skills and knowledge needed to volunteer and eventually work with the organisation and as ambassadors for cycling in their local communities.

The Link is now a focal point for cyclists in the area and cycle tourists. A key goal for Cycling Minds is to be self-funded, primarily through cycle tourism, working with organisations to develop the Northumberland County Destination Action Plan.

Achievements so far have been:

- More than 300 bikes serviced (through two people).
- 10 guided rides attended by a variety of local people including adults with special educational needs, refugees, and temporarily homeless individuals.
- 26 community outreach events ran, including in low-income neighbourhoods.
- Volunteering opportunities for 35 local people including teenagers and retired people.



Source: Cycling Minds,
Northumberland

Active Travel Friendly Places – PlayMeetStreet North Tyneside

Play streets are regular, temporary, resident-led road closures that create a safe space for children to play, and for residents of all ages to meet on their doorsteps. The idea began in Bristol in 2010 and has since spread across the UK and beyond. Within the North East, North Tyneside has one of the most successful play streets schemes in the country, with almost 100 streets involved since 2017. A number of other councils in the region are also considering trialling and actively developing schemes to support resident-led play streets.

Play streets can be a safe space to learn to scoot, skate and cycle, giving children skills and confidence that they can take beyond their streets, into their neighbourhoods and onto the school run; **74%** of play streets organisers in North Tyneside said children on their street had learnt or improved cycling skills. In North Tyneside, organisers tell us that play streets also give them the opportunity to imagine and reclaim their streets as a space for more than just driving and parking; they normalise different kinds of activity on the street and different forms of mobility, including walking, wheeling and cycling.

Environmental benefits

Active travel is the greenest way to travel around our region, helping reduce carbon emissions and harmful air pollutants. In 2021, transport was the largest contributor to CO₂ emissions of any sector, contributing 107.5 million tonnes in 2021 (see figure 6). The North East's two combined authorities and seven local authorities have all declared climate emergencies.

For an average journey of 6 miles, a petrol car emits an average of 1.4kg of CO₂, and a diesel car emits an average of 1.7kg of CO₂.

Motor vehicles emit air pollutants that are harmful to health and can lead to serious short-term and long-term effects on respiratory and cardiovascular systems.

Poor air quality disproportionately affects people living in the most deprived areas, often located closer to main roads or industrial sites, which can exacerbate health inequalities.

Air quality is linked to around **40,000** early deaths every year in the UK, including an **estimated 360 deaths** each year in central Tyneside.

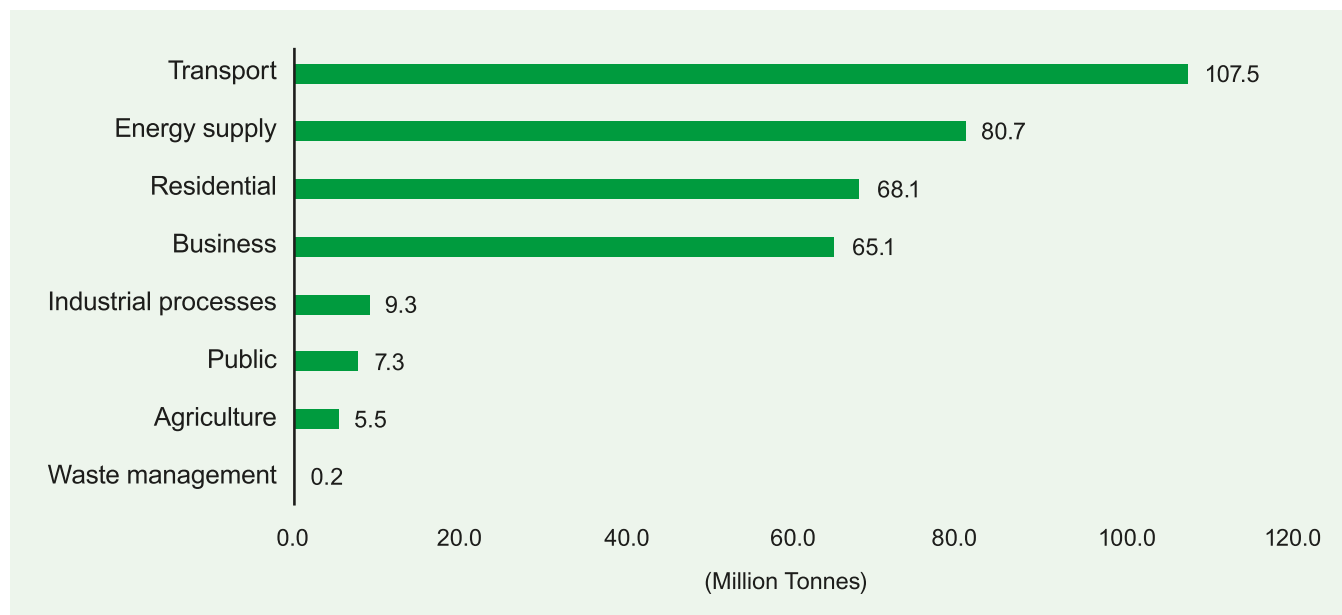


Figure 6: CO₂ emission by industry 2021



If everyone in the North East were exposed to levels of NO₂ no higher than 20.5µg/m³ (typical urban background level away from roads), it would reduce rates of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and is estimated to save the health and social care system in excess of £100 million over a 20 year period.

(Public Health England – estimation of air pollution impact tool)

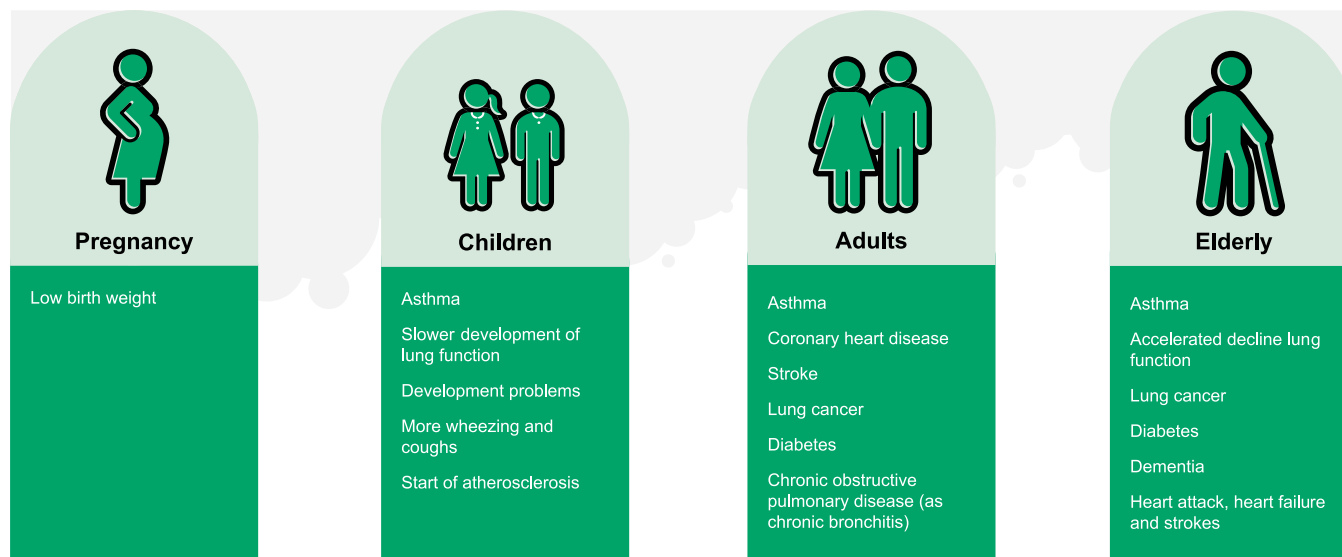


Figure 7: Poor air quality is a public health crisis and air pollution affects people throughout their lifetime (Public Health England – Health Matters)

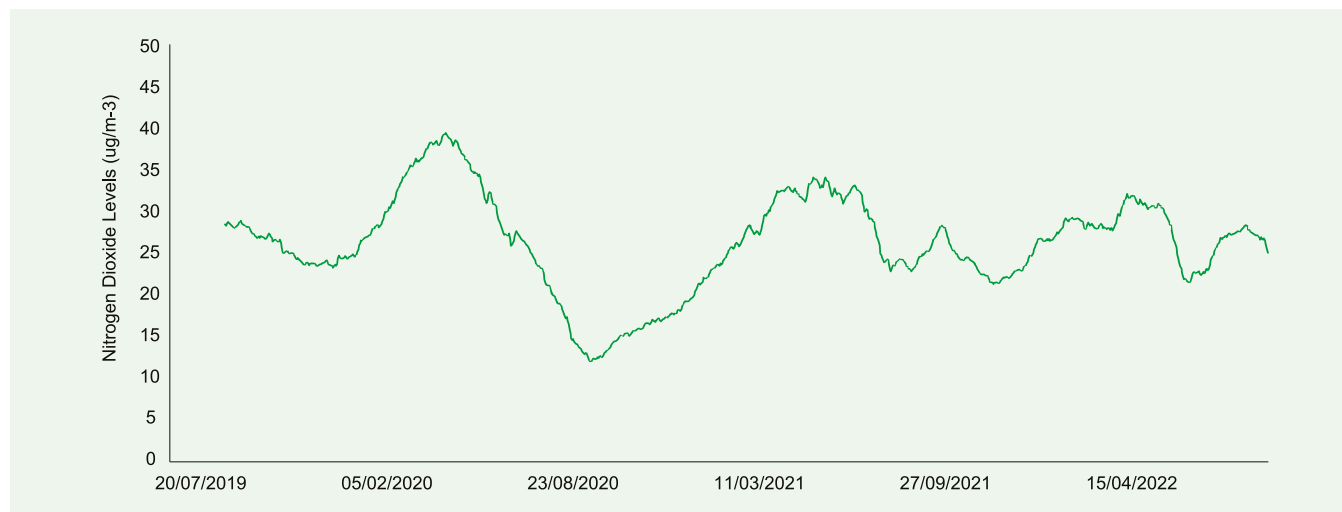


Figure 8: Background nitrogen dioxide in Newcastle centre 2019-2022

From March 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, people walked and cycled more. Active travel increased from **25%** of journeys to **32%** of journeys. Air quality improved in many of our cities, towns, and neighbourhoods and provided a glimpse of the environmental benefits we could expect from more active travel (see figure 8 nitrogen dioxide in central Newcastle between 2019 and 2022). Building on this trend is important and we can do this by supporting people to switch more journeys from motor vehicles to active travel and lead us to a cleaner and greener future.

A further benefit of active travel is a reduction in noise pollution from road traffic. In the North East, **6%** of the population live close to major routes and are exposed to more than 55dB noise (similar level of noise to an average dishwasher) from road traffic during the night (see figure 9). This is a level of noise that can result in disturbed sleep and increased stress.

Economic benefits

There are significant economic benefits of active travel, both for individuals and the wider local economy.

Trips taken by active travel are much cheaper (and often free) compared to other types of transport such as the private car. In 2022, the average cost of a 3-mile daily round trip in a petrol vehicle cost over £150 per year in fuel alone, whereas the cost of these trips made by walking or cycling would be negligible.

The average North East household spent £77 per week on transport between 2019-2021. This is **14%** of household expenditure, up from **12%** between 2013-2015.

The cost of living crisis and associated inflation have also affected transport, with an increase of **15%** in June 2022 compared to a year earlier, with much of this increase (**42%**) driven by rising fuel costs (see figure 10). Active travel may provide an opportunity to reduce outgoings for those able to switch their transport choices.

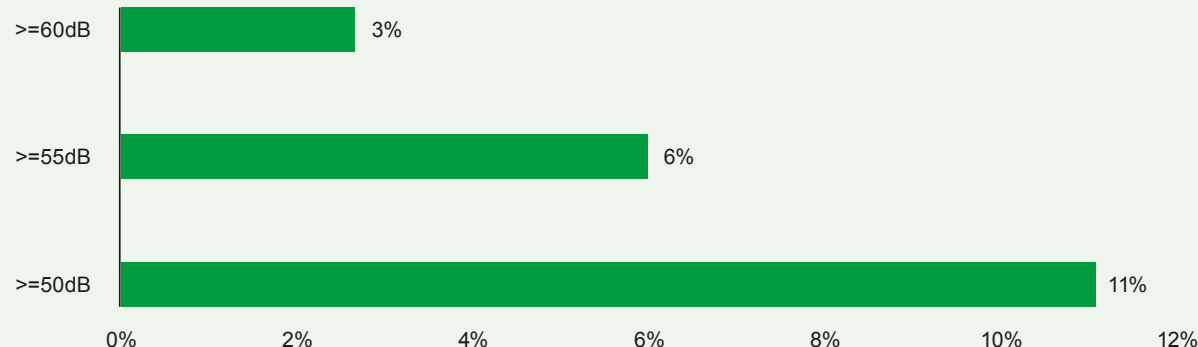


Figure 9: Population affected by road noise pollution levels at night in the North East (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, 2019)

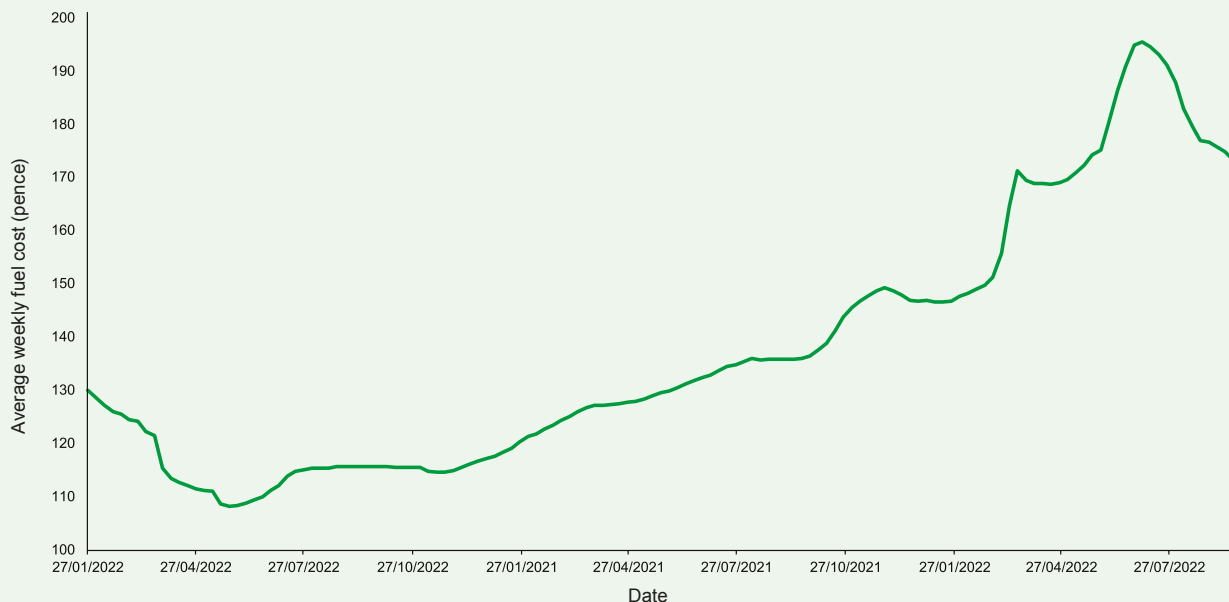


Figure 10: Average weekly cost of fuel (pence) in the UK 2020-2022

Increased levels of active travel could also improve the region's productivity. The North East economy benefits by **£436.5 million annually, with a 26p net benefit for each mile walked or wheeled** instead of driven and **£1.15 for each mile cycled** instead of driven (Sustrans 2021 Tyneside walking and cycling index). It is also estimated that traffic congestion cost the UK economy £6.9 billion in 2019, and physically active workers take **27%** fewer sick days.

Economic modelling commissioned by Transport North East estimated that even without significant changes to travel behaviours, active travel will provide over £1.2 billion benefit to the North East by 2035. It also estimated that if every driver in the North East switched one journey per week from car to active travel, it would result in around £50 million further benefit for the area's economy.

Research has shown that improved active travel infrastructure can also enhance local business performance and that walking and cycling projects can increase retail sales by at least **30%**. Investment in better streets and spaces for walking can potentially increase footfall and attract customers to local businesses.

The benefits of active travel - chapter summary

Enabling people to travel actively for all or part of more journeys will deliver significant health, social, environmental and economic benefits, ultimately creating better places to live, work and visit.

A healthier population is more productive, with less sickness absence and allows people to spend their working lives more productively.

This will help us work towards our vision of moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East, and ultimately achieve our five regional transport objectives.



How do people travel now?

In recent decades, the North East has seen rising levels of car use and ownership. This reliance on private cars needs to be addressed, and the use of sustainable types of travel (such as walking, wheeling and cycling) promoted. This chapter provides an insight into the way that people are travelling in the North East as of mid 2023, including information on recent levels of active travel in the region.

There were an estimated 408 million trips under one mile and 750 million trips under five miles made by car in the North East in 2018/19, meaning that at least 33% of trips in the region under 5 miles were made by car. In line with government aims, we want to prevent a car-led recovery from COVID-19. Active travel can play a key part of this, with government seeking active travel and public transport to be the natural first choice for journeys going forward.

Active travel is crucial to how we get around. From walking or wheeling to a local shop to cycling on one of our National Cycle Network routes, active travel is a popular way to move around the North East, consistently being the second most frequent choice of transport for all trips.

It is also estimated that for journeys to Metro stations only walking and cycling have rebounded above the overall level of recovery. According to the 2021 National Travel Survey, regionally 31% of trips of all distances in 2021 were made by walking. This gives us a solid base to build on to achieve governmental targets for active travel.

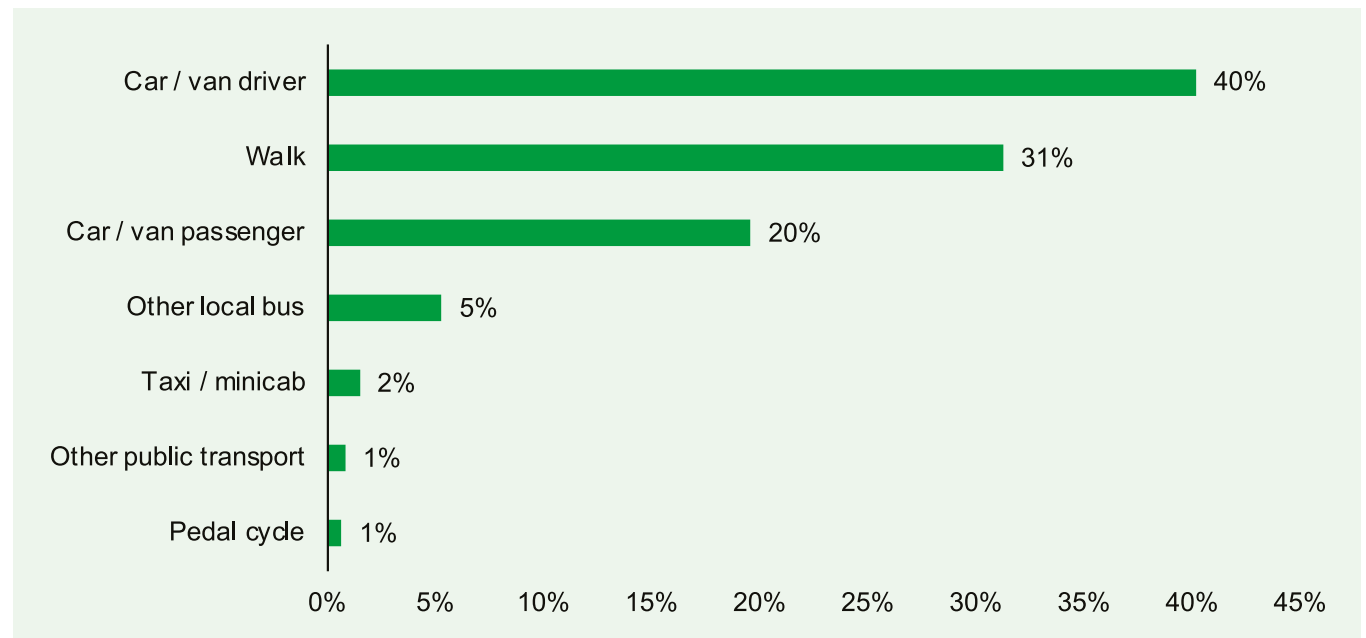


Figure 11: 2021 North East Transport Choices. National Travel Survey 2021

Walking and wheeling

In the North East we are close to national level average rates for walking once a month, once a week, or five times per week (shown in figure 12). This is good and shows that we can also reach the national targets set out in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2. Department for Transport figures show that **71%** of people in the North East walk or cycle as part (or all) of a journey at least once a week, while **88%** of respondents to a 2022 survey on walking and wheeling in Tyne and Wear either would or do walk 5 minutes to get public transport as part of the same trip.

