

WEST | MAYORAL
OF ENGLAND | COMBINED
AUTHORITY

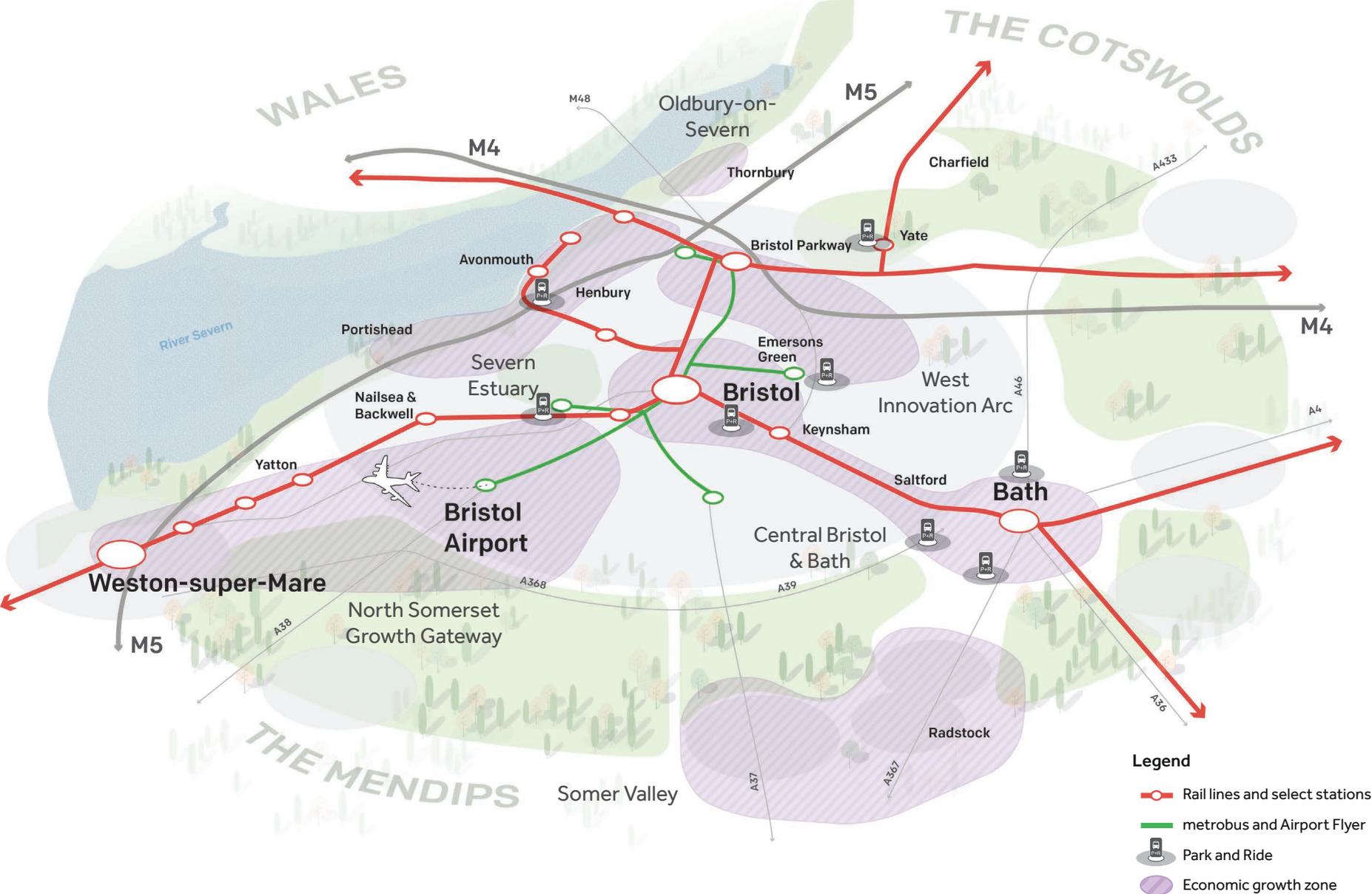
WEST OF ENGLAND TRANSPORT VISION

February 2026

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Our region's current transport network and future growth zones



A TRANSPORT NETWORK YOU CAN TRUST



We all know that the West is best – but, too often, our transport isn't. As the country's fastest growing region, we've been stuck in the slow lane for too long. It's time to tackle congestion, potholes and missing buses.

In this new chapter, we need a transport network that people can trust, wherever they live, and to get our region moving.

With over 250 new green buses due by the end of 2026 and more train stations being built, we must harness this momentum and can look forward with genuine optimism.

Wherever you're travelling, we need to invest so you can rely on how you get there. Because our transport network should improve our quality of life, with people able to seamlessly switch between different types of transport and have the option to tap-on and tap-off so they never pay more than they should.

Nobody wants to sit stuck in traffic or hang around waiting for a bus that never turns up. Our record transport investment secured from government

must make a difference. We can give people their time back: to be home sooner, get out into nature more, or visit the many attractions that make our part of the world so special.

Transport is also a big part of our Growth Strategy, because we need the right network to link communities with opportunity. Better transport can unlock more investment, create jobs, boost productivity, and drive further economic growth.

Our vision is for a better-connected West of England.

- Better buses: reliable, affordable services with one ticket and one timetable
- More trains: new stations and more frequent services with low-emission trains
- Mass transit: a high-capacity system that links our key economic centres
- Active travel: better walking and cycling routes, with e-bikes/e-scooters there for short trips
- Improved streets: smoother roads and pavements, more electric vehicle chargers, Park & Rides and travel hubs linking transport options

The West is currently the biggest city-region in the country without mass transit, or a commitment to it. High frequency services along dedicated routes will mean reliability, whether it's a tram, light rail, guided bus, or something else that gets people around. That won't appear overnight, but we are determined to start building within four or five years.

We need a transport system that keeps pace with our ambitious, growing region. That means securing more funding, as well as continuing to inspire more people to take public transport and then, crucially, to keep using and trusting it.

Together, we can and must deliver the integrated transport system that people need and deserve. The future starts here.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Helen Godwin'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

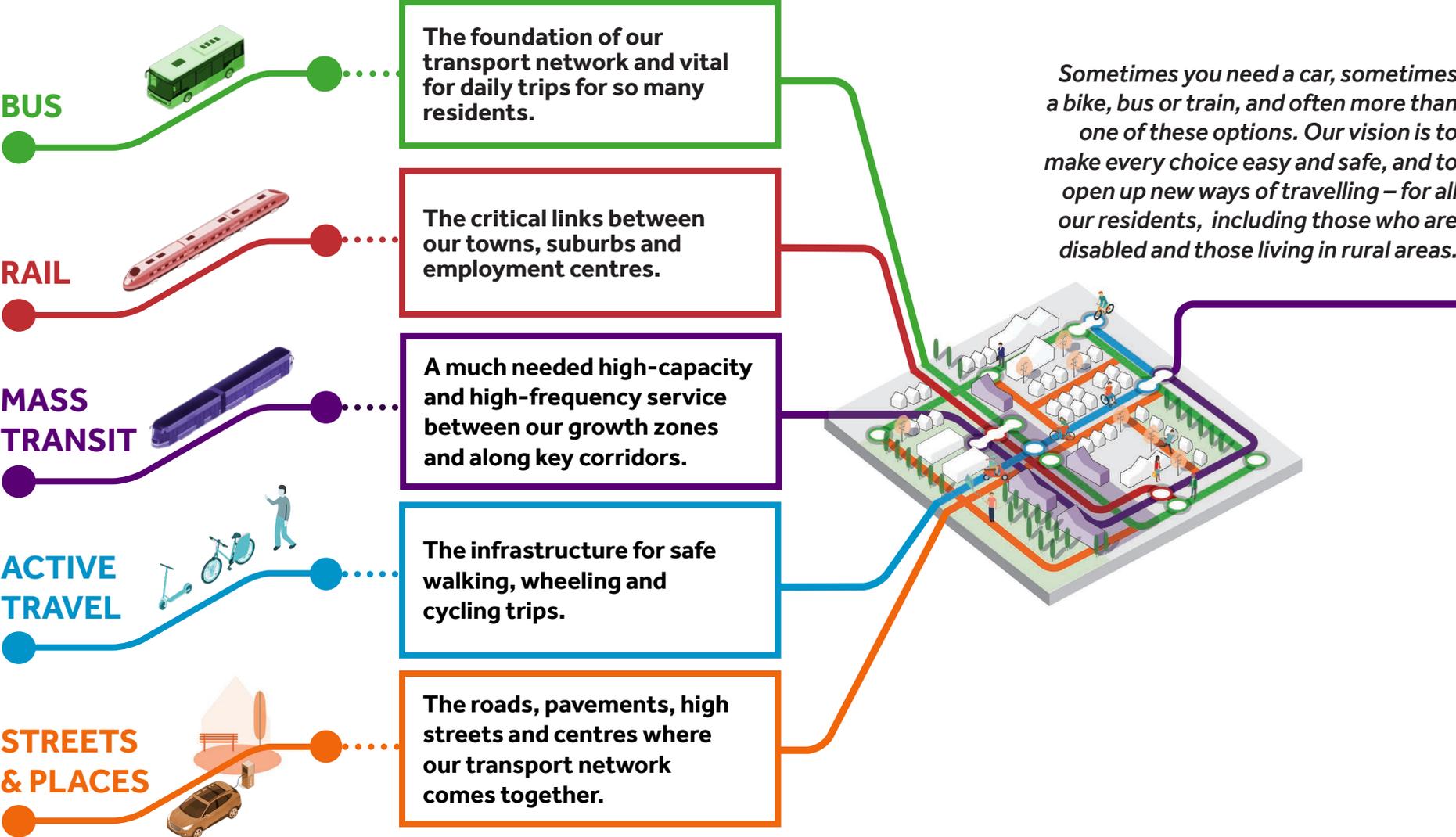
Helen Godwin
Mayor of the West of England

Our vision at a glance

Our future network will be one that...



