

# Norfolk County Council

## Bus Service Improvement Plan



October 2021



**Norfolk**  
County Council

# Contents

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<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.0 BSIP Delivery Programme</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>	4.1 Introduction	50
1.1 Our approach to delivering bus services	8	4.2 Get People on the Bus: Short Term Measures April 2022 to October 2022	52
1.2 This document	11	4.3 Supporting Lifestyle Choices: Medium Term Measures October 2022 to April 2025	57
<b>2.0 Context: Bus Services in Norfolk</b>	<b>12</b>	4.4 Towards Net Zero for Buses: Longer Term Measures April 2025 to April 2027	66
2.1 Introduction	12	4.5 Contributing to DfT Priorities	68
2.2 A snapshot of Norfolk	12	4.6 Longer Term Transformational Schemes	72
2.3 The Bus Service Network	14	4.7 Summary of Schemes	72
2.4 Bus Service Fares and Ticketing	25	<b>5.0 Delivering the BSIP</b>	<b>74</b>
2.5 Bus Service Infrastructure	28	5.1 Forming an Enhanced Partnership	74
2.6 Bus Service Information	33	5.2 Progress Reporting	75
2.7 Vehicles	35	5.3 Enhanced Partnership Board	75
2.8 What Do Passengers Think?	36	5.4 A Voice for Bus Passengers	75
2.9 Bus Use and Modal Share	40	<b>6.0 Overview Table</b>	<b>76</b>
2.10 Conclusion	41		
<b>3.0 Objectives and Outcomes</b>	<b>44</b>		
3.1 Introduction	44		
3.2 BSIP Objectives	47		
3.3 BSIP Outcomes	48		

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# Executive Summary

Norfolk benefits from a bus network that has developed thanks to close, regular and overwhelmingly positive collaboration between the County Council, bus operators and our communities. Our bus network is far from perfect, but it does cater for many rural and urban bus journeys and is delivered mostly on a commercial basis by our bus operator community.

**The spirit of partnership we have in Norfolk means that we are agile and ready to respond to new initiatives and funding opportunities for buses as they arise. This is evidenced by our successful bid to the Transforming Cities Fund in Norwich and our current work on demand responsive transport and real-time information, amongst others, that draw down external funding. We hope to soon be adding ZEBRA funding to our portfolio of exciting bus initiatives. We will also investigate options to integrate multi-operator bus tickets with opportunities to use car hire and car clubs, bike hire schemes, e-bike schemes and e-scooter schemes to bring a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) concept to Norfolk.**



COVID-19 has had a massive impact on bus use and the continued support of Government to maintain service levels has been a vital lifeline for our communities, as well as our operators. We are seeing signs of lasting recovery now which will restore our network to something akin to its pre-pandemic state during 2022. We anticipate that pre-COVID levels of demand could return no later than 2023.

But there is much more that buses can offer our communities as we recover from COVID.

Whilst our bus network is strong in many areas there are still communities and pockets that have inadequate or no bus services, and services in the evenings, early morning and at weekends, particularly Sunday, are rare in most areas. Furthermore, our communities feel they should have a greater voice to influence the operation of their bus services.

We have a competitive and imaginative range of bus fares and tickets in Norfolk, but we want to take further initiatives to encourage people back onto the bus, both as one-off promotions and through lasting concessionary fares for people under 25 years of age, and by enabling people to use multiple operators and modes for one journey.

We want to remove buses from congestion where it arises in our urban areas in Norfolk, and at isolated pinch points in rural areas. And

we want to manage our road network more effectively so that buses can avoid operational problems such as low-hanging trees and indiscriminate parking.

We want bus passengers to have the best information available to them through a variety of media, in a way that presents the bus network as one entity rather than several separate operator networks. And we want them to have better bus stops, bus stations and interchange points as they travel around the county.

Finally and most crucially, we want to create an environment where the bus plays its full role in our communities' journey to a Carbon Net Zero future. This will be achieved by getting more people on the bus and out of their cars, and by introducing a greener bus fleet.

This plan of action is fully endorsed by all bus operators in Norfolk, as evidenced by the statements of support overleaf. We are seeking £107m from DfT over five years starting April 2022 (including £64m in the first three years), which will be matched by at least £65m of Council and bus operator spending over the same five year period. Funding will be spent in effective and imaginative ways that will deliver the objectives and outcomes of this BSIP, ensuring we have an exemplar Enhanced Partnership in Norfolk that other places can learn from. We can't wait to get started.



# Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council is pleased to support the National Bus Strategy and the work that this will deliver to improve services for bus passengers in Norfolk. We see public transport as a vital service in our rural county, not only for people to get to services but to keep our market towns and urban centres vibrant and accessible, and we understand the important role that public transport plays to alleviate social isolation and help towards peoples' wellbeing.

We welcome the formation of the Enhanced Partnership so that we can work closely with bus operators in Norfolk, bringing improvements to all residents of Norfolk and as a way to assist with the County's roadmap to net zero.

CLlr Andrew Proctor  
Leader of the Council

CLlr Martin Wilby  
Cabinet Member for Highways,  
Infrastructure and Transport

As local bus operators in Norfolk we thoroughly support the measures and schemes that are proposed in this Bus Service Improvement Plan. We want to see passenger numbers grow so that we can continue to invest and improve services in Norfolk and commit to undertaking all that we can to make these aspirations a reality.

It is encouraging to see the support of Members and Officers at Norfolk County Council and believe that together we can further improve outcomes for Norfolk residents.



Steve Wickers  
Managing Director



Charles Sanders  
Managing Director



Managing Director



Jeremy Cooper  
Managing Director



Rob Crawford  
Director



Peter Brown  
Managing Director



**lynx**

**OURHIRE**

Jerry Cushing  
Managing Director

**Felme Executive Travel**

 **Stagecoach**

Managing Director

**Border  
bus**

Managing Director

# 1.0 Introduction

The county of Norfolk has a bus network built on a strong spirit of collaboration between the County Council, our bus operator partners and our public sector funding agencies - including, crucially, the valuable support we get from the Department for Transport (DfT).

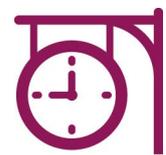
## 1.1 Our approach to delivering bus services

**The main settlements in Norfolk benefit from good bus services operated using modern vehicles equipped with ticketing and real-time location technology, while many of our urban bus stops and interchanges offer a safe and inviting environment with real-time next-bus displays. However in and between the smaller market towns services are more infrequent, buses are older and passengers do not benefit from real-time information and inviting waiting areas.**

In our rural areas, bus services operate between our market towns and intervening settlements, although many rural settlements do not have bus services that meet our well-established minimum standards. When additional funding is available, we actively try to roll out demand responsive transport options to bridge those gaps.

Partnership is at the heart of our work to deliver bus services. All partners have worked tirelessly in recent years to engender a positive and can-do working relationship, an approach that has seen the county's bus passengers benefit from a relatively stable bus network, a stable level of funding (for at least the last 10 years) from the County Council to support socially-necessary bus services and fares initiatives designed to entice people to use the bus more.

Transport Focus has recently published research that demonstrates the things people want from their bus services. The list is set out below, and accurately reflects the things that bus passengers in Norfolk are asking us for:



**Buses running more often**

to be addressed by our new standards of service.



**Buses going to more places**

to also be addressed by our minimum bus service standards.



### **More buses on time/faster journey times**

to be delivered by our bus priority programme, which will build on the investment already happening in Norwich through the Transforming Cities Fund and expanded to address bus delays across the whole county.



### **More effort to tackle anti-social behaviour**

to be delivered by working with operators to improve passengers' perception of safety and security, then enshrining these improvements in our comprehensive all-operator Customer Charter.



### **Accessible buses**

to be delivered by using a fleet of modern vehicles with facilities to cater for passengers with different needs when boarding, alighting and understanding where they are on their journey.



### **Better value for money**

to be delivered by our agreed fares initiatives, which we intend to be just the start of improving the simplicity and integration of bus fares.



### **Better quality information at bus-stops**

to be delivered by our commitment to improving the bus stop environment and set minimum standards for what facilities and information can be expected at all stops.



### **Cleaner buses**

building on the exemplary cleaning regimes implemented during the COVID19 pandemic and now more important to passengers than before.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly led to a massive shift in the level of public sector support for buses in the county, but passengers are now returning to most services and the trajectory suggests that we can be back at 2019 levels of patronage and revenue within the next 18 months.

Building on this partnership, Norfolk County Council has led a collaborative process over the last six months to prepare this Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Founded upon a widely and fully endorsed set of simple objectives and outcomes, this Plan presents an ambitious programme of measures and schemes based around **the theme of ensuring buses play their full part in the county's journey towards a Net Zero transport system.**

Our programme is focussed on three important areas that sit below and contribute to that theme – in the short term, **getting people back on the bus**; over a three year period, **achieve a new minimum standard of service in Norfolk that allows people to base their lives around relying on the bus**; and in the longer term, **upgrading the bus fleet to ensure it is modern and achieves zero or minimal emissions from the tailpipe.**

This BSIP presents a five year plan, which includes the three years for which the initial tranche of DfT funding is available. For the Council to fully commit to all items across the full life of this plan it will require a commitment to longer term funding, especially for recurring items of revenue spend. We are ready to have that conversation with the officials and ministers at DfT; our track record for delivery

of bus services, bus priority infrastructure and our use of technology is second to none and Norfolk is an excellent place to commit to long term funding for public transport.

This Plan has been developed hand in hand with bus operators, who have been involved in every step of its development. We have taken great care to incorporate the views and needs of all operators, listening to smaller operators with modest fleets of vehicles as well as large national-scale operators. Operators have worked well as a collective to share our vision for buses and ready themselves for the formation of an Enhanced Partnership during the early part of 2022.

We have undertaken some customer research and business engagement (September 2021) to understand what makes people use public transport and what prevents them from doing so. We have also worked with our neighbouring authorities to look at cross-border services and how we can join up on implementing certain measures and schemes, for example agreeing a common age for a young person's discounted fare.

The result is a BSIP that identifies the things bus users (and non-users) want, proposing ambitious and practical measures and schemes to address those user requirements. We hope you will agree that the bus community in Norfolk has come together to present an exciting and deliverable BSIP, fully worthy of DfT support.

## 1.2 This document

This Bus Service Improvement Plan has been structured to closely follow the Guidance issued by DfT throughout the last six months and we have taken care to signpost key elements of the Guidance to enhance the accessibility of the document and navigate through its key components. The Plan:

- sets out the context that currently exists in Norfolk in relation to bus services;
- takes that context and develops clear and concise objectives and outcomes;
- proposes an ambitious and highly deliverable programme of measures and schemes to deliver the outcomes, identifying funding streams for each element of the programme; and
- outlines the governance and processes that will be put in place to deliver these measures and schemes once the funding is available, based upon a county-wide Enhanced Partnership that we intend to establish for the start of April 2022 and deliver improvements over the five year lifetime of this BSIP.



# 2.0 Context: Bus Services in Norfolk

This chapter provides a focussed description of the current arrangements for delivering bus services in Norfolk, emphasising the good aspects of our bus network and exploring areas where the network sometimes fails to meet the needs of the travelling public.

## 2.1 Introduction

It examines the bus network itself, the fares and ticketing that are in place and the ways in which highways infrastructure and technology benefit the operation of buses, but sometimes also hamper operations. The role of the County Council as local transport authority, securing socially necessary bus

services and compiling business cases for investing in buses, is also discussed. We finish by explaining, given the above context, what people in Norfolk think about their bus services and how that translates into the use of buses on a daily basis, both before and after the COVID19 pandemic.

## 2.2 A snapshot of Norfolk

Norfolk is a rural county in the east of England covering 2,074 square miles. It borders Lincolnshire to the north-west, Cambridgeshire to the west and south-west and Suffolk to the south. Its northern and eastern boundaries are the North Sea.

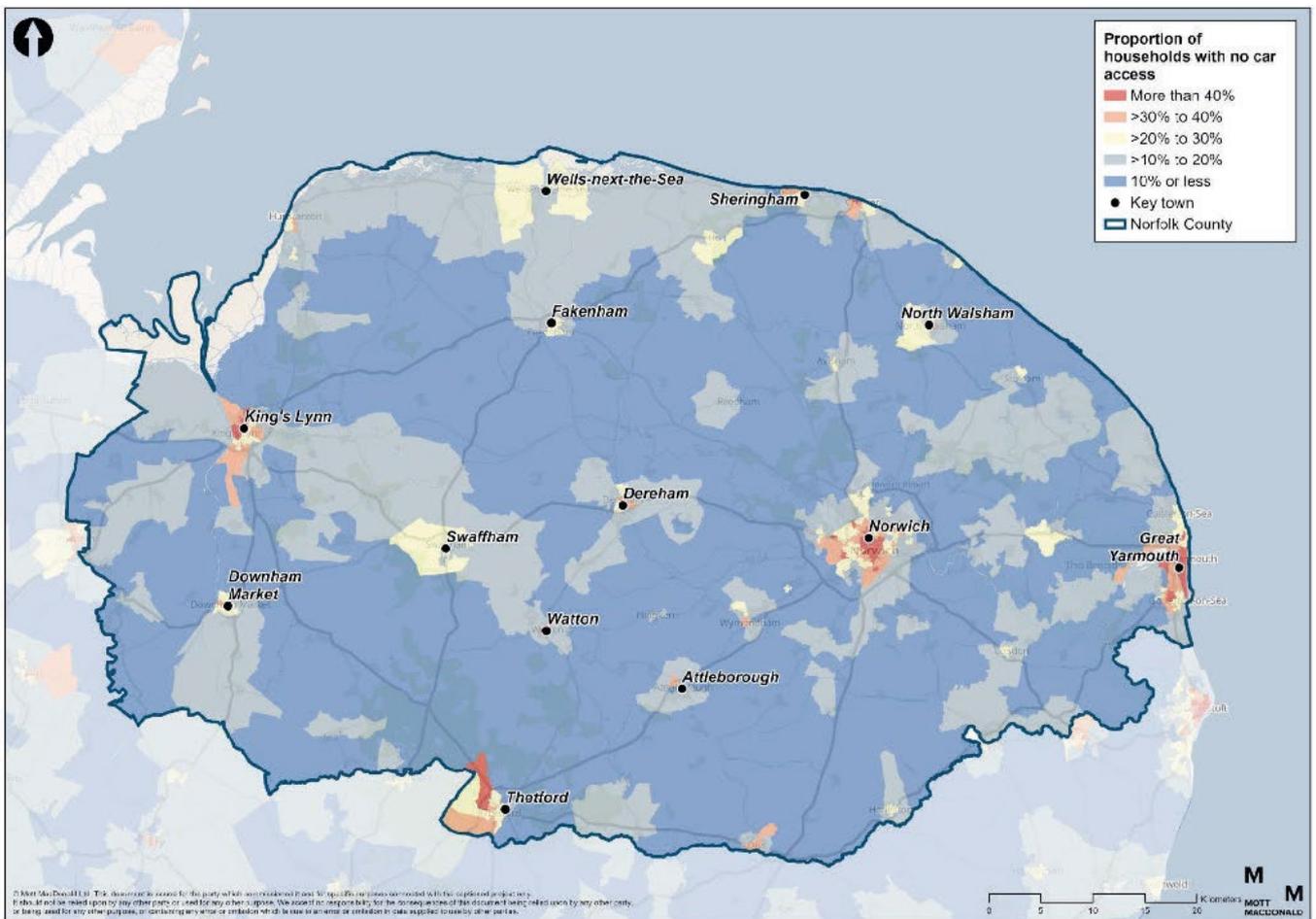
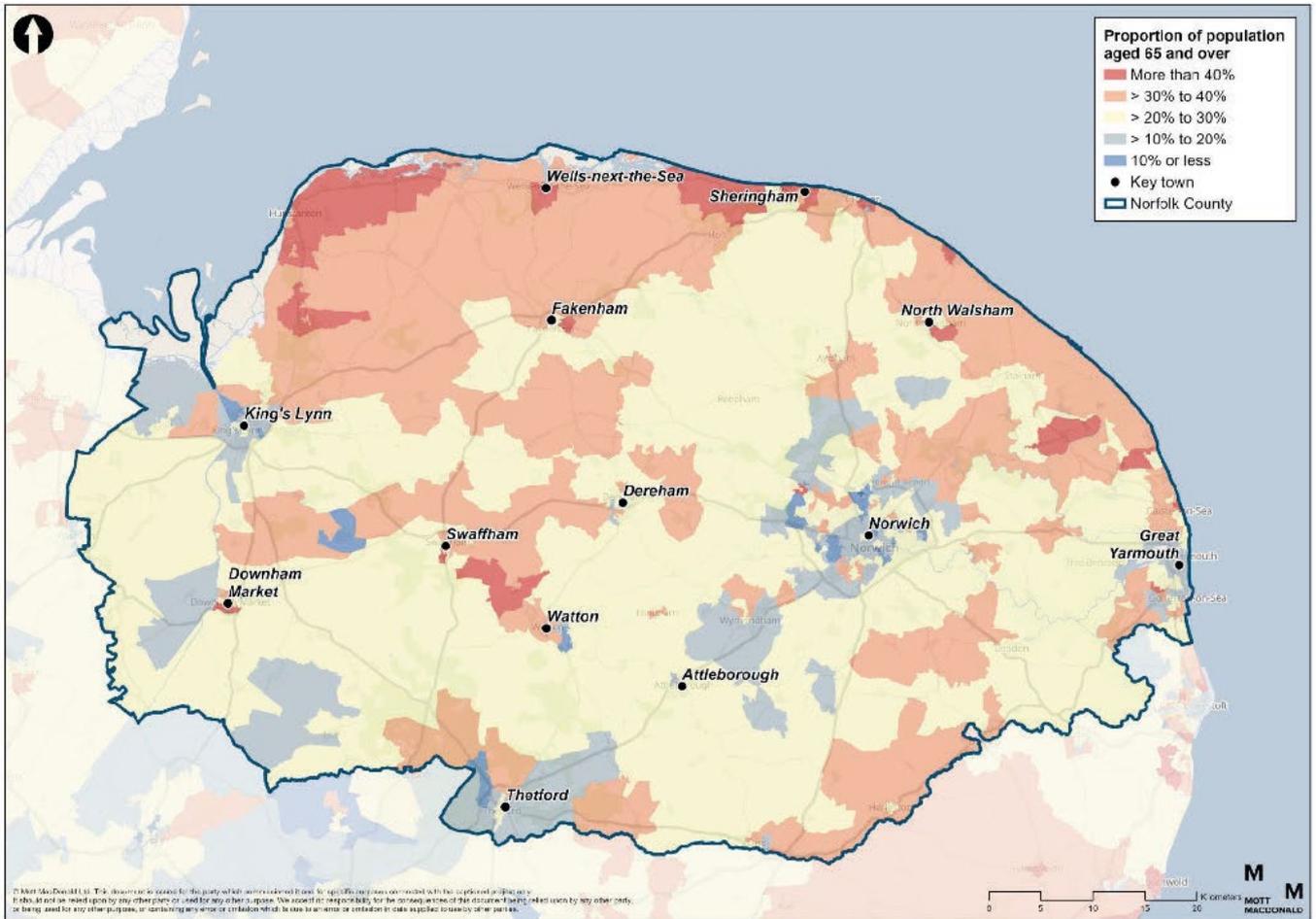
The total population of Norfolk is 915,000, and 34% live in the four built-up areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford, with the remaining 66% living in smaller market towns and rural villages. The population is spread over the whole county - the only real area where there are no homes is Thetford forest. North Norfolk has a particularly high proportion of older people, who retire to the coast (see map below).

