



Transport East

# Transport Strategy

## Engagement Report Summary



# Introduction

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**Transport East is developing an ambitious Transport Strategy for the East of England, setting out a vision for a future of inclusive and sustainable transport over the next 30 years.**

As the Sub-national Transport Body for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock, Transport East is committed to ongoing engagement with partners, stakeholders and the public so the Transport Strategy reflects local priorities while contributing to national goals on global issues such as climate change and sustainable economic growth.

Since we started developing our Transport Strategy in November 2020, Transport East has been engaging with our partners and the public region-wide to make sure it aligns with regional ambitions and reflects local needs. This report sets out the key findings from a programme of presentations, workshops, one-to-one meetings and an online public engagement questionnaire, and demonstrates how this feedback is helping to shape the future of transport in the East of England.

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# Foreword

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Transport East provides a single voice for our councils, business leaders and partners on our region's transport strategy and strategic transport investment priorities, working in close collaboration with the government and the rest of the UK. Since our formation in March 2018, we have been advocating for additional investment to address our most pressing challenges and more recently started developing an overarching transport strategy.

In autumn 2020 we received funding from the Department for Transport to complete a programme of early engagement with our key stakeholders, partners and people who live and work in the region. Through this process we met over 100 key partners and received feedback from more than 600 residents in the region. This work ran in parallel to the technical evidence building and has allowed the comments made through our many conversations to iteratively shape our thinking.

I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to engage with us. Your thoughtful and constructive feedback has been crucial to developing a Transport Strategy that speaks with one voice for the region.

Andrew Summers, Strategic Director



Stage 1A

# Developing Non-Transport Objectives

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**Presentations to District Leaders  
to Introduce Transport East**

26 & 27 November 2020



## Presentations to District Leaders to Introduce Transport East

In November 2020, Transport East delivered presentations to leaders, cabinet members and senior officers of district councils across the region to introduce Transport East and the approach to developing the Transport Strategy. During these sessions, Transport East shared the vision and draft outcomes of the Strategy, alongside setting out how partners would be engaged with.

Participants were encouraged to provide feedback on the approach taken and initial draft of the non-transport outcomes. They were also asked for thoughts on the direction the Strategy should take from their knowledge of the region.

Transport East held a total of three presentations to ensure maximum engagement from the district councils. A total of 36 district representatives (including officers and members) attended the sessions covering the length and breadth of the region. These took place on:

- Thursday 26 November 2020, 11am – 12.30pm
- Thursday 26 November 2020, 2pm – 3.30pm
- Friday 27 November 2020, 11am – 12.30pm



## You said...

**“The implementation of a regional policy/ strategy focused around electrical charging for vehicles is a priority due to decarbonisation.”**

**“There is a need to future-proof fuel options. Electricity is a feasible option for the short term but there are concerns about the longevity. Hydrogen is an option that must be strongly considered for the future energy mix.”**

**“The ports and energy coast are essential to the East’s development which emphasises the importance of transport links and infrastructure to support them.”**

**“Road building in the region is inevitable, yet the demand has to be managed in a way that limits the environmental impact.”**

**As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1A of the Transport Strategy, including:**

- Liaison with both Highways England and Network Rail on a regular basis has been integrated into the Strategy development to make sure regional transport priorities are understood by both delivery bodies.
- Engagement with the younger generation will be planned as the Strategy develops, as they are imperative in shaping the future of transport in the region.
- Using more sustainable transport methods is paramount for the region, yet it must be balanced with the need for car travel due to its importance for rural connections.
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel patterns in the short term is significant and how people choose to travel in the longer term is uncertain. In developing the Transport Strategy, we have assessed potential long-term changes with different scenarios following COVID-19 to understand which model of transport development would best meet the strategic objectives of the region and to build resilience into the Strategy.



Stage 1B

# Evidence Building

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**The Role of Transport in Economic Growth and Recovery Workshop**

14 & 15 December 2020

**Levelling Up Rural and Coastal Communities Workshop**

14 & 16 December 2020

**Unlocking International Gateways 121s**

Throughout December 2020

**Ports Roundtable**

2 February 2021



## The Role of Transport in Economic Growth and Recovery Workshop

Transport East reviewed how the Transport Strategy could benefit economic recovery in the East of England following the COVID-19 pandemic and longer-term sustainable growth. It sought the opinions of regional experts, including local government officers and business representatives, on the current issues and challenges facing economic growth and recovery in the region, and how the Transport Strategy could help to address them.