The layers of our transport system will function as a seamless and interconnected network...



Bold ambition: ready to deliver

Improve our buses:

The foundation of our transport network.

1. Work with others to deliver 'one ticket' that allows you to use all buses across the region, expanding to other modes over time
2. Develop affordable ticketing initiatives that provide support to the most vulnerable people in our communities, especially disadvantaged and young people
3. Work with partners to deliver more buses, new routes and longer operating hours across the network
4. Coordinate timetables to reduce waiting times and make connections between services more reliable, including in rural areas
5. Support Highway Authority partners in delivering bus priority measures to enable quicker and more reliable journeys
6. Invest in our buses to make them more sustainable and accessible
7. Work with partners to help you feel safer on buses, including through better lighting and enhanced driver training on managing anti-social behaviour
8. Explore new approaches to managing our bus network, including through greater local control
9. Deliver a guaranteed level of service for all communities

Expand our rail systems:

The critical links between our places within and beyond the region.

1. Deliver the long-awaited Portishead line, creating a new link for over 50,000 people
2. Deliver new stations at Charfield, North Filton and Henbury
3. Continue to explore the case for other new stations to enhance our suburban rail service
4. Increase service frequencies on key routes
5. Work with the Department for Transport and Great British Railways to secure new trains for our region which will reduce emissions, improve journeys and the passenger experience
6. Maximise the opportunity around our stations, including by supporting the potential new town at Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc

These actions are not listed in priority order.

Deliver mass transit:

High-capacity, high-frequency services enabling sustainable journeys.

1. Advance the business case at pace to develop a detailed blueprint for mass transit
2. Remain open to different modes: tram, light rail, guided bus or metrobus extensions
3. Commence delivery of the first projects within 4-5 years
4. Deliver a segregated, high-quality and high-frequency mass transit network
5. Use this network to link up our key corridors and growth zones, such as Central Bristol & Bath, Severn Estuary, Somer Valley, the North Somerset Growth Gateway and the West Innovation Arc
6. Maximise the private investment that we secure into this opportunity

Improve our active travel:

The infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling.

1. Deliver targeted enhancements on key local streets
2. Increase the number of school streets to 23 by 2028, nearly doubling what we have now
3. Enhance the role of emerging choices like e-bikes and e-scooters
4. Enhance active travel facilities by providing more cycle hangars
5. Create a dense network of high quality walking and cycling routes
6. Integrate these routes with other modes, including connections to bus and rail stations
7. Work collaboratively to deliver on the joint mayoral ambition for a national active travel network
8. Supporting infrastructure investment by building on the work we do to make people feel safer and more confident on bikes
9. Developing an approach to pavement parking using new powers to ensure our pavements are used effectively

Enrich our streets & places:

The places where our transport network comes together.

1. Deliver a transport system that supports green growth and enhances quality of life for communities by being low carbon and resilient to the impacts of climate change
2. Support schemes that provide more green space, appropriate shading, better amenities, good lighting and enhanced biodiversity
3. Work with partners to improve the quality of our roads and pavements and invest in ongoing maintenance, reducing potholes and trip hazards
4. Roll out electric vehicle charging in more places, more quickly
5. Support initiatives that make most efficient use of our limited road space, including temporally throughout the day
6. Deliver Park & Ride and other interchange hubs that create safe, simple and efficient places for changing between transport options, opening up choice in where you can travel
7. Embrace technology and use of data, including through the use of AI and data analytics to make timetables work better



01 Our region is primed for growth

The West of England is a special place where quality of life meets economic ambition.

Offering a blend of vibrant urban centres and rural landscapes with outstanding natural beauty, our region is a magnet for talent and innovation, powered by four world-class universities, a growing clean energy sector and a booming creative sector with global reach.

We're a national growth opportunity, with strengths in advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, creative industries and the everyday economy. Our population is growing faster than the national average and with expanding opportunities, the region is a destination of choice for global talent and investment.

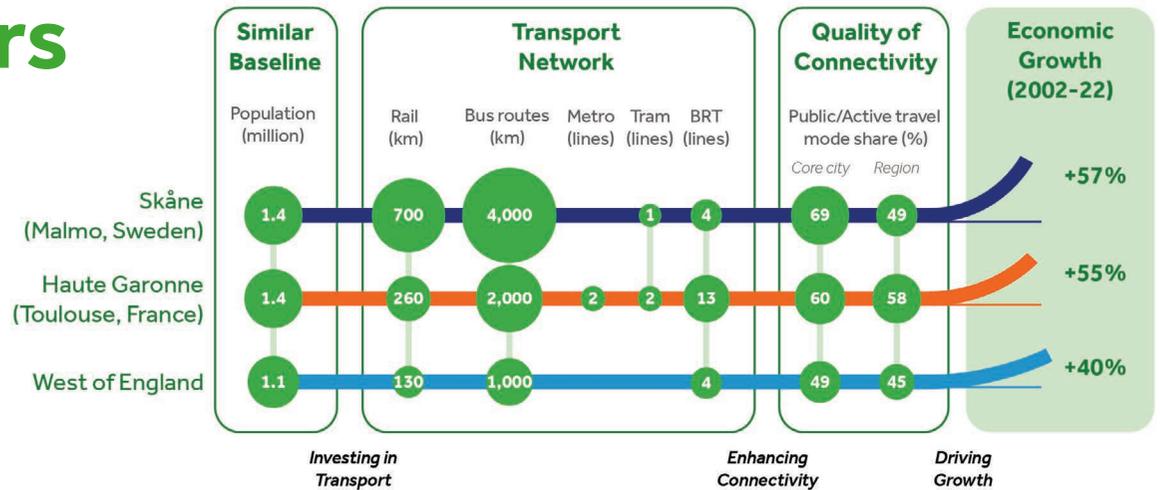
We are also one of the UK's leading tourism destinations, with global visitors flocking to places like Bath, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that welcomed 5 million visitors in 2024.

Our Growth Strategy sets out our plan for the next decade. It's the next stage in our journey to deliver sustainable growth for the benefit of people and places across the region. A core element of this strategy is the identification of five 'growth zones' – places that will be central to our decade of growth, opening up a wealth of new opportunities for businesses and residents across the West of England.

High-quality transport is a vital enabler for this ambition – connecting our growth zones and powering the future prosperity of the entire region.

Learning from others

Other global regions have demonstrated that a strong transport vision can drive real transformation. The city-regions of Toulouse, France and Malmö, Sweden are a similar size to the West of England. They have both made sustained investment over the past 20+ years to deliver their transport visions, resulting in much more comprehensive networks than we have today. Their economic performance reflects this vision-led investment, with growth rates significantly higher than we have seen in our region.



Haute-Garonne (Toulouse)

Toulouse invested heavily in transport over 30 years to tackle congestion and unlock economic potential. The city had a sustained vision to build an integrated multimodal network, now consisting of metro lines, tramways, 135+ bus routes, a bike share system, and France's longest urban cable car. These upgrades improved the attractiveness of the city for inward investment and talent, helping Toulouse become one of France's fastest-growing economies. Public transport use has increased and car use declined, and over 30% of trips are now made on foot. The region is investing a further €3.1 billion in a third metro line, due to open in 2028.

Skåne (Malmö)

Faced with industrial decline, Malmö embraced a bold transport vision to drive economic renewal. In the last few decades, the city delivered major infrastructure such as the Øresund Fixed Link, connecting Malmö to Copenhagen and unlocking a cross-border labour market, while the City Tunnel transformed Malmö Central into a through-station with new underground stops. Rail upgrades, alongside a bus rapid transit system and plans for full fleet electrification, repositioned Malmö as a regional innovation hub. Economic output grew 80% between 2012–2022, outpacing regional and national averages.