Car ownership is high except in the urban areas, reflecting the fact that people do not see public transport as something they can rely on

for all their travelling needs. But we want to change this and make public transport the first choice mode for most journeys, so that the car is used occasionally, not mostly.

Major employers, like Aviva, tend to be in Norwich but other important business sectors across the county include energy (oil, gas and renewables), advanced engineering and manufacturing, and food and farming.

Tourism is very important in Norfolk, adding £3.25bn to the economy in 2017 and supporting some 65,000 jobs (it being the fifth most important employment in the county). There are many seaside resorts including some of Britain's finest beaches, the north Norfolk coast is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the Broads national park (between Norwich and Great Yarmouth) is also a popular tourist destination.



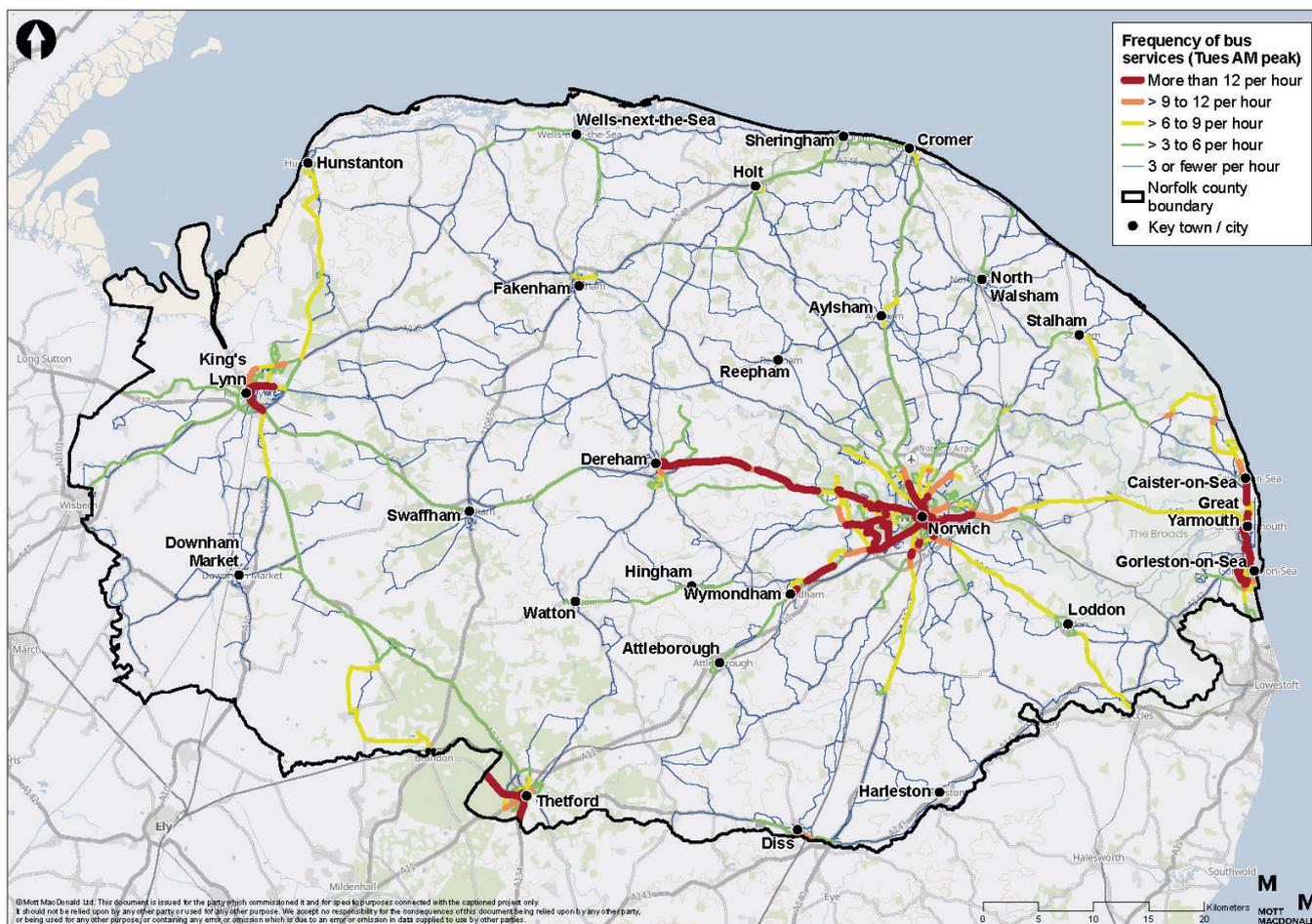
## 2.3 The Bus Service Network

Currently 193 services are run by 15 operators totalling on average 75,200 kms per day. Some 89% of services are operated commercially (67,200 km) and 11% of services are subsidised (8,000 km). We are fortunate to have a strong commercial network in Norfolk that has been stable for many years, thanks to the strong working relationships with our bus operators, and our subsidised services are mainly very rural services or those in the evening and on Sundays.

We have also successfully managed over the years to remove the subsidy from some services as they have grown, thanks to investment and good relationships with

operators, for example the very popular Coastliner and Coasthopper routes along the county's north Norfolk coast. Operator investment in improved services has also seen good passenger growth, for example improved services in Great Yarmouth along the coast led to a 6.1% increase in passenger numbers between 2016 and 2020.

Frequency of these services varies, with the more concentrated frequencies being in and between the urban centres of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and King's Lynn (red and yellow lines on the map below). However frequencies of other services tend to be mostly 3 or fewer per hour (blue lines on the map below).



31% of daytime services operating Monday-Friday are hourly or better, but there are also many services that operate only once a day (14%) and a large number of other services,

not shown in the table, which operate less frequently (typically once a week).

Frequency by Service (every...)	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
10 minutes	1%	-	-
15 minutes	5%	4%	1%
20 minutes	2%	2%	2%
30 minutes	10%	10%	5%
Hour	13%	12%	6%
2 hours	3%	2%	2%
Between 2 hours and three times per day	13%	7%	2%
Three times per day	4%	3%	1%
Twice per day	3%	4%	1%
Once per day	14%	2%	1%



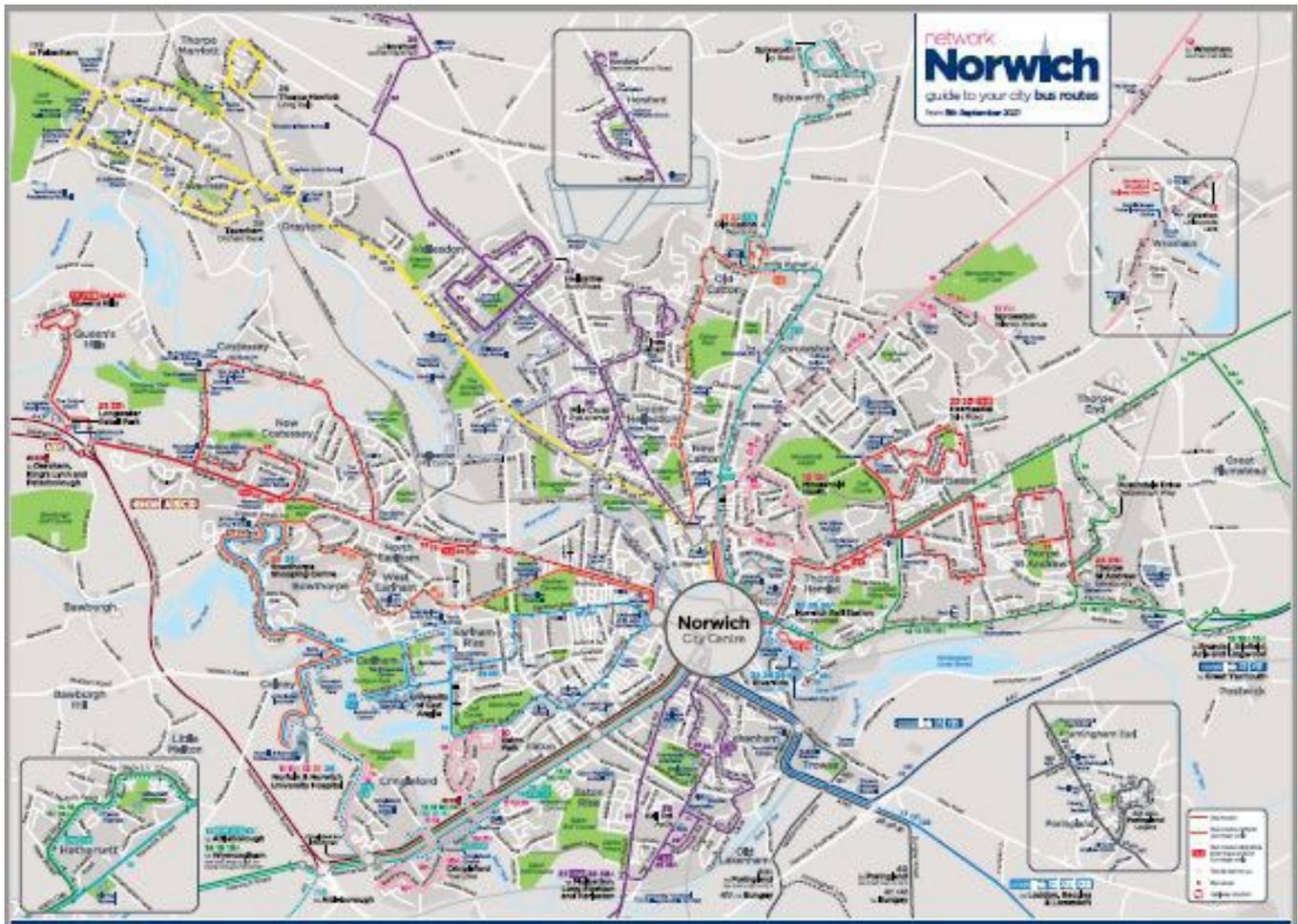
Norfolk's major settlement is the city of Norwich with a population of 200,000 people, 22% of the total population in the

county. Our other key urban centres are Great Yarmouth (population 41,000) and King's Lynn (population 49,000).

## Norwich

First Bus operates the main Norwich network, on a cross-city corridor basis, with corridors extending out to some of the larger market towns and to Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. Within the city centre area, frequencies are generally every 10-20 minutes, providing

links to key employment centres, the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH), the University of East Anglia (UEA), high schools and colleges, and shopping/leisure facilities in the city centre and on the outskirts.



Services in Norwich are supplemented by other operators who come into the city from the nearest market towns and rural areas, these services are principally provided by KonectBus, Sanders Coaches and Simonds.

Norwich also has a Park & Ride network operated commercially by KonectBus. Five sites are provided with dedicated connecting services operating into the city centre Monday-

Saturday. A sixth site, Costessey, sited on the West near Longwater, operates dedicated services to the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) and University of East Anglia (UEA) sites. The Thickthorn Park & Ride site to the south of Norwich, located on the busiest trunk road into Norwich, the A11, also has evening and Sunday services.



## Great Yarmouth

Great Yarmouth is an urban centre on the east coast of Norfolk. Services are predominantly run by First Bus from north to south, linking coastal and rural villages to the town for education, employment, shopping, leisure and to the James Paget Hospital. Inter-urban services also connect Great Yarmouth with key urban centres like Norwich to the west and Lowestoft to the south in Suffolk. First's network of services is shown right.



# King's Lynn

King's Lynn is Norfolk's other urban centre, in the west of the county. Services here are operated by Lynx Bus and WNCT (Ltd), with one service operated by Stagecoach along the A17 corridor from Lincolnshire and the First Bus Excel service running from Norwich, through King's Lynn and out to Peterborough.

There is a frequent service from King's Lynn north along the north Norfolk coast using Lynx's Coastliner service, which is very popular not only for residents but also for the many tourists visiting this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are also good links to Wisbech (in Cambridgeshire), to many of Norfolk's market towns like Fakenham and Downham Market and to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn, and links to Norwich using First's Excel services. The Lynx bus network is shown below:

**Bus times for Gaywood and North Wootton 3 & 5**

travel Green  
travel Safe  
travel GTT

**Go to town**

Address: Unit 7 & 8 Merchants Close, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4JX  
Phone: 01563 776971  
Fax: 01563 776142  
Web: www.gtt-online.co.uk

(or scan the code)

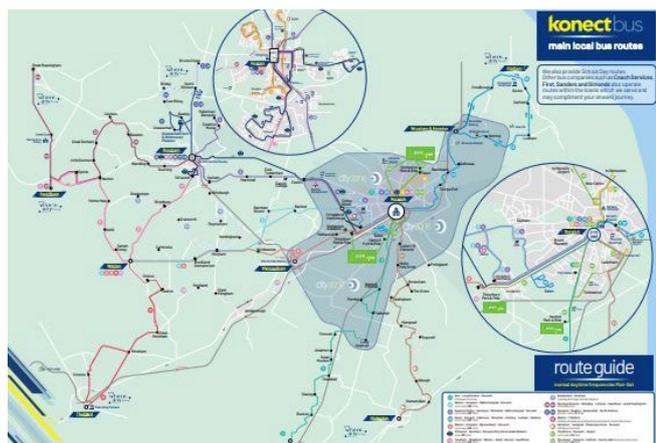
from August 2021

**Go to town**  
The local bus company with the big heart from West Norfolk Community Transport

In addition, Go To Town services are operated around King's Lynn by WNCT Ltd, which provides services from many housing estates to shops and employment in the town centre.



## Other Settlements



Outside the city of Norwich and our urban centres of Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, 68% of the population of Norfolk lives in market towns (typical size 10,000 – 22,000 people) and rural villages and hamlets scattered over Norfolk, some of which have populations of less than 100 people. Conventional fixed-route services link the larger villages with their nearest market town, with service frequencies ranging from two an hour to once a day, so that people can access essential services like GP surgeries and shopping. We still have traditional market days in Norfolk and so some services only run on those days, serving a larger area but only once or twice a week.

Services around the market towns and villages are operated by a range of operators, the biggest of which are Sanders Coaches (services around north Norfolk and into Norwich), KonectBus (offering a range of services over many areas, see map left), Simonds (around south Norfolk and into Norwich) and Coach Services (around Thetford and south Norfolk and into Bury St Edmunds, which is an urban centre in Suffolk).

Where conventional fixed route services are not appropriate for a rural area, we have a network of demand responsive services that link villages to the nearest market town, allowing access to essential services in the town itself and for onward travel to larger centres like Norwich. The most notable of these are our four Flexibus services, which serve the five market towns of Wymondham, Attleborough, Diss, Thetford and Watton from up to 70 surrounding villages.

We are also introducing another DRT scheme in and around the market town of Swaffham following our successful bid to the Rural Mobility Fund in 2020 and see this as a good way to get more people in outlying areas to more places.

In all areas, evening and Sunday services are rare except for a few routes, notably in the urban areas and along the coast from King's Lynn to Mundesley.

## Community and School Services

Norfolk also has a good network of dial-a-ride and community car schemes run by various organisations from large community transport operators like West Norfolk Community Transport and North Norfolk Community Transport to small parish councils using just a few volunteer car drivers. The county-wide volunteer driver scheme, Transport Plus, is run in-house by the County Council, funded jointly with the health service.

All of these services enable people to get around who would not normally be able to do so either because they can't use a conventional bus or because there isn't a service in their area.

School services are incorporated into the local bus network as much as possible, to give residents more travel options but also to help keep the local bus service sustainable and able to operate throughout the day. Typically therefore there will be a bus from

the surrounding villages into the nearest market town to the high school which then runs throughout the day for shopping services

before collecting students at the end of the school day to take them home.

## Bus Operators

There are 15 operators operating registered local bus services in Norfolk. Most are smaller operators with fewer than 50 vehicles and all but three are local businesses – the three that

are part of a larger national company are First Bus, KonectBus (part of the Go Ahead group) and Stagecoach:

Fleet >100 vehicles	Fleet 50-100 vehicles	Fleet 10-49 vehicles	Fleet <10 vehicles
1 operator	2 operators	6 operators	6 operators

First Bus is the largest operator, with the most vehicles and operating the most mileage, followed by Sanders Coaches, KonectBus and Lynx. Four of the six smallest companies only operate tendered services, serving the

most rural areas of Norfolk, one operator only runs one commercial service (with the other services being tendered school runs) and one of the operators only runs school services (one commercial, the rest tendered).

Operator	Area(s)	Commercial	Tendered	Schools
<b>First</b>	Norwich, Great Yarmouth, A47 to King's Lynn	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Sanders</b>	North and East Norfolk, Norwich, north coast	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Konect</b>	Dereham and central Norfolk, Norwich	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Lynx</b>	West Norfolk, coastal route	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Coach Services</b>	Thetford and South Norfolk, into Suffolk	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Simonds</b>	South Norfolk, Norwich, into Suffolk	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>WNCT</b>	West Norfolk and Swaffham	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Stagecoach</b>	West Norfolk, from Lincolnshire	Yes	No	No
<b>BorderBus</b>	South Norfolk, into Norwich, into Suffolk	Yes	No	No
<b>Semmence</b>	South Norfolk	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Our Bus</b>	East Norfolk	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Feline</b>	East Norfolk	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Harrods</b>	West Norfolk	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Peelings</b>	West Norfolk	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Completely Coach Travel</b>	Norwich area	No	Yes	Yes

## The Council's Role

One of Norfolk's key strengths is the good relationship the local authority has with all its local bus operators; a relationship that has been strengthened over many years since the introduction of the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnerships and Plans with all operators. To enact these plans we conduct quarterly all-operator meetings and the individual contact we have on an at least monthly basis helps us to resolve issues, discuss long-term plans and implement network changes to the benefit of residents, the local authority and the operator.

Currently 89% of the network is run commercially in terms of kilometres operated. The remaining 11% is covered by tendered services which are either fixed route or demand responsive services (DRT). Decisions on changes to tendered routes or on introducing new subsidised services tend to be made on the following basis by the transport team as long as the available budget is not exceeded:

- to replace withdrawn commercial services or parts of services
- to increase our target level of service measure (see below)
- if a Parish, Town or District Council or a local Member request a service and have some evidence to back up demand
- to assist children with getting to and from school and college
- at the suggestion of operators where they see an opportunity but couldn't provide on a commercial basis
- when developer funding is available to provide or supplement a service.

Norfolk County Council currently spends £3.2m per annum on tendered services and, despite severe funding cuts for other services, Norfolk's Members have always seen the benefit of our subsidised public transport services and have not made any cuts to this budget for the last 10 years. In addition to this £3.2m we also give grants totalling £500k to community transport operators for dial-a-ride and voluntary car services, which help to supplement the tendered services.

Tendered services are generally procured on a minimum subsidy basis, with only three contracts in place on a minimum cost basis. This we believe incentivises operators to generate fares income using good passenger information and marketing. There is no quality score but instead a minimum standard is stated for the service required.



