



# STP2 Vision, Strategic Ambitions & SMART Objectives

March 2024



# Introduction

This document sets out the proposed vision, objectives and metrics for the second statutory Strategic Transport Plan (STP) for the North of England being developed by Transport for the North. The first STP was adopted in February 2019 and represented a ground-breaking 30-year vision for how a more inter-connected and productive North could deliver clear economic benefits to the residents and businesses of the North (as well as to the UK as a whole) by 2050.

Through 2022 and 2023 TfN has worked extensively with our partners to develop a revised strategic transport plan, that reflects our updated evidence base, strategies and the changing political and economic landscape. This document forms part of the supporting evidence base that underpins the revised STP.

## Background

Transport for the North was established in clear recognition of the opportunity to create a more prosperous and productive North that builds on its economic strengths and assets, creating a strengthened, more coherent and inter-connected economy.

Bringing its cities and other economic centres closer together can help unify the economy of the North. This reduces barriers to trade for businesses and expands job opportunities for people. This can help the region gain a size and scale of economic activity that can rival some of the largest and most productive places in the world and can ensure that the whole region is greater than the sum of its parts.

Transport is key to creating a more unified Northern economy, in terms of connectivity (journey times), capacity, and reliability. In considering possible transport interventions, we need to recognise the full range of impacts on productivity, which include:

- Reducing costs: faster or more reliable journeys (for both people and freight) can save individuals and businesses time and money.
- Agglomeration: through reducing journey times and tackling congestion, transport infrastructure can bring areas closer together. This helps to concentrate economic activity and realise the benefits of greater sharing, matching and learning between workers, firms and consumers.
- Removing physical barriers to innovation and clustering: improving linkages between cities and towns that may be physically separated by long distances or by natural geographical barriers (such as the Pennines) can help foster trade and increase competition amongst businesses.
- Connectivity to international gateways: in a globalised economy, connectivity to key international ports and airports is also an important factor in attracting greater inward investment and allowing businesses in the North to find new markets and more easily trade with the rest of the world.
- Expanding labour markets: transport infrastructure can deepen labour pools by increasing the number of workers that can access higher productivity



locations more easily. The limited reach of labour markets means that Northern workers have fewer job opportunities, and Northern employers have much smaller labour markets. This is holding back wages and productivity and makes the North a less attractive place for businesses.

- Making places more attractive to businesses and people: businesses are attracted to locations with higher quality transport infrastructure particularly if they provide greater access to a higher skilled workforce, access to suppliers, customers and international gateways.

The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER), published in 2016, defined the scale of the opportunity from a more productive, higher skilled and better-connected North. The NPIER provides both the strategic rationale for investing in northern transport infrastructure, as well as an analytical framework for assessing the impact of economic transformation. The NPIER was updated and published in November 2023. It provided the underpinning evidence base for resetting the economic ambition within the second STP.

### **The connectivity opportunity**

In the North of England poor rail and highway connectivity and public transport provision has led to unreliable journey times that restrict trade and business interactions, and reduce labour market efficiency. These barriers limit clustering of businesses and their associated agglomeration benefits, impact on productivity levels, constrain labour markets and prevent people from accessing a wider range of jobs and services. Further substantial investment is needed to provide improved connectivity and to maintain existing levels of service. Failure to invest would cost the country billions of pounds in lost economic growth, whilst increasing the cost of congestion, overcrowding and delays.

Although significant interventions are already underway or planned (e.g. the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade and A66 dualling) further substantial improvements are needed to deliver a modern and robust transport system, capable of underpinning Government and the North's ambitions for reducing the significant economic disparities between UK regions through sustainable economic growth.

TfN's Future Travel Scenarios project robust growth in the number of trips taken by rail across a range of futures, ranging from 78% to 193%. Whilst rail would only serve a small proportion of all journeys, all the scenarios project a significant market share for longer distance journeys. This demonstrates the need to take a long-term view and expand and improve the public transport offer to serve this potential market. Indeed, the North has seen a strong recovery in the rail market since the lifting of lockdown restrictions and some areas of the market such as leisure are now above pandemic levels.