02 A critical moment: Why we need this vision

We must address pressing transport challenges to unlock our ambitions.

Over the past few decades, travel has grown significantly, almost doubling day-to-day since the early 1990s. This reflects how communities have expanded and how mobility underpins daily life. Roads have been improved and new ones built to keep people moving, but space is limited and demand continues to rise, as investment has not kept up with need.

Looking ahead, forecasts suggest car use could increase by nearly 30% in the next 20 years, which would mean longer journeys, more delays on public transport, and challenges for air quality and resilience.

We do not have enough high-quality travel choices in our region, in both urban and particularly rural communities. This means many people are forced to drive for everyday needs.

For the 1 in 5 households that don't have a car, too often the services they rely upon are infrequent or unreliable, which impacts on job opportunities and quality of life.

We are facing a climate emergency. Despite technological advancements, greenhouse gas emissions from transport have remained stubbornly high, accounting for nearly half of the region's total emissions.

The network does not work well enough for those with disabilities of all types, from physical to neurodivergent, for whom getting to work, education, and healthcare can be a daily challenge. The same can be true for the elderly or those travelling with small children.

Too many people are unable to afford well-connected housing. This creates longer trips for many and means we miss out on the productivity gains that come from better connecting people to employment and services, alongside the social impacts of long journeys.

Only 50%
of residents
are within 30
minutes of a major
employment centre
by public transport

2 of 10
most congested
UK cities are in
our region

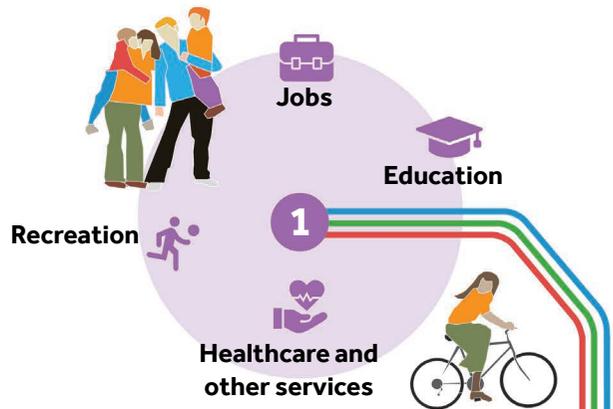
44%
of emissions
in the region
are caused by
transport

The case for change is clear. This transport vision sets out a blueprint for what this change needs to look like. There are big choices ahead, but if we are all working together with common purpose towards a common goal, we can create a stronger and more prosperous region for all.

The case for change

Our transport challenges are not only frustrating on an individual level, but also impact our region's economy, communities, health, and environment.

We need to travel for... ..



... which makes everyday life harder

Some jobs not accessible; unreliable transport can have career impacts

Economic

Social

Sustainability

Difficulties visiting friends or accessing health and other services; less time with family

No choice but to drive for many destinations

... leading to serious consequences for our region.

But there are challenges in our current network ...

Not enough affordable homes near transport

Don't feel safe or comfortable cycling; gaps in network

Accessibility

Active Travel

Public Transport

Services too infrequent; stops too far; rural areas not well served

Roads

Often too congested

Lower regional productivity

Higher transport emissions

More people & children living in poverty

Less healthy communities

**WHAT
DOES IT
MEAN FOR
YOU?**



Delivering our ambitions will bring real improvements to quality of life and economic opportunity...

Ahmed and his wife Zarah love their new home in Lyde Green after downsizing from Downend. They enjoy travelling into Bristol by metrobus but still rely on their car to visit their son and grandchildren in Stoke Gifford and for Zarah's part-time job at Cribbs Causeway.

In the future, improved bus routes around the ring road to Brabazon and Cribbs Causeway could provide quicker, easier access around the north of Bristol. This would reduce their reliance on driving as they get older and allow their grandchildren to visit them safely and independently.

Zarah and Ahmed
Lyde Green



Josie lives in Emersons Green and works in customer service at Bristol Airport. Diagnosed with MS, she is now using her wheelchair more often but is keen to continue in a job she loves, with strong support from her employer. Currently, she usually drives to work, which is costly due to fuel prices and can be stressful in rush hour traffic.

A dedicated mass transit route to the airport could significantly improve Josie's independence especially as her condition progresses, offering accessible, reliable transport with space for her wheelchair as well as passengers' luggage, and taking her directly to the terminal at any time of day.

Josie
Emersons Green



...for everyone in our region

Emma lives in Portishead and works as an administrator at City of Bristol College. She has teenage children who socialise in Bristol, and her elderly parents live in Bath. Currently, she relies heavily on her car. While buses from Portishead are good at peak times, they are less suitable for her children travelling in the dark. She also drives to visit her parents.

The new Portishead rail line will transform travel for her family. Emma and her children will use the train to reach Bristol for work and social activities, and her parents can visit Portishead by train via Bristol Temple Meads.

Emma
Portishead



Finn lives in Knowle West and was thrilled to secure an apprenticeship at Airbus after leaving school. It was his dream job and something he worked hard to achieve. However, his commute is tricky: he currently takes two buses, which are often crowded, slow due to traffic, and sometimes take nearly two hours. He has been late on occasion, and a current standard single ticket doesn't cover both buses, which makes his commute more expensive.

In the future, this will be very different. Finn lives just 15 minutes from Temple Meads by bike or e-scooter, allowing quick access to the station and a train to the new station at North Filton, only a short walk from Airbus.

Finn
Knowle West



John is retired and lives in a village near Radstock, not far from his grandchildren in Bath. He mostly depends on his electric car for travelling to the village, going to the rugby and heading to the odd medical appointment. His wife uses a walking stick, and they are concerned about the quality of local pavements.

New charging points in the region mean that he can now charge his car at or near all of his usual destinations, saving him time and peace of mind. When he wants to leave the car at home, amenities in the village make walking safer and more pleasant, and the improved bus service has also made it easier to get to Bath.

John
A village near
Radstock



Building a life and career with a network you trust

Finn's story



Finn is born and raised in the West of England and wants to have an exciting career here, but the current transport network is holding him back. Our future network will open up new opportunities for him and his family.

● Apprentice at Airbus in Filton

Finn loves his job but the commute is challenging. He gets two buses from Knowle West, and was late a few times due to traffic not long after starting his job.

He now leaves more time for travel but that means getting up earlier than he would like, and he sometimes gets home late too.

2026

● Accredited engineer at Airbus, with an improved commute

Better public transport has transformed his commute. He can now get to Temple Meads by bike, e-scooter or bus, then catch a train to North Filton.

Work is more exciting too. He's now an accredited engineer, and can feel a real buzz of activity from being part of the growing West Innovation Arc.

2030

● Buying a home, raising a family

Finn has bought an affordable first home in the new district around Bristol Temple Quarter. With young children at home, having frequent and reliable transport to nursery is critical – enabling piece of mind for him and his partner.

As they grow up, he can see the benefits of the new school street at their local primary, and he's confident that improved bus services will make independent travel possible for his children.

2040

● Senior director at a major engineering firm in Bath

Finn has moved jobs and is now working on major projects around the world, as a global leader in his field.

Mass transit gets him quickly to the office in Bath and to Bristol Airport when he needs to travel abroad. These links have also boosted the airport's attractiveness, with more destinations now on offer for holidays with the family.

2050

What this means for our places

Rural bus services will be there when you need them, providing links to vital services.

School streets will give parents confidence that their children can safely and comfortably get to school by walking, wheeling or cycling.

You will feel safe on the network thanks to better lighting, more public presence across longer hours of service, and drivers who are trained to intervene in unsafe moments.

'One ticket, one timetable' will mean you can buy one ticket that works across all buses, with a timetable coordinated to minimise waiting.

For the first time in our region, you will experience high-quality, high-frequency mass transit.

An integrated and connected network with new rail stations and better interchanges will give you more choice about how to travel.



Villages

Towns

Cities

A vibrant night market scene with a large crowd of people walking through a street. The street is illuminated by colorful lights, including a prominent rainbow light display in the upper right. In the background, a Ferris wheel is visible, and the buildings are decorated with lights. The overall atmosphere is festive and bright.

**DELIVERING
A BRIGHTER
FUTURE...**

...through better journeys for everyone



'The new station at Brabazon has made my commute so much easier.'



'We feel much more confident taking the bus to visit family.'