In the North East Travel Survey (2022), the most frequent types of journeys that people walked were attending education, for leisure and shopping. For cycling, it was commuting, attending education and leisure. Walking has also proven resilient to the increase in road traffic volumes, with walking still the principal mode of travel to school at **45%** of 5–16-year-olds, however this gap has been decreasing, particularly at primary school age

Focus on Journeys to School

Regionally, according to the National Travel Survey we have the second lowest level of active travel to school of any region in England at 36%, below the national average of 47%. One of the key aims of this strategy will be to address this.

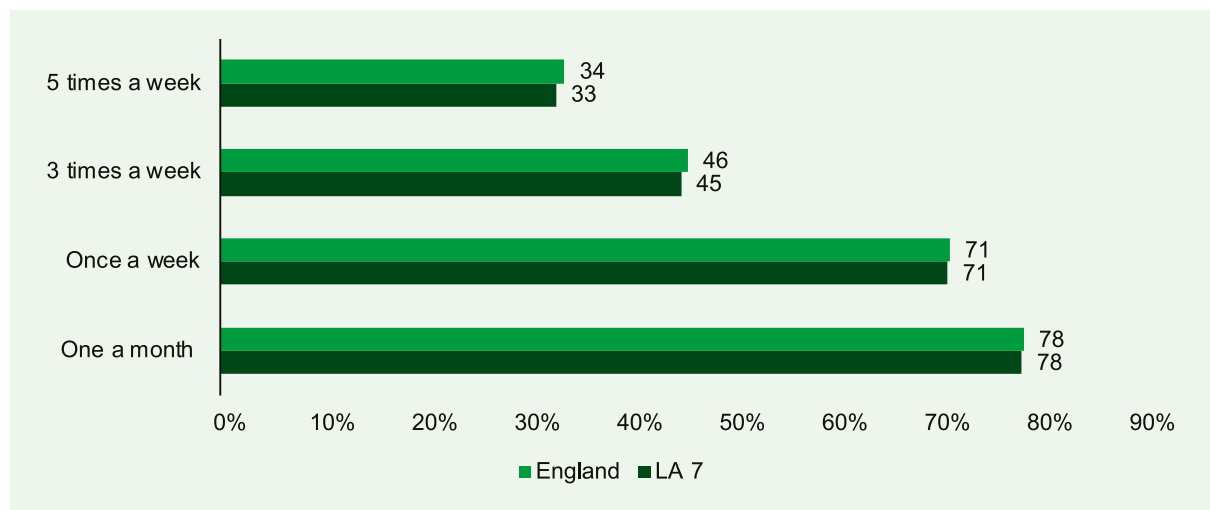


Figure 12: How often do people in the region walk, wheel or cycle. Department for Transport (published 2022)

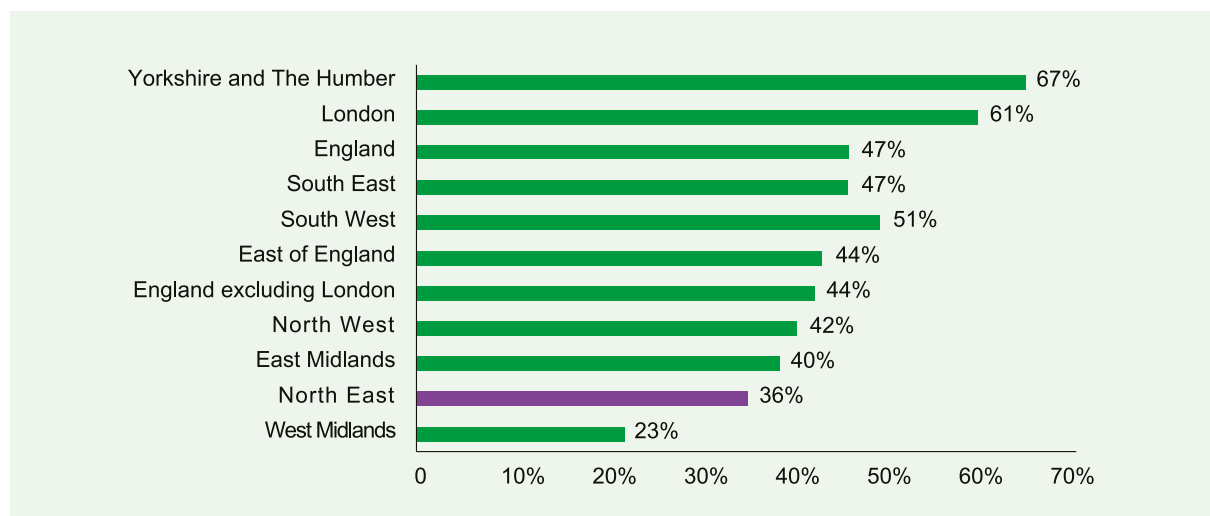


Figure 13: Active travel to school (5-16 year olds) by region 2021. National Travel Survey 2021

Cycling

Through 2022 we saw an increase in cycling of around **6%** compared to pre-pandemic levels, with some routes seeing larger rises. A 2022 survey in Tyne and Wear found **60%** of respondents who cycled did so least once a week, with the majority cycling 3-5 days a week. Our research also found that while **51%** of people who cycle had not changed their amount of cycling over the last 12 months, **20%** were cycling slightly more or much more than 12 months ago. This is positive and we need to continue to encourage this growth moving forward.

Our research shows that in Tyne and Wear, access to bicycles had not shown much change between 2019 and 2022, with around half of respondents owning a bicycle, and a further **6%** able to borrow one when required. This was **10%** higher than the national average of **47%**.

National Travel Survey data (2021) also shows that bicycle ownership and access changes over time. The highest uptake is between the ages of 5-10 and 11-16, when many begin learning how to ride a bike.

Impact of Covid-19 and Cost of Living

Active travel became an even more important part of our lives during the period of COVID-19 restrictions when social movement was limited, and active travel provided a way to get some exercise. Active travel was also a way of getting around when people were advised to only travel if necessary and where possible, to avoid public transport.

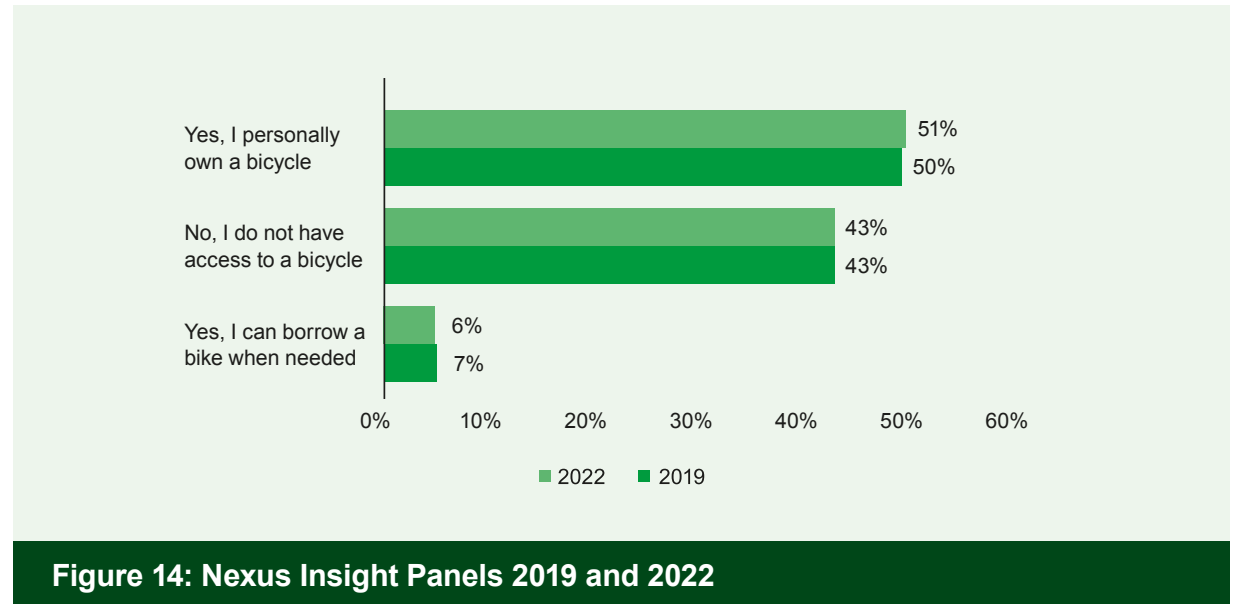


Figure 14: Nexus Insight Panels 2019 and 2022

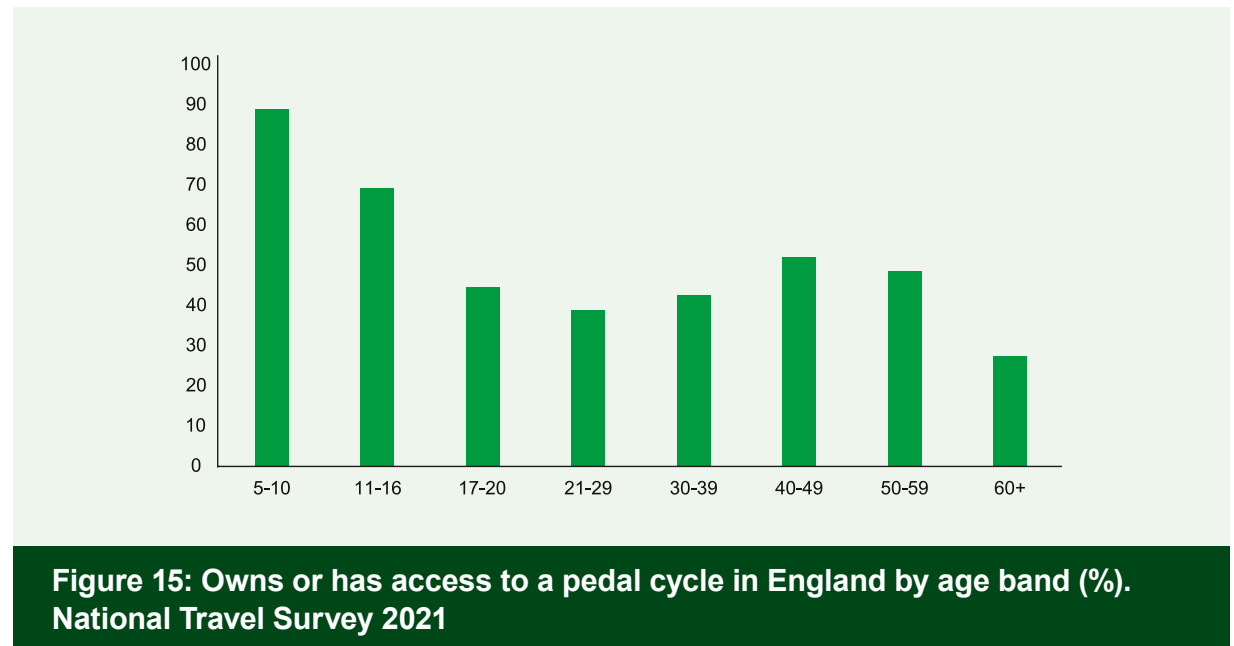


Figure 15: Owns or has access to a pedal cycle in England by age band (%). National Travel Survey 2021

Transport is an important area of regional average household spending. The average North East household spent £73.90 per week on transport prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was **15%** of total household expenditure. This was before the cost of living crisis, about which **39%** of Tyne and Wear respondents to the Walking and Wheeling Nexus Insight Panel (2022) signalled an expectation towards walking more and **26%** towards cycling more in the next 6 months based on cost of living concerns. In a national level survey, **39%** of respondents suggested they were beginning to make fewer non-essential journeys. Our research as part of the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy (2022) has shown that households are already reconsidering some of their journeys due to cost.

Changes to some working habits may also create long term shifts in active travel patterns. According to the Office for National Statistics (2022), around **22%** of employees in the North East work mainly from home, with shifts towards hybrid working in many industries meaning that people are spending less time in the workplace, and more time at home, as can be seen from figure 16. The North East however does have a lower percentage of homeworking than London, the South East, North West and South West, and is around **2%** below the national average for England. These working patterns may well change in the medium to long term.

For those who may now walk, wheel or cycle less as a result of changing working patterns, the possibility of active travel for leisure becomes even more important to ensure they remain healthy and mobile, as well as the maintenance of active travel rates in the region.

Uptake above the national average for walking for leisure in the region offer positive indications that walking and wheeling for exercise and leisure will continue. For example, in a 2022 Walking and Wheeling Nexus Insight Panel survey in Tyne and Wear, exercise and convenience were the two main motivators for journeys that respondents walked or wheeled.

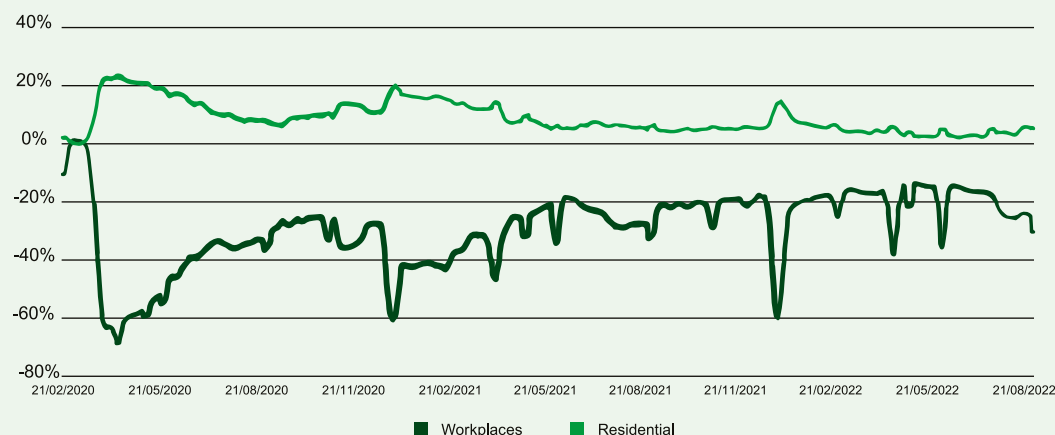


Figure 16: Change in time spend in Workplaces and Residential (Google Mobility 2022)

How do people travel now - chapter summary

In summary, it is clear that while we start from a strong base in our work to develop active travel in the region, there are areas that we can improve on.

For many metrics, we are around the national average and are well positioned to work to get more people walking, wheeling, and cycling for more journeys. The next chapter will look at the benefits of active travel.

What are the challenges?

We have identified key challenges which need to be addressed in order for us to break down barriers to active travel, both actual and perceived.

Several studies and engagement campaigns have been carried out in the region, the findings of which have helped us to better understand perceptions and barriers to active travel for residents and businesses.

They are:

- Public Attitudes Survey for North East Active Travel Fund (2021)
- Making the Right Travel Choice – Market Research with North East residents and employers (2022)
- Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy – Public Consultation (2022)
- Nexus Insight Panel –
 - Walking and wheeling (2022)
 - Cycling (2019 and 2022)
- North East Underrepresented Groups in Cycling Market Research (2022)
- Active Travel Strategy Stakeholder Forum (2022)

The samples of these surveys are not intended to be representative of the North East as a region, but can be read as useful indicators.

The research has shown us that there are five key themes that are important to people when considering walking, wheeling and cycling:

- **Safety and security (including perceptions of safety and security).**
- **Access for all and maintenance.**
- **Affordability.**
- **Coordination and integration.**
- **Journey times and perceptions of convenience.**

If we address these barriers then more people in our region will be able to travel actively for more of their short journeys, helping to achieve our vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

4.1 Safety and security

Infrastructure safety concerns

A significant challenge that needs to be addressed is the perception that active travel is unsafe because of concerns over infrastructure and/or personal safety and security.

Research found fear of motor traffic to be the main barrier to cycling. Concerns included perceptions that roads are dangerous places for cycling due to the amount of other road traffic. Specific safety concerns include the traffic being too busy on roads, the speed of other traffic, and a lack of segregated cycle routes.

Although most people who took part in the 2022 Underrepresented Groups in Cycling research having journeys they could feasibly make by bicycle it was not uncommon for them to completely discount road cycling due to safety concerns

When asked about the main barriers to cycling in the region, cyclists and non-cyclists agreed that the main concern is traffic.

Nexus Insight Panel on cycling (July 2022)

The research indicates that cycling on roads and concerns about safety when cycling are closely linked. **In particular, women and those aged 60+, perceive that it is unsafe to cycle on roads.**

Concerns were voiced about shared use paths, with the mixing of cyclists and pedestrians seen to compromise the safety and experience of both people cycling and those walking or wheeling.

Sustrans' 2023 Disabled Citizens Enquiry found that people are prevented from walking and wheeling by damaged, poorly maintained and low-quality pavements. The biggest issues are uneven surfaces, lack of dropped curbs, slippery conditions, inconsistent design and inaccessible diversions around building works.

Safety concerns also included perceptions that in rural areas, there is a lack of pavement space, with narrow roads and high speed limits (60 mph) along some non-residential roads often shared between motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

Inadequate pavements can lead to serious safety issues, with many disabled people at higher risk of falling or being injured when walking and wheeling. Concerns around safety and accessibility whilst walking and wheeling can also deter disabled people from attempting these journeys. (Disabled Citizens Enquiry, Sustrans, 2023).

2021 research from infrastructure management firm Gaist, found that pavements in England have been gradually declining and semi-urban areas have the highest proportion of pavements in poor condition. (Gaist, Healthy Pavements, National Assessment of Footways in England, 2021)

“I’m someone who signed up to my cycle to work scheme. I got the bike, but I don’t really feel that safe, where I live, cycling to work. There’s a lot of cars parked on the pavements so there isn’t the space to cycle on. I wouldn’t dare cycle on the roads, where I live, there’s just a lot of drivers that wouldn’t expect to see somebody cycling to work in the estate where I live.”

