

# Appendix: Transport East COVID-19 Work Programme

Supporting the region's recovery  
through a strategic partnership

22 July 2020

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## Purpose of this appendix:

To provide details of Transport East partnership work programme on active travel and passenger transport to aid the transport response to the region's COVID-19 recovery

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## Context:

- Local authorities, transport operators and businesses face significant transport challenges as the lockdown restrictions are lifted over the coming months.
- The need for social distancing has reduced the capacity of the public transport network. Alongside this, traffic levels are increasing significantly as the country returns to work, impacting on congestion and air quality in our urban areas.
- To aid safe social distancing, and lock-in the air quality, congestion-reduction and physical activity benefits experienced during lockdown, the Government has **promoted a large-scale reallocation of road space to temporary walking and cycling facilities.**
- The DfT has allocated **£250m** in the short term to local authorities to support temporary measures, alongside a longer-term fund of **£2bn** for walking and cycling improvements. The DfT has also issued **statutory guidance to local authorities**, applicable immediately, to reallocate road space. Some authorities in the Transport East STB region have started to introduce temporary measures.
- The government has also issued guidance for **passenger transport operators** to maintain social distancing measures. This has created **significant challenges** for operators and severely limit services and capacity – impacting on **communities and individuals** who rely on buses and trains. **School transport** will be particularly challenging when schools return in September 2020.
- The emerging findings of the Transport East Carbon Study (KPMG) are demonstrating significant desire amongst local partners for low-carbon transport solutions to support the region out of lockdown and beyond.
- The Transport East partnership has identified three areas of pan-authority collaboration for both active travel and passenger transport: **(i) Communications, (ii) Technical support, (iii) building partnerships beyond the region with DfT, other STBs and national bodies**
- We have established **two COVID-19 sub-groups for Passenger Transport and Active Travel**, to deliver on the three areas.



# Transport East COVID-19 recovery work programme

**Aim:** Develop a partnership approach to tackling COVID-19 recovery challenges across the Transport East region, specifically related to **passenger transport** and **active travel**

## Proposed objectives:

- To support our residents to continue to experience the positive transport-related impacts of lockdown (improved air quality, more physical activity, reduced congestion), and embed positive changes for the long term (aligned to our forthcoming Transport East strategy).
- To help local authorities and partners to tackle shared problems, and share active travel / bus best practice across the region
- To support our businesses and local communities to get back to work and other everyday activities, whilst observing social distancing
- To develop a better long-term relationship between the region, national government and other bodies on active travel / passenger transport, COVID-19 economic recovery and carbon reduction

Theme	Outcomes
a) Communications <i>(slide 6)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Listen and support:</b> Understand the challenges of residents, operators and businesses in the region, and monitor regional levels of active travel and passenger transport usage</li><li>• <b>Promote, lobby and advocate:</b> Promote active travel and support the PT industry to aid COVID-19 recovery, demonstrating joint local authority leadership and collaboration.</li></ul>
b) Technical support <i>(slide 7)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage knowledge sharing amongst local authorities and delivery partners to make the case, plan, deliver and monitor the impacts of projects. Commission joint work where needed to tackle joint challenges</li></ul>
c) Fostering effective partnerships <i>(slide 8)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen relationship between the Transport East members, government and other national partners through collaboration on active travel</li></ul>



## Transport East COVID-19 groups

- Transport East has established two strategic COVID-19 transport working groups for **passenger transport** and **active travel**
- The groups have each developed a work programme, to understand strategic challenges, share knowledge and experience, and develop new proposals for strategic delivery of sustainable transport post COVID-19

### Passenger Transport Group



#### Key challenges

- Passenger transport capacity is significantly reduced under national social distancing guidance
- Transport operators are facing extreme financial difficulties
- School travel will be extremely difficult to deliver in September 2020

#### Aims of the group

- In the **short term**, influence government guidance and policies, and share expertise, to tackle immediate issues
- In the long term, develop **new models** for delivery of passenger transport in 'regions like ours', influencing national partners
- Establish the East as a 'leader' in national thinking on this agenda

#### Membership

Andrew Summers (Transport East)  
Adam Thorp (EELGA)  
Helen Morris (Essex CC)  
Nicki Park (Norfolk CC)  
Howard Davies (South East LEP)

Suzanne Buck /Tracey Vobe (Suffolk CC)  
Davinia Farthing (Southend BC)  
John Pope (Thurrock BC)  
Laura Waters (New Anglia LEP)  
**GROUP HAS MET THREE TIMES**

### Active Travel Group



#### Key challenges

- There is an opportunity to lock-in the benefits of the lockdown arising from increased active travel, capitalising on emergency funding
- We need to maximise synergies with passenger transport and business, minimising conflicts between different modes

#### Aims of the group

- In the **short term**, we need to facilitate delivery of tranche 1 funding, sharing knowledge and capturing impacts and lessons learned
- Other regions secured greater funding than the East. In the **medium term** we need an 'East version' of Active Travel, make the case for it, and ensure we get a greater share of the £2bn tranche 2 funding

#### Membership

Andrew Summers (Transport East)  
Adam Thorp (EELGA)  
Julian Sanchez (Essex CC)  
Mike Auger (Norfolk CC)  
Howard Davies (South East LEP)

Carl Ashton / Sharon Payne (Suffolk CC)  
Ashley Dalton / Neil Hoskins (Southend BC)  
Navtej Tung (Thurrock BC)  
Laura Waters (New Anglia LEP)  
**GROUP HAS MET TWO TIMES**

## (Theme A) Communications:

**Listen and support:** Understand the needs of residents and businesses in the region, and monitor the transport impacts of COVID-19 recovery

**Promote and advocate:** Promote the delivery of active travel within the region to aid COVID-19 recovery, demonstrating joint local authority leadership and collaboration.