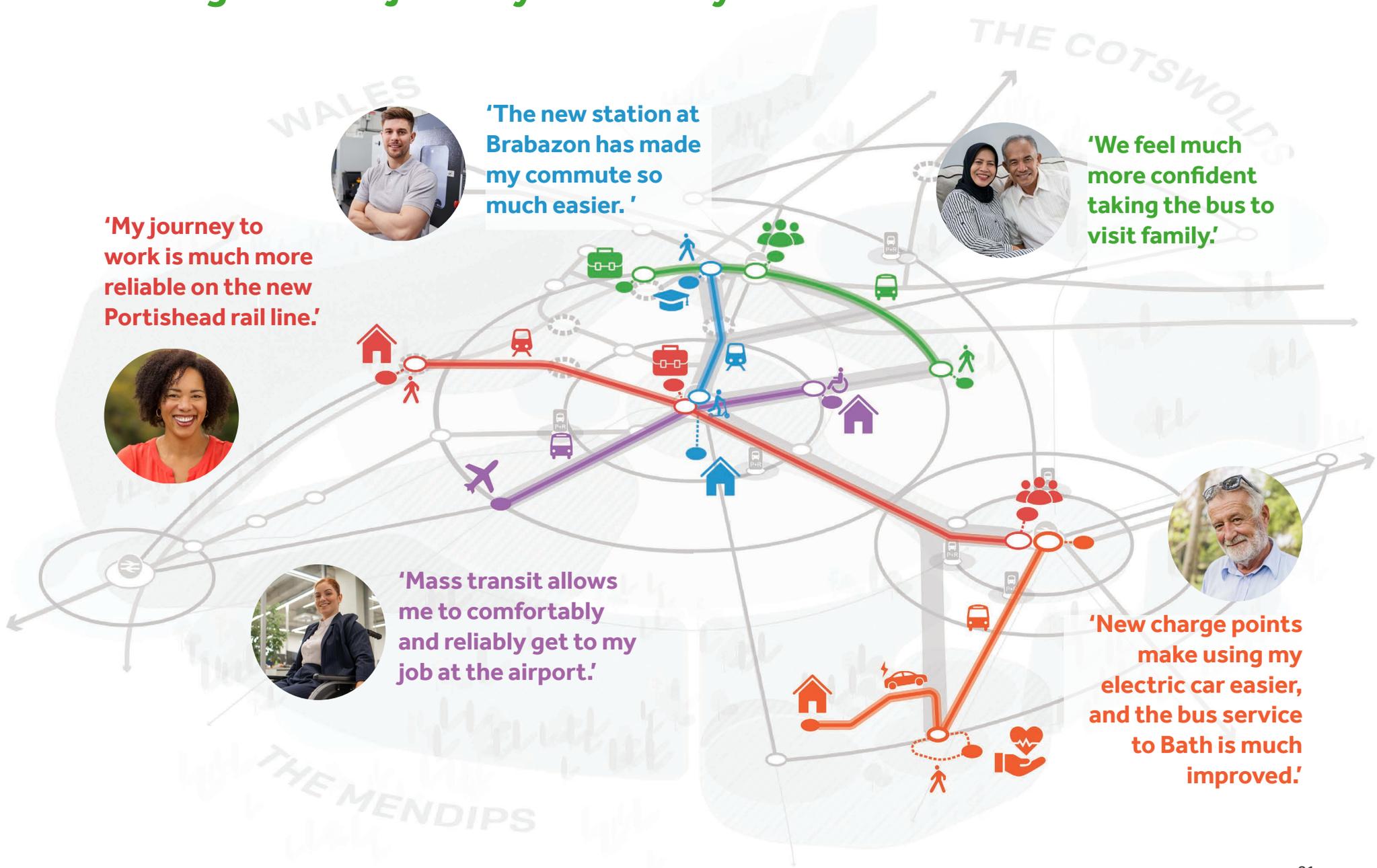
'My journey to work is much more reliable on the new Portishead rail line.'



'Mass transit allows me to comfortably and reliably get to my job at the airport.'



'New charge points make using my electric car easier, and the bus service to Bath is much improved.'



03 Our ambitions

A network...

...you can trust

You can rely on a bus or train arriving when it should. And if you miss your service, you will be confident another one will be along soon.

You can feel safe walking, wheeling, cycling or driving on well-maintained streets and pavements.

You know loved ones will always arrive safely to their destinations, and they will be able to travel without fear of harassment or physical danger.

You will always be able to access key services in the region, when and where you need them, regardless of where you live.

You can trust in the accuracy of 'real-time information' at stations and stops throughout the region and on journey-planning apps.

...that is affordable, efficient and simple to use

You can buy one affordable ticket that will enable you to tap-on and tap-off across multiple services, so you never pay more than you should.

You can interchange across multiple modes of transport at transport hubs with coordinated timetables that reduce waiting times.

You will travel on more comfortable, modern buses and trains. These will be low emission and air-conditioned, equipped with technology that improves the passenger experience.

...that offers more journey choice

You will have more options that work for your needs, regardless of where you live or your type of journey.

You will have more sustainable travel choices that contribute to achieving the climate and nature priorities of the region.

You will experience less congestion on roads for journeys by car, but will also have options and greater freedom to leave the car at home.

You will enjoy better air quality and consequently improved health outcomes in your community.

...that enables our region to thrive

You will have more options about where to live and better access to opportunities in new growth zones.

You will experience improved daily transport options, including in rural communities, as well as having reliable options for orbital journeys.

You will benefit from better movement of goods and more efficient deliveries for businesses, helping our region to become even more attractive for inward investment.

WEST will be a transport system you can trust – integrated, connected, and seamlessly linking together our villages, towns and urban centres

...that is ready for the future

You can use the latest mobility technologies, helping you get around more efficiently, affordably and sustainably. This may mean new individual mobility options such as e-bikes and e-scooters, as well as buses and trains that will continue to improve with new technology. The network will promote sustainable travel choices that support us in meeting our climate action and resilience commitments.

You will benefit from a network that uses AI and advanced data analytics to improve operational performance.

Our ambitions

45%

of commutes will be made by active travel or public transport

80%

of people will be within 30 minutes of a major employment centre by public transport

100%

of people will be within a 10 minute walk of a public transport stop



04 Building the vision

Our transport vision relies on making each 'layer' function as it should, for urban and rural communities.

Our goal is to make sure everyone has practical, reliable choices for how they travel. This means each of the layers need to function more effectively as an integrated network, allowing you to combine the best travel options for getting to your destination safely, quickly and affordably.

Our vision is about creating a system that works for everyone, where buses, trains, bikes, scooters, walking, and wheeling feel as natural and convenient as driving. This will provide residents and visitors with the freedom to move in a way that best meets their needs, while building healthier, cleaner and more resilient communities for the future.



The foundation of our transport network and vital for daily trips for so many residents.



BUS

The critical links between our towns, suburbs and employment centres.



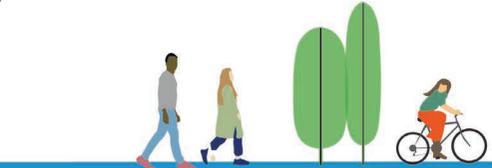
RAIL

A much needed high-capacity and high-frequency service between our growth zones and along key corridors.



MASS TRANSIT

The infrastructure for safe walking, wheeling and cycling trips.



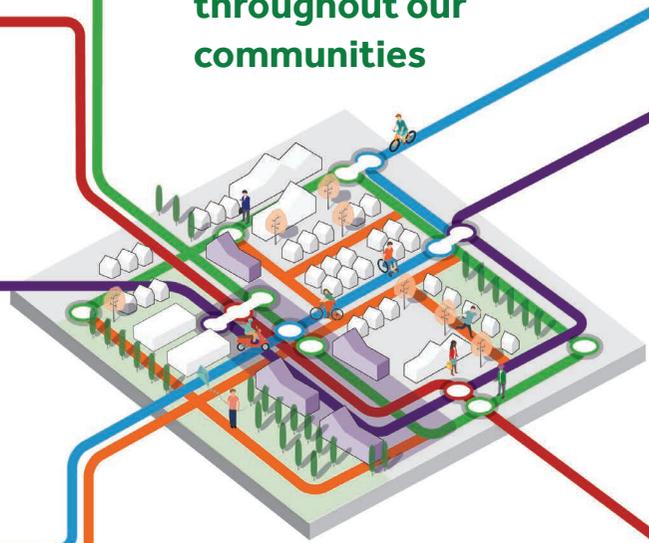
ACTIVE TRAVEL

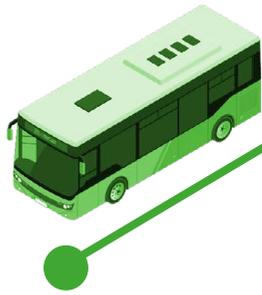
The roads, pavements, high streets and centres where our transport network comes together.