Participant, Underrepresented Groups in Cycling in the North East (September 2022)

Personal safety and security concerns

A lack of lighting and CCTV, poor maintenance and blind spots contribute to perceptions of poor safety and security when walking, wheeling or cycling. Poorly lit areas of the network can negatively effect usage and are often perceived as unsafe spaces, especially when traveling at night.

Perceptions that cycling is generally unsafe affects the willingness of parents to let their children travel actively. As a result, young people may not get into the habit of cycling.

Cycle training provided to children declines rapidly when they start secondary school, often impacting on their confidence. This is an important age group to target given the opportunity to get them to cycle for all of their adult life.

“More dedicated cycleways, reduced priorities for motorists, more cycle paths out in the open not secluded (I’m a woman and these are just too secluded. Really need some focus groups on why women are scared of cycling).”

Female, 50-60 Tyne and Wear

“The only problem about walking is the safety aspect being a senior citizen.”

Female, 60+, Tyne and Wear

47% of respondents to the North East Travel Survey (2022) reported feeling either unsafe or very unsafe due to a fear of crime or disorder while walking at night compared to 6% during the day.

4.2 Access for all and maintenance

The lack of consistency in the quality of active travel routes was strongly highlighted as a barrier. For example, perceptions of poorly maintained existing pavements and cycle paths was raised as an issue, with references to the cycling experience being impacted by debris such as glass as well as cracks and potholes.

53% of respondents in Tyne and Wear were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the condition of cycle routes in the region.

Nexus Customer Insight Panel, 2022

It was felt by many members of the public that enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure could make trips shorter, safer and more pleasant.

Providing a quality active travel infrastructure in rural areas was perceived as being more difficult because of the anticipated expense of adapting roads to meet and exceed the latest design standards, which apply to the entire local highway network.

Design standards often conflict with the characteristics of some of the region's rurally based towns and villages, although national policy recognises that the level of provision required depends on the location.

Maintenance of pavements and cycle ways is an issue as highway maintenance funding does not cover footway and cycle infrastructure assets which leaves a shortfall. Addressing the maintenance backlog and keeping pavements in England (excluding London) in good condition is estimated to cost £1.7 billion. There are no dedicated government funding streams specifically for footway maintenance as well as a lack of information on the additional health costs brought about by the impact of poorly maintained footways.

Falls are a leading cause of injury-related morbidity and mortality, as well a significant burden on health and social services.

Road Safety

Between 2013-2022, there were 43,519 casualties (of all severities) reported in the North East for all methods of travel. The North East Transport Plan key performance indicators include improvements to road safety regarding the number of people killed or seriously injured as well as improvements to the number of slight injuries on our network.

A regionwide strategy for the future management, safety, maintenance and improvement of the North East's Key Route Network (KRN) for all users will be developed in 2024/25.

Lack of information on active travel options can reduce access. Direct and pleasant routes may be available, however, if the public aren't aware of them, they will not be used. This includes public rights of way and the National Cycle Network.

Segregated cycle lanes starting and stopping resulting in people cycling having to share road space with other road traffic was also references as a deterrent to cycling for some.

Access for all and maintenance (continued)

Research from University College London found that of all pedestrian casualties hospitalised in England (2007–2009) 23,528 were involved in a road traffic collision and 76,087 were injured in falls on the public highway. **The number of pedestrian fall casualties were, similar to Dutch figures, over three times greater than those involving a motor vehicle.** This research also found that about three quarters of the pedestrian falls were related to bad or slippery pavement conditions.

Outdoor pedestrian environments influence falls risk, but this area is poorly researched in comparison to indoor falls risks, however a 2016 study by the University of Glasgow found that the following issues may increase the risk of outdoor falls:

- Uneven pavements
- Pavement materials (e.g. cobbles, paving blocks)
- Poor lighting
- Weather – icy, wet, windy
- Slopes and steps
- Pavement width
- Obstructions (street clutter, overhanging trees, tree roots)
- Road crossings
- Crowded streets

Some routes do not have the necessary supporting infrastructure to encourage walking such as seating areas so that people can rest during their journey or suitable street lighting and shelters for follow-on public transport.

Many towns have a high volume of road traffic, but little space to accommodate pathways, and constrained widths with insufficient space between building lines.



Frankland Lane, County Durham
Surface before improvement



Frankland Lane, County Durham
After the surface was improved

The scope of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) is perceived to focus on urban areas, potentially impacting on the ranking and prioritisation of rural improvements linking communities.

Direct routes linking rural communities are often on roads with national speed limits. As a result, some active travel routes have recently been reclassified by Sustrans.

Another specific rural challenge is the difficulty of identifying potential high-use corridors, as there is less demand for active travel routes compared to urban environments.

A new challenge with the current cycling infrastructure is that it isn't always suitable for cargo bikes and e-cargo bikes as older routes may not be sufficiently wide. A lack of secure storage and space for cargo bikes to complete delivery drop offs has also recently been cited as a barrier to cargo bike usage. (Transport for London's Cargo Bike Action Plan, 2023)

The images to the left show improvements on a 2-mile route linking Newton Hall to Durham City Centre from Brasside (Frankland Prison) to The Sands (Durham City) which had previously been unusable for anyone other than walkers and mountain bikers. It has opened up the bridleway for everyday walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Access for all and maintenance (continued)

“It’s not a continual network [in Durham], so there’s a lot of stopping and starting and again, cyclists are not prioritised. You have to stop at various different points and have to wait for the traffic to move. So yes, it’s not as joined up as it could be.”

Female, County Durham

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Poor physical environment for walking, wheeling, and cycling

A perceived poor environment, affected by issues such as traffic road congestion, noise, severance, air pollution, street clutter and streets and estates that are viewed as ‘car-centric’ and dominated by vehicles and car parking, were referenced as reasons why people wouldn’t consider travelling more actively.

People with restricted mobility (such as wheelchair users, people with pushchairs, and vulnerable groups) have highlighted issues which impact on their ability to travel actively.

Common barriers include ‘street clutter’, a lack of dropped kerbs, turning spaces, and ramps, and where narrow paths result in the potential for conflict with other users of the space.

Removing unnecessary obstructions such as street clutter could improve accessibility for everyone, including visually impaired people.

Users with disabilities / long term health conditions / restricted mobility

Disabled people face greater barriers to travel than non-disabled people, taking **30%** fewer walking trips than non-disabled people according to a 2023 report from Sustrans and Transport for All.

These barriers can prevent disabled people accessing essential services like healthcare and food, opportunities in work and education, and social benefits like community and green space. It can lead to reduced independence and a higher risk of isolation for disabled people.

A UK-wide survey by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) in 2015 found that **95%** of blind and partially sighted people had collided with an obstacle in their local neighbourhood over a three-month period.

New commercial demands on pavements and walkways such as dockless hire bikes and e-scooters are perceived to be adding to the problem caused by street clutter such as: advertising boards and vehicles parked on pavements.

16% of UK disabled people are not able to get access to the right mobility aid to walk or wheel, such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters, crutches or walking sticks, assistance dogs, carers or personal assistants (Disabled Citizens Enquiry, Sustrans, 2023).

Some residents living in rural areas told us that narrow paths and a limited amount of pavements can act as barriers to active travel.

Addressing these barriers can ensure active travel routes are accessible to all, regardless of age, sex, race or disability and do not create risks for users.

Walking was widely referenced as easy and enjoyable by research participants who took part in the underrepresented groups in cycling study. Walking was also seen as a way of fitting exercise into daily routines, either for short journeys or as a leisure activity in itself. However, it is important to acknowledge that walking may not be ‘easy’ or ‘enjoyable’ for everyone, especially those with disabilities and or long-term health conditions. That is why the region’s active travel infrastructure also needs to be made accessible for people wheeling.

Access for all and maintenance (continued)

Access for bikes

A lack of cycle access was raised as a key barrier to cycling (see figure 17). Regional access to bikes (to own and to hire) has remained static between 2019 and 2022. The amount of people who have no access to a bike has remained at **43%**. This shows that bike accessibility is a challenge.

Perception of fitness and perseverance required

Perceptions that active travel requires too much effort and that people are not fit enough to do it are common challenges. Whilst some people have restrictions on their physical mobility which can restrict their ability to travel, others are deterred from active travel by perceptions of the fitness and perseverance required when walking, wheeling, and cycling.

The weather has been highlighted as a perceived barrier, with unpleasant conditions during the winter and dark mornings and evenings being highlighted. There were also perceptions that hilly parts of the region require high fitness levels in order to travel actively.

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Source: A Guide to Inclusive Cycling, Wheels for Wellbeing, 2nd Edition, 2019

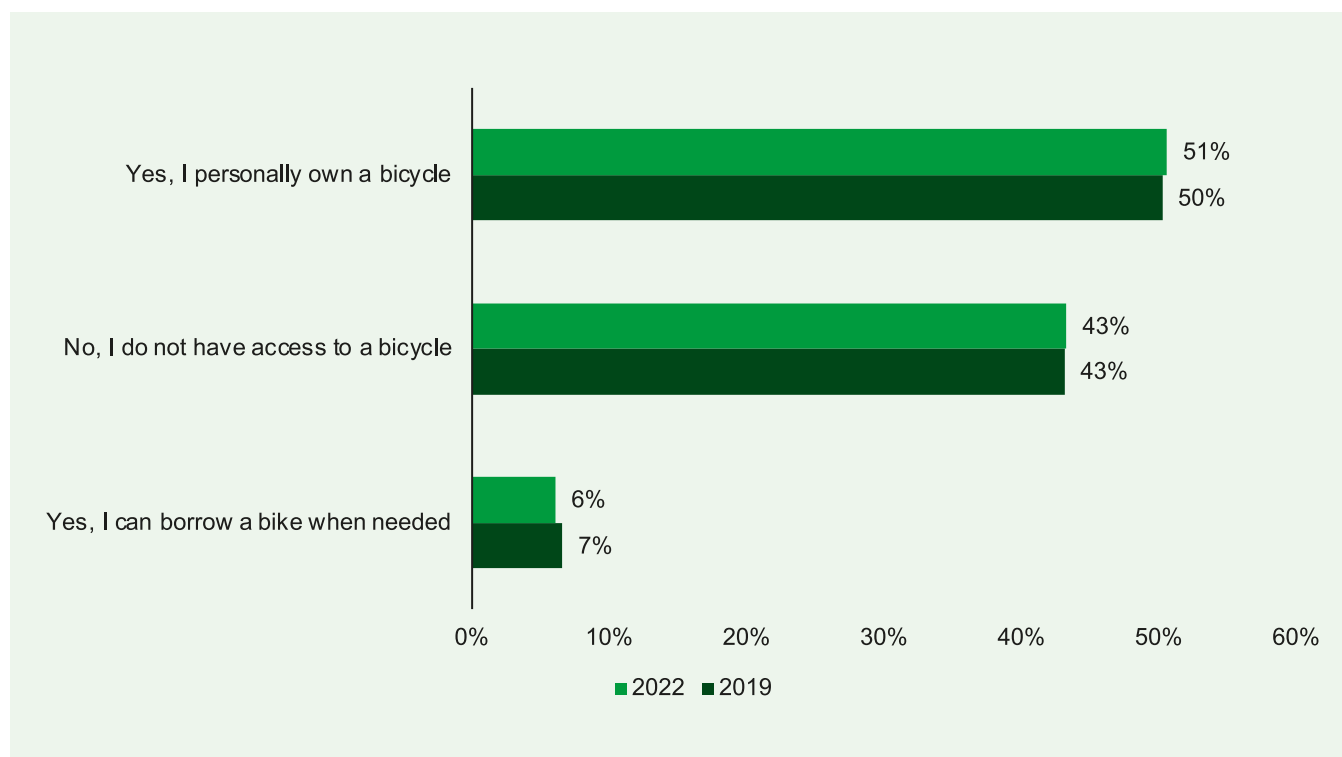


Figure 17: Tyne and Wear bicycle access 2019-2022 (Nexus Insight Panel, 2019 & 2022)

4.3 Affordability

Active travel is often the cheapest way to get around, especially in the case of walking. For cycling there are cost barriers such as purchasing a bicycle, e-bike, cargo bike, or e-cargo bike and associated equipment.

The 2022 North East underrepresented groups in cycling research found that cost does act as a barrier to cycling. For example, the economic benefits of cycling, particularly in comparison to car use due to current fuel costs, were widely acknowledged but the cost of purchasing a bike was often described as a barrier to ownership.

Research participants specifically referenced the perceived value of purchasing a bike was an affordability barrier. For example, many saw it as a discretionary spend, something they felt was currently limited by increases in the cost of living.

Some people with restricted mobility highlighted the high cost of adaptive bikes as a key barrier.

For those that told us they could afford a bike, some saw a bike as not being value for money as they would get limited use from it. This was particularly felt amongst some women in the region, who took part in the underrepresented groups in cycling research.

Cost reduction is a significant motivator for some considering switching the way they travel, prompted by the cost of living crisis.

“The price of petrol at the minute is just crazy. So that’s another reason why we’ll just go local down to the coast [on bikes].”

Female, 35-59, Underrepresented Groups in Cycling, 2022

A significant affordability barrier to e-cargo bike deliveries is that it is more expensive than diesel vans on a like for like basis. It is common practice for van deliveries to be fulfilled by independent contractors so many of the economic costs of deliveries are borne by the contractor rather than the delivery company. Passing these economic costs to diesel van drivers means courier companies can undercut deliveries by most e-cargo bike operators who tend to internalise such costs. This creates a barrier to the adoption of cargo and e-cargo bikes and further growth in usage.

4.4 Coordination and integration

Perceived lack of integration between active travel and public transport is a barrier to making longer sustainable journeys that require integration between different public transport types and services.

A perceived lack of real-time passenger information, inadequate information and signage was also identified as a common barrier that prevents more people from travelling by active modes to a public transport station or interchange.

Our research found that a perceived lack of secure storage and uncertainty about whether bikes can be taken on to trains, buses and Metro acted as a barrier to combining cycling with public transport.

Improved cycle routes, segregated from road vehicle traffic, linking to public transport stations, interchanges and other suitable locations was seen as important to people when considering if they could combine active travel with public transport use for longer journeys.

Integration of active travel and public transport is especially important in rural areas because of the distances needed to be travelled.

“It’s good to encourage increased cycling in city centres like Newcastle through bike lanes, but the other transport options need to be joined up, so that bikes can be carried on the Metro and bus, for example.”

Micro business, North Tyneside

4.5 Journey times and perceptions of convenience

Our research highlighted that some people believe many regular journeys they need to make cannot be walked, wheeled, or cycled because of the distance, and a view that it would take too long.

“Everyone’s in a hurry all the time. Like life’s just moving too fast. Everyone’s going to work, then they’re going somewhere straight after work and they’ve got to be here and there, and they’re squeezing things in around family life.”

Female, under 40, urban

The practicability of getting people to consider switching short car journeys to active travel was questioned by some, mainly due to the perceived ease of car use. Although being stuck in traffic can be inconvenient, it did not outweigh the perceived convenience of travelling by car for some.

The perception around the ease of driving, supported by the low cost and availability of car parking at workplaces and in town and city centres around the region, was also highlighted.

Those with childcare responsibilities viewed the private car as the quickest, most convenient choice for their needs because of the multi-purpose journeys and commitments they have.

Some people with restricted mobility were clear that convenience was crucial in determining how to make a journey and that the issue of sustainable travel was secondary.

People also highlighted negative perceptions of walking or cycling to work. Some felt that travelling actively was mainly a leisure activity and not suitable for journeys to work where journey time and convenience take priority.

Spatial planning and new development were also mentioned as a barrier to the convenience of cycling, walking and wheeling. This is because many new developments, such as housing, have not provided a good standard of active travel infrastructure, leading to perceptions that the car the most convenient way to travel for journeys. Another issue highlighted was a perception of new developments being located away from city and town centres with irregular or no bus services and poor and indirect walking and cycling routes.

People in the 60+ age group, and those living in rural and semi-rural locations, mentioned a reluctance to consider changing travel behaviour to more active and sustainable journeys.

“Stopped [cycling] in my teens, never picked it up again.”

Female, 50-60, Tyne and Wear

Storage and facilities

A common barrier referenced was the lack of secure cycle storage at both workplaces and transport interchanges. Whilst many employers and business parks in the region have good cycle storage, shower and changing facilities available, it was found that employees aren’t always aware of these.

Limited access to showering facilities at destinations was also highlighted as an issue affecting the appeal of cycling.

However, the lack of shower facilities at destinations was only listed as the 8th most important barrier to cycling in the region by people who took part in the July 2022 Nexus insight panel on cycling. Moreover, the underrepresented groups in cycling research found that improved facilities may not increase participation, due to a reluctance around showering and changing at destinations.

Journey times and perceptions of convenience (continued)

The perceived need to change and shower when arriving at work, as well as making multiple journeys for business, and perceived issues with having to carry a change of clothes and other equipment was also highlighted.

For all audiences, the thought of arriving at a destination – particularly work or for a social occasion - hot, sweaty, and possibly smelly, was off-putting.

The issue of showering is a particular barrier for women, and almost as much a barrier as safety. Reasons for this included: the additional effort and time requirement; the need to carry a change of clothes; concerns about unisex facilities.

2019 research from the British Council for Offices found that up to **38%** of British office workers would consider commuting by bike if their workplace offered better facilities.

Having a safe place to store bikes was raised in discussions about facilities, with evidence suggesting that a lack of facilities at destinations is a more widespread issue than a lack of storage at home.

The perceived lack of secure cycle storage at destinations was a barrier amongst those more open to cycling as transport. (Underrepresented Groups in Cycling in the North East, September 2022) There also is a general lack of facilities to cater for the storage of non-conventional cycles.

14% of all responses on barriers to cycling in Tyne and Wear related to end point facilities such as cycle parking and showers.

Nexus Customer Insight Panel, 2022

Regional cycle storage exists at public transport interchange and business parks, but we have identified a lack of awareness as a barrier to greater use.

Another barrier to the take up of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes could be the current lack of public charging availability. About 190,000 electric cars were registered in the UK in 2021, just 15,000 more than e-cycles, but there are more than 30,000 e-car charging points and only a limited number of e-cycle charging points. Sustrans is working with partners to place e-bike charging stations on the National Cycle Network to enable people to travel longer distances across the UK using electric bikes.



Summary – what are the challenges?

As can be seen in figure 18, exercise and convenience were the two most important considerations stated for those who decided to walk as part of the whole of a journey. While environmental concerns were not a major factor, it still accounted for **13%** of responses, showing that they are still taken into account.

Respondents were asked to rank their key barriers to cycling in the region (see figure 19), with levels of road traffic, the overall safety of cycling and lack of specific segregated infrastructure proving the three most important factors.