## Target Levels of Service

In order to measure residents' accessibility to key services we have used for a number of years a measure called Target Level of Service. This classifies each parish by population and

then assigns a minimum level of service to each classification that we aim to deliver in terms of a public transport service, as follows:

<b>BAND</b> <b>Parish Population</b>	<b>A</b> <b>0-300</b>	<b>B</b> <b>300-600</b>	<b>C</b> <b>600-1000</b>	<b>D</b> <b>1000-2000</b>	<b>E</b> <b>2000-5000</b>	<b>F</b> <b>5000+</b>
<b>Health</b>	Y GP	Y GP	Y GP	Y	Y	Y
<b>Shopping x1</b>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Shopping x2</b>		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Shopping x5</b>			Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Journey to work</b>			Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Saturday</b>				Y	Y	Y
<b>Sunday</b>						Y
<b>Evening</b>						Y
<b>Hourly</b>						Y

The criteria for each type of journey is outlined below:

<b>All trips based on max 10-minute walk</b>	
<b>1 x Shopping Trip</b>	1 shopping trip per week to nearest market town or urban centre
<b>2 x Shopping Trip</b>	2 shopping trips per week to nearest market town or urban centre
<b>5 x Shopping Trip</b>	5 shopping trips per week to nearest market town or urban centre
<b>Saturday</b>	any timetabled local bus service to and from Parish
<b>Sunday</b>	any timetabled local bus service to and from Parish
<b>Journey to work</b>	journey to a centre of employment, arriving at approximately 8.30am and leaving at approximately 5.30pm
<b>Evening</b>	any timetabled bus service to an urban centre or market town, leaving after 6.30pm and returning at 9.30pm at the earliest
<b>Journey to Health</b>	daily journey to either Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, James Paget Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital or West Suffolk Hospital within 90 minutes by local bus service, or by Community Car Scheme If Y GP, this means that there is a daily journey to a GP Surgery within 30 minutes by local bus service, or by Community Car Transport scheme, but no suitable journey to hospital Note: Areas covered by Transport Plus only = NO
<b>Frequency at least hourly</b>	bus service to nearest market town or urban centre at least once an hour between 9-5

We then measure the percentage of parishes meeting their target level of service – currently this sits at 74.4% having increased from 72% since June 2018.

In terms of the proportion of residents who have access to key services using public transport (both bus and train) we use the TRACC analysis tool. The tables below show the proportion of households that are within a 30 or 60-minute bus or rail journey time of the destination type in Norfolk as a whole but also by each of the seven district council areas, in the morning peak (07:00 to 09:00). The

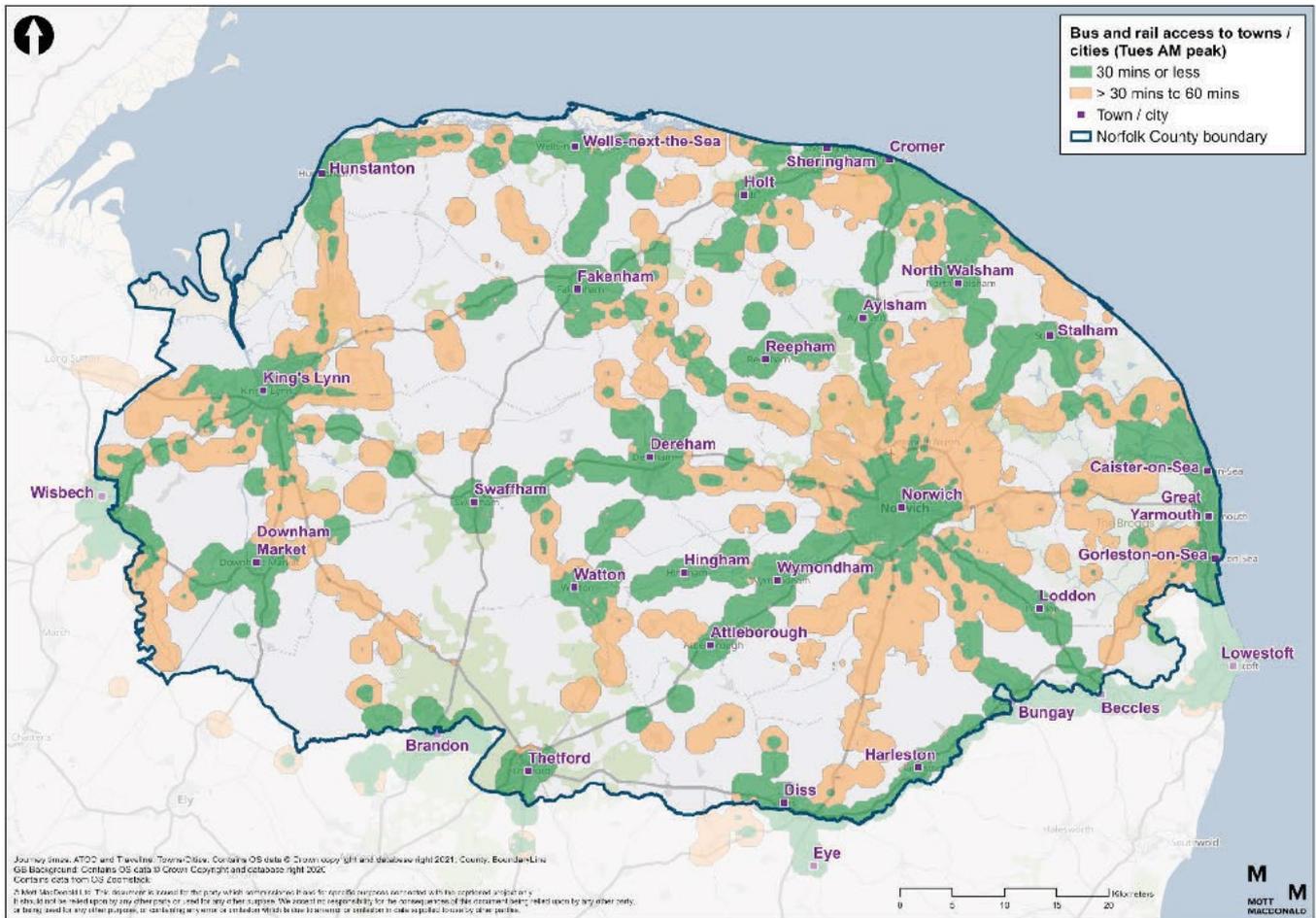
figures are considerably less than this over the weekend.

There is a broad range of accessibility levels across the various local authorities, reflecting the rural / urban composition of these areas. As would be expected, accessibility levels are extremely high in Norwich compared to some of the more rural district areas. Results across all destination types and time periods suggest that accessibility levels in Breckland are the lowest, which is one of the reasons why we are introducing a digitised DRT solution in this area as part of the Rural Mobility Fund.

Location	Within 30 mins of a GP surgery	Within 60 mins of a GP surgery	Within 30 mins of a hospital	Within 60 mins of a hospital	Within 30 mins of a market town or urban area	Within 60 mins of a market town or urban area	Within 30 mins of further or higher education	Within 60 mins of further or higher education	Within 30 mins of a supermarket	Within 60 mins of a supermarket
<b>Norfolk</b>	88%	94%	26%	67%	73%	93%	65%	89%	89%	94%
<b>Breckland</b>	80%	85%	0%	45%	75%	84%	57%	83%	77%	87%
<b>Broadland</b>	91%	96%	4%	59%	51%	95%	70%	96%	93%	97%
<b>Great Yarmouth</b>	98%	99%	63%	92%	89%	99%	72%	98%	99%	99%
<b>King's Lynn &amp; West Norfolk</b>	83%	92%	32%	65%	69%	91%	52%	86%	82%	92%
<b>North Norfolk</b>	83%	90%	23%	49%	77%	90%	37%	70%	84%	91%
<b>Norwich</b>	100%	100%	47%	49%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>South Norfolk</b>	85%	93%	20%	59%	60%	90%	67%	90%	88%	93%

This is demonstrated by the following example maps (for access to hospitals, GP surgeries and market town/urban area):





In terms of access to a bus stop, 88% of residential households in rural areas have

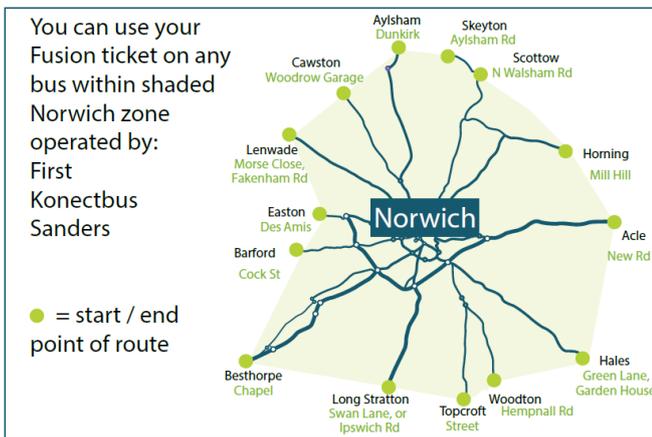
access to a stop within 800m, and in the urban areas 97% have access to a stop within 400m.

## 2.4 Bus Service Fares and Ticketing

In common with bus services across the country, operators in Norfolk permit travel on their buses on payment of fares that offer a flexible range of tickets, catering for a variety of travelling needs. While this can sometimes lead to bus fares being regarded as complicated, this approach does mean that ticket products are available that are tailored to all kinds of travellers - be they regular commuters, people who use the bus for their leisure and tourism needs, youngsters travelling to school or college or people who use the bus occasionally. Tickets can be bought in a range of ways – on bus using cash or contactless, via an operator’s App or by buying a season ticket direct from an operator.

The table below shows the range of ticketing products sold by most of the operators in Norfolk, including all of the larger operators. As well as the traditional single and return tickets, a range of day and period tickets are available, some targeted at particular markets such as students and people working in major development sites. Some operators are also considering introducing “hoppa” fares that allow unlimited travel within a 90 minute period, similar to the provisions in London. While child fares are offered across the board, the definitions vary subtly and there are different approaches to offering cheaper fares to under-19s. This latter point is one that will be picked up in our measures and scheme proposals in Section 4.

		BorderBus	Feline Travel	WNCT	Konect	Stagecoach	Our Bus	Coach Services	Lynx	First
<b>Single</b>	Adult	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Child	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Young Person	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Jobseekers					YES				
<b>Return</b>	Adult	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Child	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Young Person	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Jobseekers					YES				
<b>10 trip carnet</b>	Adult	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Child	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Young Person	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Day</b>	Adult	YES		YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
	Child	YES		YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
	Young Person	YES		YES	YES			YES	YES	YES
<b>Weekly</b>	Adult			YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
	Child			YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES
	Young Person			YES	YES			YES	YES	YES
<b>Monthly</b>	Adult	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Child	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Young Person	YES		YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>School Term/ 3 months</b>	Adult				YES					
	Child			YES	YES	YES	YES	YES		YES
	Young Person			YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Annual</b>	Adult				YES	YES	YES		YES	YES
	Child			YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Young Person			YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES
	Employer Scheme				YES					YES
<b>Family</b>	2A/2+C	YES		YES	YES		YES		YES	YES
	1A/3+C	YES			YES					YES
	Child	5 - 19	0 - 16	5 - 15	0 - 16	5 - 15	5 - 15	5 - 15	5 - 15	5 - 19
	Young person	5 - 19	none	16 - 19	16 - 19	none	16 - 19	16 - 19	16 - 19	5 - 19



At present multi-modal ticketing in Norfolk is limited to the Fusion range of tickets, which are offered in the Greater Norwich area to people wishing to travel on services operated by First Bus, KonectBus and Sanders Coaches. Revenue is apportioned to the operators in the scheme based on the total mileage operated within the Fusion scheme area.

There is currently no multi-operator scheme for the whole of Norfolk, although on some corridors operators which link up or share the corridor do accept each other's tickets, the most notable and popular example being on the Coastliner route run by Lynx from King's Lynn to Wells where passengers can use the same ticket to transfer onto a Sanders Coaches' Coasthopper service at Wells to continue their journey around the coast as far as Mundesley. There is also an agreement in place in the King's Lynn town area where passengers can use a day ticket on services run by both Lynx and WNCT Ltd.

The PlusBus add-on ticket is available for onward travel by bus from rail stations at Bury St Edmunds, Great Yarmouth, Kings Lynn and Norwich.

Transport Focus surveys of bus passengers regularly highlight that value for money fares is an area where satisfaction ratings are comparatively weak and that is undoubtedly the case in Norfolk too – while many bus fares offer good value for money journeys that operate on time and without hitch, journeys where something goes wrong can often be perceived as offering poor value for money.

These perceptions are likely to be exacerbated amongst some non-bus users, who may well know very little about bus fares. A September 2021 survey of 1,000 people in Norfolk revealed that 38% of people did not agree that buses are affordable, while amongst people that use alternative travel modes to the bus some 20% considered bus fares to be more expensive than their chosen alternative. Some 27% of respondents said that they would use the bus more if they had a range of good value tickets available to them, with a capped daily or weekly charge in place.

Some operators have provided information about the average fares charged per kilometre, as requested in the DfT Guidance. The fares can range from 5p to 40p per kilometre depending on the nature of different services, but are most typically around 15-20p per kilometre.

It is clear from ticket sales data provided by operators that their period tickets are regarded as excellent value and sales of those tickets to commuters and students are particularly strong. There are modest sales of multi-

operator tickets, which perhaps reflects the relatively low volume of people travelling with different operators and the value for money these products are perceived to offer.

Bus fares are overwhelmingly decided by individual commercial operators across Norfolk, as befits the current commercial operations that exist across the county. The County Council has some influence over the fares charged on supported bus services, but takes care not to diverge significantly from prevailing commercial fares charged in the vicinity.

Operators report that they seek to minimise the number of increases they make to fares, often changing fares only once a year and in line with general price inflation in the economy. Clearly exceptional cost or income shocks in the bus market may also precipitate immediate fare changes, though all operators keep those events to an absolute minimum.

Overall, bus fares are decided on a commercial basis by bus operators, who offer a range of products that are targeted at different sectors of the bus market. Good value fares are often available for people, but information about those fares is sometimes not easy to find. Multi-operator fares are available in Norwich but are generally absent elsewhere, and while the market for trips using buses operated by multi-operators may currently be small, the absence of such products may be dissuading people from using the bus for more trips.



## 2.5 Bus Service Infrastructure

### Bus Stops

There are 3,987 active bus stops in Norfolk. Due to the very rural nature of our county these have varying degrees of facility based on location and use, from a simple pick-up point

at the village hall to a well-used interchange facility with Real Time Information and shelters. The numbers are summarised below:

Active bus stops	DDA compliant	Have a flag	Have a timetable case	Have a shelter	Have a QR board	Have real-time information display
3,987	3,287	3,177	2,787	1,286	1000	108

As the highway authority, Norfolk County Council provides most bus stop infrastructure within the county. This includes stops to Equalities Act 2010 standard, bus stop flags or poles and timetable cases. The only exception is bus shelters which are provided and maintained by the relevant parish or town councils, or district councils in urban areas (Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn).

a partnership agreement between the County Council and the local bus operators. Improving provision in Norfolk is challenging due to the many locations that buses serve and is delivered via an annual capital programme budget with priority given to locations where there are safety concerns, and via capital bids for schemes such as the Transforming Cities Fund.

On-going stop maintenance is fulfilled through

### Bus Priority Measures

In Norfolk we have several examples of different measures to give priority to buses and minimise disruption to services:

- Bus lanes:** three bus lanes run into Norwich along key corridors – Newmarket Road, Dereham Road and Sprowston Road – totalling 4.5 miles. All apart from Sprowston Road are available only for buses 24/7; Sprowston Road currently being 07:30-09:30 hours Monday-Saturday only (although this is about to be reviewed so that it becomes consistent with other provision).
- As part of our Transforming Cities Fund, we will be introducing additional lengths of bus lane (another 3 miles) across Norwich, which will be operational 24/7.
- Bus-only links:** in Norwich there are several roads that are designated bus-only, the main ones being:
  - the main spine road through the city centre
  - the link between the major housing estate at Bowthorpe with Earham Green Lane and Dereham Road
  - time-restricted sections of road at Brazengate and Catton Grove Road, and
  - a new link on Thorpe Road near Norwich train station.
- In King's Lynn** there is a bus link (Harding's Way) between South Lynn and the town centre with rising bollards, triggered by transponders in the buses.
- Traffic light priority:** this will be introduced in Norwich as part of the Transforming Cities

Fund programme, and then also rolled out to King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth, Norfolk's other two urban centres. We are working on an approach that provides a green signal to buses irrespective of whether they are running early, on time or late, but is tailored to each individual junction. We are currently working with operators to ensure that the respective technologies are able to communicate seamlessly.

We also have a number of other traffic management activities that benefit the operation of buses in the county:

- **Traffic Sensitive Streets:** to ensure free flowing bus services on key routes at peak times we have identified, as part of our Permit Scheme for the authorisation of works on the highway, a network of Traffic Sensitive Streets. On these roads, limitations are applied to carrying out works on the highway so that, apart from emergencies, they have to be carried out outside traffic sensitive hours (i.e. between 0930-1600).
- **Management of disruption on the highway:** our Highways team works closely with utility companies, the district councils and traffic management companies to minimise disruption on the highway and all works and events on the highway are subject to a permit being issued by the team. All proposed road closures, including for events, need a code to be issued by

the transport team before it can go ahead, which confirms that the closure has been fully discussed with the transport team and with relevant bus operators so that any disruption to bus services can be fully looked into, discussed and planned, and communicated to passengers. We have a full-time member of staff dedicated to this within the transport team, who also deals with communications regarding emergency road closures so that passengers can be kept fully-informed and disruption kept to a minimum.

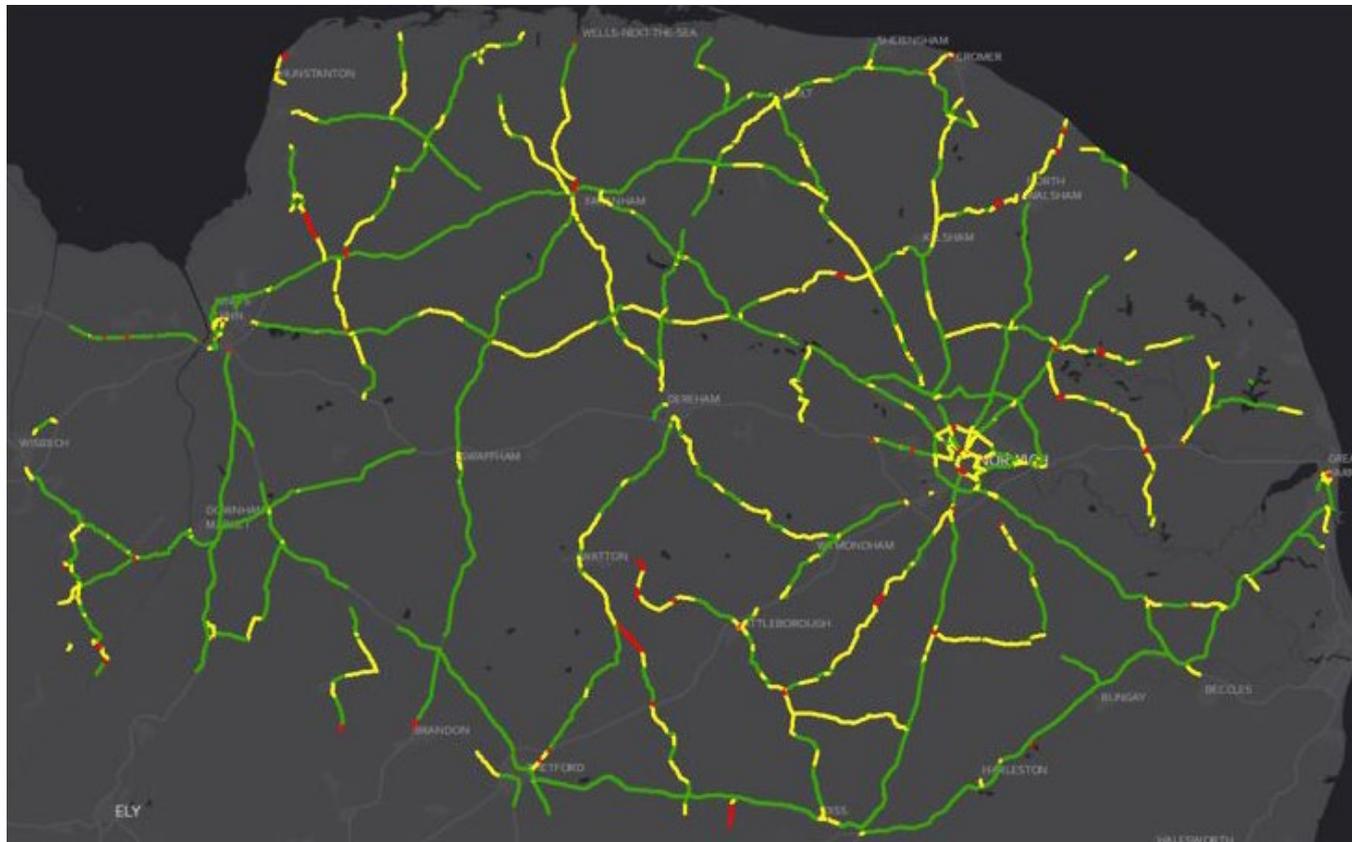
- **Tree cutting:** trees and bushes can often encroach onto the highway, causing damage to buses and sometimes meaning a service needs to be re-routed. In Norfolk we have a process whereby bus operators can report direct to the highways team where this is an issue, so that the foliage can be cut back swiftly and so avoiding any need to stop or re-route a service. However we recognise that a more pro-active approach could be adopted so that offending trees can be cut before they are an issue, possibly using sensors on buses, and we are committed to implementing this over the next few months.
- **Parking and moving traffic offences:** we work closely with the District Councils to ensure that off-street parking is monitored and controlled and will be applying for moving traffic offence enforcement powers to improve bus punctuality.