Achieving the required scale of change, whilst maintaining a resolute focus on reducing transport-related carbon emissions requires a tripartite approach encompassing investment in infrastructure (maintenance, renewal and enhancements), adoption of new technologies and changes in travel behaviour. This will result in reliable, affordable, safe and user centric transport options,

including many journeys achieving significant modal shift away from private car to more sustained modes.

Delivering transformational, inclusive economic growth requires complementary and supporting investment at a local as well as a pan-Northern level to ensure a 'whole journey' and 'total network' approach to improving transport. The start and finish of almost all journeys lies beyond the strategic transport networks and requires integration with local road networks and other modes such as local public transport, walking and cycling.

It is imperative that we also consider the whole transport 'ecosystem'. A whole systems approach is critical to achieving environmental and social inclusivity goals whilst supporting improved economic productivity and delivering a good level of service for all transport modes. Maximising the benefits of improved road, rail and public transport investment can only be achieved through implementation of complementary policy measures. This could, for example, include encompassing spatial planning, mobility pricing, integrated public transport ticketing and so on under a single policy framework.

## Developing the Vision & Objectives

As part of our preparation for producing our second strategic transport plan, in July 2022 we consulted with the TfN partnership on the relevance of the original vision and objectives of the first STP and the principles for designing the next STP. Through those discussions, we derived three guiding principles for developing this document:

- The need to reflect the significant change in context since 2019, including the pandemic, the Levelling up agenda and funding and delivery challenges now facing the industry.
- The importance of a clear, flexible framework, able to reflect the current uncertainty around travel behaviours following the pandemic, but also able to reflect the long-term transformational ambition of the North.
- The need to create a triple bottom line: the economy; the environment; and inclusivity, thereby ensuring that the TfN STP remains relevant and outcome focused.

As a result of this TfN have applied the following strategy hierarchy for our second STP.



This document focuses on the first four elements of our strategy hierarchy (identified in blue), the final two elements (identified in purple) are detailed further in our Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy which will be published alongside the final adopted STP in early 2024.

## **The Vision and Strategic Objectives**

Our vision has been amended to better reflect our net zero commitments, our commitment to social inclusion and our aspirations for the North's transport system. Our proposed vision for STP2 is now:

***By 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. Our communities, businesses and places will all benefit from sustainable economic growth, improved wellbeing and access to opportunities for all. This will be achieved through a transformed zero emission, integrated, safe and sustainable transport system, that will enhance connectivity and resilience, support modal shift and improve journey times for all users.***

The strategic ambitions identified are:

- **Transforming economic performance** – as set out in the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER).
- **Rapid decarbonisation of surface transport** – as set out in TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy; and
- **Reducing Transport Related Social Exclusion** – as set out in TfN's Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy.

Northern leaders have been resolute in their commitment to addressing these systematic issues by committing, through TfN Board, a number of stretching targets that go further and faster than current national government policy. The scale of ambition under each of our strategic ambitions is clearly articulated in the relative report but summarised below.

- To address the historic productivity gap between the North and the South – as set out in the NPIER – by 2050.
- To achieve near zero emissions from surface transport by 2045 – as set out in TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy; and
- To lower the proportion of population at risk of Transport Related social exclusion to the England average (excluding London) – as set out in the Socially Inclusive Transport (Connecting Communities) Strategy.

For each ambition there are a number of sub-themes which together represent relevant aspects of the objective and an overview of the best current available metrics; this will allow appropriate analysis, monitoring and evaluation of performance.

As TfN's Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy states, none of the STP objectives exist in isolation and there are complex synergies and trade-offs that can only be understood by examining them in combination.

The metrics proposed are already a fundamental part of the TfN analytical framework and build on work undertaken in a range of TfN workstreams. Enshrining these metrics within our statutory plan will sharpen the focus on sustained progress on our shared objectives, whilst recognising the necessary trade-offs in doing so.

We recognise that, over time, the strategic ambitions themselves will be influenced by wider external factors and will also need to respond to emerging Government and local partner priorities. So, in addition to setting clear outcomes for 2050, we have also set a series of interim 2030 targets within our STP and we will continue to regularly monitor progress on them as part of the implementation of the STP. We will publish an annually updated dashboard reviewing metrics, and review progress and actions as part of the TfN annual report and annual business planning process. We will use this insight to review and recalibrate our long-term strategic ambitions and underpinning metrics.