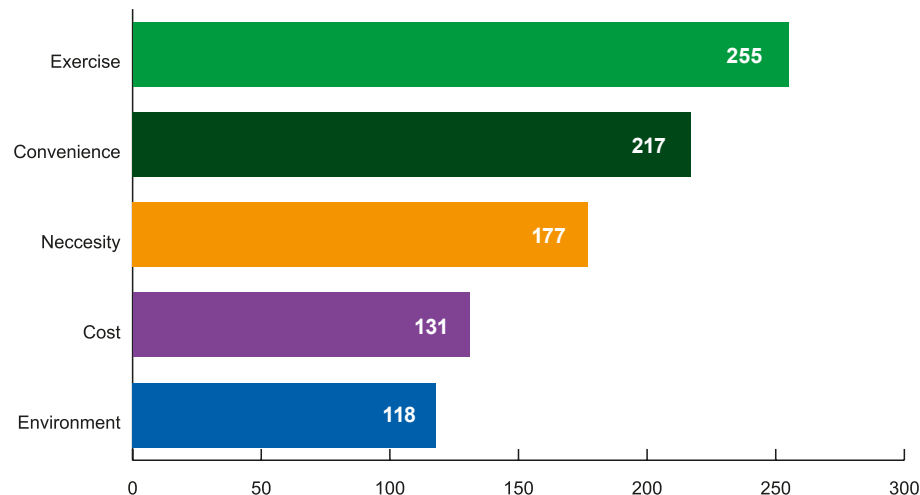


Figure 18: Motivations when deciding to walk or wheel – 2022 Nexus insight panel

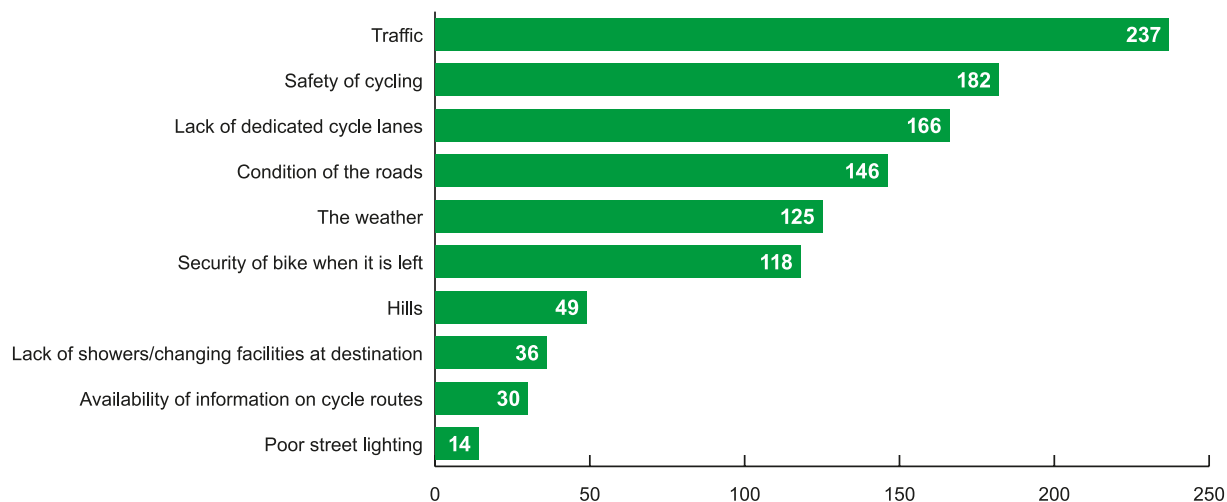


Figure 19: Key barriers to cycling in the region – 2022 Nexus insight panel

Where do we want to be?

Background

By 2035 we would like our region to be at the forefront of having made the transition to decarbonise transport, having cleaner air for our people to breathe, having a more physically active population, and having a stronger economy.

We want active travel to become the natural choice for short everyday journeys and to combine with public transport for longer travel.

Our target to meet this aim is for over half of all shorter journeys to be made by active travel by 2035, up from 37% in 2018/19.

It is ambitious but can be achieved with the right level of investment and policy change. The region must also work to tackle the barriers people face and the everyday needs of people making journeys, which includes everyone living in, working in and visiting the North East.

There is significant potential to grow the number of active trips taken, and we need to work with partners to help provide safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure which helps people move around the region and make more everyday journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling.

We want to be in a position where the vision and objectives of the North East Transport Plan and Active Travel Strategy are realised. We also want to ensure the region can help to meet the national targets set out in the Government's second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) published in July 2022, and the 2020 'Gear Change' cycling and walking plan for England which sets out a vision for a travel revolution in England's streets, towns and communities.

For this to be achieved, our transport network and offer will look different to how it does today. Active travel will take a more prominent role in how people travel alongside a sustainable, affordable public transport system and zero emission vehicles.

This chapter sets out how we envisage walking, wheeling and cycling will look in the North East by 2035 if this strategy has been implemented. We have identified the need for a better active travel infrastructure, using our seven Local Authority Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and the region's Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs), including the proposed development of a North East active travel network, with affordable cycle hire, docking and storage at key transport interchanges, education and employment sites.

We have created six active travel policy areas aimed at supporting delivery of this strategy and how active travel will achieve the North East Transport Plan vision and objectives. This chapter sets out where we want to be in the coming years for each of the following themes:

- **Active travel friendly places;**
- **World-class active travel network;**
- **Greater integration;**
- **Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle;**
- **Improving access to equipment;**
- **Partnership working.**



5.1 Active travel friendly places

Streets and public spaces will be more appealing and safer, with better experiences for people using them.

We want active travel to be a choice for all. Removing barriers that make it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle to their destinations, will make our streets and active travel infrastructure more inclusive. This will ensure that travelling actively in the North East is more accessible to all regardless of age, sex, race or ability.

For example, areas, particularly town and city centres will be more 'walkable' and wheeling friendly, through better and more inclusive pedestrian infrastructure improvements. As well as improvements to the built environment and greater CCTV coverage, providing reassurance and boosting confidence, enabling more shorter journeys to be made by active travel, including underrepresented groups. Our research identified women, lower socioeconomic classifications, those aged 60+, minority ethnicities, people with disabilities and long term health conditions, and people living in rural and semi-rural locations as underrepresented groups in cycling.

On our road network, the needs of all users will be considered, ensuring that conflicts are reduced, suitable speed limits are in place and vulnerable road users are protected to improve road safety.

People walking, wheeling, and cycling will be physically separated from cars, where possible, to improve road safety for vulnerable road users. We will strive for more cycle lanes to be physically segregated from pedestrians except where no alternatives exist.

Cycle routes will be more direct with good lighting, improving safety.

Given the challenges of accommodating segregated active travel pathways, particularly in rural areas, highway authorities will have considered measures to improve safety for people walking, wheeling, cycling or horse riding when sharing the carriageway with motor traffic.

Improvements to public spaces and enhanced signage and wayfinding across the region will also help visitors to the North East to walk, wheel and cycle during their stay.

Improving the accessibility of the region through promotion of and investment in active travel will enhance the offer to visitors arriving by air, rail and sea, as well as those arriving by car but wishing to travel actively while in the region.

Our footpaths and cycleways will be attractive and pleasant, and people will enjoy using them. Physical access barriers on active travel paths, such as waggonways, which prevent access to non-standard cycles will have been removed or replaced where possible.

A greater presence of people moving around our region actively will have led to improved perceptions of personal safety and security, achieved by more people walking, wheeling and cycling around our cities, towns, suburbs and villages for everyday journeys. More people travelling actively will have encouraged others to do the same, helping to support local businesses and other economic development.

More 'School Streets' and 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods' will have been trialled and introduced across the region which will help lower congestion, improve air quality and boost the number of children walking, wheeling, and cycling to school each day.

Streets will be for all, with greater priority given to people walking, wheeling, or cycling. People will be met by modern and safe waiting and storage facilities to complete their onward journeys by public transport such as bus, Metro, rail, and ferry. A range of cycle storage solutions will be available across the region, and these will be covered by CCTV where possible, combatting bike theft.

There will be wide, segregated (where possible) and well-maintained routes with reduced street clutter, dropped kerbs, ramp access provision where needed, and other inclusive infrastructure such as well-designed crossing points.

Greater provision of shelters, rest areas and other amenities will ensure people have the opportunity to take a break during their journey. There will have been an increase in the amount of supporting active travel infrastructure such as seating areas, street lighting and shelters, especially at leisure locations and at stations and interchanges for follow-on public transport.

5.2 World-class active travel network

Active travel will be viewed as a regular activity that everyone can enjoy for a range of journey purposes. Routes will be more direct, improving journey times in some cases linking into key destinations and attractions.

The North East will have developed a fully joined-up active travel network, linking together existing parts of our active travel networks, parks and greenspaces.

This future network will link both urban, suburban, and rural communities, where possible, and will be designed to a consistent regional standard with a strong, identifiable brand. Investments will be targeted to extend benefits of existing schemes and existing spaces.

New infrastructure solutions will be high-quality and will meet (and where possible exceed) minimum design standards such as LTN 1/20 and future updates.

This will be created initially by working with local authority partners to identify and address known gaps in the active travel network to create more direct and desirable routes.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs) will feed in directly to the development of the strategic regional network.

There will be robust maintenance of the network. Targeted investment will strive to ensure that maintenance and cleaning are regularly undertaken, and the network remains reliable and pleasant for users. The region will have successfully made the case for partners to obtain financial resource for targeted investment in maintenance activities to complete maintenance at pace, to improve resilience and drive up the safety of the region's network.

For example, we will endeavour for footpaths and cycle ways to be well maintained, free of uneven surfaces, potholes, trip hazards (including from street clutter/obstructions) and overhanging vegetation through strengthened maintenance and cleaning regimes.

It will be easier for people with restricted mobility to be able to use active travel as a form of transport, including as a means of accessing public transport.

In addition to providing new active travel routes, the existing network will have continued to be upgraded to the highest standard, enabling onward connections away from main routes including off carriageway routes in rural areas.

Our active travel network will be suitable for use by non-traditional bikes through the removal of barriers and improving surfaces. Physical access barriers on active travel paths, such as waggonways, which prevent access to non-standard cycles will have been removed or replaced where possible.

We will strive to reduce street clutter on footpaths and cycle lanes due to badly parked vehicles and poorly placed temporary signage, through considering greater enforcement which will help all users – especially visually impaired people – and people using wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Mobility hubs in urban, suburban and rural areas will provide services related to walking, wheeling and cycling, walking and wheeling, such as hire bikes and possibly bike repair.

People will be able to easily hire cycles, including e-cycles and, where appropriate, e-scooters throughout the region at public transport stations and interchanges.

E-bikes will be hireable and available in more rural locations because of the longer distances people may need to travel and will also enable people to tackle hills easier. E-bikes will have unlocked a huge opportunity for improving transport between and beyond suburban areas where distances to key destinations are too long for many to consider walking or cycling using a conventional bike and where public transport options are limited.

As well as e-cargo bikes being used for home deliveries, there will be greater use of e-cargo bikes to carry children, supporting families to switch more journeys from car to active travel.

We will aim to make new routes wide enough for non-traditional bikes to be used and for secure storage facilities to be provided in suitable locations.

Many journeys between rural communities will be perceived as more cyclable distances, through allowing space for paths within or outside of the highway boundary, improving safety for active travel. There will also be more active travel routes in rural areas, better connecting communities.

Given the limitations that are often in place for creating new active travel infrastructure in rural locations, creative solutions which make better use of existing infrastructure will be introduced.

5.3 Greater integration

Combining active travel with public transport, such as walking, wheeling or cycling to a station or interchange will be an effective way for people to incorporate physical activity into daily life and raise activity levels.

There will have been significant growth in the numbers of people travelling actively for the first and last mile of journeys, using bus, Metro, local and national rail, as well as the Shields Ferry as part of a journey.

Cycle hire will be integrated with the rest of the region's sustainable transport network.

Active travel routes will link to public transport stations and interchanges, allowing for safe and seamless travel with other forms of transport.

The region's public transport network and services will work better for people using bicycles than it already does in 2023. For example, it will be easier to safely store cycles, including accessible bikes at interchanges and bring them on more public transport services. There will also be greater information on storage for cycles at stations and on services.

Greater active travel journeys in the region will not replace or compete with journeys currently made by public transport, but rather complement and feed into the region's public transport system as part of a one, total, sustainable network. People will be able to see where there is available cycle parking and be able to easily use it.

There will be seamless active travel integration with public transport for onward journeys. Real-time public transport passenger information will show how long it takes and the most convenient route to travel when walking, wheeling or cycling to a public transport station or interchange.

Incentives as part of an integrated transport app could also be in use to reward people for making more active journeys.

In rural areas, active travel routes will link with good quality, reliable and affordable public transport services to encourage more journeys to be made by combining walking, wheeling or cycling with public transport.

For example, given the importance of integration with public transport for active travel in rural locations, creative solutions combining active travel with public transport such as mobility hubs, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), including bus services and Mobility as a Service (MaaS), will have been introduced in rural communities.

5.4 Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle

People of all ages will have improved confidence and cycling skills through equal access cycle training initiatives across the North East.

More school children will travel actively to school, with the region no longer having the lowest level of active travel to school (age 5-16) of any region in England (36% in 2021, below the national average of 47%).

People will have awareness of the updated Highway Code which places walking and wheeling at the top the road user hierarchy. There will be an understanding of key changes, including other traffic having to give way to people crossing or waiting to cross at a junction, and the position in the road for cycling, will be enhanced. Raising awareness of the 2022 updated hierarchy and future updates will help improve the safety of people walking, wheeling and cycling.

Improvements to lighting and maintenance of active travel routes could also support people during their commute to and from work during early morning or late evening shift patterns. People working shift patterns and hospitality workers will have particularly benefited.

The night time economy is a key part of the North East economic makeup and improving the safety of routes, especially when traveling at night, will support more active journeys irrespective of the time chosen to travel.

There will have been a significant rise in e-bike and e-cargo bikes across the region, especially from people who currently don't cycle. Organisations will be able to deliver some goods over short distances using cargo bikes, instead of doing so by using petrol or diesel vans.

Safety will be the key consideration in the design of all regionally promoted active travel schemes and programmes to support people to use active travel for more journeys.

Entry and exit points of visitors to the North East, where the leisure-based movements of these visitors differ from local residents making journeys for work, education or to access services, will support more people to walk, wheel and cycle through better information and facilities.

Visitor economy locations will also be supported in installing active travel infrastructure such as safe cycle storage, docking for bike and e-bike hire.

More people will walk, wheel or cycle to work, education sites, healthcare appointments and to leisure locations and facilities. More streets will be used for leisure and recreational activities, such as children playing.

Negative perceptions of active travel will have been addressed through various initiatives such as promotional campaigns which will have successfully helped more people to walk, wheel and cycle for all types of journeys in the North East.

Teenagers and school leavers will also receive cycling education to help them take forward active travel into their adult life.

We will remain realistic in our recognition that active travel won't be suitable for all journeys. The reasons why people travel the way they do are complex and depend on a number of circumstances, which can change per journey, so a flexible approach is needed. There will not be a 'one size fits all' approach in the region, recognising that the car or van may be the only option for certain journeys and personal circumstances.



Source: Cycling UK

5.5 Improving access to equipment

The region will champion active travel, particularly walking and wheeling for more journeys as an affordable, attractive, and healthy way of traveling.

People will be able to easily hire dockable cycles across the North East, including e-bikes in order to travel around cheaply. Access to hire bikes, and e-bikes, with a consistent and integrated payment scheme and adequate promotion and information provision will address issues around transport poverty and social exclusion.

Opportunities to work with partners to introduce the hire of non-conventional cycles will have been explored to improve access to equipment.

Docking stations will be strategically placed around the region at key employment sites, residential areas, and transport interchanges. People will be encouraged to leave bikes at docking stations to help reduce street clutter, enabling walkers and wheelers to travel actively on paths and pavements. The region will have also explored further opportunities of regulated e-scooter hire.

Businesses and employers will be able to support and enable their staff to introduce more active journeys to and from work, building on current initiatives such as the Cycle to Work scheme. More employers will have electric bikes available for staff to use during work hours for business travel.

The region will also have suitable active travel hire and storage facilities at leisure spots and key employment sites to ensure that people are able to safely store their bicycle. This will be achieved by working with local authorities, transport operators, destination management organisations (DMOs), such as Visit Northumberland, Visit County Durham, NewcastleGateshead Initiative, and other active travel stakeholders.

5.6 Partnership working

The North East Joint Transport Committee will have achieved the aim and targets of this strategy through partnership working with a range of stakeholders, using this strategy's commitment statements as a call to action.

By 2035, the region will have achieved its active travel aims and targets through partnership working with communities, local authorities, transport operators, Nexus, police forces, public health and the NHS, businesses and employers, school and universities, as well as third sector stakeholders. Partnership working with these stakeholders will be key to develop closer relationships and joint working to achieve the aims of this strategy.

Accessibility groups, communities, and local requirements will have been properly consulted on regional active travel policies as well as the development of infrastructure.

The region will have supported our local authority partners by successfully bidding for funding opportunities, enabling the delivery of Local Cycle and Walking Investment Plans (LCWIPs) and Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs).

Working with local authorities and developers, new housing and business developments will be built around making active travel the first choice for short everyday journeys.

Safety and perceptions of safety on public transport will have been improved through partnership working with local police forces. Bike theft will also be reduced in the North East through improved storage and joint working with the region's police forces.

There will be more initiatives and schemes that enable more walking, wheeling and cycling to improve health and reduce inequalities (inclusive of geographical and socio-economic inequalities as well as those amongst protected characteristics and wider protected groups) across the North East.

Effective partnerships with businesses and employers will have been developed and strengthened which will have led to more employees in the North East travelling actively for journeys to and from work, including travelling actively for part of a commuting journey.

More school children and students will travel actively for journeys to and from school, achieved by working with schools and other education providers to encourage active travel.

The National Cycle Network (NCN) and long-distance walking routes will have been improved by working closely with local authorities, Sustrans and other key delivery partners.

More people will visit the region and travel actively when getting around. More visitors will use our long distance walking routes, cycle routes, rambling and mountain biking for example. This will be achieved by working in partnership with tourism organisations to promote the region's active travel assets.

Improving active travel infrastructure in Blyth, Northumberland

Improvements are being made to active travel infrastructure using the Active Travel Fund. Segregated cycling and crossing facilities have been built on Waterloo Road to improve access to the town centre, aligned to wider 'Energising Blyth' town centre redevelopment proposals. The scheme opened to traffic on 31st August 2022.



Smart and Healthy Metro Stations, South Tyneside

As part of the Transforming Cities Fund, South Tyneside Council is developing two Smart and Healthy Metro Stations. Chichester and Tyne Dock Metro Stations have been focused on initially due to the levels of commercial and industrial activity within the immediate area of each. The scheme will improve active travel connectivity from each Metro Station to nearby businesses and areas of commercial activity, including the Port of Tyne. These schemes are expected to be complete by Spring 2023.

Community Cycle Hub – Bike4Health, North Tyneside

Bike4Health Community Interest Company was established in 2014 with a focus on promoting modal shift by delivering unique cycling experiences in partnership with schools, businesses, charities and the NHS across the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

Projects are diverse and often involve working with partner organisations. An example of this is YMCA Newcastle, who connect young people to their own social history through exploring Newcastle's historical sites and parks by bike. Another is working with both Crisis and Forestry England to show people who use their services how easy it is to get away from the city centre by bike.

The approach is to build confidence and resilience whilst having fun, and allowing people the freedom to get out and explore their local area by bike.

Regional Active Travel Network – The ‘Bee Network’, Greater Manchester

In 2018, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) launched ambitious plans to develop a fully integrated regional walking and cycling network, branded the Bee Network.

Made up of 1,000 miles of walking and cycling routes, including 75 miles of segregated bike lanes, the network will connect every community across Greater Manchester helping to make walking and cycling a primary form of travel for everyday journeys, whilst also helping to decarbonise transport throughout Greater Manchester.