Each workshop started with an introduction to the work undertaken to develop the Transport Strategy to date, followed by a more in-depth review of the work to develop the specific topic area. In the second half of the workshops, attendees were separated into smaller breakout groups to share their own views and thoughts on the topic area through a series of focused questions.

Transport East held two workshops to ensure maximum engagement from regional experts. A total of 21 experts from across the region attended the sessions. These took place on:

- Monday 14 December 2020, 1pm – 3pm
- Tuesday 15 December 2020, 9.30am – 11.30am



## You said...

“North to south transport connectivity as well as the link between towns and cities is satisfactory, but local connectivity and east to west transport needs to be improved.”

“There needs to be a balance between delivering short-term recovery, to meet existing demand, and the long-term strategy.”

“More transport connectivity would encourage investment, enhancing business and skilled workforce relocation as well as bolstering the visitor economy.”

“The main challenge posed is the increase in housing demand coincided with a lack of trust in the current transport services.”

“The reliability of existing transport methods is insufficient and can be seen as a burden on local businesses and productivity.”

A key takeaway from the workshop was how minor transformations to the area could significantly bolster the region. Town centres can provide more leisure and outdoor business opportunities if the public realm and pedestrian areas are improved. Moreover, the quality of walking and cycling routes needs to be consistent across the East to encourage active travel and reduce car use for short journeys.

**As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1B of the Transport Strategy, including:**

- Understanding transport’s role in ensuring the success of growing sectors such as manufacturing, engineering, logistics, tourism, and agriculture in the East. The Strategy will outline ways transport can enhance these spatially and thematically.
- Clearly identifying transport as an important facilitator for businesses to operate in an efficient, effective manner.
- Exploring how we can maximise the attractiveness of the region’s sustainable transport options, particularly targeting the younger generation to establish positive travel behaviours early.



## Levelling Up Rural and Coastal Communities Workshop

Much of the population within the region lives in rural and coastal communities. With many of these suffering relative deprivation in comparison to urban dwellers. Transport East examined how transport improvements can assist in 'levelling-up' these areas, while at the same time supporting our region's ambition to become the UK's leading all-energy coast. Transport East sought the opinions of regional experts, including local government officers and representatives from the tourism industry, on the current issues and challenges facing coastal and rural communities within their region, and how the Transport Strategy can support them.

Each workshop started with an introduction to the work undertaken to develop the Transport Strategy to date, followed by a more in-depth review of the work to develop the specific topic area. In the second half of the workshops, attendees were separated into smaller breakout groups to share their own views and thoughts on the topic area through a series of focused questions.

Transport East held two workshops to ensure maximum engagement from regional experts. A total of 11 experts from across the region attended the sessions. These took place on:

- Monday 14 December 2020, 10am – 12pm
- Wednesday 16 December 2020, 1pm – 3pm



## You said...

“The current coastal connectivity is insufficient, so increased effort needs to be placed on improving roads, bridges and ferries as a means of making the East a more attractive location.”

“Rural and coastal communities have a variety of issues and challenges to overcome, which means levelling up needs to address them on an independent basis to generate noticeable improvements.”

“Buses are in desperate need of a revamp to make it an attractive service that reduces social isolation.”

“Bus services have not received any attention in years and have subsequently remained unchanged.”

“Park and ride services are more popular than normal bus services in the East and drastically increase the likelihood of preventing congestion in towns and cities.”

**As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1B of the Transport Strategy, including:**

- The importance of passenger transport as a service, which should be easy, comfortable, affordable, and reliable to attract increasing numbers of people in the years to come.
- Joining services to create a seamless travel experience, no matter who is managing which part of the journey. Investment in multi-modal transport has been outlined as a priority and needs all levels of government and operators to work more closely to maximise the benefits and accelerate delivery.
- The Strategy should pinpoint ways in which the region can shift to more active travel through improving the walking and cycling infrastructure, which could also support the tourism sector.
- Transport and digital connectivity go hand-in-hand. Access to rapid information has the ability to maximise the use of existing transport assets and services and help reduce the need for travel. Investment in ultrafast broadband should be planned alongside transport infrastructure schemes to manage disruption to communities.