## Traffic Congestion and Buses

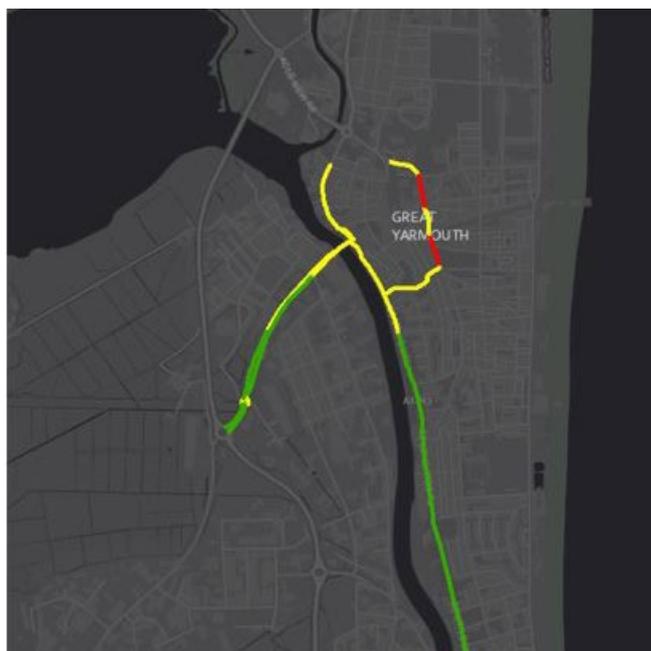
Network congestion is regularly measured by analysing millions of data points extracted from vehicle telematics data to determine levels of congestion at different time periods

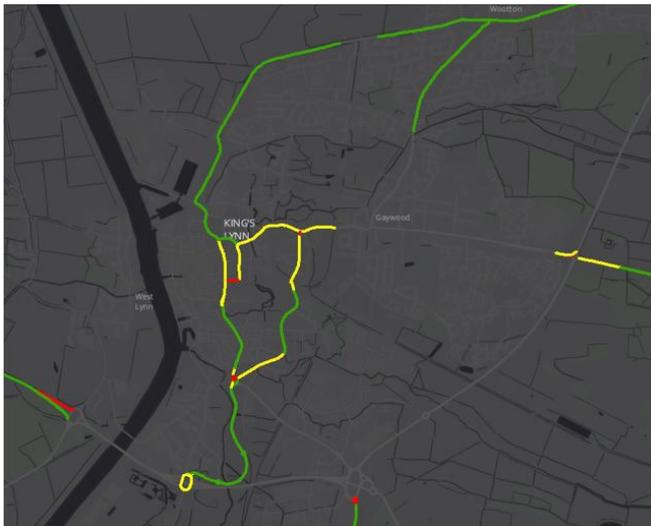
through the day compared to free-flowing conditions. The following map shows typical congestion levels Monday to Friday 7am to 9am across Norfolk:



Red lines indicate sections where congestion was above 40%, i.e. average traffic speeds were 40% or lower than free flow speeds for that section. This data is for general traffic and can be compared with bus performance data provided to us by operators in order to identify key areas where network improvements would deliver the most benefits to bus journey times and reliability.

We are also able to drill down into key areas of Norfolk so that we can identify where schemes and works are necessary to ease congestion for buses. Plots are shown right for Great Yarmouth and below for Norwich and King's Lynn:





Norfolk has had Punctuality Improvement Partnerships and Plans in place for many years. These Plans are written as a joint commitment between the local authority and the bus operator to improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services. A key commitment from the bus operators is sharing data to inform decisions on where bus priority measures are necessary, which we then use to prepare bids for both internal and external investment, e.g. from the Transforming Cities Fund.

The County Council also collects data through the GPS functionality of operators' ticket machines. This data includes dwell time on stops, average vehicle speed, journey time between stops, all of which we can use to assess where bus priority measures could be successfully deployed to optimise congestion relief for buses. We also run scoping exercises with highway designers on board buses so that they can see first-hand the issues that buses and drivers have with congestion – this was done very successfully as part of the Transforming Cities Fund bid and will be done again as we work through schemes for the Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership.

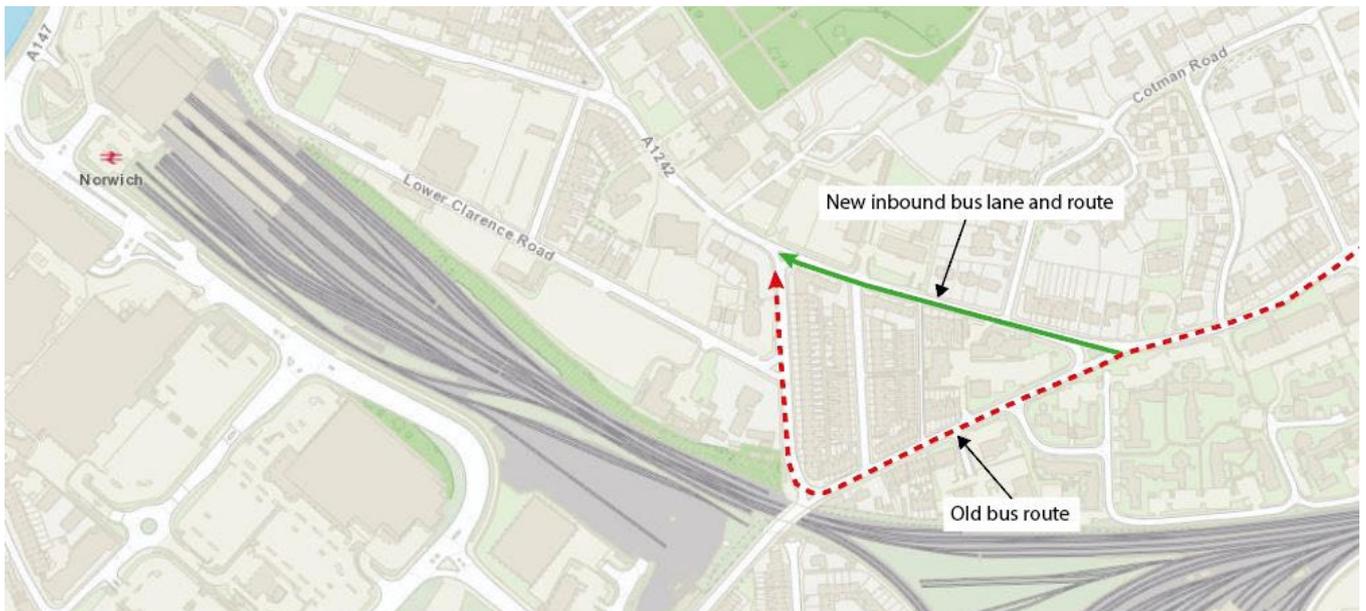
Punctuality Improvement Partnership meetings are held regularly with each individual operator and then quarterly there is also a joint meeting with all operators and the DVSA. These meetings review measures in place, ideas for improvements, target setting, opportunities for bidding and what further data can be gathered either from County Council systems or the operators' ticket machines.

## Bus Congestion – A Case Study

As part of the £32m awarded through the Transforming Cities Fund we have recently introduced an inbound bus and cycle-only lane on Thorpe Road towards Norwich rail station. The map below shows the old bus route versus the new route – the bus and cycle lane having displaced a lane of cars travelling in the opposite direction.

This short section of road has decreased the average bus journey time by 1min 31secs, and in

the peak period of 07:00-09:00 hours Monday-Friday has decreased it by 2mins 31secs, thus giving the bus a journey time advantage over the car as motorists have to follow the previous route (in red below). This gives us good evidence to support similar investment in infrastructure to improve bus services and also encourages operators to invest in more frequent services.



We work within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provides national planning guidance on how mitigation for development should be secured to help deliver accessible and connected growth, enhancing travel choice by bringing forward alternatives to the private car. Norfolk County Council recognises how important it is to influence travel behaviour and choice from the outset on all major growth proposals and so seek to deliver enhanced bus services and infrastructure for new developments through the planning process.

Local policy such as the Local Transport Plan (Norfolk County Council) and Local Plans (district and borough councils) also seek to ensure that development is brought forward in a sustainable manner and includes suitable provision for public transport.

## 2.6 Bus Service Information

### At Bus Stops and Interchanges

Currently, out of the 3,987 stops in Norfolk, 70% have printed information in the form of a timetable. In 2017 Norfolk County Council came to an agreement with all local bus operators to share responsibility for the provision and maintenance of printed bus timetables and bus stop flags at bus stops and interchanges across Norfolk. The agreement outlines that:

- **at bus stops served by one or two operators** the responsibility to supply and put up any printed information, and to keep it up to date, lies with the operator(s) at their own cost
- **at bus stops served by more than two operators**, for example at key interchanges like Norwich bus station, it is the County Council's responsibility to supply any

Working with operators, the highway authority considers what public transport provision is currently available and whether or not additional provision/services are required. If additional viable service provision can be justified, then these can be secured either through condition (where a certain standard of service may be required) or by planning obligation (Section 106 agreement) for a financial contribution towards enhanced service provision.

Upgrades or additional facilities in terms of bus infrastructure are secured as either off-site works or as part of the internal estate road if buses are to directly serve a development, once again working with the planning authorities and transport team as to what is the best solution to increase sustainable travel and reduce car use.

printed information and to keep it up to date, at no charge to the operator, but the operator is expected to assist with putting the information up.

The agreement also outlines what information must be included as a minimum, for example contact details, departure times, and that only Norfolk County Council-branded bus stop flags should be used.

Operators are responsible for any other printed information that they wish to provide and distribute, for example timetables, leaflets, route maps.

Norfolk has a long-established partnership with Nexus Alpha Low Power Systems and a proven track record of providing high quality, low-cost Real-Time Passenger Information (RTPI) systems to bus passengers in

Norfolk. 108 displays are currently deployed, predominantly in major urban areas, at key transport interchanges and also at places with high footfall like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn. The new RTPI displays being deployed in Norwich as part of the Transforming Cities Fund will also include the option to initiate audio bus departure information by waving your hand past a sensor.

As part of the Transforming Cities Fund we are deploying up to 9 RTPI Monoliths at Norwich bus station, throughout the city centre and at Norwich railway station. These are free-standing RTPI displays ideal for conveying large amounts of bus/rail departure information and public service messages in

prominent locations. Built with low power consumption, units can be single or double sided and will be fitted with RNIB React capabilities. We are keen to increase this number and to particularly give other key interchanges the benefit of this type of display.

We also provide a mobile-based solution which enables passengers to access stop-specific bus departures through a simple weblink or QR code via a sign at the bus stop. There are currently 1,000 signs deployed throughout Norwich and Great Yarmouth and we would like to roll this out to other locations across Norfolk as it gives the most up-to-date timetable information.

## Online

All of our operators have their own websites which give information on timetables and services. The larger operators also have route maps, journey planners, information on fares and season tickets and live information updates.

The County Council's website signposts people to the Traveline journey planner and to the operators' own websites. It also enables people to find their nearest bus stop with 1-4 miles of their address or other location.

Our website also has a section on accessibility which was co-produced with members of different disability groups in Norfolk. This section includes information on mobility scooters, talking bus stops and Braille Bus Hailers. From this section you can also download a range of safe journey cards (example right) designed to show the driver so that they can understand any disability or issue

you may need help with. These have been very popular with not only disabled people but also the elderly.



Five of our operators have their own App available via a Smartphone. These enable tickets to be purchased and for the user to track their bus in real-time, as well as some having journey planning capabilities and showing live capacity information.

## Travel Centres

Norwich has two travel centres, both of which are run on a commercial basis. Norwich bus station is owned by Norfolk County Council and leased to KonectBus, who run the day-to-day operations and the travel centre located in the bus station building. They sell their own tickets, which includes Park and Ride products, National Express tickets, and also give out information for all services.

First Bus have a travel centre on Castle Meadow, another key interchange in central

Norwich. They sell tickets for their own services and give out information for their own and others' services.

In King's Lynn there is a travel centre which provides information leaflets and timetables, run by the district council.

There are no other travel centres in Norfolk but at some key interchanges we have invested in real-time information instead, for example in Market Gates bus station in Great Yarmouth.

## 2.7 Vehicles

Bus operators across Norfolk use around 463 buses every day to deliver their services to the public, using a range of vehicles across the typical 15-18 year lifetime for a bus. At present all of these buses are powered by diesel engines, more than 60% of which are the

lower emission Euro V and Euro VI standard, but there is growing interest in looking at alternative methods of propulsion. A table showing the percentage of vehicles with the different Euro standards is below:

Emission rating	Euro II	Euro III	Euro IV	Euro V	Euro VI	Total
<b>Total operator vehicles</b>	2	112	67	195	82	463
<b>Operator vehicles %</b>	0.5%	24.0%	15.0%	42.5%	18.0%	100%

The County Council is committed to reducing the emissions arising from bus operations, especially in areas of the county that see the highest levels of pollution. Working in partnership with First Bus, the Council has recently submitted an Expression of Interest for £3.2m of funding from the Government's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) fund and have been selected to go to the next stage of putting forward a full bid in January 2022. This bid is matched by £3.6m of local investment from First Bus and will deliver

15 battery electric buses to the network in Norwich, replacing an equivalent number of Euro III diesel buses.

Operators are also committed to ongoing investment in their fleets, despite the financial constraints placed upon them by the COVID19 pandemic. First Bus have committed to an £18m investment in their fleet as part of the Transforming Cities Fund while other operators continue to order new buses on an annual basis, keeping the fleet modern and environmentally friendly.

## 2.8 What Do Passengers Think?

The sections above set out what we provide for bus passengers in Norfolk – but what do they think about that offer and how would they like to see it improved? And what do people who rarely if ever use the bus want, in order that they might consider using the bus more often? These are key questions that this BSIP must address.

Transport Focus has recently published research (Bus passengers' priorities for improvement, September 2020) that demonstrates the things people want from their bus services. Whilst this research has been conducted across England and is not specific to Norfolk, we know from our own engagement that this list reflects the things that bus passengers in Norfolk are asking us for. The key issues that people want to see are:

### Buses running more often

This translates to requests for more early morning, evening and weekend services in urban areas of Norfolk, and more services throughout the week in rural areas. Even when frequencies appear to be satisfactory in terms of buses per hour, the timing of services during that hour can mean that they don't meet passenger needs as they should – for instance, two services operating at five minutes past the hour and eight minutes past the hour offer an hourly service, not half-hourly as would be the case with proper co-ordination.



### Buses going to more places

There are communities, often in rural settings but in urban areas too, where bus services are absent entirely or only serve a very limited range of destinations and planning your life around your bus service proves impossible.



### More buses on time/faster journey times

Traffic congestion can really hamper bus operations, it can lead to delays that frustrate passengers left waiting for their late running bus and it can extend journey times, making vehicle utilisation really inefficient. Delays can happen on a regular daily basis, or they can happen as a result of emergency works and last a short period of time, but many of these delays to buses can be avoided or minimised with better investment, co-ordination and provision of designated infrastructure and real-time information.



### Better value for money

Bus fares are not regarded as cheap, as delays that bus users experience, as set out above, can then make fares seem like poor value for money. Alternative ways to travel are often perceived as offering better value for money than buses, although there can be a difference between perceived costs and real costs of those alternatives, especially the motor car. This complex balance of real and perceived values need to be explored and addressed.



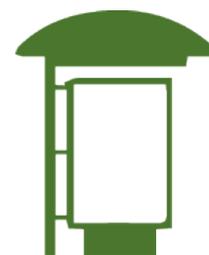
## More effort to tackle anti-social behaviour

While many bus journeys pass without incident or threat, a small minority of people on certain bus services can act in anti-social ways on our buses. This can be an issue for bus passengers in general, but can particularly affect more vulnerable groups based on their gender, age, disability or mental health. A significant onus is placed on society to deal with this anti-social behaviour in general, and on bus drivers to deal with it when it occurs.



## Better quality information at bus-stops

People that make the same journeys day after day need little information to reassure them, they know when their bus should turn up and how much the fare is. But less frequent travellers, non-bus users or regular users making different trips to their usual ones, rely on good information at bus stops, online and on their mobile devices to reassure them that they are waiting at the right stop and know when their bus can be expected to show up.



## Accessible buses

The accessibility of public buses in England has advanced significantly in recent decades and step-free access is now a feature of practically all public buses in Norfolk. But knowing a bus is accessible is not the same as knowing the place where your wheelchair must be stored is available. Having step-free access at bus stops is of much less value if there aren't step-free routes to that bus stop from surrounding streets. And passengers with hearing and sight problems may not be aware of when it is time to get off their bus. These factors all affect the ability of people with mobility difficulties to use the bus as regularly as they might like.



## Cleaner buses

The COVID19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of a basic requirement to be able to travel on a bus where air circulates freely, surfaces are regularly cleaned, litter on the floor is dealt with at the soonest available opportunity and the bus is clean internally and externally.