The Bee network aims to create pleasant active travel spaces with safety and inclusivity intertwined. The growing network consists of routes for young children to walk or cycle safely and ease of access for all, including wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.

Priority has also been given to walking and cycling at strategic areas of the city to further promote safety and convenience of active travel journeys, and integration with public transport has been central to development around the city with a particular focus on passenger experience throughout their journeys.

The yellow branding helps to promote active travel around Greater Manchester and gives cycling and walking routes an identity that communities can connect with. The growing network also brings huge benefits to public health and the environment, alongside financial boosts to the local economy.

Sunderland City Council – Bus rationalisation and active travel improvements – March 2023

A segregated eastbound cycle lane was opened in March 2023 funded by the Transforming Cities Fund with matched funding by Sunderland City Council.

The new route extends along the north side of the carriageway between the Albion Place / Green Terrace junction and the Holmeside / Waterloo Place junction. The lane is segregated from the carriageway through an island, making the scheme LTN 1/20 compliant.

Additional pedestrian improvements including the widening of existing footways and the introduction of tactile paving areas at existing crossing points within the scheme have provided a significant enhancement to the existing pedestrian provision within the area. A pedestrian crossing has also been simplified as part of the scheme, making it easier to use for people walking and wheeling.

The scheme has improved access into the city centre from the west by providing a safer, more direct route and will be the main cycle route to the redeveloped Sunderland Railway station from the west. According to Sunderland City Council, feedback from active travel groups has been positive.



Where do we want to be – desired outcomes

Active travel friendly places

We will invest in and support developments which improve public spaces to enable more walking, wheeling and cycling. Active travel will be deeper integrated with public transport by improving access to equipment such as cycle hire and storage at public transport stations and interchanges.

World-class active travel network

We will promote more safe, continuous, direct routes for cycling in towns and cities, physically separated from volume motor traffic, as well as people walking and wheeling, serving the places that people want to go.

NOTE – these images are for illustrative purposes only. They are intended to give a flavour of what delivery of this strategy might look like in urban and rural areas of the North East.

They are not designed schemes and not intended to be final design proposals. The core of this strategy is to grow the number of trips made by active travel, to the point where active travel is the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combines with public transport for longer journeys.

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Suburban coastal active travel 'superhighway' route with consistent signage and lighting



Rural active travel route, linking rural communities together



Urban pedestrian improvements with cycle hubs outside public transport interchanges



Where do we want to be – chapter summary

This chapter has set out how we envisage walking, wheeling and cycling will look in the North East in 2035 if this strategy has been successfully implemented.

It sets out a vision for the region where people make more everyday journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling. Active travel will take a more prominent role in how people travel, with over half of short journeys made by active travel by 2035.

More active travel will compliment a sustainable, affordable public transport system, along with zero emission vehicles.

This will be achieved by securing funding for providing and promoting a safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure, which this strategy makes the case for.

How do we get there

To realise the ambitions of this Active Travel Strategy, the North East Joint Transport Committee will work in collaboration with central government, Active Travel England, and local people.

Our schemes are ambitious, and we estimate would cost in the region of £500 million to fully deliver the strategy. However, this is just the beginning of the scheme pipeline and funding which the region requires to truly meet the vision and objectives of this strategy and as further schemes are developed over the period to 2035.

Identified Programme – North East Active Travel Strategy

Our programme of proposed investment stems from the North East Transport Plan. The plan sets out a live programme of interventions. All interventions within the programme were initially tested to ensure that they are consistent with Transport Plan objectives and that they are deliverable.

But that is not the end of the process. All schemes will be subject to more rigorous testing and appraisal and will only be delivered where they have demonstrated, through detailed business case development, that they can appropriately contribute towards the delivery of the objectives.

If schemes cannot contribute towards objectives and don't support the Transport Plan, they will not be taken forward.



This strategy has utilised the Transport Plan pipeline and Nexus' (The Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive) capital pipeline schemes. We have identified schemes that will support North East Active Travel Strategy objectives from the below work packages. The different work packages are schemes that can be delivered within the following time periods:

- **Schemes for delivery in the next five years (requiring funding to be accelerated)** – these are either smaller scale schemes that can be quickly developed and delivered or larger schemes at an advanced stage of development. Accelerating development funding will move them to 'Shovel Ready' status; and
- **Schemes for development and delivery by 2035** – A programme of smaller schemes coupled with ambitious schemes requiring development funding to bring them to an advanced stage and move to delivery.

What are we proposing?

We want active travel, particularly walking and wheeling, to become the natural choice for short everyday journeys and combine with public transport for longer travel.

The proposed investments set out in this strategy broadly consist of:

- **New and upgraded forms of active travel infrastructure:** Enhanced infrastructure for walking and cycling delivering quality, safe, connected, and accessible infrastructure for walking, cycling and wheeling;
- **Access to equipment schemes** that allow people to affordably access the active travel network;
- **Maintenance of the active travel network** to ensure it remains safe and accessible to all users; and
- **Targeted behaviour change initiatives** that encourage uptake of the network and sustain these levels of usage, building on the proposals set out in the region's 'Making The Right Travel Choice' strategy. Key examples include social prescribing and clearer accountabilities to drive the vision for active travel.

Our proposed programme has been further tested to demonstrate how it meets the objectives and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of this strategy and importantly how they meet central government objectives set by Active Travel England (ATE) including from the Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy 2 (CWIS 2).

Delivery

This programme will be delivered by the constituent authorities and Nexus within the North East, together with regional schemes being delivered by the JTC on behalf of the region's Combined Authorities.

The Transport North East programme team will manage this programme and will be responsible for sponsoring the development of various schemes and projects that support this plan, as well as a series of region-wide initiatives.

Implementation of the interventions that are regional initiatives are within the region's control and will be delivered in accordance with the region's programme management and assurance frameworks.

The role of Transport North East acting on behalf of the JTC is varied. In some cases, we will act as the promoter of schemes and will be responsible for delivery but in most circumstances, delivery may be undertaken by another organisation, for example our constituent Local Authorities with Transport North East securing funding at a regional-scale and providing technical assistance as required.

Programme management and assurance

The funding required to realise the ambitions of this strategy is substantial, however the region is fortunate to have a well-established and ratified Transport Assurance Framework in place which is proportionate to the nature, scale, and value of schemes.

The Transport Assurance Framework is a scalable series of gateways that provide our governance structure with the confidence that each component investment is delivering on the requirements of the programme and delivering the Active Travel Strategy and Transport Plan outcomes that have been ascribed to that investment. For more information on our Transport Assurance Framework, please visit: www.transportnortheast.gov.uk or contact info@transportnortheast.gov.uk.

Funding and development options

The main source of funding for transport is from central government. Previous rounds of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Transforming Cities Fund show how the region can deliver significant packages of investment.

Transport North East will continue to work with government to secure funding through competition based funding and longer-term devolved settlements to unlock schemes. Engagement continues with Active Travel England to secure funding through the Capability and Ambition Fund rounds and the Active Travel Fund to take projects from concept to delivery.



For certain investments, developer contributions will form a viable part of the financial model. We will work with the individual authorities to secure appropriate levels of contributions or works in kind where the investment is directly related to the development and is needed to mitigate the impact of the scheme in question.

Realising the ambition of this strategy will be partially reliant on the ability to secure the necessary powers and consents for delivery in terms of traffic regulation orders (TRO) and in some cases planning consent.

Alternative funding may be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly where shared integrated priorities can be realised. This may include borrowing, local government financing, third party support, alternative central government funding and the UK Infrastructure Bank.

The North East has a track record in selecting and prioritising projects which balance objectives around the economy, environment, health, and society. It is important that the plan is flexible to respond to funding opportunities and as such a prioritisation process has been designed incorporating the assessment against the vision and objectives that can be deployed based on the fund that is available.

How do we get there – summary

The region has set out a range of initiatives within this strategy document, worth approximately £500 million that will meet the objectives of this strategy and our Transport Plan and get us to our vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic, and thriving North East by 2035’.

We will keep this pipeline updated and have plans in place to develop schemes, so they are ready for delivery over this time period.

We will actively investigate all options for the future financing of these projects including much needed maintenance and revenue support that offer the best combination of security, flexibility, and value for public money in order to successfully deliver where we want to be.



North East Active Travel Strategy – key commitment statements

In order to drive forward this strategy, we have created a list of clear key commitment statements linked to our active travel policy areas. These commitments are aimed at supporting the delivery of this strategy and how active travel will achieve the North East Transport Plan vision and objectives:

Active travel friendly places

- We will support improvements to streets, existing routes and open spaces to make them more appealing, safer and a better experience for people using them.
- We will support local partners to consider trialling and introducing more 'School Streets' and 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods' to protect children and improve air quality.
- We will encourage use of the streets for leisure and recreational activities.
- We will support accessibility design and infrastructure improvements to make streets more inclusive in line with the Equality Act.
- We will support local authorities to improve and maintain pedestrian infrastructure, minimise street clutter and give greater priority to pedestrians.
- We will promote signage and wayfinding to facilitate walking, wheeling and cycling.

World-class active travel network

- We will adopt inclusive design principles to make the region's active travel infrastructure safer and more accessible for everyone.
- Our Active travel network will have safe, continuous, direct routes for walking, wheeling and cycling in towns and cities. Cyclists will be physically separated from volume motor traffic and pedestrians (except where no alternatives exist) to serve the places that people want to go.
- We will adopt LTN 1/20 (and later) design standards across the region.
- We will continue to receive training on cycle infrastructure design guidance to help empower and enable highways authorities to deliver safe, inclusive and good quality cycle infrastructure.
- We will work with and support Sustrans to improve the National Cycle Network (NCN).
- We will support highway authorities to undertake robust maintenance of the network.
- We will work to increase cycle parking and storage ensuring that it goes where it is needed.

Greater integration

- We will work to integrate walking, wheeling and cycling with public transport such as improving active travel access and infrastructure to and from stations and interchanges.
- We will work with Local Authorities, Nexus and the region's transport operators to make sure public transport works better with active travel.
- We will work with Local Authorities, Nexus and the region's transport operators to make it easier to carry bikes on public transport services.
- We will work with Local Authorities, Nexus and the region's transport operators to improve real-time passenger information and to support active travel route finding.

Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle

- We will promote and support inclusive and culturally aware initiatives to ensure that adults and children can be trained how to ride and maintain a cycle safely.
- We will work with schools and other education providers to encourage active travel patterns from an early age (primary and secondary, and further education) and enable family support to continue.

Improving access to equipment

- We will work with partners to consider introducing and then expanding an affordable cycle hire scheme in the North East, including the hire of e-cycles.
- We will work with local authorities and Nexus, to develop secure cycle parking, also including accessible cycles in cities, towns, and neighbourhoods across the region.
- We will support and promote cycling for the carriage of freight, to reduce unnecessary motorised freight and servicing traffic.
- We will support the development of mobility hubs at the heart of communities to improve access to hireable bikes and e-bikes, as well as other types of micromobility.

Partnership working

We will continue to engage with key stakeholders through the North East active travel stakeholder forum to help strengthen our work on active travel at a regional level.

Communities

- We will consult and listen to people who live and work in our region and want to travel actively for more journeys to ensure that their requirements are considered when developing new policies and infrastructure.
- We will also work with accessibility groups to ensure that the needs of people who have disabilities and mobility barriers (visible and hidden), are considered when schemes are being developed.
- We will work with our local authority partners to bid for funding opportunities, enabling the delivery of their Local Cycle and Walking Investment Plans (LCWIPs) and Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs).

Planning

- We will work with our local authority planning partners, public health teams, and design partners to strengthen active travel infrastructure within new developments, reduce car dependency, and improve the quality of existing environments for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- We will support pedestrianisation and the walkability of town and city centres, to encourage more active travel and increase footfall for local amenities and businesses.
- We will support the reduction of street clutter and the provision of rest areas to encourage more accessible and safer neighbourhoods for active travel.

Police and community safety

- We will work with the Police, Local Authorities and Nexus, and transport operators to improve people's safety (including perceptions of safety) to and from stations as well as on public transport services to encourage public transport use as part of an active travel journey.

Public health

- We will work with our partners in local authority public health teams and at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) to encourage and support schemes that enable more walking, wheeling and cycling to improve health and reduce inequalities across the North East.
- We will work with local charities, social care and health services to promote social prescribing of active travel.

Business and employers

- We will work with and support local businesses and employers to enable their employees to commute and make more trips by active travel.
- We will work with employers and business parks to strengthen the promotion of active travel and public transport.

Third sector stakeholders

- We will continue to work with partners including Cycling UK, Sustrans and Living Streets to ensure that there is alignment between the work and activities which they lead on and our delivery projects.

Delivery Plan 2022-2028

Key			
	Active travel friendly places		World-class active travel network
	Greater integration		Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle
	Improving access to equipment		Partnership working

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
DU16	Improvements to the National Cycle Network Route 1 in County Durham (NCN1)	Durham County Council	<p>NCN1 Improvements in Durham – a series of works to improve the quality of the route including upgrading to take into account biodiversity and appearance of a section of National Cycle Network Route 1 which runs between Seaham and Stockton. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seaham to A19 – improvements to this section to include resurfacing and widening. The Moonscape – implement a preferred route to include resurfacing and widening. Pesspool Woods – replace the current boardwalk with a suitable, safe and to standard alternative. Improving the lead into and exit from the woods. Making habitat improvements along the route where appropriate. Removing any barriers along the route which prevent access for all non-motorised users. 	Capital
DU23	A689 Sedgefield to Wynyard active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Upgraded/new off carriageway track connecting Sedgefield and Wynyard growth area.	Capital
DU24	Bishop Auckland to Barnard Castle active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Upgraded/new off carriageway track connecting Bishop Auckland and Barnard Castle.	Capital
DU26	A177 cycling improvements, linking Coxhoe with Net Park	Durham County Council	A177 cycling improvements, linking Coxhoe with Net Park employment site and Sedgefield.	Capital
DU27	Belmont to Newton Hall active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Cycling route improvements via Belmont Viaduct, linking North and east Durham employment sites.	Capital
DU36	Newton Aycliffe active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Delivering the priority phases of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Newton Aycliffe.	Capital
DU37	Three towns active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Willington, Tow Law and Crook and the surrounding area.	Capital
DU38	Horden active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Horden and the surrounding area.	Capital
DU44	Bishop Auckland walking and cycling improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Bishop Auckland and the surrounding area.	Capital
GA03	Small scale cycling improvements (Gateshead)	Gateshead Council	Package of small scale improvements and additions to the cycle network across Gateshead assisting to deliver the Council's Cycling Strategy.	Capital
GA23	Gateshead local cycling and walking investment proposals	Gateshead Council	Under developed cycle route network acting as a deterrent to increased cycle use.	Capital
GA29	Portobello to Washington footbridge access improvements	Gateshead Council	Improve approaches to the bridge on both sides of the A1 to make the route more open and inviting to users, whilst also providing a ramped access for cyclists and street lighting.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
GA32	High Spenn to Greenside cycle route	Gateshead Council	Provision of 3m wide off road shared use path between High Spenn and Greenside alongside Spenn Lane to provide sustainable transport routes in the outer west.	Capital
GA33	Upgrading the National Cycle Network (NCN) routes in Gateshead	Gateshead Council	Upgrading of NCN cycle routes to meet current standards.	Capital
GA47	Derwent cycle route improvements	Gateshead Council	Various cycle improvements linked to housing development in west Gateshead.	Capital
NE06	Cycle City Ambition 3 programme to invest in corridor improvements	Newcastle City Council	Further programme of investment in strategic cycling infrastructure, including the urban core and routes into North Tyneside, Gateshead and Northumberland.	Capital
NE08	Newcastle Urban Core pedestrian and cycling improvements	Newcastle City Council	Investment in pedestrian and cycle upgrades identified in Core Strategy and linked to urban development – Northumberland Street; Camden Street Bridge; Forth Yards.	Capital
NE15	Newcastle Streets for people	Newcastle City Council	Delivery of streets for people/Healthy Metro & bus areas designed to provide filtered permeability.	Capital
NE18	Central Newcastle - walking, cycling and public transport improvements	Newcastle City Council	Investment in public transport, walking and cycling to enable traffic-free and zero carbon central Newcastle.	Capital
NE22	Delivery of local walking and cycling improvements across Newcastle	Newcastle City Council	Investment in top priority LCWIP routes and junctions.	Capital
NX17	Cycle parking and hubs	Nexus	Provide a network of secure cycle lockers that are smart enabled across Metro stations, bus interchanges and rail stations. Also develop a series of secure cycle hubs at public transport interchanges/Metro stations based on development at other areas including West Midlands and Transport for Greater Manchester.	Capital
NT01	Improvements to cycling and walking routes in North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Build new and improved infrastructure to cater for and facilitate increased demand for cycling and encourage modal shift, for travel to work and other journey purposes. This covers routes across the borough: for example purposes these may include e.g. the west-east A191/A186 corridor; north-south A188/A189 corridor; the A193 corridor linking the borough's historic town centres.	Capital
NT13	A191 all user improvements	North Tyneside Council	Improve capacity and cycling and walking provision in the A191 corridor west of the A19.	Capital
NT18	Improving Wallsend town centre public realm delivery and improve accessibility for all users	North Tyneside Council	Public realm, public transport corridor and cycling and walking improvements, e.g. enhanced links to Metro, employment, town centre destinations and Unesco world heritage site.	Capital
NT19	Improving Whitley Bay town centre public realm delivery and improve accessibility for all users	North Tyneside Council	Upgrade of traffic signals equipment throughout town centre; improvements to public transport movements, management of traffic flows, improve cycling and pedestrian facilities and public realm. Improve scope for seasonal road space reallocation schemes. Improve connectivity by sustainable modes to the wider network, including links to the Sea Front Sustainable Route (considered for ATF3). Links to A191 corridor.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
NT20	Local cycle and walking improvements across North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Improvements within town and district centres with reference to the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to deliver a package of improvements for walking and 'last mile' cycling in town centres.	Capital
NT27	Killingworth Moor underpass	North Tyneside Council	Provision of route crossing the A19 to better link strategic housing development into the local transport network.	Capital
NT30	Sustainable access improvements - North West of North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Improvements to public realm and infrastructure for cycling, walking and horse riding to support accessibility as part of the regeneration of the North West of North Tyneside, which currently experiences more limited accessibility.	Capital
NO12a	Walking and cycling upgrades in Alnwick	Northumberland County Council	Improvements to existing and new pedestrian and cycle connections within Alnwick.	Capital
NO12b	Walking and cycling upgrades in Amble	Northumberland County Council	North / South and East / West corridor upgrades for pedestrians and cyclists.	Capital
NO12c	Walking and cycling upgrades in Ashington	Northumberland County Council	Town Centre and suburban improvements to existing active travel routes.	Capital
NO12d	Walking and cycling upgrades in Bedlington	Northumberland County Council	Identified improvements to existing active travel routes including connecting to Bedlington Station.	Capital
NO12e	Walking and cycling upgrades in Berwick Upon Tweed	Northumberland County Council	Targeted improvements from the station to Town Centre and from Tweedmouth to the Town Centre.	Capital
NO12f	Walking and cycling upgrades in Blyth	Northumberland County Council	Continuation of existing investment including improved North / South links and to the Northumberland line stations.	Capital
NO12g	Walking and cycling upgrades in Cramlington	Northumberland County Council	Improvements for all users around the train station, town centre and industrial areas of the town.	Capital
NO12h	Improved links in Haltwhistle	Northumberland County Council	North, South and East-West routes including improved links to schools and the leisure centre.	
NO12i	Better walking and cycling links in Hexham	Northumberland County Council	Focused investment within the town centre including the rail and bus station and on longer distance links including to Acomb and along the A695.	Capital
NO12j	Walking and cycling upgrades in Morpeth	Northumberland County Council	Investment on radial corridors into Morpeth town centre for all users.	Capital
NO12k	Walking and cycling upgrades in Ponteland	Northumberland County Council	Suburban and rural route improvements connecting Ponteland to neighbouring villages and suburbs with upgraded infrastructure.	Capital
NO12l	Focused upgrades on walking and cycling routes in Prudhoe	Northumberland County Council	Improvements on routes south of the Town Centre and East / West along the A695 alignment.	Capital
ST12	Improved cycling links to Tyne Pedestrian Tunnel	South Tyneside Council	Improved connections on both the South and North side of the Tyne Pedestrian Tunnel.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
ST07	Strategic Transport Corridors: All user improvements along strategic corridors in South Tyneside	South Tyneside Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Transport and Cycle Corridor Upgrades as part of a LCWIP upgrade. Upgrades to Traffic Signals / ITS. Upgrades to junctions to improve flow and conditions for pedestrians. A184 Strategic Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements on the A184 from Testo's to White Mare Pool. NCN 14 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements to NCN14 within South Tyneside. A185 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements along the A185 corridor. NCN 1 Route Upgrade Realignment of NCN 1 within South Tyneside along the A183 corridor. A194 Cycling Corridor Cycling improvements along Western approach connecting the Arches/A194 schemes to South Shields. A1300 Cycling Corridor Cycling Improvements along the A1300 Corridor (John Reid Road to the Coast). A184 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements along the A184 from East Boldon to the A1018 junction. South Shields Cycling Improvements South Shields Town Centre Cycling Improvements. 	Capital
U14	Vaux-Stadium Village footbridge	Sunderland City Council	New high level pedestrian footbridge linking the Vaux development site and the City Centre with Stadium Village. Estimates for a bridge at this location will vary widely depending on the required width and quality.	Capital
J29	Improving strategic links between University of Sunderland and Sunderland city centre	Sunderland City Council	Environmental / public realm improvements providing strategic links between Sunderland University and City Centre.	Capital
EX40	Upgrades to Active travel routes to NE rail stations	Transport North East	Improve walking /cycling routes to rail stations.	Capital
TNE19	Delivering the residual Transforming Cities Fund ask	Transport North East	The region made a compelling case for investment in public and sustainable transport demonstrated through our Transforming Cities Fund submission with a very positive BCR from the Business case. We gratefully received a settlement of £198 million. Residual overprogramming of approx £10 million is delivered, therefore TCF Tranche 2 programme is delivered in full.	Capital
TNE27b	Access to active travel equipment scheme	Transport North East	Identifying and supporting the development of access to equipment schemes such as cycle grants or loans / cycle to work or education schemes for those not in full time employment. This includes exploring a Cycle to Work Alliance	Revenue / capital
TNE27c	Active travel ambassadorial programme	Transport North East	Walking and cycling ambassadorial programme implemented and a region wide behavioural change initiative delivered to cement best practice. Through Behaviour Change programmes encourage an active last mile to improve awareness of health benefits. Investing in Wow Walk to School, Modeshift STARS for schools and STARS for workplaces, schools, colleges, communities and neighbourhoods, leisure and tourism.	Revenue
TNE27d	Sponsoring cycle training in schools	Transport North East	Sponsoring Cycle training programmes in schools and available in the community with group rides.	Revenue
TNE27e	Improved mapping and promotion of the Active Travel network	Transport North East	Sponsoring the development of outward facing promotional material, including an interactive map perhaps integrated with an app development and highlighting a network of servicing locations for equipment.	Revenue
TNE27f	Active Travel Evaluation	Transport North East	A common approach to monitoring and evaluating usage on the active travel network, linked to a placed based management approach.	Revenue