## Unlocking International Gateways 121s

In addition to the earlier workshops, Transport East held a series of one-to-one meetings with stakeholders on the topic of ‘unlocking international gateways’. With 13 ports and three airports in the region, the East plays a unique role in supporting international trade for businesses across the UK. The engagement approach differed for this topic due to the difficult operational environment for both ports and airports relating to both the COVID-19 pandemic and the end of the transition period for the UK leaving the European Union.

Representatives of ports, airports and logistics bodies in the East of England were asked to input into the initial phases of this work, particularly around improving regional and global connectivity to drive exports and foreign direct investment.

Through December 2020 to February 2021, Transport East held one-to-one meetings with seven major ports and airports. Each meeting comprised the same questions and resulted in a free flowing discussion on their views.



## You said...

“The pandemic has significantly affected airports, setting growth back at least 3-4 years. However, the long-term picture is still one of growth”

“It is difficult for a customer to change from the current port they use as it requires a whole supporting supply chain and logistics operation to adjust too.”

“Road reliability is crucial to ports’ operations, and investment in the network has not kept pace with the increase in freight movements.”

“The East and South East ports are essential for global deepwater trading due to proximity to large European ports.”

**As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1B of the Transport Strategy, including:**

- There is a significant opportunity for rail freight improvements to reduce the carbon emissions associated with transporting goods.
- The importance of coherence between land use development, port locations and road networks is noted. The successful bids for Freeport East and Thames Freeport will result in growing logistics and distribution services along major road networks across the region.
- The need to articulate support for decarbonising port operations and logistics chains including through financial, policy and regulatory incentives.
- There remains uncertainty around the future fuel technology options for HGVs. Further clarity is needed, with hydrogen and some emerging electric technology viable options.



## Ports Roundtable

Transport East held a Ports Roundtable with senior leaders from port operators, business groups and local authorities with ports within their jurisdiction, to provide valuable insight on the needs of the region's ports to help shape the regional Transport Strategy.

Transport East sought the opinions of regional experts on three key themes:

- **Decarbonisation** – Discussing the need for the Strategy to support the national decarbonisation agenda and progression towards Net Zero
- **Growth trajectories and aspirations** – Outlining the important role of the region's ports for for businesses across the UK
- **Investment priorities** – Identifying the key transport corridors serving each port and the priorities for investment

The workshop was held on Tuesday 2 February 2021 between 9.30am and 11.30am. Representation was spread across the region's ports representatives and included representatives from 11 partner organisations.



## You said...

“Consideration should be given to the impacts of passenger rail on freight rail.”

“There are currently some good schemes being proposed for the region including Lower Thames Crossing, London Resort and the third exit off Canvey Island, however the impact of all of these projects as a collective poses an adverse effect on the region.”

“Capacity on the rail network needs to be increased to lower emissions and ensure trains operate as efficiently as possible.”

“The reduction of emissions is at the forefront of operations and is driving innovations, e.g. an electric shuttle carrier at London Gateway and the nodal hub at Ripple Lane.”

“Accessing skilled employees is also a challenge for ports and logistics operators. Improved and more reliable networks would help this issue.”

“Local communities in the East are often forgotten about in comparison to those living in the North.”

**As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1B of the Transport Strategy, including:**

- Supporting international gateways will be a core theme within the Transport Strategy to reflect the unique role our ports and airports play locally, regionally and nationally in connecting businesses across the UK with global trading partners.
- Help to articulate the case for investment in the transport networks which move goods from our international gateways through the region to distribution and manufacturing centres in the Midlands and North of England.
- Work with the other Sub-national Transport Bodies and Transport for London on unlocking blockers on key corridors beyond our boundaries.
- Align our support for international gateways with the other core themes, especially energising coastal communities and decarbonisation, to maximise the strategic benefits of transport investment to the whole region.