STREETS & PLACES

Seamless connections between these options throughout our communities





5,978
bus stops in
the region

77%
of customers
satisfied in 2023
(89% in 2017)

69m
bus journeys
in 2024/25

Our bus network today

Buses are the foundation of our region's public transport system.

Providing connectivity across the region, the network and its services are vital to our residents. Passenger numbers have recovered strongly over recent years, with 64 million passengers on our buses in 2023/24, and we're targeting a return to pre-pandemic levels in 2025/26.

However, too often our residents are let down by the quality of the bus service. Only three-quarters of buses ran on time in 2022/23, well below other regions and below our own targets. Traffic is the biggest cause of these delays.

The reality is that residents do not always feel they can trust the bus network. Customer satisfaction was down to 77% in 2023. The network has a lack of real time information, inconsistent routes, and sometimes even 'ghost' buses that don't turn up. Often people don't feel safe travelling on buses, particularly women and girls and especially during hours of darkness.

We need to urgently fix this so that bus becomes a travel mode of choice. This means making improvements to routes, ticketing, fleet, facilities and information. All of these changes will come together to make taking the bus not just a viable option for your journeys, but a first choice.

'Improved bus journeys along the ring road have made it easier for us to get around, so we rely less on driving, and our grandchildren can travel safely to visit us.'

Ahmed and Zarah
Lyde Green

Our future bus service

Our vision is for everyone to have access to bus services that reliably connect them to jobs, services and leisure.

○ Immediate priorities

Alongside partners, we've made a £150 million investment in a distinctive new fleet of green buses for a smoother, quieter and more reliable ride. Our free bus travel for children during summer and Christmas holidays was transformational, supporting nearly 1.1 million free journeys and enabling more people to move independently and gain new life skills.

We are looking to build on this initiative and considering future concessions for disadvantaged young people – to make public transport more affordable, helping household budgets stretch further.

We will deliver seamless journeys with 'one ticket, one timetable'. You will be

able to buy one ticket that can be used across operators and routes throughout the West of England, eliminating the complexity and cost of changing between services. Timetables will be coordinated, making connections more reliable.

More frequent buses, extended routes and longer operating hours are being introduced across the network, including hourly night buses. We will support Highway Authority partners in delivering bus priority measures to enable quicker and more reliable journeys.

We will also focus on making sure people feel safe on our buses. This will include working with partners to deliver enhanced driver training, working with the police and crime commissioner to reduce violence and crime, particularly against women and girls, and deliver better waiting environments, for example with better lighting for our bus stops.

MORE RELIABLE

MORE ROUTES

EASIER TO NAVIGATE

CLEANER AIR & LESS NOISE

○ Long-term priorities

Our aim is to create a bus network that brings a guaranteed level of service to all communities across the region, including rural areas.

We will consider the most appropriate type of bus service for each area, be it a fixed bus route, demand responsive transport (like WESTlink), or community transport, and building interchange hubs where it will be safe and comfortable to change onto another bus where needed. This will bring reduced journey times, more reliability, greater passenger satisfaction, and more zero-emission buses.

Delivering this may mean adopting new approaches to managing our bus network. We will consider options that include greater local control over bus timetables, fares and vehicle quality. We will also extend tap-on, tap-off across modes so passengers never pay more than they should.



25m
rail passengers
in the region
per year

100,000
more people
gaining access
through new lines

£43m
annual economic
benefit from the
Portishead line

Our rail service today

Our suburban rail network provides high-quality links into key urban centres.

Regional rail usage has increased by 130% since 2000 – with some 25 million annual journeys in our region.

However, too few communities currently benefit from easy access to the rail network. Overall, only half of our residents can access a major centre within 30 minutes by public transport. New lines, stations and services are needed to expand this opportunity to many more people.

We need to upgrade our stations, particularly older ones, to ensure they

are easier, safer and more convenient. This includes step-free access onto platforms, so that stations are fully accessible to all passengers.

We also need to enhance the quality of our network. This means more frequent trains and a new battery/electric fleet to make journeys greener, quieter and smoother, transforming the customer experience.

We are already making major improvements to the rail network. Two new stations have recently been delivered – Portway Park & Ride and Ashley Down. The final phase of enabling works is underway for the long-awaited return of the Portishead Line with construction starting in 2026.

‘The new rail link makes my commute much easier and finally we’re connected to the wider rail network, which makes life better for the whole family.’

Emma
Portishead

Our future rail service

We have real momentum, with a £400m programme of rail upgrades underway.

○ Immediate priorities

We are making huge investment in our railway: five new stations on top of the two recently-opened; five new or enhanced services; and step-free upgrades and other enhancements to major stations such as Bristol Temple Meads. We want to see similar improvements at other key stations such as Bath Spa.

We will open new stations at Portishead and Pill, creating a new link for over 50,000 people and halving journey times. Two more stations are planned at Charfield and Brabazon, while planning permission has been granted for Henbury station. We will explore opportunities for other new stations, including working with partners for those just beyond our borders.

○ Long-term priorities

We have secured funding for long-term improvements to the network. We are looking to increase service frequency on key routes. Decarbonisation of services will reduce emissions. Tap-on, tap-off will be extended to local rail services alongside other modes, so passengers never pay more than they should.

We are also maximising the opportunity around stations. Bristol Temple Meads is part way through a major upgrade, supporting one of the largest and most exciting brownfield development opportunities in the country at Bristol Temple Quarter.

A new station will unlock the major economic growth area at Brabazon, a key part of the West Innovation Arc, identified as a potential 'new town'. The region will also benefit from a

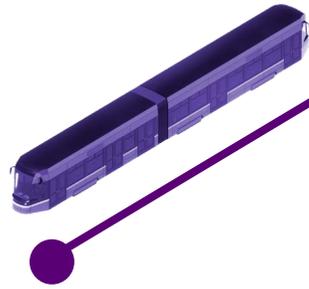


transformed Bristol Parkway station and surrounding area.

We want to deliver this kind of growth at more stations, maximising their potential as interchanges and making the most of their role as nodes of activity for communities and businesses. This includes improving connections to our stations.

Our rail network is complex, with a number of organisations that set policy, own infrastructure, run services, and more – most of which extends beyond our borders.

Government's reforms to the rail sector, including the creation of Great British Railways (GBR), will simplify this landscape and provide us with greater ability to influence improvements to our network. We welcome the opportunity to work with GBR to help make these reforms a success and deliver better outcomes for our communities.



7,000
additional morning
peak hour journeys
into Bristol alone
by 2055

Only 50%
of the region's
population can
access a major
centre within 30
minutes by public
transport

2nd
most expensive
average commute
in the UK when
taking public
transport into
Bristol

The need for mass transit

The West of England is behind peer cities in the UK and abroad in providing high-quality mass transit.

We are the largest city-region in the country without a committed or operational mass transit system, and Bristol Airport is the largest airport in the UK without a fixed mass transit link. The National Infrastructure Commission identified the region as one of the four places in the UK most in need of mass transit investment.

Beyond the UK, approximately 23 cities in France that are smaller than Bristol have a mass transit system. A similar situation exists in other European

countries such as Germany and the Netherlands (for instance Utrecht, a region similar in population to the West of England, has three tram lines serving more than 40 stations). Centre for Cities found that less than 50% of Bristol's population can access the city centre within 30 minutes by public transport; the European average for similar-sized places is more than 70%.

This is an historic failing that holds back our region's global competitiveness. With the number of jobs in Bristol city centre alone projected to grow by over 15,000 by 2055, and in Bath by 9,000 over the next 10 years, we need to urgently increase public transport capacity.

'Dedicated mass transit routes would give me accessible and reliable travel that enables my continued independence and allows me to continue in the job that I love.'

Josie
Emersons Green

Our future mass transit

HIGH QUALITY

HIGH FREQUENCY

DELIVERABLE

INTEGRATED

Our vision is to finally deliver the mass transit network the region needs.

Our Growth Strategy sets out the areas of the region that are most suitable for significant levels of new homes, offices, education and recreational space – our ‘growth zones.’ We need to connect people to the new opportunities that will be delivered in these places, while also enabling them to move around the wider region quickly and efficiently.

High-quality mass transit is an essential ingredient to achieving this. ‘Mass transit’ means public transport services that run frequently, provide plenty of seats, offer comfortable vehicles with modern amenities, and are more reliable by having dedicated operating space. As set out in this vision, our intent is to pursue single

ticketing across modes and aligned timetables, enabling easy interchanges between different travel options.

Mass transit could take different forms in different places, based on what best meets the characteristics of each corridor: trams, rail, metrobus, guided buses, or other options. The right answer for each place will depend on several factors, including physical road space, costs, travel demand, and scale of growth planned for the area.