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
TNE31	Integrating health and transport planning with active travel prescriptions	Transport North East	A clear action plan around initiatives between the NHS, Public Health Directors and Transport North East around spend to save initiatives to encourage activity.	Revenue
TNE30	Accessibility Audits Fund	Transport North East	Accessibility Audits Fund – A fund to address identify and address maintenance issues achieved via accessibility audits on the existing active travel network.	Capital
TNE47	North East active travel partnership board	Transport North East	The creation of a North East Active Travel Partnership Board will provide a strategic steer on the direction and development of Active Travel in the region.	Revenue
TNE46	Regional bike hire scheme	Transport North East	Integrated as part of the region's sustainable transport network, affordable to help people cycle who aren't able to own/afford a bike. Hubs will be located at strategic points around the region (transport interchanges, employment sites, town and city centres, residential areas).	Capital/ Revenue
TNE44	School Streets	Transport North East	The region wishes to secure development funding to deliver a blueprint for a consistency in approach towards the deployment of school streets. This will provide a palette for the delivery of future deployments. It will additionally develop up a pipeline of interventions and arrive at an initial set of propositions for funding in future Active Travel Rounds. The future costs and benefits have been modelled based on the deployment of 8 schools per annum (based on experience) across the 7 local authority areas.	Capital/ Revenue
TNE53	Three towns active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Lack of active mode infrastructure: Limited infrastructure for active modes in the Three Towns is inhibiting mode choice for residents who wish to travel between Willington, Crook and Tow Law. Current provisions are intermittent, and there is limited access to the NCN, which provides connectivity further afield to places like Bishop Auckland and the City of Durham. Of the three towns, the NCN only passes through Willington. There is also a lack of cycling parking and information boards within the town centres. New and upgraded routes as well as enhanced facilities and wayfinding will help alleviate these issues.	Revenue
TNE45	Tyne Bridge Sustainable Maintenance	Transport North East	An opportunity to design and deliver active travel interventions at pace that will encourage people to choose active travel for their entire journey or part of it building on existing foundations. Initial opportunities that will be developed through this project include; Cycle parking hubs at destinations and at park and ride locations, Bike/e-bike hire, Improved signage in and around the bridge, Cycle way and pavement upgrades to address pinchpoints along the route, improving quality.	Capital
GA57	A694 corridor improvements	Gateshead Council	Changes are needed to several junctions, the bus lane and cycling facilities along this corridor due to housing development in Core Strategy (South Chopwell). A short bus lane already exists but may not be working optimally and cycling infrastructure is lacking.	Capital
GA58	Askew Road West cycleway	Gateshead Council	The main aim of the scheme is to facilitate cycling access to / from Gateshead towards more western residential areas such as Teams, Bensham and Dunston. Cycle provision in this direction at present is on road along the busy Bensham Rd with this scheme connecting to recently completed schemes along the remainder of Askew Road to provide cycle access to the Gateshead Quays area.	Capital
GA59	MetroGreen Intermediate schemes	Gateshead Council	Part of the regeneration of the MetroGreen Area of Change, this scheme proposes additional infrastructure to improve pedestrian and cycle access and improve bus priority in the area. As part of the work on the Area Action Plan a series of mitigation measures has been identified to facilitate more sustainable development.	Capital
TNE27a	North East active travel network	Transport North East	The North East Active Travel Strategy proposes the development of a fully joined-up and region-wide active travel network, linking together existing parts of our active travel networks, parks and greenspaces. This future network will link both urban, suburban, and rural communities where possible, and will be designed to a consistent standard with a strong, identifiable brand. Investments will be targeted to extend benefits of existing schemes and existing spaces.	Capital

Delivery Plan: 2029 – 2035

Key			
	Active travel friendly places		World-class active travel network
	Greater integration		Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle
	Improving access to equipment		Partnership working

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
DU03	Walking and cycling improvements in Durham City Centre	Durham County Council	Package of proposals that seeks to enhance walking, cycling, public transport and driver information on Durham City.	Capital
DU42	LCWIPs (Chester-Le-Street, Barnard Castle, Consett, Peterlee, Seaham, Spennymoor and Shildon)	Durham County Council	Because of the rural nature of the county, upgrading or providing new active mode links to the network enables more people to walk and cycle more often everyday giving better transport options to residents enabling them to travel actively and sustainably for both work and leisure purposes.	Capital
GA04	Gateshead central integrated transport improvements	Gateshead Council	<p>Reconfiguration of road network in and around Gateshead town centre to reduce severance and dominance of road traffic.</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfiguration of Bensham Road roundabout. Removal of flyover and construction of tree lined boulevard. Upgrading of pedestrian, cycle and public transport environment on key link to Tyne Bridge. Urban Core pedestrian improvements. Exemplar neighbourhood footbridge, link between town centre and freight depot site. 	Capital
GA05	Blaydon station to town active travel link	Gateshead Council	Potential active travel improvements at Blaydon rail station. The pedestrian bridge is being replaced connecting the town with the railway station and phase 2 will be onwards over the river.	Capital
GA10	West Tyneside cycle route (bridge over East Coast Mainline)	Gateshead Council	New bridge over East Coast Main Line between Chowdene and Team Valley.	Capital
GA30	Bill Quay pedestrian link to a future Metro Station	Gateshead Council	Pedestrian link from Gullane Close in Bill Quay to proposed Metro Station at Westburn.	Capital
GA46	New Derwent walking and cycle crossing at MetroGreen	Gateshead Council	New crossing of River Derwent at MetroGreen.	Capital
W19	New bridges to remove severance e.g. Blaydon / Newburn, A194M/Follingsby, A1 Coalhouse	Gateshead Council	New bridges over key motorway / A road infrastructure.	Capital
GA53	Coatsworth road improvements	Gateshead Council	Need to improve environment of Coatsworth Road to make it a more attractive centre, particularly for pedestrians and active modes.	Capital
NO16	Recreational cycle network development	Northumberland County Council	Capital investment targeted at improving the walking and cycling networks in Northumberland to support greater opportunities for recreational cycling and accessing the visitor attractions across the county by active modes. We will support families and individuals who want to start to cycle by providing traffic free short circular routes and links to where people want to go including visitor attractions, county parks and other recreational areas. We will support visitors and residents who want to explore our longer distance recreational cycling routes by ensuring where possible they can access them by public transport, the network is safe and trouble-spots or gaps in the network are addressed and we will support those looking for a specialist cycle offer through developing our specialist trails and network of off-road trails.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
NO16	Tyne Valley Active Travel corridor	Northumberland County Council	Proposed Superhighway between Newcastle and Carlisle, likely to be delivered in phases.	Capital
SU10	Improving strategic cycle networks in Sunderland	Sunderland City Council	<p>Sunderland has a strong transport policy (LTP, DfT) imperative and political support for the continued development of a strategic cycle network across the city. The five Regeneration Area Committees/Place Boards have formally supported and endorsed the initiative. The project will be embedded in and strongly support the integrated development of transport for Sunderland, and will be linked to a regional cycle network in accordance with LTP3 policy. Strategic Transport Corridors with frustrated expressed and latent demand and opportunity for modal shift and equitable active access from residential to work service and education trip generators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A19 Corridor • A1018 Corridor • Coalfields • West/East City Centre • North • Washington 	Capital
SU16	Stadium Village – St Peter's Subway	Sunderland City Council	5.5m wide subway below Wearmouth Bridge North Approach linking St Peter's area and Bonnersfield development site with St Peter's Metro Station and Stadium Village.	Capital

Measures of success

This will be achieved by breaking down the barriers, securing funding and addressing the key challenges. We hope to ensure that, if we are successful, over half of all shorter journeys in the North East will be made by active travel by 2035. This is aligned to Active Travel England's national target of increasing the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled from **41%** in 2018/19 to **46%** in 2025, then to **50%** in 2030, then **55%** by 2035.

Headline target

We want to see over half of all short journeys in the North East being made by active travel by 2035.

The opportunity

Shorter journeys currently made by car have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel.

According to the latest (2018/19) regional breakdown of the National Travel Survey (NTS) by distance, **80%** of journeys under 1 mile in the North East were made by active travel. **17%** were made by a car or van. However, for shorter journeys above 1 mile and under 2 miles, only **34%** of these were made by active travel, with cars and vans making up **58%** of journeys of this distance.

For journeys above 2 miles and under 5 miles, only **6%** of trips were made by active travel. **77%** were made by car or van. It is these shorter journeys that are currently made by car that have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel. Many of these trips could be walked, wheeled or cycled, which would help to reduce carbon dioxide emitted from cars, benefit local economies, as well as improve people's physical health (see figure 20 on the following page).

Our Making the Right Travel Choice strategy sets out ways in which unnecessary car journeys can be reduced and asks people to consider switching at least one journey a week to active travel or public transport and for people without access to a car, to continue to travel sustainably.

If we all switch one journey a week to active travel, there would be a significant increase in active travel region wide. Making all cars, public transport and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) zero emission is part of the solution to decarbonising transport, but relying solely on zero emission road vehicles isn't enough. That is why we need to promote and grow active travel.

A lot of the increase in the number of active journeys will likely need to come from reducing the number of unnecessary car journeys. However, realistically, the increase will also be achieved if our region secures the £500 million worth of investment required for better pavements, paths, and cycle routes.

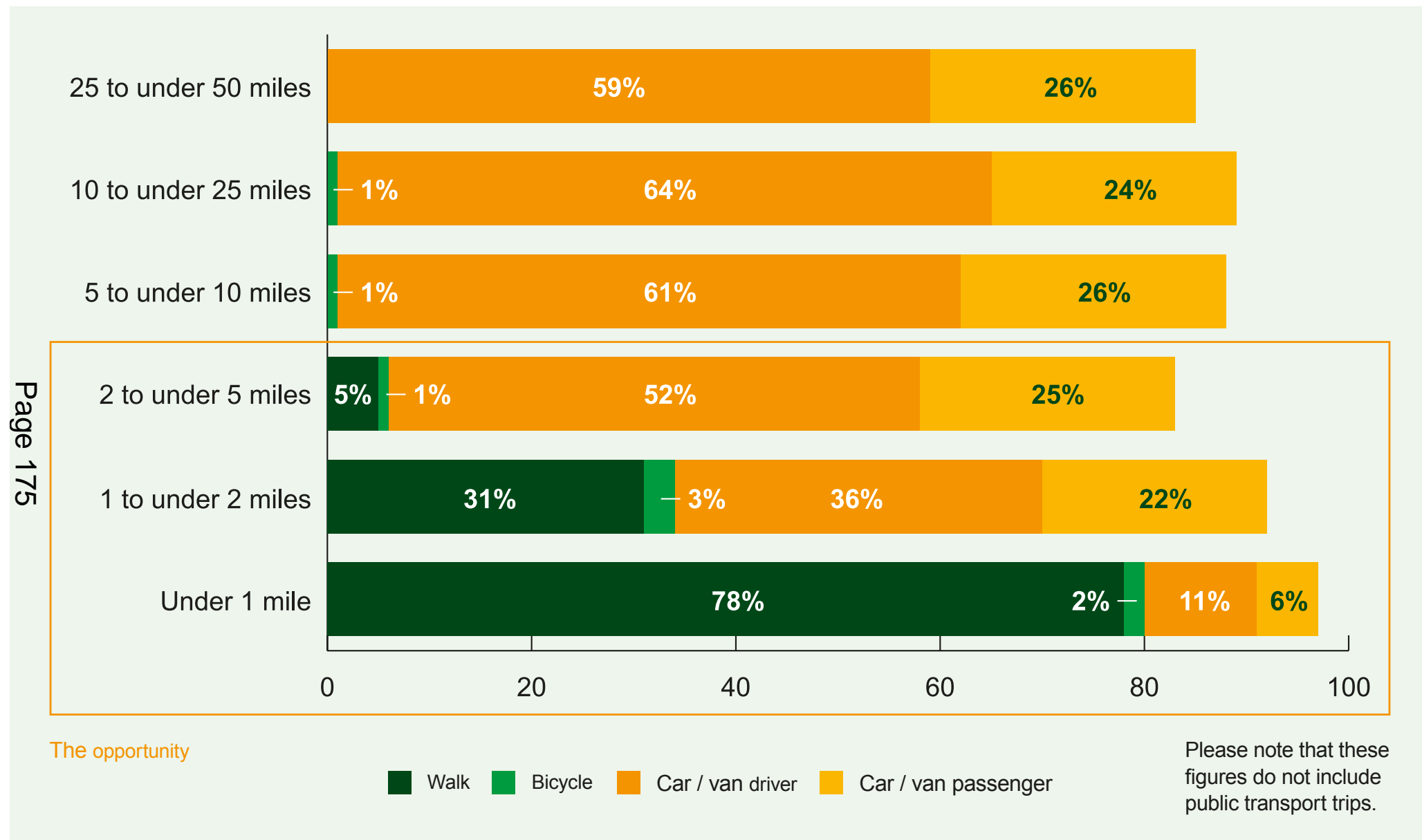


Figure 20: 2018 - 2019 National Travel Survey – North East breakdown

The benefits

Over half of all shorter journeys being made by active travel in the North East by 2035 could result in the following benefits:

- Grow the region's economy by around **£350 million a year**.
- **Reduce carbon emissions**, potentially saving around **80,000 tonnes of CO2** emissions per year.
- Prevent in the region of **1,000** premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels in the population.
- Help more people become active, improving public health outcomes including healthy life expectancy.
- Improve connectedness and cohesion of communities and decreased social isolation.
- Better air quality by reducing pollution from traffic emissions.
- Lower noise levels as congestion is eased on our road network.
- Save petrol and diesel drivers money by reducing car use.



Example journeys

We understand that for everyone, a 'short journey' may mean different things. Greater active travel journeys will not replace or compete with journeys currently made by public transport, but rather complement and feed into the region's public transport system as part of one sustainable network.

Examples of introducing active travel into regular everyday journeys could be choosing to walk to a Metro station or bus interchange instead of driving. Another example could be choosing to walk or cycle to work or school instead of driving or getting dropped off by car. For others, it might be that active travel can make up the whole of an everyday journey. For example, walking to a local shop to pick up essentials like milk or bread instead of driving.

Monitoring and reporting

For the purposes of our target, 'short journeys' refers to trips of less than 5 miles. We propose to monitor success against our vision by looking at different journey lengths, journeys under one mile, from one to two miles, and from two to five miles, in line with Governmental distance classifications. We will be reliant on available National Travel Survey (NTS) data to monitor our progress and understand relevant travel patterns in our region.

Progress will be measured using a North East breakdown of National Travel Survey (NTS) data, which is collected on a calendar year basis and published the following year. Progress will be reported to the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC).

With greater levels of funding and continued development of regional capacity, we could use methods such as regional travel diaries and increased use of counter or sensor technology to give us a greater understanding of active travel in our region and more accurately assess our position against our goals.

When monitoring the Key Performance Indicators, we will also seek to analyse and monitor inequalities in transport and health. Again, we will seek funding to better understand which groups benefit most from any improvements in our active travel network.

Rationale

The target was selected after modelling both the change in journeys to the region if we achieve our goal of switching one car journey a week using National Travel Survey data and applying an overall increase that we would expect to see in active travel rates by 2035 based on available third party modelling.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Successful delivery of this strategy will help achieve the following KPIs as set out in the North East Transport Plan:



Sustainable travel

Increase the % of journeys made by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

(33% in 2019)

Intended direction of travel: **Increase**



Climate action

Reducing transport CO2 emissions per person.