Stage 1C

# Exploring Future Scenarios

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**Transport Outcomes and Future Scenario Workshop**

15, 22 & 27 January 2021

3 February 2021

11 & 12 March 2021

13 April 2021



## Future Scenario Workshop

Transport East held a series of workshops with Transport East's Senior Officer Group (TESOG). The sessions sought feedback from TESOG on how Transport East would develop and test potential future growth, development and digital technology scenarios, enabling an understanding of the impact on the region against the key themes. These scenarios were:

### Spatial Scenarios:

- Centralised Growth
- Dispersed Growth

### Workplace Scenarios:

- Back to Normal
- Remote and Local

	Centralised development	Dispersed development
<b>Remote Working and Local Travel</b>	<p><b>15 Minute Living:</b> High levels of remote working centred around urban lifestyles.</p> <p><b>HIGH DIGITAL</b></p>	<p><b>Local Revival:</b> High levels of remote working with revival of local communities as more workers spend time near their homes.</p> <p><b>HIGH DIGITAL</b></p>
<b>Back to Normal Travel</b>	<p><b>Urban Regions:</b> Cities and towns grow as homes and jobs are centred, allowing for increased public and active travel.</p> <p><b>LOW DIGITAL</b></p>	<p><b>Alternatively Fuelled Future:</b> Smaller towns and specialised employment locations grow, but high levels of commuting requiring a rapid shift to clean fuelled vehicles.</p> <p><b>LOW DIGITAL</b></p>



## You said...

“The approach to scenarios being taken sounds sensible.”

“The dispersed scenario would need more digitalisation and low carbon initiatives.”

“Having a baseline from which to measure is critical.”

“There is a need to understand the commuting patterns as a result of the different scenarios”

“Growth beyond the local plan period is uncertain.”

As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 1C of the Transport Strategy, including:

- A baseline from which projections are taken has been defined as March 2021.
- An agreement has been reached to identify the key 13 urban areas within which half of the resident population of the Eastern region live.
- The purpose of the scenario testing has been agreed to include:
  - Quantifying the link between scale and distribution of economic activity and subsequent patterns of transport demand.
  - Exploring the implications of the Strategy, including assumptions on future growth and trends.



# Online Public Engagement

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## Online public engagement

Transport East published an online public questionnaire to better understand the views of people who live and work across the East of England. The questionnaire was open to those over the age of 16 and ran from Friday 4 December 2020 until Wednesday 20 January 2021, a period totalling 48 days.

The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions and covered the following topic areas:

- The main methods of transport used before and during the COVID-19 pandemic period
- The different types of transport options used for different activities
- How often different types of transport options were used
- How the impact of COVID-19 may change future transport habits.

The questionnaire was publicised via social media channels including Twitter and LinkedIn, a press release shared with local media, and with key stakeholders as part of any meeting or workshops taking place with Transport East. In total there were 611 responses to the questionnaire covering all five local authority areas: Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock.



## Online public engagement

The feedback from the online questionnaire will be used to support Transport East in identifying the region's priorities as well as new transport policies and projects to make the East of England a better place to live, work, learn and visit. Key highlights from the feedback include:



### Pre-COVID Travel Trends:

- The private car was identified as the most used mode of transport with 54 per cent of responses preferring it to alternative methods for a range of activities that were listed.
- Trains were used most frequently for commuting with cycling and walking being linked to leisure activities.
- Consistent low scorers for the preferred mode of transport were bus and community transport options.
- When asked to rate the transport options available where they live, walking and driving facilities were rated as good with cycling and bus services rated as poor.



### COVID Changes:

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 76 per cent of those who completed the survey were less comfortable using buses and trains and 67 per cent were less comfortable getting a taxi or a lift from family/friends.
- As expected with national lockdowns and increased working from home, the frequency of participants who use traditional commuting transport modes has reduced.
- A notable change was the drop in the number of people who use the private car on a daily basis, which has decreased by 27 per cent.
- There has been an increase in walking and a minor increase in cycling for visiting family and essential and leisure activities.





#### Post-COVID predictions and strategic issues:

- Longer-term expectations revealed that 77 per cent of participants do not expect to use public transport more as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 21 per cent of participants believe they will cycle more, 34 per cent believe they will walk more and 32 per cent thought they will use a private car more often.
- Generally participants believe they would expect to make fewer journeys and work from home more frequently in future.