These factors all affect the willingness of people to use buses, be they existing users or lapsed users. Of particular importance are the views of people who don't use buses, whose perceptions mean that they do not consider the bus to be a viable option. In September 2021 Norfolk undertook bespoke research on these perceptions to inform the development of this BSIP and the subsequent Enhanced Partnership. Some 1,000 people were interviewed of which 86% used alternatives to the bus for some or all of their day to day journeys. The key findings of this research are that:



The Covid pandemic has also had an impact on passengers' perceptions which have affected their journey patterns and appetite to travel. We have looked closely at Transport Focus' research into this new phenomenon (Covid Travel segmentation, April 2021), where they have classified bus users and non-users into

five segments, so that we can take this into account when devising mechanisms and measures to grow patronage, by re-connecting former customers, attracting new ones, and compensating for journeys lost to home-working. The five segments of passenger are defined as follows:



### Cautious Car Chooser

former fair-weather bus user, 90% car access, negative views about the bus, high Covid concern

### Anxious and Affected

former car passengers but now more reliant on the bus, low income, high Covid concern, fewer vaccinated

### Rethinking Reducer

public transport ex-commuters, can work from home, high income professionals under age 45, feel public transport is not for them, shifting to other modes, moderate Covid concern, feel public transport is safe enough

### Springback Socialiser

relaxed higher-income male retirees who socialise, reduced non-essential travel but optimistic and will continue with activities, low Covid fear, vaccinated, feel safe

### Carefree Carrying On

active, with history of low bus use, mid-income, have families, work full-time, average views on public transport, above average use since lockdown, low Covid concern, fewer vaccinated, blasé



## 2.9 Bus Use and Modal Share

28.911m journeys are made by bus each year in Norfolk – 3.1m journeys per 100,000 people. But this figure only represents 4.75% of all journeys made by all modes against a national

average of 7% – see table below. As is to be expected, use of the bus is highest in the city of Norwich, where there are more, and more frequent, services:

	Bicycle	Walking	Car driver	Car passenger	Motorbike	Train / tube	Bus	Taxi / other
<b>Breckland</b>	5.23%	20.09%	64.30%	7.18%	0.91%	0.16%	1.28%	0.84%
<b>Broadland</b>	5.20%	12.56%	73.29%	4.82%	1.47%	0.22%	2.04%	0.40%
<b>Great Yarmouth</b>	5.90%	17.31%	61.45%	7.07%	1.19%	0.19%	6.09%	0.80%
<b>King's Lynn &amp; West Norfolk</b>	6.35%	10.46%	71.84%	6.73%	0.86%	0.51%	2.73%	0.53%
<b>North Norfolk</b>	3.94%	14.52%	71.32%	6.04%	1.13%	0.49%	2.00%	0.56%
<b>Norwich</b>	8.18%	20.03%	53.44%	5.61%	1.46%	0.70%	10.08%	0.49%
<b>South Norfolk</b>	4.69%	6.69%	74.55%	5.59%	1.37%	0.24%	6.42%	0.44%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4.84%</b>	<b>11.46%</b>	<b>69.26%</b>	<b>6.05%</b>	<b>1.10%</b>	<b>1.33%</b>	<b>4.75%</b>	<b>1.21%</b>

This shows that despite some really good practices and examples of where bus services and bus use is strong, we need to do more and there is certainly scope to do more, to increase bus use over the car.

Before the Covid19 pandemic, bus use in Norfolk and particularly Norwich, Kings' Lynn and Great Yarmouth was growing, due to investments by bus operators and the County Council. But now (October 2021) passenger numbers are about 70-75% of pre-Covid levels. One of the reasons for this is a reduced need to travel, as workplaces have changed their way of operating and so the commuter market has noticeably shrunk. ENCTS journeys are even lower than 70% of pre-Covid levels, suggesting a nervousness by the elderly and

disabled passengers to travel using public transport. However numbers overall continue to rise each month and we are hopeful that numbers will return to at least pre-Covid levels within the next 18 months.

The key challenge for the bus industry in the short-term therefore is to keep services running whilst passenger numbers and revenue are not as high as in 2019. We also need to entice people out of their car, which they may have switched to during Covid as traffic levels and congestion were lower, and show everyone that buses are Covid-safe. Lack of revenue also leads to less investment and fewer improvements and then fewer passengers again, unless external funding is given to help us and operators break this cycle.

## 2.10 Conclusion

The current bus offer in Norfolk can be summed up as follows:

- There is a good network of services but these vary considerably in terms of frequency, fares, availability of information and are not seen as a single transport system
- Services in Norwich and other urban areas are comprehensive and benefit from the highest levels of frequency
- There are good modern vehicles on high frequency routes, and these do attract passenger growth
- Rural services are available but are infrequent and often have to be booked in advance, which does not suit many people's lifestyle
- There are some very good examples of route, timetable and fares information, but the number of different operators often makes it difficult for people to know where to get comprehensive information from
- Fares vary across operators for similar length journeys, and can be seen as complicated for non-bus users
- Where infrastructure has recently been updated it is very good, but in rural areas in particular waiting facilities and information at stops could be better
- Our operators are very committed and have a strong ethos of partnership working with the County Council

Opportunities for improvement therefore exist all over the county: in urban areas we can make buses more frequent and reliable and provide more journey options in the evenings and over the weekend to encourage more people to use the bus for their everyday travel needs; between main settlements we can provide more frequent and regular journeys so that the bus is a viable way to get to and from work, for shopping and to make onward journeys from key locations (e.g. Norwich rail station); and in rural areas we can improve rural connectivity

and use technology and better infrastructure to allow smoother and more confident transitions from DRT (for example) to high frequency inter-urban routes, to enable people in rural areas to complete their whole journey by bus.

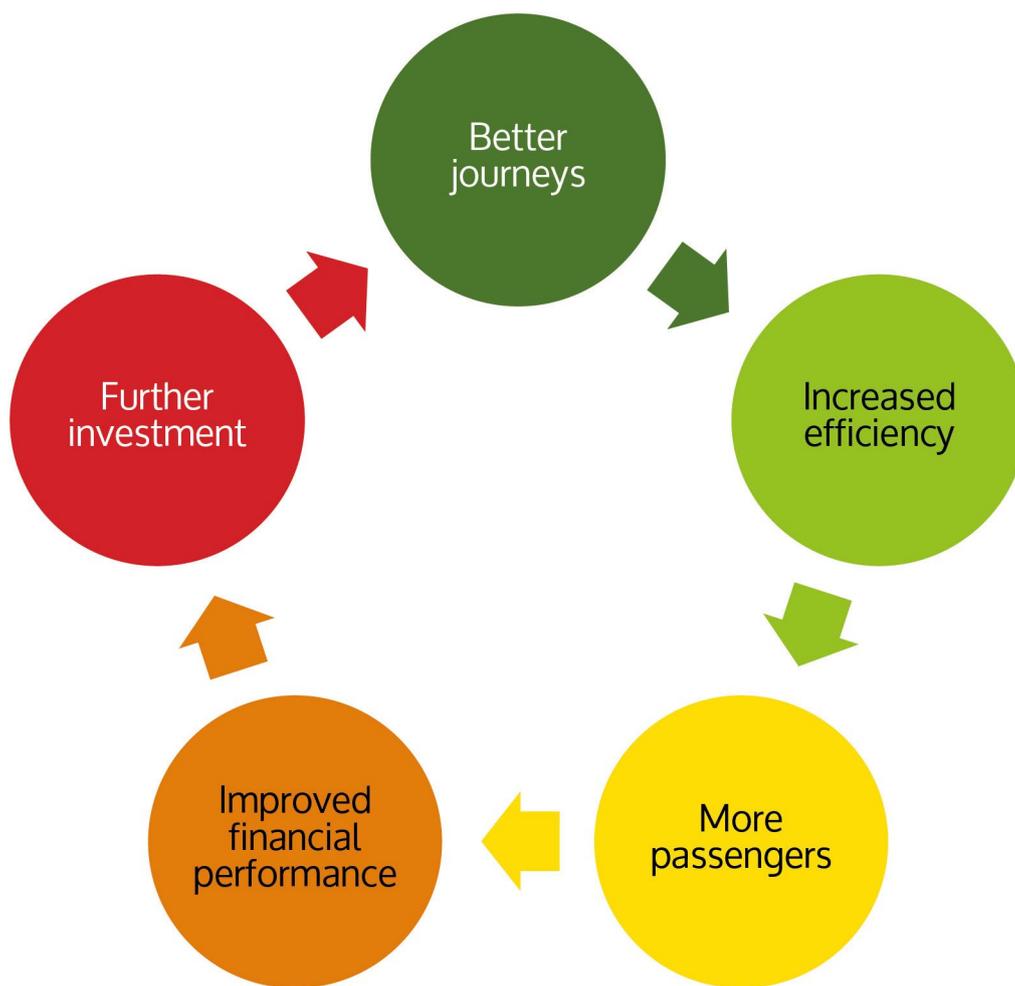
As well as improving things for existing users, there is huge scope to attract more and different passengers – transferring them from car trips (either as drivers or passengers) to bus trips. For example there is a good opportunity to attract young people to public transport after they have used the bus for school and college – we need to tap into this market before they buy a car for work. We already train young people to use the bus as part of our TITAN travel training programme and we can build on this by offering incentives and cheaper fares too.

We can also improve our offer for tourism – apart from the north Norfolk coast, services to tourist attractions are limited unless they happen to be on a main road. And as part of this we can improve links with train timetables so that visitors do not even have to arrive in the county by car.



Our proposed improvements will benefit everyone, and this will encourage more journeys by existing users and more journeys

overall by getting more people to use the bus, leading to further investment and further improvements, and so the cycle continues:



Norfolk has an excellent track record in attracting external funding and delivering funding commitments on time and to budget, meaning that Norfolk is a good place for DfT to focus their investment in bus services. Recent examples of successful bids and delivery are:

- **Transforming Cities Fund** - awarded £6.1m in Tranche 1 and £32.3m in Tranche 2. Tranche 1 fully delivered and on track to deliver Tranche 2 by the deadline (we were the first TCF city to get to a point of delivering and completing schemes on the ground and have received acknowledgement from DfT that they are pleased with how we are managing to deliver schemes against challenging timescales)

- **Active Travel Tranche 1** - £225,000 Capital & £70,500 revenue - delivered
- **Active Travel Tranche 2** - £1.198m (of which 0.3m was revenue) – being delivered
- **Rural Mobility fund** - awarded £700k – on track to be implemented by the end of March 2022
- **E-bike Extension Fund** – successful and awarded £250k

We also have an excellent track record in innovative technology, which we can build on as part of these suggested improvements. For example, our partnership with Nexus Alpha has seen investment from both parties to deliver better, more accessible solutions to enhance the information available to bus passengers. Below are some examples of current, imminent and future deliverables, with Nexus Alpha keen to use Norfolk as its test-bed due to our good working relationship and proven track record of delivery:

- **Hello Nexus** – An experimental interactive travel information system using low-cost technologies, where users can ask questions about bus services and receive an audio response - similar to commercial products such as 'Alexa' and 'Siri' – a test system will go live in Norwich Bus Station in late-2021 and will be particularly useful for visually impaired passengers
- **Environmental monitoring** – A solution that will see RTPI displays fitted with low cost, low power pollutant sensors to monitor air quality levels. This will expand monitoring capabilities throughout major urban areas and congestions zones, previously seen as unfeasible due to cost.
- **Solar power** – Already installed at our Cringleford interchange (just outside Norwich), this is an 'off the grid' RTPI power solution which uses lightweight, flexible panels fixed seamlessly to a bus shelter roof, reducing visual impact, greatly simplifying installation and significantly reducing on-going revenue costs and environmental impact. The next stage is to enhance battery proficiency by utilising Lithium ion technology.
- **Hybrid display including e-ink** – An ultra-low power solar RTPI display using a combination of large text to show real-time bus departures which can be read from a distance, and an interactive e-ink panel displaying scheduled departures. The first unit will be deployed in Norwich Research Park in late-2021.
- **An App to deliver personalised bus information** – A personalised solution aimed at visually impaired passengers that will deliver audio bus departure information to a mobile device via Bluetooth and heard through headphones. A passenger within the vicinity of a RTPI display can 'trigger' the audio response through their phone with a view to customising the information e.g. the bus service they want.
- **Solaris LTN-LCD** – A low-cost, battery or solar powered single line display that combines RTPI and bus shelter lighting that specifically targets more rural locations where solutions, in the past, have been unfeasible. Can also be used on-bus for next-stop announcements.
- **Proxima Lite** – A non-touch approach (waving a hand pass a sensor) to initiate an RTPI display to deliver audio bus departure information. Deployed to hardware, where appropriate, to minimise contact with surfaces and reduce contamination in a COVID environment. Trial being undertaken in Norwich.

# 3.0 Objectives and Outcomes

Norfolk County Council has a progressive approach to planning its transport networks, an approach that takes account of the future transport challenges arising from the need to decarbonise transport while continuing to stimulate economic growth and recovery following the COVID19 pandemic.

## 3.1 Introduction

We see the role of buses as a critical part of meeting those challenges, in general terms based on our strong existing relationships with bus operators and in specific terms based on the creation of this Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The national policy context sets the scene for what we seek to do in Norfolk, the strategies recently published by Government on Transport Decarbonisation, Buses and Active Travel are each crucial elements of context for this BSIP:

### **Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain**

Published by the Department for Transport in June 2021, sets out a bold vision for reducing the impact of travel and transport on our local and global environments. It recognises the challenges and dangers of continued growth in car use and advocates that making “public transport, cycling and walking the natural first choice for all who can take it”. This BSIP builds on that vision that the bus must play its part in an environmental transformation of our transport network.

### **Bus Back Better: A National Bus Strategy for England**

Published in March 2021 forms the cornerstone of our plans for buses in Norfolk, which is structured around the key challenges of ensuring that buses experience a renaissance in quality and use, fuelled by the funding that will be made available by DfT in response to this BSIP.

### **Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking**

Published in July 2020 provides a new standard for making provision for, and encouraging journeys by, active travel modes. Proposals for cycling, walking and buses can work best where they are fully integrated to work hand in hand along travel corridors, and come together at hubs to facilitate onward travel and first/last mile access. This BSIP contains plans to facilitate this integration with buses funding a share of that infrastructure.



There are also a number of key local strategies that influence this BSIP as set out below

Transport for Norwich Strategy	King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth Transport Strategies	Market Town Improvement Strategies	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has just been out for consultation and planned to be adopted at the end of 2021. It will replace the existing Norwich Area Transportation Strategy adopted in 2004 and which set out a transportation strategy for the Norwich area until the year 2021.</li> <li>• It is an ambitious strategy that puts carbon reduction and better air quality at the heart of the aim to support a growing economy, strengthen communities and reduce our impact on the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport strategies have been adopted for our two other urban centres, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.</li> <li>• The implementation plan measures will address issues on the transport network such as congestion and accessibility and should also help to make King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth more attractive to economic investment and assist existing and new businesses within the towns.</li> <li>• They also take account of the planned growth to ensure the towns can grow sustainably and will protect the historic areas of the towns which are important for their ability to attract visitors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local plans have identified a large amount of planned housing and employment growth around many of Norfolk's market towns.</li> <li>• These strategies outline what we will do to identify and plan interventions ahead of the growth, ensuring that current and potential transport issues are identified and resolved, with a key focus on accessibility and implementing public transport and other sustainable transport solutions.</li> <li>• Also relates to emerging Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Cycling and Walking Plans are being produced to define our active travel networks and produce a prioritised list of schemes to be delivered as defined in the Government's Vision for Cycling and Walking, "Gear Change". As part of the LCWIP planning, access to public transport, key transport hubs and future transport hubs are used as a key attractor when developing the prioritised routes.</li> <li>• Plans for Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth will be adopted autumn 2021, we are well progressed with the Dereham LCWIP and we will soon produce a Norfolk-wide LCWIP covering the remaining areas, to be completed by October 2022.</li> </ul>

The enactment of measures to improve the quality of bus services and encourage their greater use will make use of a wide range of legislative tools, ranging from land use planning legislation and highways management duties to the provision of multi-operator ticketing products through the Block Exemption provision. Provisions in the Bus Services Act 2017 will be vital to delivering our BSIP through:

- the formation of Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes;
- the enhanced provisions for **bus network planning** and providing **integrated bus ticketing**;
- the provision of open data for bus timetables, fares and real-time bus locations; and
- the requirements to deliver improved on-board passenger announcements.

The challenges laid down by Government have been accepted at both the sub-national and local levels within Norfolk. Transport East is a collaboration of local authorities in the East of England that is developing strategies and programmes around key regional themes –

gateways to global markets, multi-centred economic growth and energised coastal areas. Public transport has a key role to play in facilitating access to and from these key drivers for the region and Transport East is developing a passenger transport strategy for the region that this BSIP draws upon and delivers at a local level.

Norfolk County Council is currently developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the county, and launched a major consultation exercise to garner views of our residents and visitors on a wide range of transport matters. The responses received that relate to bus issues have informed this BSIP, which in turn will become one of several vital delivery mechanisms for the new LTP.

Overall it is evident from the national, sub-national and local policy and strategy context that bus services will play an enhanced and vital role in delivering a greener and more inclusive transport network in Norfolk, building on our recent successes and ensuring that buses contribute significantly to the journey towards a Net Zero transport network.



## 3.2 BSIP Objectives

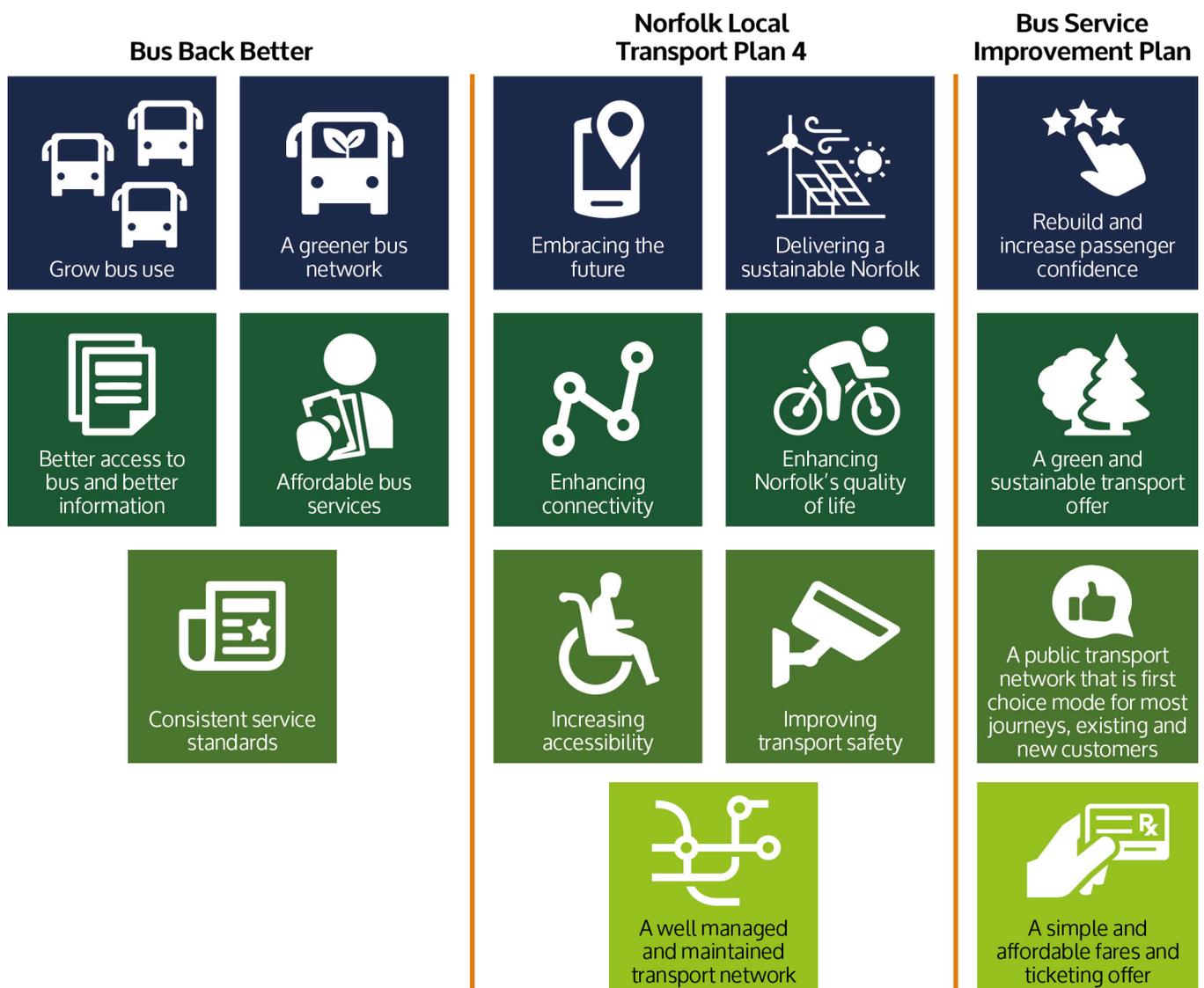
The Council has agreed a set of objectives with bus operators and stakeholders in Norfolk that will provide a backdrop to the implementation of schemes and measures associated with this Plan. We believe that all proposals that come forward for funding directly contribute to one or more of our BSIP objectives. That will be the key test for all ideas that emerge from this document and the Enhanced Partnership Plan that will follow.