(1.7 tonnes emitted per person annually using transport, 2019)

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving road safety

Reducing numbers killed and seriously injured.

Numbers killed and seriously injured (KSI) three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 778.

In the three-year rolling average from 2018 to 2021 there were 683 KSI.*

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving air quality

Encouraging a switch from car to active travel to improve air quality.

The highest, median, hourly nitrogen dioxide reading was 26.9ug/m3 occurring in the morning traffic peak (2019).

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Motor vehicle traffic

Reduce motor vehicle traffic miles per head.

Estimated vehicle miles per head in our region in 2019 5,077. Without successful interventions and alternatives, motor vehicle mileage per head will grow in our region in the years ahead.

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving road safety

Reducing number of slight injuries.






Number of slight injuries three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 3,275.

The three-year rolling average from 2018 to 2021 was 2,519 slight injuries.*

*It is important to note that lower traffic volumes in 2020 and 2021 are likely to have contributed to the observed reduction in KSIs.

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**

Conclusion

2022 – Barriers to active travel that need to be overcome	Our investments proposed are:	2035
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety and security (including perceptions). Accessibility and maintenance. Affordability. <p>Coordination and integration.</p> <p>Journey times and perceptions of convenience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New and upgraded forms of active travel infrastructure. Access to equipment (cycle and e-cycle hire). Maintenance of the active travel network. Targeted behaviour change initiatives (building on the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy). 	<p>Over half of all shorter journeys are now made by walking, wheeling, or cycling. Active travel is now the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combines with public transport for longer journeys.</p> <p>Our vision</p> <p>“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”. ✓</p>
North East health challenges	Desired outcomes	Our objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 in 4 adults are physically inactive – the highest proportion in England, costing the region’s NHS upwards of £19 million per year. Life expectancy at birth is the lowest of all regions in England for both males (77) and females (81). 70% of adults “18+” are classified as overweight or obese – highest proportion in England. 44% of children are overweight or obese at year 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrianisation and walkability of town and city centre improvements to encourage more active travel and increase footfall for local amenities and businesses. The need to create a regional cycle network with consistent signage and strong recognisable branding. Introduce a regional cycle hire scheme, integrated with the region’s wider transport network, including e-bike hire. Social Prescribing – working in partnership with the region’s NHS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon-neutral transport;  Overcome inequality and grow our economy;  Healthier North East;  Appealing sustainable transport choices;  Safe, secure network. 

Appendix 1

May 2023, North East LA7 area Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) update

County Durham

The County Durham [Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan 2019-2029](#) sets out the Council's commitment to undertake 12 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) by 2024.

The first three LCWIPs (Chester-le-Street, Durham City and Newton Aycliffe) were adopted in October 2021. In 2022, the remaining 9 LCWIPs for Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Consett, Crook, Peterlee, Seaham, Spennymoor, Shildon and Stanley were drafted. 8 of these town LCWIPs are due to go to Cabinet for approval in mid-2023. Barnard Castle will become the first LCWIP Lite town.

Durham County Council is seeking funding to further develop designs and to deliver priority routes. LCWIPs for the 5 mile routes from Durham City and an LCWIP Lite project are in development and are due for completion later this year (2023).

Gateshead

Gateshead Council is in the process of developing an LCWIP for the Borough and it is expected to be completed later this year.

They have updated their previous draft pilot LCWIP and have engaged consultants to expand the coverage to the whole of Gateshead. That work is nearing completion and public consultation is due to start shortly with a view to adopting the Plan later in 2023.

Newcastle City Council

[Newcastle's LCWIP](#) was adopted in June 2021 with implementation subject to funding over coming years. The council is currently aiming to review and update the 2021 plan and its schemes, as well as their priority for delivery going forward.

North Tyneside

The current North Tyneside Cycling Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in March 2018. Public consultation on the updated draft North Tyneside Cycling Strategy, including a proposed borough-wide LCWIP, took place in Autumn 2022. The draft Cycling Strategy, including the LCWIP, is expected to be brought to Cabinet for approval in June 2023.

Northumberland

Northumberland County Council have developed 12 individual LCWIP documents, including an in-depth evidence base and walking and cycling network plans, for each of its 12 main towns; Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Berwick, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Ponteland and Prudhoe.

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in Summer 2023. Active schemes include:

- Ponteland – Callerton
- Hexham – Corbridge
- Bedlington
- Ashington
- Bondicar – South Beach
- Blyth Bebside – town centre
- Energising Blyth – Bridge Street
- Borderland – Haltwhistle

South Tyneside

South Tyneside Council has a published and approved [Borough wide LCWIP that is valid between 2021-2036](#). The plan has been consulted upon and the Council is now working towards the delivery of new and improved routes over its lifespan. It is still considered a live document and reviews will be undertaken periodically to ensure that it remains relevant to the public and reflects local need.

Sunderland City Council

[Sunderland's LCWIP](#) was open for public consultation for 6 weeks during November 2021. It was Approved by Cabinet in September 2022 and Published November 2022.

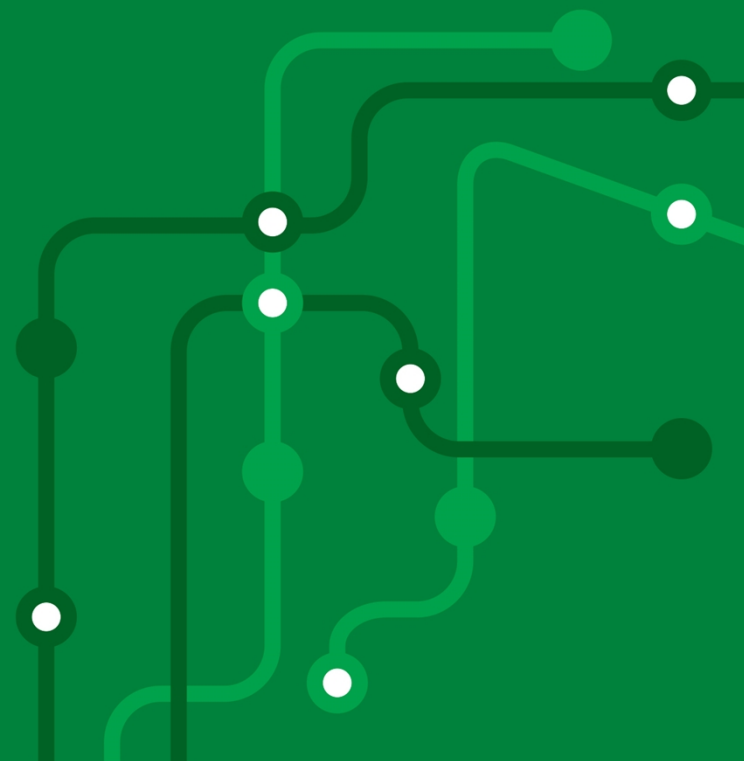
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Transport **North East**

North East Active Travel Strategy – consultation summary report June 2023



Background

The North East Active Travel Strategy aims to encourage more active travel – walking, wheeling and cycling – across the North East and sets out proposals to help people travel actively more often.

Developed on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee, the strategy focuses on measures to help active travel become the natural first choice for short, everyday travel and combine it with public transport for longer journeys. The Strategy aims to achieve over half of all short journeys being made by active travel by 2035. This will be good news for the environment, public health and the economy.

Consultation with the public and stakeholder groups was an important and valued step in developing this strategy. The consultation helped us to shape the final document, ensuring it addressed the needs of our communities, and provided a transparent and open process.

How we told you about the consultation

The Active Travel Strategy consultation ran from 4th January to 5th March. To reach out to as many people and stakeholder groups as possible, a multi-channel approach was used, including:

- Frequent social media posts on the Transport North East media channels, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn;
- Partner communications – working with local authorities to encourage residents and organisations to have their say on the proposals. Local authorities shared messaging on social platforms, across public spaces, libraries where possible and consultation platforms;
- Posters and flyers distributed to local authorities for display in public spaces including libraries;
- Print advertising in regional newspapers;
- Digital advertising through Facebook;
- Media activity;
- Information and an online survey available via www.transportnortheast.gov.uk;
- A dedicated consultation telephone hotline and email address in operation throughout the consultation;
- Four online stakeholder consultation events which included a Q&A session – held on a variety of different days/times, including evenings and weekends;
- A total of nine drop-in public engagement events across all North East local authorities;
- E-mail communication with interested groups;
- Stakeholder forum sessions;
- Individual meetings with stakeholder groups.

An audio version of the strategy was produced and published on the consultation page on the Transport North East (TNE) website. The strategy was also available in alternative formats upon request. The TNE consultation guidelines were followed throughout the consultation process.

Your response

As part of the consultation, we asked the public and stakeholder groups their views on the strategy's:

- Key aims
- Targets
- Commitment statements
- Intervention list

A total of 4,056 pieces of engagement were received as part of the consultation. The majority responded by completing the online surveys, but feedback was also received via email, on social media and by comment card submissions at our in-person engagement events.

To summarise, we received:

Public engagement response:

- 2,863 responses to the online survey;
- 393 comment cards;
- 1 piece of verbal feedback submitted over the phone
- 676 social media comments.

Stakeholder engagement response:

- 43 responses to the survey from organisations;
- 23 stakeholder responses received via email.
- 8 one to one sessions with stakeholder groups

We also received 58 registrations for engagement events which were open to both members of the public and other stakeholders.

Response Themes

Every piece of feedback was read and reviewed by the team, and the below table summarises the main themes from the feedback, along with our response. The table only includes topics that are within the scope of the strategy.

Table 1 – consultation insights from both members of the public and other stakeholders

Response theme	Insights	Response
Overall support for the strategy	<p>The majority of consultation respondents expressed support for the strategy, including the key aim, commitment statements and intervention list.</p> <p>More respondents expressed support for the headline target than did not. For those who disagreed with the headline, this was often divided between those who felt the target was too ambitious and those who felt it was not ambitious enough.</p>	<p>Emphasis on the health, social, environmental and economic benefits of active travel has been retained. Some of the data included in the strategy has been updated to reflect more recent trends.</p> <p>The strategy encourages people to consider switching more short car journeys for active travel where possible and we have given examples of options for travelling</p>

	<p>Some stakeholder groups were particularly positive, welcoming the aims and ambitions of the strategy.</p> <p>Respondents expressed support for the target but felt that half of short journeys actively travelled was the easier figure to understand compared to a 45% increase.</p>	<p>sustainably by referencing how active travel could fit into everyday journeys.</p> <p>Throughout the strategy we have prioritised the target of half of short journeys actively travelled. We have switched emphasis away from the 45% increase figure in the target and instead are referring to 'over half of short journeys actively travelled' instead. It has been made clearer that the 45% uplift figure is contextual so that readers can understand the scale of our ambition.</p>
Accessibility and connectivity	<p>People highlighted general problems in accessing or utilising high quality segregated active travel infrastructure and accessing equipment on the grounds of cost. It also included issues for some people combining active travel with public transport for longer journeys. They understood these as key barriers to active travel.</p> <p>Those living rurally raised particular barriers in addition to those raised in Chapter 4, such as the distances they need to travel to amenities, higher speeds on roads, and public transport connectivity for longer journeys.</p> <p>The need for endpoint facilities such as showers or lockers and safe places to store cycles came through strongly.</p> <p>Stakeholder groups suggested places to rest alongside walking routes and public toilet facilities as key to supporting active travel, as well as ensuring that routes are well maintained to avoid trips and falls.</p>	<p>We understand that for some people (e.g., people with limited mobility) and places (e.g., rural areas) active travel may not always be the appropriate travel choice. This strategy focusses on short journeys that could realistically be taken by active travel.</p> <p>The commitment to active travel friendly places has been strengthened in the 'Where do we want to be?' chapter, with a greater focus on improving the user experience of streets for those walking, wheeling or cycling.</p> <p>A greater emphasis on maintenance and management of existing infrastructure has been included in the strategy.</p> <p>The commitment statements now include a commitment to support secure cycle parking at mobility hubs, interchanges, and in city, town and neighbourhood centres.</p> <p>In chapter 4 there is strengthened reference to</p>

	<p>Some respondents also highlighted external issues such as the weather or hills where they lived as key barriers for them, especially if they mentioned having limited mobility.</p>	<p>perceptions of danger from road vehicles as a key barrier for people cycling. There is also added detail to the risk of falls on poorly maintained paths and more detail about the challenges of street clutter such as overhanging vegetation and tree roots, particularly for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Inclusivity was built into the strategy from the planning phase, and the consultation helped to reinforce messaging in the strategy around accessibility, ensuring this remained at the forefront of sustainable travel schemes and interventions that were evolving as part of the strategy.</p> <p>We have included stronger emphasis on cycle and e-bike hire schemes needing to be accessible and affordable in the 'Where do we want to be?' and the 'How do we get there?' chapters.</p>
<p>Opportunity Cost and alternative ways to spend public funding</p>	<p>Some people told us that they felt funding allocated to active travel could be better used for improving public transport or on health care during a cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Others had concerns about the allocation of space between cars and those actively travelling.</p>	<p>We acknowledge that the cost of living crisis is having a significant impact for people in our region. We expect that increasing active travel will have a positive impact on individuals and the economy, but wider societal policies are needed to address the cost of living crisis which is outside the scope of a transport strategy.</p> <p>The strategy includes a list of proposed schemes that are not currently funded. All proposals would need to meet bid criteria before being assessed for value for money and benefit to the public when funding allocation decisions are made.</p>

		<p>We have strengthened the commitment to active travel friendly places. We are committed to improving the experience of all users of the region's transport network, particularly for those walking, wheeling or cycling.</p>
Partnership Working	<p>There was a strong agreement that the strategy needs to work closely with a range of other sectors and stakeholders to achieve the strategy's aims. For example, stakeholders suggested working with bodies such as highway authorities, Nexus, public health, employers, community groups, police forces and educational institutions.</p> <p>Also, stakeholder groups highlighted the importance of the tourism sector as an important partnership opportunity to promote active travel.</p>	<p>Strengthened reference to encouraging and working with community groups, tourism sector, and community safety in key commitments.</p> <p>A commitment to work in partnership with the police to support a safe active travel network has been included in the strategy.</p>
General Feedback	<p>Some other general issues were highlighted during the consultation process.</p> <p>For example, some felt that the strategy contained too much transport planning specific language and others mentioned that they understood the term 'walking' to be an organised activity rather than an everyday travel option. This was also the case for 'cycling' with some feeling this was a sporting activity that needed specific equipment and clothing rather than an everyday means of getting around.</p> <p>We also heard from stakeholders that it would be helpful to include more best practice examples and case studies of interventions/ schemes that have worked well from across our region.</p>	<p>We have reviewed the strategy document and where language or terminology was not clear or user friendly, amendments were made to the text. We also strengthened definitions and offered examples of walking to clarify that this primarily referred to everyday walking.</p> <p>We added further best practice examples from stakeholders in our region and from elsewhere that will help us work towards our target. For example, in the 'Where do we want to be?' chapter we have added an example of community groups supporting people to travel actively</p> <p>The relationships between central government, Transport North East and local authorities were also clarified</p>

		<p>and information on the region's December 2022 devolution deal and what the deal means for active travel has now been included in the introduction. We have provided Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for our seven Local Authorities as of May 2023.</p> <p>We have referred to potential plans and forthcoming policy documents from central government such as Manual for Streets 3 to make sure street design and expected substantial housing growth is supported by good public and sustainable transport.</p> <p>We have offered greater focus on everyday travel journeys for walking and cycling and strengthened examples of everyday short journeys travelled actively.</p>
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Following endorsement from the North East Joint Transport Committee, the strategy will be published on the Transport North East website www.transportnortheast.gov.uk. The strategy will be used to help shape the future of active travel in the region, allowing us to make a strategic case for investment in our active travel network.

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20 June 2023

Subject: Transport Plan Progress Report

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress made across a number of Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

The government's national £2 bus fare capping scheme across England has been extended until October 2023, after which the fare cap will rise to £2.50 until November 2024.

Additional bus recovery support of £300m was also announced nationally but marks a significant cut in the level of funding available for operators and local transport authorities. Areas – including the North East - already in receipt of significant Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) revenue funding will not receive any of this new funding.

The region has begun to launch new products using BSIP funding including a new £1 single bus fare for those 21 and under covering every journey across Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and Durham. This initiative was approved by the JTC earlier this year.

The region has successfully secured £17.7m from the fourth round of the Active Travel Fund to invest in eight new Active Travel schemes.

The region's campaign to re-open the Leamside Line continues to gather pace. A new Leamside Line All Party Parliamentary Group launched in Westminster on 10 May, co-chaired by Sharon Hodgson MP and Paul Howell MP. In addition, a high-profile business event was held which further highlighted growing support for the region's rail ambitions with speakers from Transport North East, The Northern Powerhouse Partnership and North East Chamber of Commerce.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has now formally fed back on the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the Washington Metro Loop. Whilst the initial feedback from the DfT is positive and commits to continuing to work with the region on the proposal, it does not offer any funding commitment either to the development of the business case, or to the construction of the scheme itself. Engagement with the government over this issue will continue.

Three trains out of the new Metro fleet have been delivered to the region with a further two deliveries scheduled for this summer. In May, a new Stadler Metro train successfully completed its first test run on the network as part of the detailed preparations to get it ready for entering service at the end of the year.

The government has announced that it will not exercise its option to extend the current arrangements for the TransPennine Express ('TPE') National Rail Contract. DfT will appoint its Operator of Last Resort to take over delivery of passenger services on the TPE network from 28 May 2023.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The North East Transport Plan sets out a vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' through the delivery of transport improvements under seven policy areas. Recent developments in the transport field are discussed below, organised by policy area.

2. Public transport, travelling by bus, Metro, ferry and on demand public transport

2.1 Bus travel

Enhanced Bus Partnership (EP) £1 fare initiative - Following the confirmation of £118m of Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding, and the making of the EP, the Bus Partnership has started delivering improvements to bus services for passengers outlined in our region's BSIP. The first of these saw the introduction of the '21 and under' £1 single fare on 7 May 2023 which allows all young people in the region to travel for £1 on any bus. The offer has also been matched by the Tyne and Wear Metro and was launched alongside an extensive youth marketing campaign.

The remaining BSIP fares products which cover multi-modal, multi-operator young person and adult day fares will be introduced later in the year. Other interventions which will be delivered early in the BSIP include:

- Extending the provision of a free annual multi-modal season ticket to care-experienced people up to the age of 25 over the whole region following a successful trial in Newcastle and Gateshead.
- Work is already underway on a new region wide journey planning website for public transport.
- Producing a programme level Full Business Case for the bus priority measures on the busiest bus corridors in the region. In advance of these long-term infrastructure investments, the partnership is working together with

partners to investigate mitigations which can be put in place to avoid disruption during the forthcoming Tyne Bridge restoration works.

National Bus Funding – Unfortunately, it has been confirmed to us by the DfT that Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) funding will end as of 30 June 2023 and the North East will not receive any ‘BSIP+’ funding, which is primarily allocated to areas that did not receive BSIP funding. Additional funding has been made available to operators in the form of a reformed Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), known as BSOG+, final allocations have not been announced but it is assumed this will be substantially less than BRG funding. This is likely to mean that funding that had previously been allocated to pay for BSIP revenue schemes will have to be diverted to support bus services which would otherwise have to be cut. This is an unwelcome development and officers are working with DfT and other partners as the situation develops.