#### Journey choices:

- From a selection of 12 factors most likely to influence a participant when considering the transport options for a commute or most common journey the top three choices were:
  - Reliability
  - Convenience
  - Frequency

The bottom three were:

- Affordability
- Carbon footprint
- Health benefits



#### Wider objectives:

- When asked to consider which of 11 objectives were most important when thinking about the role of transport across the East of England most objectives had support levels above 70 per cent. The objectives which had lower support levels were:
  - Supporting new homes
  - International access
  - Encouraging visitors



Stage 2B

# Ensuring Effective Delivery

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**Better Delivery Workshop**

10 February 2021



## Better Delivery Workshop

Transport East held a Better Delivery workshop with transport operators, business organisations and local businesses within its jurisdiction, to establish a clear and ambitious regional Transport Strategy that focuses on sustainable initiatives and securing long-term investment.

Transport East engaged with its partners and other organisations within the region to further understand their views on four key themes:

- Challenges facing the delivery of regional transport
- Opportunities that can contribute to transport delivery
- The role and impact of new technologies within the industry
- The supporting role of Transport East

The workshop was held on Wednesday 10 February 2021 between 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Representation was spread across the region including representatives from 11 partner organisations.



## You said...

"The energy sector has reduced emissions by 60 per cent in the last two decades by incorporating new technologies into their practices, which is something transport needs to do."

"The pandemic has provided us with a once in a lifetime opportunity to alter the Transport Strategy post COVID-19."

"The speed at which funding becomes available is slow. There needs to be a proactive approach to align councillors and MPs when securing future investment."

"There is an opportunity to develop a programme of decarbonisation for agricultural vehicles."

"The East has the potential to support the development of more bike lanes, with a current lack of quality provision being the main reason for their lack of use."

"Employers should commit to decarbonisation and sustainable transport modes to raise the importance of decarbonisation amongst employees."

As a result of this engagement, the following ideas and feedback helped refine Stage 2B of the Transport Strategy, including:

- The Strategy should recognise the importance of decarbonisation as a fundamental objective underpinned by all the interventions identified throughout.
- The Strategy should identify a multi-modal approach which recognises the diversity of communities across the region and sets an ambitious yet balanced path including reducing the demand for travel, increasing sustainable travel options and greening fuel.
- Transport East needs to involve both public and private organisations to reach the ambition of net zero carbon emissions.
- Engage young people, particularly those between the ages of 10 and 15, as they are the generation that are going to contribute to and be impacted most by the long-term elements of the Transport Strategy.