We have got funding to invest in mass transit to deliver the breakthrough that the region needs. We are working quickly to develop a 15-year plan for mass transit for all of our economic growth zones, with an ambition to start delivery of the first projects within 4-5 years. Achieving this will require our region to make a unified and compelling case to government for further investment. We also need to explore opportunities for innovative

funding and delivery mechanisms with the private sector.

Our current focus areas

Potential areas for future mass transit are set out in our Growth Strategy, and include:

- the West Innovation Arc (WIA); for instance, we are looking at increasing rail frequency between the WIA and Bristol Temple Quarter, as well as orbital routes
- the Bristol and Bath Growth Zone (A4 corridor)
- the North Somerset Growth Gateway, including the airport
- improved public transport connections to the Somer Valley Growth Zone
- linking key locations across Bristol city centre, including enabling seamless onward journeys from Bristol Temple Meads

What mass transit could look like

High-quality bus-based solution.

Comfortable and accessible vehicles that look and operate similar to trams, for instance with longer vehicles, multiple entry / exit points, low floors, smooth ride quality, and running on segregated roadways.



Tram or light rail solution.
Small, electrically-powered
rail vehicles generally
running on fixed tracks.



Illustrative imagery only. Actual alignment, stop locations, and other design and planning details subject to development as part of business case progression, including public consultation and other activities.



Only 8%
of commutes are
made by walking
or cycling

40,000
more people
now have access
to e-bike and
e-scooter zones

10
more school
street projects
by 2028

Our active travel today

Walking, wheeling* and cycling are critical enablers for our entire transport system.

'Active travel' – or walking, wheeling or cycling – is arguably the most critical mode of transport. At a minimum, every journey starts or ends with an 'active' mode. Higher levels of active travel in communities has been demonstrated to have significant positive benefits for both health and environmental outcomes. It is free or low-cost to travel this way, and active travel infrastructure is largely cost-effective.

Too often though, people don't feel that these journeys are safe or attractive. We want to create safe and stress-free interactions with traffic, particularly at junctions and crossings.

There are too many potholes, while journeys are hindered by pavement parking and a lack of dropped kerbs and tactile paving. Facilities for securely storing bikes often aren't good enough, particularly for adapted bikes.

Walking, wheeling or cycling should feel easy and safe - for everyone. This is particularly important on routes to key destinations such as schools and hospitals.

We need a wider network of high-quality cycle routes across our region, connecting more people to the places they need to be. We also need more accessible pavements and crossings. This will bring benefits to people as individuals and also ease pressure on other modes, invigorate our local centres, and reduce emissions.

'I feel much less stressed about getting to work on time. Depending on how I feel or the weather, I can cycle, scoot or get the bus to connect with the train.'

Finn
Knowle West

* The term 'wheeling' refers to travelling as a pedestrian through the use of wheeled mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, prams and buggies or mobility walkers.

Our future active travel

SAFE ROUTES

ATTRACTIVE ROUTES

BETTER FACILITIES

EASE OF USE

Our vision is for walking, wheeling or cycling to be a natural choice for more people and journeys.

○ Immediate priorities

We are working with partners to maintain our increased capability rating, which has recognised our region's commitment to active travel. This will include developing a programme for the £12m that has been secured to deliver targeted enhancements on key local streets, which builds on over £70m already committed.

More space is being provided for pedestrians and cyclists and connecting Bath Quays Links with the city centre, as well as on Victoria Street in Bristol. These build on the success of other popular local schemes. Pilot schemes for improved wayfinding are also being explored.

We are continuing to deliver school streets. These make school journeys safer and healthier by temporarily closing streets to non-essential vehicles. Working with partners, we're planning to introduce 10 new school streets by 2028, taking us to 23 across the region.

The distinct, green-painted cycle lanes, as delivered in South Gloucestershire, should be a model for our region. We will deliver the right cycle infrastructure that reflects the unique conditions and needs for different types of roads and urban environments.

We will support micro-mobility, with e-bike and e-scooter zones recently expanded to serve 40,000 more people and a clear plan for when the e-scooter trial period ends. Alongside this, we are enhancing active travel facilities including more cycle hangars.

We also know that encouraging more people to walk, wheel or cycle requires more than just infrastructure. Working with partners, we will also look at training and education offerings, as well as publicity to make sure people know what options are available to them.

○ Long-term priorities

Our ambition is for walking, wheeling and cycling to become the first choice for many more people - whatever their background. This means using all the tools available to create a dense network of high-quality routes. These routes will be integrated with other modes, dramatically improving the first and last mile of journeys.

We will continue to work with local councils and Active Travel England to deliver this – building on the joint mayoral ambition for a national active travel network.



2 of the 10
most congested
cities in the UK

44%
of emissions come
from transport, the
largest contributor
in the region

No. 1
cause of bus
delays is traffic
and congestion

Our streets and places today

Our transport network comes together in our streets and places.

Our streets are where journeys of all modes come together – they are not just for vehicles, they are places for people to live, meet and move safely. On roads and pavements, along high streets and in villages, people should feel comfortable making journeys using a range of different modes.

Currently though, the network is not as integrated as it should be. Bus and rail timetables don't align, while different ticketing systems are in place across our range of operators, making it hard to make seamless journeys. Road and utility works need to be better coordinated to minimise disruption to local businesses and residents.

Our road network has some of the worst congestion in the UK, with an estimated cost of £151 million in Bristol and Bath last year. This impacts the wider transport network, contributes to emissions, and holds back growth.

At a larger scale, our transport network is not serving all of our region well enough. This slows down housing delivery and limits the number of places people can live with good connections to jobs and services.

Proper integration of our public and active transport networks will enhance our streets and places. This will lead to greener, safer, and more accessible villages, town centres and high streets that people want to spend time in – enabling our region to thrive.

'Most of my journeys are by electric car, but I struggle to find convenient places to charge it, and I don't feel confident making longer journeys by bus or rail.'

John
Village near Radstock

Our future streets and places

BETTER STREETS

THRIVING PLACES

EMBRACING DATA

SAFE FOR ALL USERS

Our vision is to create high-quality streets and places for people.

○ Immediate priorities

We are supporting schemes to provide more green space, appropriate shading, better amenities, improved lighting and enhanced biodiversity. Our one stop transport hubs are making multi-modal journeys easier.

We want to get more people onto public transport, but recognise some people will always need to use cars. We want this to have as minimal impact on the environment as possible, so we're working to roll out electric vehicle charging in more places, more quickly.

We will work with partners to maintain and improve the quality of our roads

and pavements so that journeys are more comfortable.

We will support initiatives that ensure parking is available for those that need it, while ensuring we use our road space as efficiently as possible – including through traffic management and shared mobility (e.g. car clubs / sharing). We are expanding and improving Park & Ride and other transport interchanges to enable more people to travel sustainably and seamlessly across modes.

We are embracing technology, whether that be better use of data to help residents get around or increased adoption of autonomous vehicles. Our Transport Data Hub is already helping to optimise transport operations and services - we will continue to maximise the benefits of this.

○ Long-term priorities

We will deliver a new Transport Strategy, later followed by our Spatial Development Strategy. Together these will be a comprehensive plan for how we deliver better transport and how this comes together in our streets and places.

Better timetabling and ticketing is key to this. We will deliver one ticket, one timetable for buses across the region, but need to go further in integrating this with rail services to make journeys as seamless as possible - with an ambition for tap-on, tap-off across the network.