Our objectives for this Bus Service Improvement Plan are four-fold:

- To rebuild and increase passenger confidence

- To have a green and sustainable transport offer
- To have a public transport network that is the first choice mode for most journeys, for existing and new customers
- To have a simple and affordable fares and ticketing offer

We haven't created these BSIP objectives in a vacuum, we have followed a process that takes on board objectives in the wider policy and strategy context. Critically this process includes consideration of the Bus Back Better national strategy for buses and Norfolk's wider Local Transport Plan objectives. This is illustrated below.



### 3.3 BSIP Outcomes

It is important that we measure the success of this Plan in achieving our objectives. Individual measures delivered through the BSIP and the Enhanced Partnership Schemes will be subject to the appropriate value for public money assessment that determines whether a strong business case exists for each measure. However measuring the overall impact of our spend on achieving our objectives through targeting outcomes is also vital to ensuring this Plan is a success.

We have drawn heavily on the Government's guidance for preparing BSIPs<sup>1</sup> in determining our measurable outcomes, as well as closely reflecting our BSIP objectives. Some of the outcomes contribute to achieving single objectives, others span multiple objectives.

We propose a 2019/20 baseline, prior to the COVID19 pandemic, where possible for each of these outcomes:

- **Grow annual bus patronage in Norfolk:** return to 2019/20 patronage levels by March 2023, then grow bus patronage in the County by 1% per annum between 2023 and 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 28.911 million journeys<sup>2</sup> leading to a future total of more than 30m journeys per year (3.2m per 100,000 people).
- **Grow bus patronage amongst young people in Norfolk:** grow bus patronage by an extended target of 5% per annum for people under 25 years of age between 2023 and 2027. The baseline for this outcome is to be determined.
- **Improve bus passenger satisfaction:** grow bus passenger satisfaction with bus services in Norfolk to 95% by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 89% satisfaction as measured by Transport Focus in 2017.
- **Increase bus passenger satisfaction with fares:** grow bus passenger satisfaction with the value for money offered for bus services in Norfolk to 80% by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 59% satisfaction as measured by Transport Focus in 2017.
- **More buses with next stop announcements and displays:** increase the number of buses operating registered bus services in Norfolk that offer next stop announcements (visible and audible) to 70% by 2025. The baseline for this outcome is 7%.
- **More reliable bus services:** increase the reliability of bus services to 99.5% of all timetabled bus services starting their journeys, by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is to be determined.
- **More punctual bus services:** increase the punctuality of bus services starting their journeys on time to 95%, by 2027, using the Office for the Traffic Commissioners' standard measure of what is considered 'on-time'<sup>3</sup>. The baseline for this outcome is 85%.
- **Greener buses:** the proportion of buses operating registered bus services in Norfolk that are Euro VI or zero emission will increase to 50% by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 18% in September 2021. This will mean that by 2027 more than 90% of buses will be Euro V, Euro VI or zero emission.
- **Increase the bus mode share from cars:** in corridors where bus priority and bus vehicle investment is made during the lifetime of this BSIP, ensure that the number of bus passengers increases and the number of people travelling by car either reduces or remains the same. Location specific targets

1 DfT, National Bus Strategy: Bus Service Improvement Plans, Guidance to local authorities and bus operators, May 2021

2 DfT Bus Statistics, Table BUS0109a

3 Current standard is that buses must operate no more than 5 minutes and 59 second late, or 1 minute and 59 seconds early, compared with timetabled departure times



will be agreed in Enhanced Partnership Schemes on a corridor by corridor basis, based on bus operator data, automatic traffic count data and surveys.

- **Reduce journey times for buses:** on specified corridors where bus priority and bus vehicle investment is made during the lifetime of this BSIP, ensure that average journey times for buses between specified points are decreased compared to before the measures were implemented. Journey times for cars in those corridors will not be increased in typical circumstances. Location specific targets will be agreed in Enhanced Partnership Schemes on a corridor by corridor basis, based on bus operator AVL data.
- **Increase the number of accessible bus stops:** increase the number of accessible bus stops that are suitable for people using wheelchairs and people with other mobility issues to 95% by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 82% in September 2021.
- **Increase rural accessibility:** using Norfolk's index of rural accessibility<sup>4</sup>, improve the

measure to 85% by 2027. The baseline for this outcome is 74.4%.

The measurable outcomes set out above have been selected to ensure that they are all capable of being assessed using existing sources of data available to the local transport authority and/or bus operators in Norfolk. Where necessary original survey data has been collected to inform the establishment of a baseline situation, these surveys will be repeated at suitable intervals to chart progress.

The progress made in achieving these outcomes will be set out in an annual BSIP Progress Report, which will be presented to the relevant Enhanced Partnership governance groups and published annually on Norfolk County Council's website. All partners delivering buses in Norfolk have agreed to make data available in order to populate the Progress Report.

<sup>4</sup> We have defined a target level of service for each parish based on its population size, e.g. a parish with 1000-2000 people should be able to expect a journey to health services, a shopping service 5 days a week, a commuter journey at peak times and a Saturday service

# 4.0 BSIP Delivery Programme

In this section we set out the commitments that have been made, subject to funding in some cases, to achieve the objectives and outcomes set out in Section 3. A range of infrastructure schemes, promotional and ticketing initiatives and policy reviews combine to provide a comprehensive and compelling set of proposals that will ensure that buses in Norfolk are making their full contribution to the journey to net zero transport provision.

## 4.1 Introduction

**We have agreed with operators and stakeholders that our central theme for this BSIP is to ensure buses play their full part in delivering:**

### A Roadmap to Net Zero for Carbon

The figure below summarises the staged approach we will take to deliver the ambitious

measures and schemes contained within the delivery programme for Norfolk's BSIP.

### Norfolk BSIP - A Roadmap to Net Zero



#### Get people on the bus

- Major marketing campaign and an identity for buses
- Integrated journey planner
- Single customer charter
- Fares offer for Under-25s
- Back to bus fares promotion
- Contactless on every bus
- Improved road network management
- Network review and bus priority studies



#### Supporting lifestyle choices

- Deliver consistent bus network standards
- Agreed timetable change dates
- Bus priority programme
- Better bus stop standards
- Multi-operator fares with common zones and fare capping
- Better service integration and hubs
- Next stop announcements and displays on all buses



#### Towards net zero for buses

- More modern buses
- Zero emission buses

0-6 months

6 months to end of Year 3

By end of Year 5

Through the growth in bus use and the transfer of trips from car to bus, a greener pattern of journeys in the county will emerge. Furthermore, investment in lower and zero emission vehicles will reduce local pollution and provide further reductions in carbon emissions.



Measures are split into three time bands:

In the immediate term	In the medium term	In the longer term
<p>(0-6 months, starting April 2022 if not sooner) we will put in place a comprehensive and imaginative marketing campaign aimed at getting people back on the bus, quickly returning patronage levels to much nearer their pre-COVID levels. A number of measures that are complementary to this campaign will also be pursued, as will laying the groundwork for subsequent major bus investments;</p>	<p>(6 months to three years, by March 2025) we will deliver bus priority measures and improvements to our bus network and ticketing that will ensure many more people can rely on the bus to live their lives day to day, allowing them to rely less on their motor car. The measures will support lifestyle choices in both built-up and rural areas; and</p>	<p>(three to five years) we will continue to roll out infrastructure and new services to support car-free lifestyle choices while also seeking a comprehensive funding solution that allows the county to make a rapid and lasting move towards zero emission buses, exploiting the latest battery electric and hydrogen technologies that will be available from 2025 onwards.</p>

The programme set out in this BSIP proposes measures for a five year period starting in April 2022, which is when we will commence our agreed Enhanced Partnership Plan and begin delivering the first Enhanced Partnership Schemes. However we understand that the DfT’s additional funding available for buses has a three year life span (April 2022 to March 2025). Some proposals in this programme are likely to rely on revenue support on an ongoing basis, the Council will wish to be assured that a long term funding solution is in place beyond the first three years before introducing those

proposals – be it continued funding from Government or a strong prospect of funded initiatives becoming commercially viable within three years. This issue will be debated by the Enhanced Partnership Board, once formed.

The initiatives headlined in the figure above are explained in detail in the remainder of this chapter, after which a summary table of schemes, financial asks, local contributions and delivery timescales is provided. The measures are arranged around the timescales set out in the paragraph above.

## 4.2 Get People on the Bus: Short Term Measures April 2022 to October 2022

### The Get People on the Bus measures in this BSIP will:

Stimulate a return to the bus and encourage people to give the bus a try for the first time  
 Begin the process of presenting Norfolk's bus services as a single integrated network  
 Ready ourselves for the medium term actions by conducting planning and design studies

### The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:

Rebuild and increase passenger confidence	Green and sustainable transport	Public transport as first choice mode	Simple and affordable fares and ticketing
high	low	moderate	high

These measures are focused on stimulating a recovery from the effects of the COVID19 pandemic and taking early steps to present buses in Norfolk as one integrated system rather than separate services operated by different companies. The programme

of measures and schemes below will be deployed at pace as soon as the funding is available, and from April 2022 at the latest, in order to ensure no time is wasted in working with operators to stimulate a recovery to the bus market.

### Major Marketing Campaign

#### DFT Priority: A single local bus network with clear information

By April 2022 at the latest, Norfolk County Council will begin work with all operators to instigate a major marketing campaign for buses, which will be led by suitably skilled marketing specialists. The focus of the campaign will be to use imaginative marketing techniques across a range of media to entice people into using the bus, be it more often, for the first time in a while or for the first time ever. A full range of media channels will be used to raise awareness of the campaign, building on the extensive work that bus operators themselves already do to market their services. The campaign will last for at least six months and will reach its peak over the summer tourist season.



This marketing campaign will create an identity for buses across Norfolk, using as its starting point a proposed Travel Norfolk brand (that will be used for all forms of sustainable travel) that will be displayed:

**on vehicles**

which could be a decal on a side panel or a logo on the destination display;

**online** on journey

planning tools, on the Council's own website landing page and on operators' individual websites and apps

**on printed**

**materials** printed timetable booklets, timetable cases at bus stops and other assets

**at bus stops**

on a redesigned standard bus stop flag for the County's 4,000 bus stop locations

The marketing campaign will consolidate all of the short term actions set out below relating to fare promotions, journey planning and the updated bus service identity. As well as addressing bus passengers directly, the marketing campaign will seek to encourage new users to try the bus for the first time. It will also extend existing conversations

being held with major employers to ensure they do everything they can to influence the journey to work and in-work travel choices of their employees. This will build on work that operators and the county are doing with employers that is being co-ordinated by Liftshare.

## Integrated Journey Planner

**DFT Priority: A single local bus network with clear information**

Bus operators in Norfolk have a range of high quality, sometimes industry-leading online tools to promote their services and encourage people to use the bus. Many of these tools include a journey planner that allows people to understand the quickest way to make their journeys by bus. However these tools are typically limited to offering the services of just one operator, not the whole bus network available in Norfolk.

At commencement of the Enhanced Partnership in April 2022, or most likely before then, the County Council will conduct discussions with bus operators about creating a single fully-integrated journey planner to enable travel planning across Norfolk and into its neighbouring authorities, encompassing the services of all operators and building on what is already available through Traveline. This tool will require full co-operation between operators in order to use and combine the best available timetable and real-time data to enable journeys to be planned and tracked

across the county. This high quality data will be presented to the travelling public using the best available platform in use within Norfolk right now – or potentially a third party platform that operators agree to use to maximise the quality of the journey planning experience for passengers (a financial allowance has been included in case a third party tool needs to be procured by operators).

This integrated journey planner will be available on all places where people may go looking for information about bus trips – operators' own websites, the public transport landing page on the Council's website and many other appropriate locations on websites and within Apps. Options to include API feeds and widgets to maximise integration with other third party systems, including other travel planning tools, will also be explored. The integrated journey planner will be delivered by August 2022, to support the major marketing campaign.

## Single Customer Charter

**DFT Priority: Give passengers more of a voice**

Through the Enhanced Partnership structure, by September 2022 at the latest, all bus operators will agree a single county-wide Customer Charter that bus passengers can rely on when using bus services in Norfolk. The Customer Charter will be a live and well-publicised document that will provide a cornerstone of our significant marketing campaign to encourage people onto the bus, building on the current Norwich Bus Charter

that has been in place for many years.

The Customer Charter will provide a comprehensive set of expectations that passengers should have when using buses in Norfolk, based on the best-in-class standards available in the industry. The Customer Charter will set clear and precise expectations on at least the following matters:

**The minimum standards for bus services that can be expected across Norfolk**

**The standards of on-board facilities that can be expected**

**The operators' commitments to affordable and simple fares**

**The reliability of bus services that will be delivered by operators and the Council**

**The standard of accurate and timely information that passengers can expect when planning journeys**

**A straightforward direct point of contact for redress when things go wrong**

This Customer Charter will be widely publicised as part of the county-wide marketing campaign described above.

## Fares Offer for Young People

**DFT Priority: Lower and simpler fares**

Section 2 describes the range of fares and the level of fares charged for using the bus in Norfolk. Bus fares offer people good value for money for a wide range of journeys across Norfolk, however in common with many places the fares charged vary considerably depending on where people travel, how far they travel, which operator they use and whether they are eligible for fare discounts. Fares targeted at different travel markets mean that the totality of all fare products in the county can be dauntingly complex for new or irregular users. During the term of this BSIP decisions on any

major or lasting changes to fare levels or the range of fares products are made will remain with commercial bus operators, influenced by discussions conducted through our Enhanced Partnership Board. However we have discussed and agreed to look at some key sectors within the bus market in the immediate term, where lower and simpler fares could have a major impact on the attractiveness of our bus network.

The co-operation of all operators to engage positively in these talks has already been secured as part of developing this BSIP. The

nature of these aspirations mean that the County Council will need to take the lead in brokering unilateral and multi-operator discussions, to ensure that concerns about competition law are minimised.

Many operators offer discounted fares to young people in Norfolk, however the eligibility and type of discounts vary considerably, and a few operators do not offer a discount at all to 16-19 year olds or free travel to under-5s.

Between April 2022 and October 2022 the County Council will broker discussions with all bus operators to ensure that all operators have a consistent approach to offering a form of fare discount for under-25s (discounted or flat fare), under-16s (half or flat fare) and under-5s (travel free of charge) on every bus in the county. The offer of a discounted adult fare (typically for longer rural journeys) or a flat fare (typically for shorter urban journeys) will be regularised so that young people can easily understand what type of fare discount they can expect when travelling by bus.

The agreed common approach will then be introduced by every operator in Norfolk no later than April 2023. Where it will bring additional benefits to young people travelling by bus and where competition law allows it, agreements for common fares will be sought in corridors and across major conurbations where more than one operator provides services.

Introducing a consistent approach to the offer of under-16 fare products will be undertaken on a commercial basis by operators at no additional cost to the public purse. The extension of current under-19 fares to cover everyone under 25 will require a new concessionary reimbursement scheme to be put in place. Based on our current understanding of the under-25 market, we estimate that this reimbursement scheme will cost £200,000 to set up and a further £200,000 for reimbursements on an annual basis. The annual cost will grow as the number of under-25s travelling increases as a result of the scheme.

## Back to bus fares promotion

### DfT Priority: Lower and simpler fares

As part of our short term priority to encourage people back onto our bus services, the County Council will use DfT funding to reimburse operators for the revenue foregone during a significant short term fares promotion. Our current intention, which is to be finalised in discussion with all operators in the county, is to offer a deep discount for one week during the school half term week in either May or October 2022. Our request for DfT funding of £556,000 for this initiative assumes that every adult fare in Norfolk will be discounted to £1 per journey, with a commensurate flat fare discount applied to all child and young person journeys. The practicality of offering free travel for a week will also be explored.

The fares promotion will be backed up with the major marketing campaign described in Section 4.7 below. The details of the offer will be refined during the formulation of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes for Norfolk. It is plausible that such a deep discount might be sufficiently successful to entice additional passengers during the week in question such that some buses are filled and duplicate services may be required – in these circumstances, the way in which the cost of providing these duplicate buses will be agreed with operators in advance.

## Contactless on every bus

### DFT Priority: Seamless and integrated local ticketing

Every operator in Norfolk has agreed to implement a contactless payment system on every public bus by October 2022. This will ensure that every passenger in the county has the certainty of using a contactless bankcard to pay for any journey, and will also be a precursor to implementing a county-wide fare

capping scheme in the medium term. Cash will still be accepted on all buses, though people using cash will not be able to benefit from the best price fare cap system unless they choose and pay for a multi-trip product on their first journey of the day.

## Improved road network management

### DFT Priority: Significant increases in bus priority

There are a number of tasks that Norfolk County Council, as highway authority, working in partnership with seven district planning authorities, will undertake to ensure that buses are able to avoid delays more often on a day-to-day, often short notice basis. Further steps will also be taken to ensure that car parking and land use planning policies are aligned with the desired outcomes in this BSIP, ensuring buses have a fair chance of attracting more passengers in existing towns and new developments. These tasks are:

- **Better information about network delays** – the County Council will commit to informing operators and passengers in a timely manner when planned and emergency works affect bus operations, both the Council's own works and those of statutory undertakers. While systems are already in place for disseminating this information, additional resources will be delivered using BSIP funding to yield further improvements. We will work with utility companies to set challenging targets for identifying and informing stakeholders about emergency highway works, so that the impact on bus operations can be minimised by operators.
- **Better management of highways** – the County Council will work with operators to ensure that more buses can operate efficiently and safely throughout the year.
- **Better management of car parking** none the Council will commit to improving enforcement of on-street parking contraventions, which can delay buses greatly both when accessing bus stops and negotiating narrow urban and village roads. The Council will bring District Councils into this conversation to review off-street car parking provision and charges, including that of private operators, to ensure that using the car is not unduly benefited compared with taking the bus. The practicalities and potential benefits of introducing a Workplace Parking Levy in Norwich and other urban areas, to influence travel behaviour, will be considered as part of these discussions.
- **Moving traffic offences that hamper bus operations** none the Council will be applying for new powers to enforce moving traffic offences so that buses can be kept moving more efficiently through bus lanes, yellow box junctions, etc.
- **Monitoring transport patterns** none we are working with a local partner to develop

a video analytics tool, funded through an InnovateUK SBRI programme, that integrates with our existing highway CCTV SBRI programme to provide a detailed insight into sustainable transport patterns on our network, and identify areas where improvements can be made to bus journeys. This includes monitoring the amount of queue time in real-time and providing data to assist with traffic signal optimisation.