Stage 3A

# Prioritised Measures

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**District Officer Update**

27 April 2021



## Continued Engagement with Partners

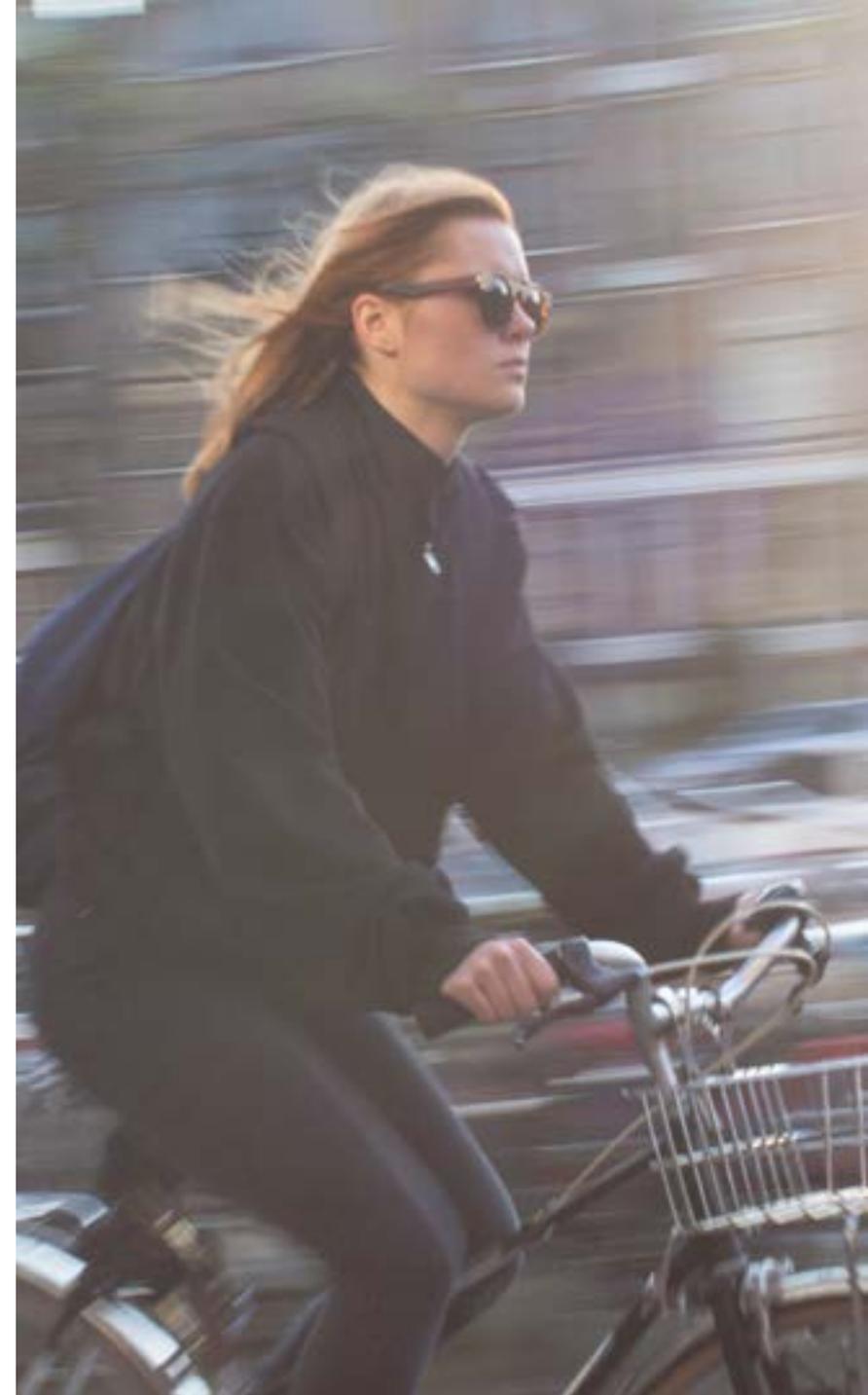
**The engagement outlined in this report reflects a specific programme undertaken to iteratively inform the early stages of the Transport Strategy development work.**

Alongside this activity there are regular meetings with the main partner bodies of Transport East and with the Department for Transport, Highways England and Network Rail. Transport East has also attended and presented to a range of regional meetings, transport taskforces and infrastructure bodies.

As the Transport Strategy develops, we will continue this wide engagement approach to refine our detailed approach. It will then be published for a widely promoted public consultation and reviewed following that feedback before the final Strategy is published.

As our work programme moves into delivering the Strategy, our engagement approach will continue to evolve to keep stakeholders involved in our work. There will be regular opportunities to provide feedback throughout the year, including our annual Transport East Summit.