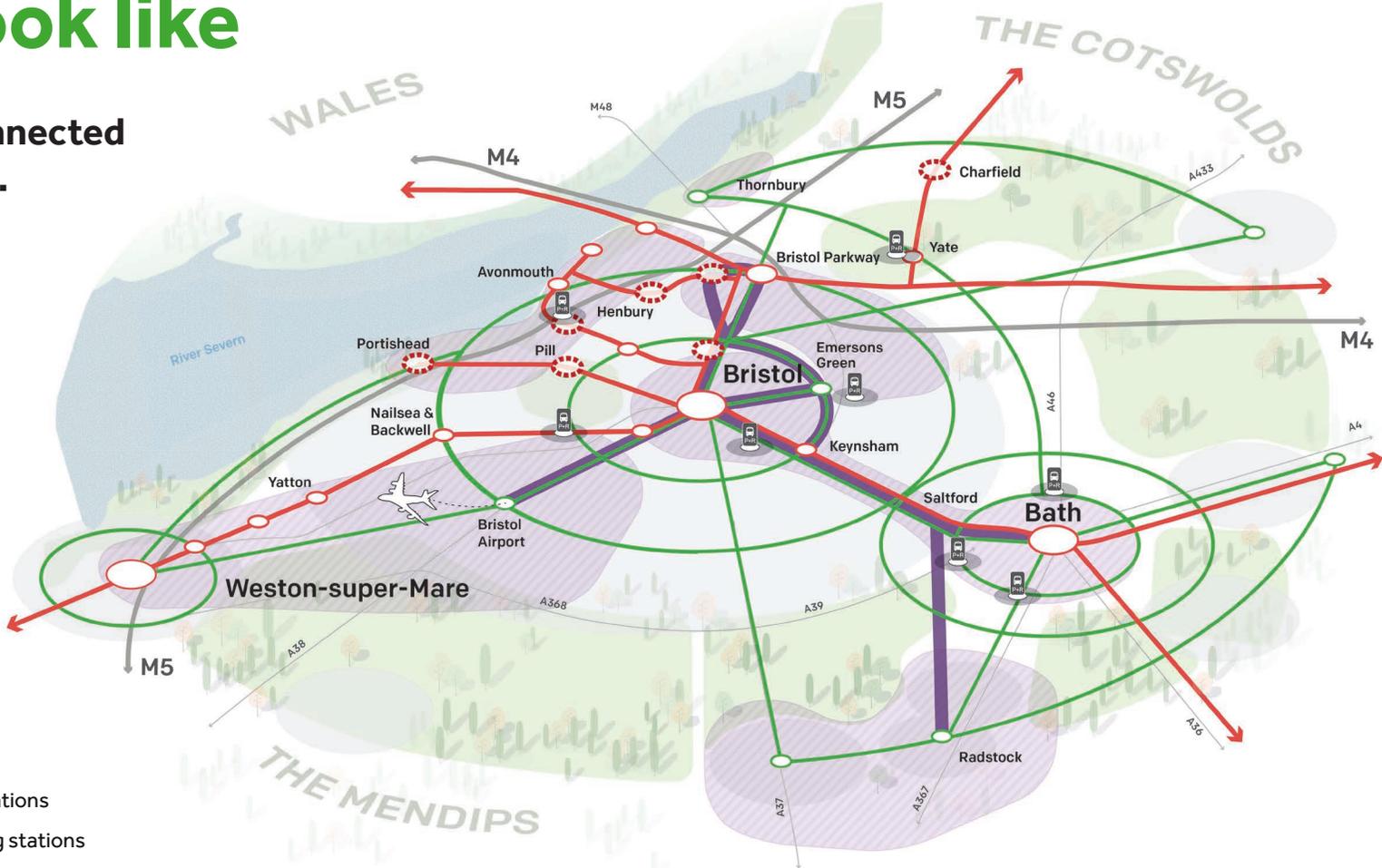
We will embrace further innovation - whether through autonomous vehicles or other initiatives that bring real benefits, whilst ensuring our network is resilient to a changing climate.

AN INTEGRATED NETWORK FOR THE REGION



What our integrated network could look like

A sparse, disconnected network today...



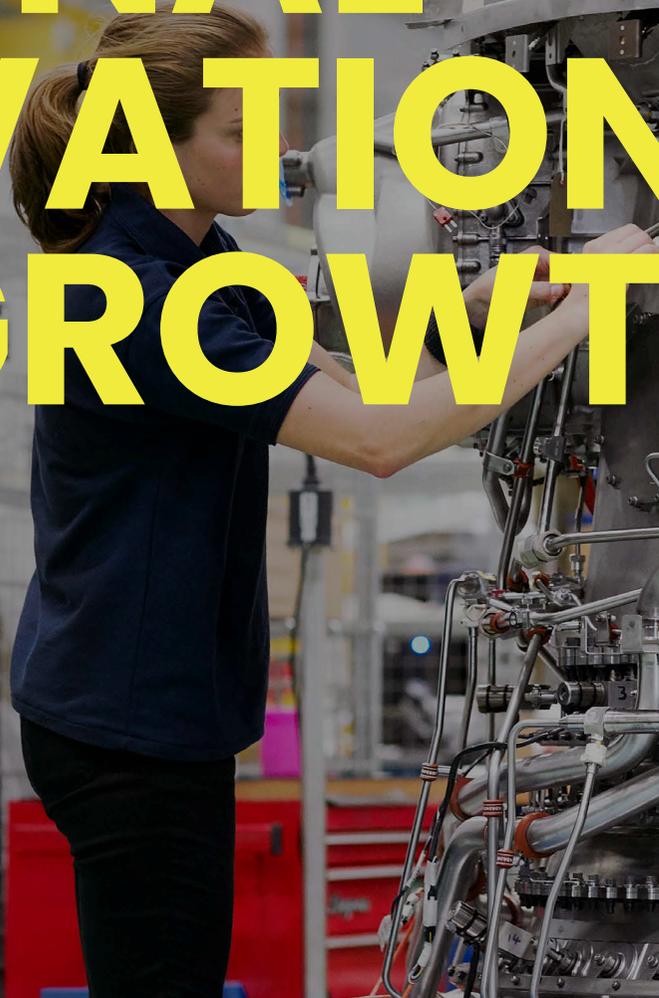
Legend

- Rail lines and select stations
- - -○- - - Rail lines and upcoming stations
- Bus network (conceptual)
- Potential mass transit routes (mode TBD)
- P+R Park and Ride
- Economic growth zone

Illustrative concept. Future schemes are currently at varying stages of development, and will be further reviewed and defined as part of the forthcoming West of England Transport Strategy.

...becoming an integrated network that connects all of our villages, towns and cities and unlocks new growth areas

**DRIVING
NATIONAL
INNOVATION
AND GROWTH**



05 Unlocking benefits for all of the UK

This vision will catalyse social, economic and environmental benefits for people and businesses across the nation.

Our region is a crucial hub connecting south Wales, the West Midlands, south-west England, the south coast and London. Our transport network is not only critical for the movement of people and goods within our region, but also nationally.

More than 50 million people live less than 250 kilometres from Bristol, more than any other major city in the UK. This access to Britain's consumer base has turned the Port of Bristol into a significant import destination, processing the second-largest number of vehicle imports in the country.

The West of England's strategic position near the head of the Bristol Channel also makes it a key stopping point on longer journeys. Freight from Britain's largest energy port (Milford Haven) passes just north of us, and critical rail links with London, south Wales, and the rest of the West Country make Great Western one of the most popular rail operators in the country.

Interregional rail traffic is likely to increase even further, with Bristol seeing the highest year-on-year growth (13%) in daily arrivals in England and Wales (outside London).

In some of our most productive areas, such as the West Innovation Arc, and for our critical sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, better transport connectivity is a key enabler of growth. Better transport is needed

to connect residents, researchers and industry. We know that transport and accessibility are key issues for companies deciding to locate or grow in the region.

This vision will also drive wider objectives that have benefits for all of the UK: reducing inequality via a more accessible, inclusive, and affordable network; driving better health outcomes through promotion of health and well being and links to health services; and tackling climate change through infrastructure innovation.

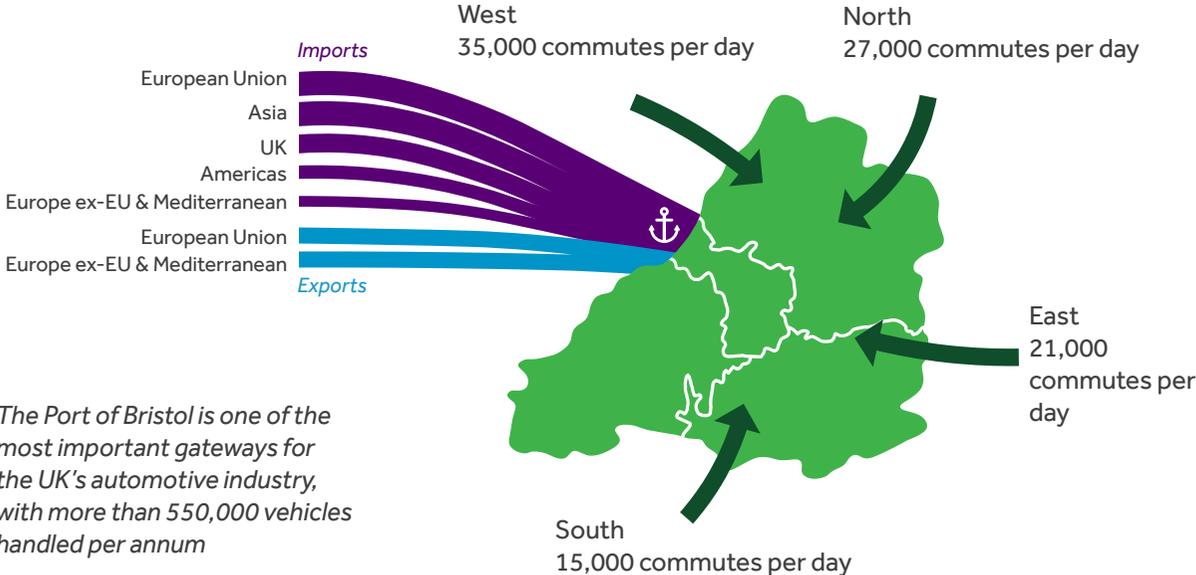
We can only achieve these outcomes, however, through coordinated policy-making; targeted public and private sector investments, building on the £752 million provided to the region in the 2025 Spending Review; and working in partnership to deliver.