- **Planning policy** – the County Council will also work with District Councils to ensure that the needs of bus service operation are better integrated into planning decisions made by local planning authorities for larger development sites across Norfolk.

Norfolk County Council will use DfT funding to recruit additional staff and equipment to put these measures in place, spending an estimated £936,000 over the five year life of this BSIP.

## Network review and bus priority studies

Finally, the County Council will conduct a Bus Network Review Study and a Bus Priority Study for the county between April 2022 and October 2022, in readiness to identify, design

and mobilise delivery of the interventions and measures where bus priority should be delivered, as set out in the medium term measures below.

### 4.3 Supporting Lifestyle Choices: Medium Term Measures October 2022 to April 2025

#### The Supporting Lifestyle Choices measures in this BSIP will:

- Provide a far more consistent standard of bus services across urban and rural communities
- Implement highways measures that will improve the journey time and reliability of bus services
- Implement a multi-operator fare product range across Norfolk
- Install next stop announcements and displays in Norfolk’s buses
- Continue the roll out of the identity for all bus services in Norfolk
- Provide infrastructure that better integrates bus services with other bus services, rail services and micro-mobility modes

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
<b>high</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>moderate</b>

These measures are focussed on raising the standard of buses across the county to a new minimum, with many communities still benefiting from a service that far exceeds the minimum. These services will be able to operate efficiently and reliably thanks to new bus priority measures, and new integrated

fares will be delivered. The identity for buses in Norfolk developed in the short term measures will be extended, further enhancing the delivery of bus services as a single consistent and high standard network.

## Deliver consistent bus network standards

### DFT Priority: Intensive services and investment in key corridors

Our aspiration for this BSIP in relation to intensive services and investment in key corridors is to set minimum standards for basic bus service accessibility that all communities should be able to rely upon. This is part of our commitment to delivering a bus service across Norfolk that more people can build their lives around and travel by bus to support their day to day lifestyle choices.

To achieve this, we have agreed minimum standards that the BSIP will seek to achieve in partnership between the County Council and our bus operators. These minimum standards have been set for daytime services and off-peak services. The new standards to be adopted, which are already met in some corridors and occasionally exceeded, are:

Urban corridors in larger settlements	Town services	Inter-urban services (3 main settlements)	Inter-urban services (other settlements)	Rural settlements	Tourist destinations
daytime 6 buses per hour	daytime 2 buses per hour	daytime 4 buses per hour	daytime 2 buses per hour	Ranging from daytime 1 bus per hour to DRT service	daytime during tourist season opening hours
off-peak 2 buses per hour	off-peak 1 buses per hour	off-peak 2 buses per hour	off-peak 1 buses per hour	Ranging from off-peak 1 bus every two hours to DRT service	1 bus per hour, where that is operationally feasible

The timing of buses during each hour must be evenly spaced in order to achieve these standards.

Daytime services are defined as operating between 8am (or earlier in our larger settlements) and 7pm on normal weekdays and Saturdays.

Off-peak services are defined as operating in early weekday and Saturday mornings (between 6am and 8am), weekday and Saturday evenings (7pm to midnight), Sundays and Bank Holidays (excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years' Day when no services operate).

The key definitions for the minimum service standards set out above are:

- Urban corridors in larger settlements – Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.
- Town services none services in medium sized settlements with population around 10,000 or more.
- Inter-urban services (three main settlements) – services between Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn)
- Inter-urban services (other settlements) none services between adjacent towns, larger villages and other settlements with population around 5,000 or more
- Rural settlements – the size of rural settlements will determine the minimum standards that can be expected:
  - larger rural settlements can typically expect the upper range of minimum standards, where operationally feasible. The feasibility of routing inter-urban services via rural settlements will be considered on a case by case basis to ensure that significant detriment to the service's operation and its inter-urban passengers is avoided;
  - settlements with a population of 300 or more can expect a bus service at least once a day; and

- smaller communities will normally be served by at least a daytime DRT service.
- ◉ Tourist destinations – out of town tourist destinations that are not served by any of the above bus services, and which attract at least 200 visitors per day. The feasibility of services will depend on the ability of public access roads to carry buses, and the proximity of the destination to a public road where a bus stop could be safely located.

In order to achieve these standards, and provided DfT provides sufficient funding, we will follow a three stage approach to delivery:

- ◉ **Planning stage (Apr 2022 to Oct 2022)** – undertake a comprehensive review of bus networks to determine where standards are being met and where they are not being achieved, developing practical and affordable solutions to eliminate gaps. Where significant over-bussing is seen on the busiest corridors, the practicality of diverting resource to cover gaps elsewhere will be discussed with operators. The practicality of covering service gaps using DRT services, and of converting big bus operations to DRT in certain areas, will also be reviewed. Funding will be secured to continue support for the introduction of digital resources that will enable wider introduction of DRT services. Our funding also includes an allowance for continuing our work on encouraging people back to bus via the workplace, led by Liftshare.
- ◉ **Delivery stage (Oct 2022 to Apr 2023)** – use funding secured from DfT to support up to 60 additional buses across the Norfolk network, placing a focus on boosting daytime frequencies, early morning, evening and weekend services as well as communities that have very poor bus services well below the standards set out in this Plan. These new services

will be a combination of services trialled commercially by operators and those supported by BSIP funding, e.g. kickstart services, new secured bus services and new supported DRT services<sup>5</sup>.

- ◉ **Review stage (Apr 2023 to Apr 2027)** – review the enhanced bus network on an annual basis, amending or removing services that give particularly poor value for money or undertaking measures to increase patronage, and plugging new gaps where they appear as a result of, for example, the completion of major new developments.

In order to deliver this improved network we will take a stepped approach working closely with all bus operators in the county through the Enhanced Partnership structure:

- ◉ Operators will consider where they can increase services on a commercial basis without funding;
- ◉ Norfolk County Council will procure additional services using de minimis powers where that makes operational sense (being mindful of 25% spend limit);
- ◉ Norfolk County Council will tender additional services, or exceptionally entire services using EP powers where tendering a part service could be problematic on the road, where the kickstart and de minimis options are not available; and
- ◉ Norfolk County Council will commission DRT services to meet the aspiration set for rural communities.

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) provides an opportunity to provide public transport across large often rural areas where the provision of conventional bus services would be prohibitively expensive or impractical. DRT uses smaller vehicles that turn up to transport people when demanded. They may not ever reach levels of use that mean they are commercially viable without public subsidy

<sup>5</sup> In the event that DfT Bus Recovery Grant funding is terminated prior to passenger numbers and revenues returning to pre-COVID levels, this funding may need to be diverted to continue support for existing bus services rather than grow the network to meet our new minimum bus service standards.

but they can offer a cost-effective backstop for communities not served by traditional service buses.

The County Council is already introducing a DRT service in the environs of Swaffham thanks to Government support via the Rural Mobility Fund. The network review will identify further opportunities for introducing DRT services in the county and some of the 60 additional buses to be funded may be DRT vehicles. The BSIP funding plan includes a specific cost item to ensure that the back office systems are kept in place and can be scaled up

to cater for growth in our DRT network.

Although much work is still to be done to refine the outturn costs, we believe that this programme will require funding from DfT of £20.7m over the five year period starting April 2022. This funding will be matched by a commitment from Norfolk County Council to maintain its supported services budget at current levels of £3.2m per annum (£16.0m over the five year life of this BSIP), and a commitment from operators to consider up to five commercial schemes across the county.

## Agreed timetable change dates

### DfT Priority: Intensive services and investment in key corridors

Alongside improving the intensity of bus services, we believe that bus users in Norfolk will value a stable network that rarely changes, allowing people to plan their lives around using the bus for a reasonably long period into the future. For this reason we will ensure that all public bus services in the county will normally only see significant changes on a limited number of agreed dates every year, subject to agreement with operators. We are proposing to limit significant changes to just twice a year, and although the dates may vary across the county, will be adhered to by all operators and enforced through the bus service registration process and Enhanced Partnership.

We will agree with operators a definition of 'significant changes' however the County Council's position is that this should include changes to service frequency, changes to destinations served and changes to operating times during the week. Minor changes such as small retimings of services will be excluded, as

will changes precipitated by school opening/closure and the start/end of the tourist season. The County Council will consider exceptional calls for significant changes on a case by case basis, for instance because a service frequency needs to be improved or because a destination that has a significant impact on bus service patronage has closed.

Through the auspices of the Enhanced Partnership Plan, the County Council will consider carefully whether it should take responsibility for overseeing the registration of public bus services across the County, in order to help enforce this policy on significant timetable changes. If the responsibility were to be requested, the Council would have to seek further funding from DfT, which is not included within this BSIP, to cover the cost of transferring all administrative and management tasks associated with bus registrations from the Office for Traffic Commissioners to the County Council.

## Bus priority programme

### DfT Priority: Significant increases in bus priority

Our aspiration for this BSIP in relation to bus priority measures is to ensure that many more bus users travelling along key corridors can have a fast and reliable bus service irrespective of the prevailing general traffic conditions in that corridor. This is another aspect of our commitment to delivering bus services across Norfolk that more people can build their lives around, travelling by bus as part of their day to day lifestyle choices.

Norfolk already has bus priority on a number of corridors and as a result of funding received through the Transforming Cities Fund, three more cross-city corridors in Norwich will be upgraded with comprehensive bus priority investment. Our plan is to build on that ongoing investment and use further DfT funding to treat congestion points on at least one further corridor in Norwich, address pinch points in both King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth and tackle congestion hotspots in other towns and junctions across the county where buses are most disadvantaged as a result of being caught in congestion. The details of our programme will be determined during the first few months of the Enhanced Partnership, as detailed below.

Our proposed standards for bus corridors across Norfolk are:

- **Urban corridors in larger settlements** – along a corridor and at key pinch points, bus journey times in typical busy and more congested conditions should be no more than 10% greater than in quiet/uncongested conditions. So a bus corridor that has end to end journey times of 30 minutes in off-peak periods should experience journey times of no more 33 minutes in busier periods – given that boardings are likely to be longer in peak periods when more bus passengers are travelling, this means that peak and off-peak running times between stops should be largely the same in the majority of cases.
  - **Congestion pinch points in smaller towns and inter-urban corridors** – bus journey times in typical busy/congested conditions should be no more than 10% greater than in quiet/uncongested conditions. It is accepted that at busy junctions it is not always possible for buses to completely avoid delays, but that additional peak time delay should be kept to a minimum.
- In order to achieve these standards a number of staged actions will be delivered, subject to receiving sufficient funding from DfT:
- **Planning stage (Apr 2022 to Oct 2022)** – Norfolk County Council and bus operators will work together to commission a study that will use a full range of available traffic data, plus Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) data supplied by operators, to identify corridors and locations where journey times can be improved generally, and where congestion has a persistent adverse effect on passengers at peak times. This study will be used to identify bus priority and traffic signals schemes that can reduce the effects of congestion on bus services.
  - **Design stage (Oct 2022 to Apr 2023)** – Norfolk County Council, in collaboration with bus operators, will undertake design studies and consultations in order to prepare detailed plans and traffic orders for the measures that will be implemented to improve bus journey times and reliability. As part of the design process, provision of active travel facilities will also be considered where space is available.
  - **Delivery stage (Apr 2023 to Apr 2027)** – From April 2023 a programme of bus priority construction works will be enacted by the County Council, subject to the availability of DfT funding.

Norfolk County Council, as local highway authority, will take the lead in delivering this programme, building on the successes already

starting to be seen thanks to the Transforming Cities Fund investment in Norwich. Bus operators will play a crucial role in the provision of data and their insights at a day-to-day operational level about where and why congestion occurs that hampers bus services.

All bus priority measures will be assessed by the County Council to ensure they provide good value for public money, prior to their implementation. All measures will only be delivered once all democratic and regulatory processes have been completed, in line with normal practice.

A budget of £40.6m is proposed for the five years beginning April 2022, in order that the

network congestion study and resulting design processes can be delivered during 2022 and 2023, with construction of the first schemes in a £40m four year programme starting in the Summer of 2023. This budget has been produced based on the Council's detailed knowledge of opportunities and costs that it has learned from the Transforming Cities Fund programme, and from our discussions with operators about key pinch points in the county.

Norfolk County Council is seeking full funding for this programme from the DfT, with considerable local match funding coming in the form of new vehicle investment in the improved corridors.



## Better bus stop standards

### DFT Priority: A single local bus network with clear information

We propose a series of actions to improve the quality and consistency of bus stops in Norfolk, ensuring that a decent standard of service is given to more passengers waiting for, boarding and alighting their buses. This is the first stage of a more ambitious bus stop and bus interchange programme that the County will pursue in a future update of this BSIP.

The Council has developed categories for bus stops and interchanges across the county with what should be expected at each stop in each category. This will form the foundation of improvements to bus stops and interchanges in this programme, and further improvements that may be delivered within the lifetime of a future BSIP.

The categories are set out below:

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	PLATINUM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalities Act 2010 compliant boarding point</li> <li>• Safe crossing and disabled access including drop-kerbs</li> <li>• Bus stop flag</li> <li>• QR code linking to mobile bus departure board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalities Act 2010 compliant boarding point</li> <li>• Safe crossing and disabled access including drop-kerbs</li> <li>• Bus stop flag</li> <li>• Printed stop-specific timetable</li> <li>• QR code linking to mobile bus departure board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covered waiting area e.g. bus shelter</li> <li>• Equalities Act 2010 compliant boarding point</li> <li>• Safe crossing and disabled access including drop-kerbs</li> <li>• Improved public realm including additional seating provision and lighting</li> <li>• Cycle parking provision</li> <li>• Bus stop flag</li> <li>• RTPI stop-specific departure display with audio announcements/disruption messaging</li> <li>• Printed stop-specific timetable</li> <li>• QR code linking to mobile bus departure board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covered waiting area e.g. bus shelter</li> <li>• Equalities Act 2010 compliant boarding point</li> <li>• Safe crossing and disabled access including drop-kerbs</li> <li>• Improved public realm including additional seating provision and lighting</li> <li>• Cycle parking provision</li> <li>• CCTV</li> <li>• Bus stop flag</li> <li>• Real-Time Passenger Information (RTPI) departure summary display</li> <li>• RTPI stop-specific departure display with audio announcements/disruption messaging</li> <li>• Printed destination finder/route finder</li> <li>• Printed stop-specific timetable</li> <li>• Multi-modal travel information</li> <li>• QR code linking to mobile bus departure board</li> </ul>

The details of how stops will be assigned to each category will be discussed and agreed with partners when the Enhanced Partnership is operational from April 2022 onwards.

Linked to the new identity for bus services in Norfolk, we propose to replace all bus stop flags in the county with a single design that accommodates the identity, provides basic up to date information about services (stop name, single journey planner website, Traveline details, etc) and provides space for local

tailoring to show any relevant route-specific branding and service numbers. This flag replacement programme will be completed by 2025, subject to funding, and provide a key element of the single identity look and feel for bus services across Norfolk. Where a bus stop does not currently have a bus stop flag, a new pole and flag will be provided where that is safe and permissible. At busier stops the programme will also provide printed timetable cases that reflect the new identity for buses

in Norfolk, which will include consideration of installing e-ink digital timetable cases at key stops. A funding ask to DfT of £2.5m has been allocated to this programme, which will provide a major step forward towards achieving the standards set out above.

More widely, we have allocated a considerable sum of £1.8m to fund the general upgrade of bus stops across the County so that many more can meet the tiered standards set out in the chart above.

At our busier bus stops the Council will commence a programme of enhanced bus stop maintenance, in conjunction with district and parish councils where appropriate, to ensure that decent standards of safety and cleanliness are maintained. This programme will ensure that all required lighting facilities are working, that damage is made safe rapidly and repaired in a timely manner and that stops

and shelters are kept clean wherever possible. A budget of £500,000 in 2022/23 has been set to fund this maintenance programme, which provided funding is received from DfT will recur during the life of this BSIP. The potential to rationalise the number of bus stops in some corridors will be explored as part of setting up this maintenance programme, which may also contribute to the improvement of bus journey times.

The Council will also continue to introduce real-time bus arrival displays at more bus stops around the County, building on the investment already seen in key corridors and at key boarding points. A budget of £750,000 has been requested from DfT to cover the costs for a three year programme to install more displays (about 25) at bus stops and interchanges.

## Multi operator fares with common zones and fare capping

### DfT Priority: Seamless and integrated local ticketing

Building on the rollout of contactless payment on every bus in the first six months of this BSIP, the County Council and all operators will work together to introduce a comprehensive suite of day and week multi-operator tickets across the county. The feasibility of also adding monthly and term-time multi-operator products will also be considered. It is proposed that the introduction of these products will be based on contactless payments on boarding and tapping out on alighting.

A structured approach, building on the work of DfT's Project Coral<sup>6</sup>, will be followed to:

- Define the products to be offered (day and week tickets for adults, young people and under-16s).
- Define what methods of payment and

identification will be accepted, ranging from contactless bankcards to pre-loaded 'dummy' contactless cards and QR codes on apps.

- Determine what additional infrastructure will be required on buses, an allowance will be made for capital expenditure for tap-on tap-off posts on all buses operating in the county.
- Define the business rules for accepting payments, capping to the best value fare product and reconciliation of income to each operator.

Where zonal fares are offered by operators in our main conurbations, discussions will be brokered by Norfolk County Council with a view to ensuring that the boundaries of zones used by every operator coincide. This

<sup>6</sup> In line with the DfT's Guidance on BSIPs, we have assumed that all back office systems required to implement a multi-operator fare capping system based on contactless payments will be funded centrally and will not require a financial contribution from this Norfolk BSIP.

is primarily to avoid confusion for passengers who may wish to choose between multi-operator tickets and own-operator zonal ticket products.

It is intended that this process will have been completed and a suite of multi-operator fares will be implemented across Norfolk by April 2025 at the very latest. This will require considerable co-operation between the County Council and all operators, building on the work being undertaken by DfT to examine the practicalities of multi-operator ticketing and fare capping based on contactless bankcard payments. To implement this aspiration the County Council will require financial support from DfT for the introduction of tap-on tap-off

readers on every bus.

We will also investigate options to integrate multi-operator bus tickets with opportunities to use car hire and car clubs, bike hire schemes, e-bike schemes and e-scooter schemes.

In the longer term, the range of multi-operator tickets and the geography of any fare zones will be reviewed to ensure they are optimised and remain relevant to the needs of the travelling public. The Council and operators will also embark on discussions with Great British Railways to examine the practicalities of introducing multi-modal bus/rail ticketing products in Norfolk, building on the existing Plus Bus offer.

## Better service integration and hubs

### DfT Priority: Integration with other modes

The complexities of changing bus timetables and changing rail timetables mean that integration of bus and rail arrivals and departures has proved extremely difficult for many years. We intend to open discussions with bus operators and rail operators to improve significantly upon the current situation.

Our aspirations in this BSIP are to achieve minimum standards for:

- **Connections between bus services at interchange hubs** to facilitate seamless travel using more than one service, be it a conventional public bus service or a DRT service. This will include significant investment in up to three market towns over the next three years.
- **Bus connections at major railway stations** to facilitate onward longer distance travel.

We will commence work towards these aspirations during 2022 by reviewing the main bus-bus and bus-rail interchange points across the county and develop a minimum standard of infrastructure that encompasses fixed and real-

time information, safe and covered waiting facilities, cycling and walking links, wayfinding standards and provision for DRT services as well as buses. This is clearly closely related to the new platinum bus stop standards set out above.