£2 Fare Promotion – The national £2 bus fare capping scheme has been extended until 31 October 2023, and then £2.50 until November 2024 in order to help passengers with the cost of living. We welcome this support to help residents during the cost of living crisis to travel sustainably and will continue to promote to residents with partners.

National Bus Strategy: One Year On – In March 2023, the Transport Select Committee shared a report on the impact of the National Bus Strategy, a year after its implementation. Some of the key conclusions drawn include:

- Most participants in the inquiry remained broadly supportive of the National Bus Strategy, however many remained concerned that the original aims of the strategy would not be fulfilled.
- They remain optimistic about the future of buses, but there is still a lot of work to do to get back to where the bus sector was when the Strategy was first promised in 2019.
- The Government should set out clearly how it plans to evaluate the success of the Strategy across its various stands, including indicative timescales for the scoping, consultation and publication of future iterations of the Strategy.

2.2 Metro

New Metro Fleet – Three of the new Metro fleet units have been delivered to date with a further two deliveries planned for the Summer. In May, the first of the new trains successfully completed its first test run on the Metro network as part of the detailed preparations to get it ready for entering service at the end of the year.

Metro Rail Grant – Nexus was awarded £3m of additional Metro Rail Grant funding for revenue expenditure on the Metro system to 31 March 2023, with the intention

being that this will allow other funding to be carried forward and held in reserves in order to accommodate unbudgeted pressures in 2023/24, specifically in relation to the cost of high voltage power.

3. Connectivity beyond our boundaries

3.1 Transport for the North (TfN)

TfN have commenced 12 weeks of statutory consultation on their new Strategic Transport Plan, running until August. The consultation will be carried out using a range of methods:

- Virtual and face to face events with key groups.
- An online virtual consultation room.
- TfN 'talks' webinars with specific groups and/or on specific STP topics.
- Digital media, including TfN website and social media channels.
- Around three face to face events across the North, including one in Newcastle currently scheduled for 14 July.

3.2 Rail

Washington Metro Loop – The Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the Washington Metro Loop was submitted to DfT earlier this year for review and comment along with letters of support from local stakeholders and local businesses. In their response, DfT praised the SOC saying:

“The Strategic Outline Business Case is well developed, in some areas going beyond the level of detail and evidence expected at this stage. It presents a clearly defined and locally led strategic case for development of the Washington Metro Loop”.

In terms of funding, the DfT has said that it is unlikely to be able to commit capital funding for the project in the short to medium term, or development funding for the Outline Business Case (OBC). Despite this, the OBC work is now underway via Nexus to move the project forward in line with regional rail ambitions. DfT has committed to continuing engagement with the region on the project as part of the devolution deal.

Leamside Line campaign - The region's campaign to re-open the Leamside Line continues to gather pace and raise awareness of the strategic case for investment in the line and the unified support regionally on the project.

A new Leamside Line All Party Parliamentary Group launched in Westminster on 10 May, co-chaired by Sharon Hodgson MP and Paul Howell which will amplify local campaign activity on a national scale and TNE is grateful to our region's MPs and Lords for their valued support as part of this new group.

In addition, a high-profile business event was held in partnership with Womble Bond Dickinson and North East Times at the Helix which further highlighted growing support for the region's rail ambitions with speakers from Transport North

East, The Northern Powerhouse Partnership and North East Chamber of Commerce. The event was well-attended by organisations including Nissan, Karbon Homes, Federation of Small Businesses, NewcastleGateshead Initiative, Vantec, Nifco, Siemens Mobility, Port of Tyne, BAM Nuttall Ltd, Arup and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership.

Northumberland Line – During a ministerial visit to the Northumberland Line developments at Newsham station, the entry into service date was announced for summer 2024 for passenger services.

Timetables – The discussions around the Durham coast services have now been resolved and a new semi-fast Durham coast service will be introduced in late summer 2023 but is currently being delayed due to waiting for the completion of the Hartlepool second platform developments.

Rail Performance – The results for Northern have improved in recent periods but there is still increased sickness in the North East resulting in a significant number of cancellations. Both the Durham Coast and Newcastle to Carlisle services are underperforming in all three metrics of:

- Time to 3 (Percentage of recorded station stops arrived at within 3 minutes)
- Time to 15 (Percentage of recorded station stops arrived at within 15 minutes)
- Cancellations.

It was announced on 11 May 2023 that the DfT would not exercise its option to extend the current arrangements for the TransPennine Express ('TPE') National Rail Contract. DfT will appoint its Operator of Last Resort to take over delivery of passenger services on the TPE network from 28 May 2023.

Industrial Relations – Network Rail staff have settled their pay dispute with no further strike dates but services still being impacted by lack of rest day working. ASLEF and RMT members have balloted for strike action and action is being/has been taken on the following days respectively: Friday 12 May, Wednesday 31 May, and Saturday 3 June; 13 May for TOC staff at 14 companies.

4. Making the right travel choice

- 5.1 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Capability and Capital Fund – The region has been awarded an indicative allocation of up to £15,829,000 capital and £1,137,340 capability funding under the LEVI Fund to support chargepoint delivery primarily focused on low power EV solutions for residents without residential parking. This funding will be available across the next two financial years, between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Proposals are being developed working with the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles to support the uptake in EV deployment for those who would otherwise struggle to access the market.

- 5.2 Active Travel – The region has successfully secured £17.7m from the fourth round of the Active Travel Fund to invest in the region’s walking, wheeling and cycling network to deliver eight schemes in the North East.

The multi-million-pound funding boost will create new and enhanced cycling and walking infrastructure. The investment into the Go Smarter Go Active spring and summer campaign continues with events and training activities being planned across the region (organised by local authorities) and scheme and strategy development funding provided. This is funded through the Active Travel Capability Fund.

6. Private transport: travelling by car and using road infrastructure

The Chair of the JTC has written to the Secretary of State for Transport calling for early progress on investment in improvements at Moor Farm and Seaton Burn junctions on the A19. Addressing issues at these junctions has been identified as crucial to improving connectivity and unlocking development sites.

The letter has also been signed by the North Tyne Mayor, the Elected Mayor for North Tyneside and the leader of Northumberland County Council and we await a response.

7. Transport Usage Trends

- 7.1 Across the region, public transport passenger numbers were high throughout the month of April, with bus at 96% of their 2022 levels and Metro at 105%. Overall, weekday traffic speeds between 17:00 – 18:00 were slower in April compared to April 2022. Daily cycling rates were up around 26% at the Millennium Bridge compared to March rates.

8. Reasons for the Proposals

- 8.1 This report is for information purposes.

9. Alternative Options Available

- 9.1 Not applicable to this report.

10. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 10.1 Next steps are set out under the respective items, where applicable.

11. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 11.1 Successful delivery of the various transport schemes and investment proposals outlined in this document will assist the JTC in delivering its objective to maximise the region’s opportunities and economic potential.

12. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 12.1 The report provides an update and overview of progress against the seven Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving north-east.'
- 12.2 The North East Transport Plan includes proposed / required investment totalling £7 billion to achieve the aims and ambitions of the JTC, the majority of which is dependent on future funding decisions by central government. The financial and other resource implications aligned to the plan were agreed as part of the Transport Budget and Levies 2021/22 report to the JTC on 19 January 2021 and in subsequent reports to augment and amend the budget as appropriate.
- 13. Legal Implications**
- 13.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
- 14. Key Risks**
- 14.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements are in place for each programme of work overseen by the delivery agencies responsible.
- 15. Equality and Diversity**
- 15.1 Successful delivery of schemes to improve public transport, walking and cycling will help to address transport-related social exclusion and create a fairer society.
- 16. Crime and Disorder**
- 16.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications associated with this report.
- 17. Consultation/Engagement**
- 17.1 Many of the schemes and proposals outlined in this report have been, or will be, the subject of engagement with appropriate stakeholders or the wider public.
- 18. Other Impact of the Proposals**
- 18.1 No specific impacts.
- 19. Appendices**
- 19.1 Progress on Key Performance Indicators.
- 20. Background Papers**
- 20.1 None.
- 21. Contact Officers**
- 21.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East
Tobyn.hughes@transportnortheast.org.uk

22. Sign off

- 22.1
 - The Proper Officer for Transport:
 - Head of Paid Service:
 - Monitoring Officer:
 - Chief Finance Officer:

23. Glossary

- 23.1 All abbreviations or acronyms are spelled out in the report.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 20 June 2023

Subject: Bus Service Improvement Plan- Early Investments

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) for a number of items of expenditure aimed at helping to deliver the JTC's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

This includes providing a free-to-use travel pass for care-experienced people across the whole region, an allocation to support the bus network following the ending of the Bus Recovery Grant and the development of a region-wide journey planning website.

These investments are in line with the aspirations set out in the BSIP, have the support of partners following discussion at the Bus Partnership Board, and can be funded following the confirmation of the award of BSIP funding from the government.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- Approve the allocation of up to £650,000 for the bulk purchase of annual region-wide travel passes from Network One Ltd for those aged 18-25 who have left Local Authority care.
- Approve the allocation of £430,000 to Nexus for the development of the region's journey planning and public transport information website.
- Approve the allocation of £12.2m to secure and where possible improve bus services across the region for the financial year 2023/24.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 Funding for the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was confirmed in March 2023 following the establishment of the region's bus Enhanced Partnership (EP) scheme. As part of this announcement an initial £117.8 million has been released and we will continue to work with the Department for Transport (DfT) to unlock the remaining £46.5 million of our indicative funding award. This initial funding breaks down as £76,891,265 revenue and £40,982,321 capital funding.
- 1.2 One initiative set out in the region's BSIP was to offer free travel for young people who have experience in local authority care. This will be an impactful initiative which aims at increasing mobility among young people who often start living independently at 18, 5 years earlier than the UK average. It is intended that providing free travel passes will remove barriers meaning these young people will be able to access more learning, training and work opportunities. A pilot scheme to offer free public transport was introduced by Newcastle and Gateshead Councils for residents of their areas in October 2022, using funding from the NHS's North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board. This has proven successful, with an estimated 1,800 bus journeys and 200 Metro journeys being made every week by the 330 care-experienced individuals who have benefitted from the pilot scheme. Research into the scheme is ongoing but demonstrates many positive impacts of removing barriers to travel. Some testimonials and initial results from this research can be found in Appendix A. JTC members have therefore discussed several times an aspiration to expand this scheme across the region.
- 1.3 Part of the customer experience offer in the region's BSIP set out the need for a new universal local transport app and website for North East England, covering Northumberland, Durham and Tyne and Wear. The app and website will not replace existing operator and local authority websites and apps, but will instead sit alongside them as a unified, central source of information for public transport users in the North East.
- 1.4 The North East BSIP included an ambition to invest in the bus network and expand it. This includes ensuring communities are not left without a service through network cuts, improving services to make them more convenient and introducing new services to connect communities. Service enhancements include increasing frequencies on designated routes identified through the BSIP, in order to encourage greater use of sustainable transport and reduce journey times to amenities such as health facilities, education and employment sites particularly where customers need to interchange, and extending services hours to cater to new customers such as shift workers. Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council already invest substantial amounts on behalf of the JTC to secure 'socially necessary' services where there is no commercial bus route or to extend operating hours to provide links. There are many communities in the region that could benefit from this investment in mobility with 27% of households having no access to a private vehicle, which is the highest in England outside of London. Due to instability of the current network and limited funding, it is possible that protecting existing links will have to be prioritised over enhancements.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The EP is looking to deliver the fare initiative for care-experienced people in the BSIP by purchasing a 'Pop' smart card with an annual Network One season ticket loaded onto it for each individual identified by their respective local authority. The season tickets will be sold by Network One Ltd, the company that administers regional multi-operator ticketing products, to Transport North East at a discount on the normal commercial price, providing a year's free travel across all local public transport for those who are leaving local authority care throughout the region. Costs for this scheme have been projected using 2019 Nexus research which estimated there are 1500 care experienced people aged 18-25 in the region which implies a total cost of £650,000 a year for the scheme. The scheme will be delivered in partnership with Network One, Nexus and bus operators. Following the successful roll out of the pilot scheme, links have been established with social care teams in each local authority to identify eligible young people Pop cards will then be distributed by social care teams with accompanying guidance on how to use the cards.
- 2.2 Nexus has been identified as the most suitable body to deliver a partnership app and website due to their previous experience delivering projects of this scale, and its ability to draw on existing app and web development resource. A technical working group will be established with representatives from relevant partners. The Partnership Marketing Steering group will also provide the customer focused perspective for the project.
- 2.3 Unfortunately, it has been confirmed to us by the DfT that Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) funding will end as of 30 June 2023 and the North East will not receive any additional 'BSIP+' funding, which is primarily allocated to areas that did not receive BSIP funding. Additional funding has been made available to operators in the form of a reformed Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), known as BSOG+, final allocations have not been announced but it is assumed this will be substantially less than BRG funding. TNE and local authority colleagues will continue to liaise with operators as they recalibrate their position without BRG.
- 2.4 It is therefore likely that BSIP investment will have to be used to mitigate the potential reduction in commercial services given the reduction in central government support. At the time of writing the amount that would be needed is unknown and we therefore propose that the funding allocation is still agreed to allow Nexus and the County Councils to respond quickly when needed. It should be noted that the DfT confirmed via email on the 19 May 2023 that BSIP funding can now be used to support existing services, this would need to be confirmed via the DfT's Project Adjustment Request process.
- 2.5 Throughout the BSIP funding period it is intended that interventions such as reduced fares and bus priority infrastructure will boost bus patronage, stabilising the network. This will allow more services to be commercially viable without subsidy which will allow investments in new services and enhancements. This will follow plans proposed by Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council using local expertise, transport modelling software and feedback from residents and bus users.
- 2.6 We have allocated £12.2m to be spent on securing bus services for the financial year 2023/24. While this amount was initially intended to enhance services in line with the original BSIP Guidance, we have now been advised by the DfT that BSIP funding can be used for supporting the existing network in the event of service cuts. We will continue to work with Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council to

determine the level of funding they require to secure existing, and ideally enhance, bus services across the region.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 BSIP funding provides a key opportunity to make impactful investments to improve the North East Bus Service. The North East Bus Enhanced Partnership will deliver these vital improvements all of which focus on achieving our BSIP Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of improving bus ridership, performance, customer satisfaction and environmental performance. Both our public engagement campaign 'The Big Bus Conversation' and our independent market research highlighted to us the need for improved customer information, to achieve our KPIs of boosting passenger satisfaction and ridership. In our market research 75% and 69% of respondents respectively told us the provision of real time information and fares information would encourage them to use the bus more.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendations set out in this report.
- 4.2 Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the recommendations set out in this report.
- 4.3 Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 Care-experienced travel cards – The Pop smart card with an annual Network One season ticket will be bulk purchased and distributed through local authority social care teams.
- 5.2 Website - A full product specification will be finalised and will be presented to the Bus Partnership Board for review and comments. Nexus will also manage the procurement process of a supplier for the project, who will then work with the technical working group once selected. A detailed programme for delivery will be possible following these steps.
- 5.3 Bus services - TNE and local authority partners will continue working together to deliver these investments, this will include developing a procurement strategy to ensure requirements can be met by bus operators given recent bus driver and resource shortages.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 Investing in these schemes will stimulate growth in our bus network, expected to lead to higher ridership and modal share, especially for key demographics such as younger people through use to access work and education. This will have a positive impact on the following BSIP KPIs:

- KPI 2: Modal share of buses to grow by 1 percentage point in 2023/24 from the baseline of 6.4%, and a further 1 percentage point in 2024/25.
- KPI 3: Modal share of bus use for journeys to work and education to grow by 1 percentage point in 2023/24 and a further 1 percentage point in 2024/25.
- KPI 4: Bus patronage to grow by 10% in 2024/25, and then again by a further 10% in 2025/26.
- KPI 5: Bus patronage from people under the age of 22 to grow by 10% in 2023/24 and then by a further 10% in 2024/25.
- KPI 6: Bus boarding at rural bus stops to grow by 10% in 2023/24 and then by a further 10% in 2024/25.
- KPI 7: Overall bus passenger satisfaction to grow from a baseline of 91% to 92% in 2023/24 and to 93% in 2024/25.

Working towards our BSIP KPIs will also help us to deliver the objectives of the North East Transport Plan. In particular, by supporting a green recovery through the provision of an attractive form of sustainable transport.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 These proposals will be fully funded through BSIP funding allocation.
- 7.2 It should be noted that whilst we await confirmation of the full BSIP award, the JTC has been formally provided confirmation of adequate funding to fully cover the cost of these initiatives until the end of March 2025.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 These initiatives are tied into the EP scheme, meaning that not delivering proposals will necessitate variation to the scheme by use of the variation mechanism. The EP itself follows a statutory framework requiring legal notices and formal agreements. The EP is legally binding upon the LTAs, LAs and Bus Operators and specialist legal advice has been sought in support of the development of the EP.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 Care experienced - Cost overrun is a risk to this proposal, this has been mitigated through engagement with Network One who will supply the tickets. The successful delivery of the pilot project also demonstrates the deliverability of the project.
- 9.2 Website - Deliverability is a key risk to this project as building an integrated public transport app and website involves complex technology with the ability to collect a huge amount of data. Drawing upon experience in Nexus, bus operators and local authorities in delivering similar projects will mitigate this risk.
- 9.3 Bus services - Deliverability is a key risk to this proposal as the bus driver shortage and other resourcing challenges may impact on availability of the bus market to provide additional services. To mitigate this bus service tenders will be coordinated across the region allowing as much advanced notice as possible.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 The care-experienced initiative is intended to deliver a positive impact on equality and diversity as it will benefit care experienced young people who are more likely to have low incomes, not be in education, employment, or training (NEET) and experience homelessness. Many local authorities in the UK have passed motions to recognise having experience in local authority care as a protected characteristic.
- 10.2 While everyone will benefit from the increased availability of more attractive bus services, we know that this will have a larger impact on certain groups. From our stakeholder groups we have heard directly about the impact bus services have on users who are less likely to have access to private vehicles, such as those with certain disabilities, those with lower incomes and young people. In our own independent research older residents, those not in education, employment, or training and black and minority ethnic residents were all more than twice as likely to be frequent bus users, when compared to the North East population as a whole. New and enhanced services will give greater freedom to many people to access jobs, education healthcare and social support.

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

- 12.1 These proposals were all included in the BSIP and EP Plan & Scheme. These proposals have also been through the Bus Partnership Board.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 None

14. Appendices

- 14.1 None

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 North East Bus Service Improvement Plan: [TNE-BSIP_FINAL.pdf](#)
(transportnortheast.gov.uk)

Bus Back Better – The National Bus Strategy: [Bus Back Better](#)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Bus Services Act 2017 – Enhanced Partnerships Guidance: [The bus services act 2017: enhanced partnerships](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

JTC Report – Vision for Buses (item 9): [\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 13/07/2021 14:30](#) (northeastca.gov.uk)

Bus Service Improvement Plan outline resourcing form (the content of this document is exempt from publication pursuant to paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

16. Contact Officers

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17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

BSIP – Bus Service Improvement Plan

BSOG – Bus Service Operators Grant

DfT – Department for Transport

EP – Enhanced Partnership

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

LA – Local Authority

LTA – Local Transport Authority

NBS – National Bus Strategy

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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