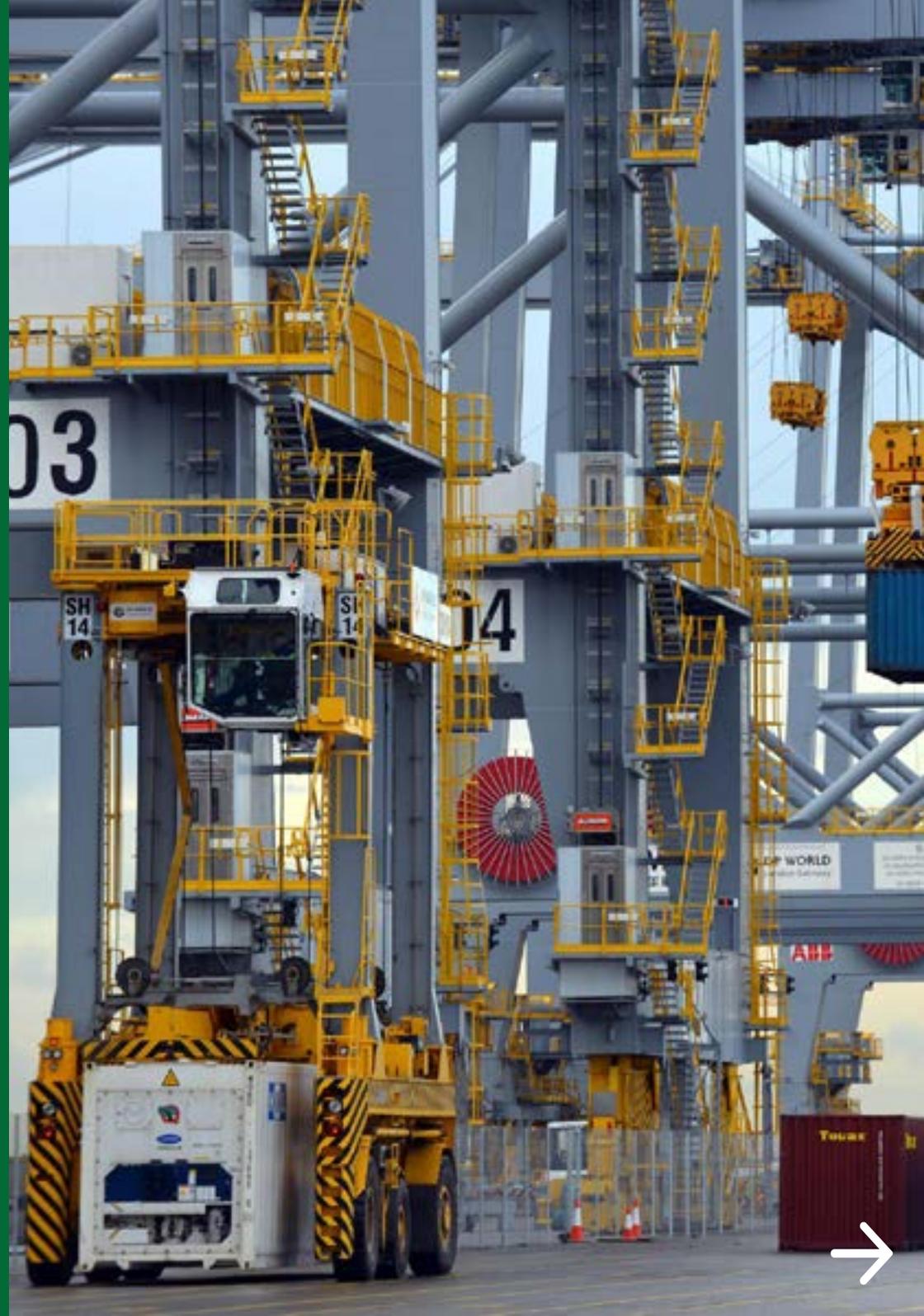
The wider public will be kept updated through our social media feeds, press coverage and are able to sign up for our newsletter via [www.transporteast.org.uk](http://www.transporteast.org.uk)



# Conclusion

As well as generating valuable insights on current transport use and future travel needs, this period of early engagement also served to raise awareness of Transport East and its emerging Transport Strategy. Future consultation will build on this foundation, providing further opportunities for more people to play a part in shaping the Transport Strategy. The volume of feedback received during a relatively short engagement period, which also spanned the Christmas holiday period, indicates a strong level of interest and willingness to engage on transport issues and suggests future opportunities to contribute will be well received.

By highlighting how feedback received has helped to shape the emerging Transport Strategy, Transport East can demonstrate the value of engagement to its partners, stakeholders, and the public, encouraging future involvement. For this reason, the Transport Strategy clearly shows where and how engagement feedback has influenced the priorities identified and how, in turn, these objectives will be used to develop transport policies and projects to make the East of England a better place to live, work, learn and visit.



# Next steps

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To support future engagement with younger people in the region, a school engagement campaign will be delivered before consultation on the Strategy commences.

The primary target group for this activity is those aged 11 to 14 with the aim of building awareness and valued relationships with these young people to encourage further engagement as the Strategy develops.

A full public consultation will take place on the draft Transport Strategy later in 2021.

Please visit our website to keep up to date with the latest news.  
[www.transporeast.org.uk](http://www.transporeast.org.uk)



# Contacts

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