Having identified the important interchange hubs, we will commence a programme of improvements from 2023 onwards, subject to receiving funding from DfT, so that the standards can be achieved across the county on a consistent basis. Allied to this, we will conduct discussions between operators to ensure that where key connections are made at interchange hubs to facilitate onward travel across the county, timetables are co-ordinated as far as can reasonably be expected to ensure timely interchange.

In the longer term we will also facilitate discussions between bus operators and Great British Railways so that similar timetable integration can be explored and implemented at the most important bus-rail interchanges.

## Next stop announcements and displays

### DfT Priority: Modern buses and decarbonisation

Bus operators and the County Council have committed to begin implementing next stop announcements and displays during 2022 with a view to rolling them out on the majority of buses by the end of 2023, providing funding is forthcoming from DfT through this BSIP. Implementation is likely to be completed ahead of the legislation requirements set out in the 2017 Bus Services Act and will enable more passengers with hearing or sight problems to know when they are approaching their stop and will also bring benefits to all bus passengers by alerting them to the identity of the next stops on their service.

The County Council is already working with a contracted supplier (Nexus Alpha) and operators to develop innovative ways of delivering next stop announcements via mobile phones, as well as via low-power on-board displays and announcements. This will ensure that a full range of information is available to passengers about their alighting stop, and may also reduce the potential for constant spoken announcements on certain services.

A budget of £1.5m has been allocated to the introduction of next stop announcements and displays on 70% of our buses, based on the typical cost of retrofitting these systems to older vehicles and ensuring they connect to on-board geolocation systems via the ticket machine. It is anticipated that ongoing costs to maintain systems and keep the announcements up-to-date will be funded by operators based on the growth in fare revenue that they will receive from this investment.

Allied to the introduction of next stop announcements and displays, the bus operators and County Council in Norfolk will agree, via the Enhanced Partnership structure, a minimum standard of on-board facilities that will be achieved for all buses operating in the county. These minimum standards will be delivered on a commercial basis and are likely to include the provision of wheelchair space, wifi, mobile phone charge points, sufficient luggage space (a key issue in tourist areas) and maintaining the highest standards of on-board cleanliness and sanitation. The agreed standards will be reflected in the new Customer Charter and will start to be delivered from 2022.

## 4.4 Towards Net Zero for Buses: Longer Term Measures April 2025 to April 2027

### The Towards Net Zero for Buses measures in this BSIP will:

Deliver a progressive improvement in tailpipe emissions from buses, building on the progress already made across all operators

Begin the introduction of zero emission buses and the requisite charging/fuelling infrastructure in the County

### The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
<b>low</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>low</b>	<b>none</b>

We believe collectively that the greatest contribution that buses can make to achieving a Net Zero transport system is to get people out of their cars and using the bus more – the short and medium term measures set out already in this chapter focus on that. However while massive strides have been taken to reduce emissions from diesel buses over the last 20 years, a move towards zero tailpipe emissions would provide a huge step towards

achieving environmental goals.

Our aspirations for this BSIP are to:

- Reduce tailpipe emissions from diesel buses by introducing more modern buses and retrofitting older buses where appropriate and affordable
- **Begin to decarbonise the bus fleet** by introducing 100 zero emission buses in Norfolk by 2027

### More modern buses

#### DFT Priority: Modern buses and decarbonisation

The bus operators across Norfolk will continue to invest in newer Euro V and Euro VI standard vehicles and explore opportunities to retrofit older vehicles so that their operational life can be extended while achieving Euro V/VI emission standards. These fleet replacements, fleet cascades and retrofit plans will be developed by each operator on a commercial basis and co-ordinated by the Enhanced Partnership so that a fair and well-planned introduction of these newer vehicles is followed.

For its part the County Council will be specifying a higher standard of vehicles on its

supported services contracts from April 2022 onwards, requiring at least Euro V vehicles from April 2022 and Euro VI from April 2025, in order to ensure that emissions from the operation of secured bus services are reduced.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the introduction of new vehicles matches investment in bus priority programmes as set out in Section 4.2. In addition, care will be taken to ensure that new and retrofitted vehicles are also introduced in rural areas where bus priority measures will be less prevalent but where air quality is equally important.

## Zero emission buses

### DfT Priority: Modern buses and decarbonisation

During the lifetime of this BSIP a major investment in zero emission buses will commence in order to start decarbonising and further reducing tailpipe emissions from the bus fleet in Norfolk. The technology and distance range of zero emission buses is still developing rapidly, and because many buses in Norfolk travel long distances every day in rural areas many of our operators wish to wait for further development of zero emission buses before committing to their operation. However First Bus is ready now to introduce zero emission buses in Norwich if suitable ZEBRA funding can be released by DfT.

Building on our ZEBRA ambitions, Norfolk County Council and bus operators wish to introduce 50 new zero emission buses in 2025/26, with a further 50 new zero emission buses the following year. Funding will be

required for the additional cost of buying a zero emission bus compared to a Euro VI bus as zero emission buses are likely to still attract a premium price that cannot be fully recovered through operating cost savings.

Funding will also be required for the installation of suitable charging infrastructure (for battery electric buses) or fuelling infrastructure (for hydrogen fuel cell buses). Where such infrastructure is installed, steps will be taken to ensure that a wider selection of vehicles can benefit from the charging and fuelling facilities, beyond just buses – for example local authority fleets and local companies with zero emission fleets.

In total, a sum of £21m is to be sought to fund this zero emission bus programme between 2025 and 2027.

## 4.5 Contributing to DfT Priorities

The BSIP Guidance published by DfT sets out in paragraphs 67 to 106 the key topics that are priorities for Government. The tables below show how the measures and schemes in this

BSIP contribute to delivering against those key topics and how that relates to the delivery of our BSIP objectives.

### DfT Key Topic: Intensive services and investment in key corridors

#### The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:

Deliver better bus services, on a more consistent basis, to urban and rural communities across the County

Ensure bus timetables are more stable and can be relied upon to make lifestyle choices

#### The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
<b>high</b>	<b>moderate</b>	<b>high</b>	<b>none</b>

### DfT Key Topic: Significant increases in bus priority

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Deliver infrastructure and technology to improve bus journey times, allowing buses to avoid congestion and operate more reliably

Improve a range of highways and parking management functions so that delays to bus services can be better addressed

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
high	low	high	none

### DfT Key Topic: Lower and simpler fares

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Improve the fares offer for important sectors of the travelling public

Use fares promotions to encourage people back onto the bus

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
high	none	moderate	high

### DfT Key Topic: Seamless and integrated local ticketing

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Facilitate clearer and consistent methods to pay for bus fares and understand what tickets are right for each passenger

Create multi-operator fares that match the complex travel needs of many people relying on the bus

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
moderate	moderate	high	high

## DfT Key Topic: Integration with other modes

### The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:

Improve the way in which bus timetables integrate at key locations, and provide improved infrastructure and information at those interchange points, including integration with bike hire, e-bike hire and e-scooter hire

Begin a discussion about full integration between bus and rail timetables

### The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:

Rebuild and increase passenger confidence	Green and sustainable transport	Public transport as first choice mode	Simple and affordable fares and ticketing
moderate	low	moderate	low

## DfT Key Topic: A single local bus network with clear information

### The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:

Deliver short term actions to encourage people back onto the bus, creating a common identity for Norfolk's buses

Implement measures to allow seamless planning of day to day and occasional journeys by bus, irrespective of operator, using the best technology available

Begin a programme to improve the standard of bus stops

### The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:

Rebuild and increase passenger confidence	Green and sustainable transport	Public transport as first choice mode	Simple and affordable fares and ticketing
high	low	high	low



### DfT Key Topic: Modern buses and decarbonisation

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Implement next stop announcements and displays as soon as possible to aid all passengers including those with sight and hearing difficulties

Deliver a progressive improvement in tailpipe emissions from buses, building on the progress already made across all operators

Begin the introduction of zero emission buses and the requisite charging/fuelling infrastructure in the County

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
low	high	low	none

### DfT Key Topic: Give passengers more of a voice

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Deliver a clear and consistent Customer Charter that will increase passenger confidence about what they can expect from bus services and what happens when things go wrong

Continue to provide passengers and their representatives with a voice to help shape their bus services

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
moderate	moderate	high	high

### DfT Key Topic: Demand responsive and socially necessary transport

**The measures and schemes in this BSIP will:**

Introduce Demand Responsive Transport services to meet individual travel needs in rural areas where conventional bus services are not viable

Continue to work with community transport operators to provide demand responsive travel to groups of people who struggle to use normal bus services

**The BSIP objectives achieved by these measures and schemes are:**

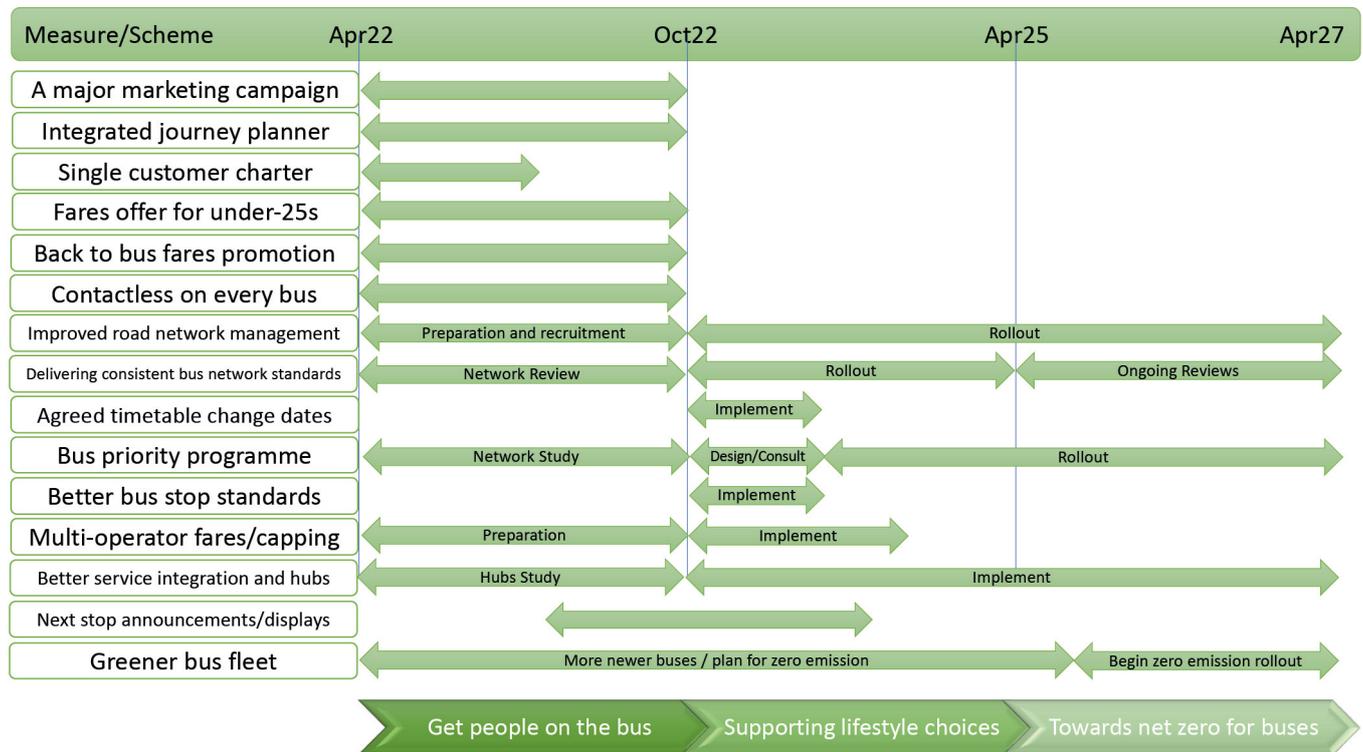
<b>Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</b>	<b>Green and sustainable transport</b>	<b>Public transport as first choice mode</b>	<b>Simple and affordable fares and ticketing</b>
moderate	low	high	none

## 4.6 Longer Term Transformational Schemes

At present the County Council and operators have not identified any long-term transformational schemes, such as Bus Rapid Transit corridors, that they wish to include in this BSIP.

## 4.7 Summary of Schemes

The chart below shows the delivery timescales for the headline schemes in this BSIP, showing how proposals in our three time-bands interact and integrate to deliver a better bus offer to the people of Norfolk.



The table below provides a simple summary of the BSIP proposals alongside the funding streams that will enable their delivery, with funding coming via DfT grant and local contributions over the next five years (2022-2027).

Measure	BSIP Capital	BSIP Revenue	Local contribution
Major marketing campaign and an identity for buses	£0.500m		Operator co-operation
Integrated journey planner	£0.200m	£0.691m	Operator data feed and advice
Single customer charter	£0.030m		Operator agreement
Fares offer for Under-25s		£1.225m	Operators to agree commercial commitment
Back to bus fares promotion		£0.556m	Operator reimbursement data
Contactless on every bus			Operators to complete roll-out
Improved road network management		£0.937m	Assistance with tree-cutting, reporting/ detection
Deliver consistent bus network standards		£21.037m	Commercial trials for 5 services operated by up to five buses
Agreed timetable change dates			Operator agreement
Bus priority programme	£40.600m		New vehicles deployed to improved corridors where feasible
Better bus stop standards (flag, timetable, RTI)	£3.250m	£2.655m	Operators and NCC to apply identity to bus stops
Multi-Operator Tickets with Fare Capping	£0.600m		DfT/operators provide back office systems and implement common fare zones, GBR commit to discussions with NCC
Better service integration and hubs (interchange hubs, bus stop upgrades, 3 market town bus station upgrades)	£11.825m		Operators implement timetable integration, GBR commit to discussions with NCC
Next stop announcements and on-board standards	£1.621m		Operators to arrange install programme
More modern buses			Operator investment plans continue, up to £20m of new vehicle investment already planned in Norfolk
Zero emission buses	£21.000m		Purchase cost for equivalent Euro VI bus
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£79.626m<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>£27.100m<sup>8</sup></b>	

7 2022/23: £2.805m, 2023/24: £17.171m, 2024/25: £25.850m, 2025/26: £16.900m, 2026/27: £16.900m

8 2022/23: £5.431m, 2023/24: £6.911m, 2024/25: £5.517m, 2025/26: £4.553m, 2026/27: £4.689m

# 5.0 Delivering the BSIP

The measures and schemes in this BSIP will be delivered via an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s). Norfolk County Council commenced the formal process for forming an Enhanced Partnership in June 2021 by publishing a notice of intention for all bus operators.

## 5.1 Forming an Enhanced Partnership

The measures and schemes in this BSIP will be delivered via an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s). Norfolk County Council commenced the formal process for forming an Enhanced Partnership in June 2021 by publishing a notice of intention to all bus operators. As of October 2021 an Enhanced Partnership Board is currently being formed, building on the regular all-operator meeting conducted by the County Council throughout the development of this Plan – more details of the Board are below.

The process of forming and consulting on an Enhanced Partnership is a considerable one and Norfolk County Council has recruited an officer to play a key role in delivering the necessary process between November 2021 and the intended start date of April 2022. This BSIP will form the basis of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s) to be consulted and agreed during that process.



## 5.2 Progress Reporting

The Enhanced Partnership Board will receive a report every six months prepared by Norfolk County Council officers that sets out:

- The key achievements of the previous six months;
- The planned measures and schemes to be implemented in the next six months;

- Progress against meeting target outcomes; and
- As a result of the above matters what, if any, changes and additions to the Enhanced Partnership Scheme(s) should be considered.

## 5.3 Enhanced Partnership Board

The Council has already made progress in identifying a suitable independent chairperson for the Board. As of October 2021 the bus operators in Norfolk are discussing how they will be represented on the EP Board. It is currently proposed that the Board will consist of seven representatives from a range of large and small operators spread across the county, and seven representatives of the Council drawn from portfolio holders and executive

officers with responsibilities for public transport and buses.

It is anticipated that the Board will have an independent chairperson and will consider whether there is a case for inviting other representatives onto the Board, taking care to preserve the balance of operator and Council representatives.

## 5.4 A Voice for Bus Passengers

The Enhanced Partnership Plan will provide the opportunity for bus passengers and their representatives to have a greater say in shaping bus services so that they better meet the needs of communities. Whilst the details of these enhanced engagement channels will be the subject of detailed discussion when preparing the Enhanced Partnership Plan between November 2021 and April 2022, the headlines will include:

- Engagement at executive level between the Council's elected members and bus operators through the Enhanced Partnership Board.
- Improved engagement through the provisions of the Single Customer Charter.
- Passenger forums that allow bus users and their elected representatives to bring ideas and issues to the attention of the EP partners.

# 6.0 Overview Table

As requested by DfT, a BSIP overview is provided below.

<b>Name of authority or authorities:</b>	<b>Norfolk County Council</b>
<b>Franchising or Enhanced Partnership:</b>	Enhanced Partnership
<b>Date of publication:</b>	31 October 2021
<b>Date of next annual update:</b>	31 October 2022
<b>URL of published report:</b>	<a href="https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses">https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-transport/buses</a>

<b>Targets</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Target for 2024/25</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Journey time</b>	To be determined by Bus Priority Study	To be determined by Bus Priority Study	Difference between peak/offpeak times < 10%	
<b>Reliability</b>	Awaited	Awaited	99.5%	Services commenced their timetabled journeys
<b>Passenger Numbers</b>	28.162m	28.911m	29.492m	Return to 2019/20 levels by March 2023, then 1% growth per annum thereafter
<b>Average passenger satisfaction</b>	89%	89%	95%	

Delivery – Does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes/ No	Explanation
<b>Make improvements to bus services and planning</b>		
<b>More frequent and reliable bus services</b>		
Review service frequency	Yes	Network review proposed during 2022, funding requested to enhance service levels to new minimum standards
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	A bus priority study will be followed by a £40m investment programme, building on TCF investment
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	DRT will be a key part of achieving minimum service standards in rural areas
Consideration of bus rapid transit networks	No	No suitable corridors have been identified yet in Norfolk.
<b>Improvements to planning/integration with other modes</b>		
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	Proposals to enhance interchange hubs, bus/rail interchanges, and to incorporate other sustainable transport modes like walking and cycling
Simplify services	Yes	Will form part of the whole county network review study
Review socially necessary services	Yes	Will form part of the whole county network review study
Invest in Superbus networks	No	No suitable corridors have been identified yet in Norfolk.
<b>Improvements to fares and ticketing</b>		
Lower fares	Yes	Back to bus fares discount and under-25 fares
Simplify fares	Yes	Simplify under-25 fares
Integrated ticketing between operators and transport	Yes	A new multi-operator product suite built around fare capping using contactless payment
<b>Make improvements to bus passenger experience</b>		
<b>Higher spec buses</b>		
Invest in improved bus specifications	Yes	Operators will purchase new and cascade owned vehicles of higher standard than those replaced
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services	Yes	Rapid rollout of audio-visual announcements and displays on buses in Norfolk
Protect personal safety of bus passengers	Yes	All vehicles equipped with CCTV
Improve buses for tourists	Yes	A specific element of the Minimum Bus Service Standards.
Invest in decarbonisation	Yes	100 zero emission buses from 2025 onwards, subject to gap funding
<b>Improvements to passenger engagement</b>		
Passenger charter	Yes	Single charter for all operators in Norfolk
Strengthen network identity	Yes	A single identity for all buses, bus infrastructure and bus information in the county
Improve bus information	Yes	A single journey planner for all services, and improved printed/real-time information at stops



**Norfolk County Council**