Our transport network plays a critical role in driving the West of England's contributions to the UK economy.

A variety of inputs come into the region via our transport network - the port, airport, rail and motorways. Wood is shipped from Sweden, automobiles from Germany, composite materials from China, and talent from around the world.

The West of England generates huge economic value from these inputs. With wood, we make furniture for homes across the UK. With composite materials, we manufacture jet engine components that are conveyed to France for installation on new airliners. With talent and capital, we produce research and ideas which fuel our arts and professional services.

This is all enabled by our transport network, which includes intermodal facilities, logistics hubs, and freight infrastructure. These interrelations make our transport infrastructure important not only to businesses that operate here, but also in the rest of the UK and abroad.



FROM VISION TO DELIVERY



06 Delivering in partnership

Achieving this vision will require an enduring partnership across local and central government, local people / communities, transport operators, and the private sector.

The West of England has secured £752 million in transport funding from government – a record amount for our region and a vote of confidence in our ability to deliver. This investment provides a crucial ‘down payment’ on this vision and the Combined Authority will be working with all local partners to invest this funding, in line with our vision for the region.

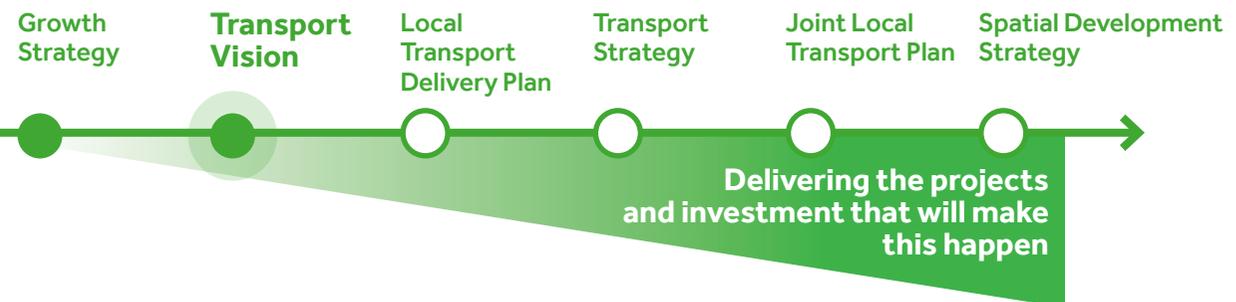
This is just the start, however. We have much more to do to make this

vision a reality, and further investment will be needed from both public and private sectors. We will also need to engage across our boundaries, to achieve shared aspirations for investment, change and growth with our neighbours.

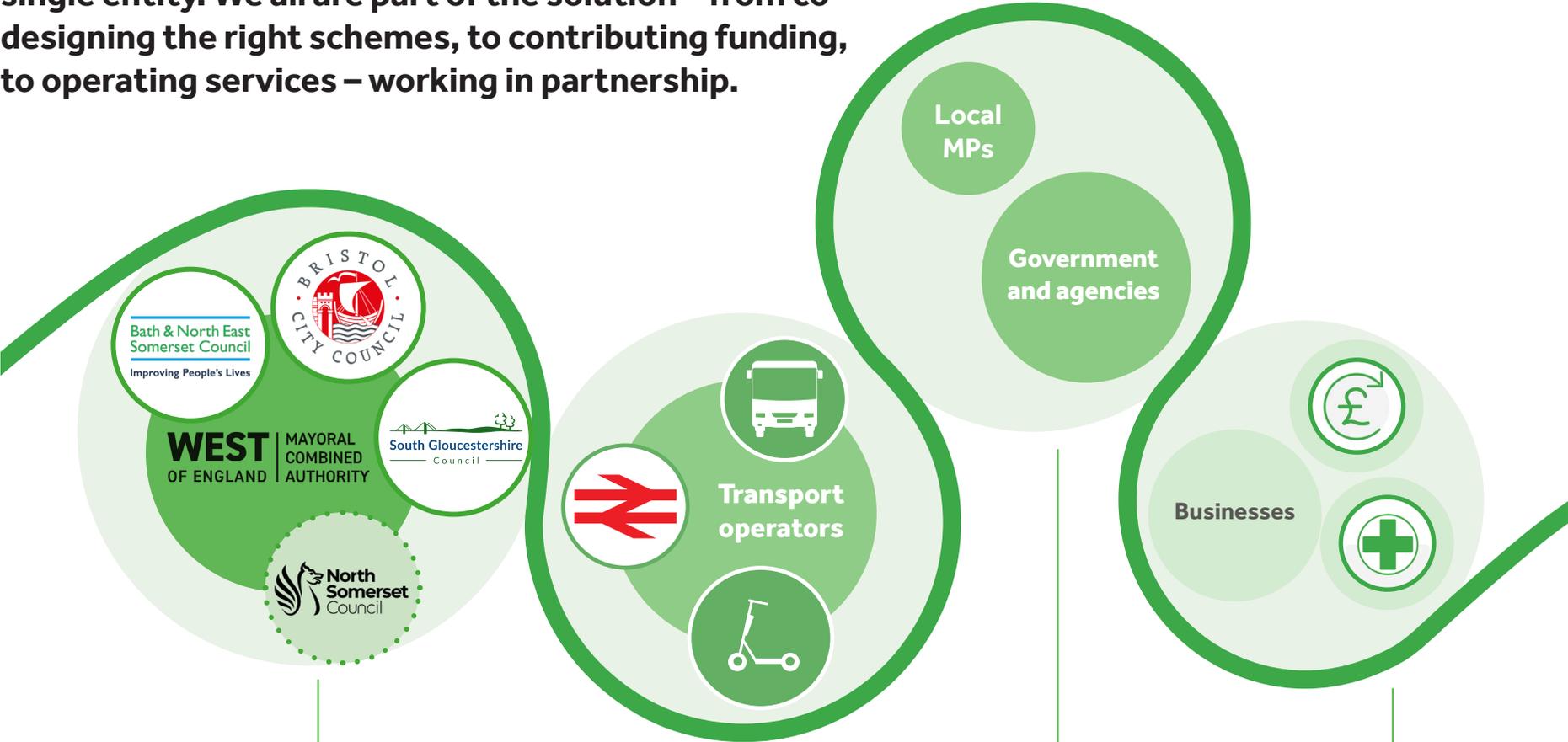
The crucial next step is to develop a Transport Strategy, building on the ambitions set out in this vision and our Growth Strategy. The Transport Strategy will outline the transport infrastructure that needs to be developed and delivered to enable achievement of the region’s growth ambitions. The Joint Local Transport Plan will also be updated, and,

alongside our Spatial Development Strategy, this will be developed through a collaborative exercise bringing together all partners and seeking input from the public.

In parallel, the region is actively considering the right model for transforming the local bus network, in collaboration with partners in the councils, bus operators, and other stakeholders. We are also developing plans to guide more effective and joined-up decision making related to transport in the West of England, and advancing the business case for mass transit.



Delivering this vision cannot be achieved by any single entity. We all are part of the solution – from co-designing the right schemes, to contributing funding, to operating services – working in partnership.



Delivering real action together, leveraging our respective powers and funding. Coordinating our efforts and delivering collective outcomes for the region. Engaging with local people and communities to inform the overarching ambition and specific projects.

Ensuring the vision is deliverable on the ground and people see real benefits quickly.

Ensuring local people’s voices are heard in Westminster. Taking a place-based approach to policymaking and engagement with new agencies such as NISTA and the National Wealth Fund to improve delivery and harness alternative investment mechanisms.

Maximising the benefits of our enhanced transport network by creating jobs, delivering new homes, securing investment, and championing the region with partners across the UK and globally.

Want to know more?

Follow our progress at:

www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk

Want to be part of our future?

Contact us at:

transport.strategy@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

See our new Growth Strategy:

www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/west-of-england-growth-plan/

Our Transport Vision has been informed by data from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and other public sources.

The more detailed evidence base will be outlined in the forthcoming Transport Strategy.

Image acknowledgements:

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Page 40	Bristol Airport, credit to Bristol Airport
Page 40	Anchor icon, credit to Shaka Fahimi from the Noun Project

Produced by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, with support from **ARUP**

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Cambridge, showing a dense urban area with a mix of residential and commercial buildings. A river flows through the city, with a marina in the foreground containing numerous boats. The text "THE FUTURE STARTS HERE" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow letters on the left side of the image.

**THE FUTURE
STARTS
HERE**