### Passenger Transport Group

#### Agreed Actions

Communicate to government on national policies that we want to influence, change or make permanent (e.g. on national school travel guidance). Progress includes:

- ✓ Essex County Council sent letter to Secretary of State to set out issues relating to social distancing guidance
- ✓ Transport East written to Department for Transport and Department for Education on key requirements needed in the next iteration of the school travel guidance
- ✓ Department for Transport invited to Transport East sub-group meetings to ensure lines of communication established

### Active Travel Group

#### Agreed Actions

Understand the ongoing public demand and attitudes to active travel and passenger transport, and support local authorities to make the 'make the case' for active travel and passenger transport. Actions agreed include:

- ✓ Initiate pan-regional work to understand the expectations of the public and businesses for active travel, and develop an evidence hub for 'making the case' for Active Travel with a 'Eastern lens' (e.g. economic impacts on high streets, interchange with PT, tourism, rural areas and other local outcomes).
- ✓ Produce an online hub, and evidence to inform both Transport East strategy and local authority work

## (Theme B) Technical Support:

**Technical support:** Provide support and knowledge sharing facilities to help local authorities and delivery partners to make the case, plan, deliver and monitor the impacts of projects.

### Passenger Transport Group

#### Agreed Actions

Pool the expertise and resources to deliver joint outputs:

- ✓ Hold a practice sharing session on planning bus and active travel initiatives in tandem to reduce conflict and identify synergies (potentially inviting expertise from elsewhere, for example TfL).
- ✓ Develop a study/proposal for the future of Passenger Transport in 'regions like ours'. To focus on the range of issues we face, both in the short term and more strategically into the long term. The product would be an evidence-based set of options and proposals would directly inform local authorities responses and the Transport East Transport Strategy, as well as developing a partnership with DfT to set out options for the future.
- ✓ Take a leading role in co-ordinating with other similar rural / semi-urban regions across England.

### Active Travel Group

#### Agreed Actions

Pool the expertise and resources to deliver joint outputs:

- ✓ Support local authorities with pan-regional activity on shared challenges, including messaging, community co-creation, and active travel planning best practice. Product would be a series of meetings and workshops to support delivery of active travel in our region (in collaboration with Modeshift organisation and experts from within the region and elsewhere).
- ✓ Develop a pan-regional approach to supporting future bids to DfT (including Tranche 2). The product would be a new proposal, working with DfT, to scope out 'our version' of active travel, to achieve the national goals in the context of rural, semi-urban, multi-centred regions such as the East (compared to large urban areas, on which national funding is currently focused)

## (Theme C) Fostering effective partnerships:

**Partnership with government and other national bodies:** Strengthen relationship between the Transport East members, government and other national partners through collaboration on active travel and passenger transport

### a) Partnership collaboration with LEPs and Business Groups

Work with LEPs, Chambers of Commerce and local growth partnerships to ensure Transport East is supporting LEP recovery plans, helping local businesses and employers to get back to work:

- ✓ Understand the collective impact of COVID-19 on the transport industry and operators across the region (e.g. ports, airports, passenger transport, freight and logistics), and the potential role of the Transport East Strategy in supporting these in future
- ✓ Support the development of specific activities, including events for businesses on travel

### b) Partnership collaboration with government

Develop partnership with government to ensure better delivery of active travel and passenger transport in the region.

- ✓ Transport East sub-groups to help act as a single point of contact to communicate regional 'lessons learned' and progress back to DfT and government
- ✓ Transport East to invite DfT to participate in regional events on active travel and PT

### c) Partnership with other English STBs

Share knowledge and lessons across the wider England Sub-National Transport Body network:

- ✓ Transport East to collate activity across the national STB network and feed back to the partnership
- ✓ Transport East to take the lead on rural transport within the national STB network, starting with hosting a national STB workshop on 24<sup>th</sup> July



# Next Steps

Since June 2020, two sub-groups have been formed and identified their work programmes as set out in this document.

The next steps are to:

- Secure input from Transport Forum today on the proposed work programme, and continue to deliver the key actions
- Transport East to present at national STB forum on 24<sup>th</sup> July, leading a work programme on rural transport
- Ensure the core outputs and proposals directly support local authorities, and input into our work programme, including :
  - Transport Strategy
  - Interim Investment and Delivery Plan
  - Communications Plan

If you are interested in becoming a member of one of the sub-groups, please contact: [Adam.Thorp@eelga.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Thorp@eelga.gov.uk) and [Andrew.Summers@Suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Summers@Suffolk.gov.uk)