# Transforming Economic Performance

## Rationale for Strategic Ambition

The North is home to around 1.1 million businesses<sup>1</sup>, and at present employs around 7.31 million people<sup>2</sup>. **The region is currently home to 15.6 million people<sup>3</sup>, with population growth of 9%<sup>4</sup> from 1999 to 2020.** The North's economic gross value added (GVA) is around £386 billion, c.19% of UK total<sup>5</sup>.

However, overall productivity in the North trails behind that of the rest of England. Since 1981, the North's economic value per person (measured as GVA) has been typically 10-15% below the average for the rest of the England, excluding London<sup>6</sup>. And the most recent available data for 2021 reveals that gap remains at 10.6% below the rest of England average, excluding London<sup>7</sup>.

Proactively taking action to tackle the causes of weak productivity growth in the North, and to close this gap in GVA per capita, represents an economic opportunity for the North that would also contribute to the success of the UK in the global marketplace. Furthermore, the success of the Government's Levelling Up agenda depends upon transforming the economy of the North.

The scale of this economic opportunity for the North was first set out in the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER 2016), which set out a bold vision of economic transformation for the North that would support rebalancing of the UK economy and increase international competitiveness. The NPIER considered the scale and causes of the North's persistent and widely recognised 'performance gap', especially the factors driving relatively low productivity (underperformance in enterprise formation, workforce skills, innovation and technology, investment and agglomeration). It also considered the North's competitive advantages and sector strengths, identifying a series of key 'prime' and 'enabling' capabilities within the North.

Since the 2016 NPIER, there have been substantial changes in the policy and economic context, including the political and economic consequences of Brexit; the growing policy salience of decarbonisation; the economic shock caused by the Covid-19 pandemic; as well as evolution in the local economic development architecture and the economic development funding landscape. The period since 2016 has also seen persistently weak productivity growth in the UK, alongside a widening gap between the North and the rest of the country.

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<sup>1</sup> Business Population Estimates 2022, October 2022, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Accessible [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Labour Force Survey September 2023, ONS. Available [here](#).

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics (2021), '*Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: Mid-2020: 2020 local authority boundaries*'. Available [here](#).

<sup>4</sup> The North's population was estimated by ONS to be around 14.28 million in 1999, compared to a 2020 estimate of 15.57 million.

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics (2021), '*Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions*'. Accessible [here](#).

<sup>6</sup> The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review: Final Executive Summary Report, June 2016, Cambridge Econometrics and SQW. Available [here](#).

<sup>7</sup> Regional gross value added (balanced) per head and income components, 2022, ONS. Available [here](#).

Against this backdrop, in 2022/23 TfN, NP11 and Northern partners updated the NPIER to develop a new economic vision for the North, supported by a broader set of economic scenarios to aid decision making, to inform the revised STP and stakeholders' economic development policies and strategies<sup>8</sup>.

While addressing the North's productivity gap remains the focus of the NPIER economic vision, policy makers have been keen for other, broader aims to also be considered as part of a vision for the North, including aspects such as inequality, the environment, health and wellbeing and sustainability.

A new framework has been established for modelling the desired policy interventions of importance to partners. This framework includes a number of 'change scenarios', each representing a different basket of policy levers or ambitions which can contribute to transforming economic performance in the North and contribute to the North's wider ambitions. Each 'change scenario' can be assessed against a range of economic, environmental, and social metrics to understand its performance against different policy objectives, and where potential trade-offs may lie. However, it is when modelled together that synergies act across all the policy interventions and create a transformational scenario where the outcomes are greater than the sum of the individual scenarios for GVA and employment. To provide additional context, a business-as-usual scenario without policy interventions demonstrates the notional prize if the economic performance of the North is transformed.

The role of transport in connecting people, places, businesses and goods, supporting agglomeration and clustering, and providing access to economic and social opportunities will remain central to this. Transport is a key enabler of economic performance, and as such the new STP presents the transport interventions required to deliver the transformational ambition for the economy of the North.

## Components of Strategic Ambition

**Closing the North's productivity gap:** As a key driver of long-term economic performance, prosperity, and living standards, productivity growth remains a focus of the refreshed NPIER and STP. However, there is a recognition that a narrow focus on growth in productivity or economic output, without consideration of its environmental or social impacts, is no longer appropriate.

**Supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth:** Focusing on economic interventions and policies which contribute to the net zero transition, reduce inequality, and improve social inclusion (such as capitalising on the North's strengths in the 'green economy').

**Connecting people, businesses and goods:** Transport remains a key enabler for a prosperous and inclusive North, connecting individuals to economic and

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<sup>8</sup> In May 2022, TfN commissioned Cambridge Econometrics, working in partnership with the consultancy SQW to undertake the development of a series of economic scenarios, modelled to 2050, and refresh the NPIER.



social opportunities, stimulating business interactions, and ensuring that goods needed by individuals and businesses can be moved around effectively.

## Headline objectives

STP impact	Metric	Reporting
Improved economic productivity	Close the productivity gap between the North and the average for the rest of England excluding London by 2050	Annually
Integrating the North's labour market	37% of the North's population can access 500,000 jobs within 60 minutes by rail by 2050, up from 27% in 2018	Every 5 years
Integrating the North's labour market	75% of the North's population can access an employment centre with at least 5,000 jobs by public transport within 30 minutes by 2050	Every 5 years
Improved journey time reliability of the road network	Reduce the proportion of the Strategic and Major Road Network experiencing excessively poor journey time reliability during weekday peak times to 2050	Every 3 years
Improved journey time reliability of the road network	Reduce the proportion of the Strategic and Major Road Network experiencing excessively poor journey time reliability during the weekend to 2050	Every 3 years

## Trade Offs

**Enabling long term economic growth & "Levelling Up":** The UK overall has benefited from the evolution of its economy and a period of globalisation, but these benefits have not been realised equitably across all areas and communities in the UK, and large disparities exist. Some of the UK's most successful cities are home to a number of the worst areas of deprivation to be found in the country. And the North of England is home to the top five most deprived local authority areas in England<sup>9</sup>. Public sector investments, like private, favour those perceived to have the greatest return. This has led some areas to fall behind as they are now underinvested and have weaker growth opportunities. Levelling up seeks to address this challenge, trading off short term gain for the longer-term prosperity for all.

**Agglomeration vs Levelling Up:** Major transport schemes have relied on demonstrating agglomeration benefits, bringing together areas of economic activity and improving access to a wider labour market. Post-pandemic changes to work and the need to Level Up create a tension with agglomeration. The

<sup>9</sup> Middlesbrough, Liverpool, Knowsley, Kingston upon Hull and Manchester. The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD2019), available at The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 (publishing.service.gov.uk), last accessed 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

potential to work more locally and the need to achieve Levelling Up, will require more locally focused transport schemes to help distribute growth.

**Economic Growth vs Decarbonisation:** The case for decarbonising the economy to limit further human-impact on the Earth's climate has been well made. However, addressing the challenge requires changes to demand, investment and costs. Whilst in the long term these changes will be positive for the economy, not least as they will reduce the cost of climate-related catastrophes, in the short term there will be disruption to the economy as it restructures and there will be the burden of cost on both private and public purse.

For the North, the NPIER 2016 highlighted the energy and advanced manufacturing sectors as prime capabilities for the region, demonstrating that there is a potential benefit to the North of decarbonisation. However, on the negative side, large parts of the North's economy remain carbon-intensive or reliant on its use, e.g., refining oil. As such, in the short – medium term achieving higher levels of economic growth in the North might have a negative impact on the environment and be misaligned to TfN's commitments in our decarbonisation strategy, unless there is active support for those sectors that can address the challenge.

**Service levels vs economic viability:** Increasing service levels to deliver a more inclusive network may lead to a higher cost per passenger and may be at the expense of investment elsewhere on the network.

## Rapid Decarbonisation of Transport

### Rationale for Strategic Ambition

In the UK, transport is the largest contributing sector to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 22% of all emissions in 2019<sup>10</sup>, of which more than 95% are from road transport. Furthermore, transport emissions have actually grown overall since 2013, despite modest falls in the last few years<sup>11</sup>.

Drops in emissions during 2020 due to reduced levels of travel during the COVID-19 lockdown, are likely to be temporary, with demand for car travel rebounding more quickly than public transport, approaching pre-pandemic levels.

TfN and our partners believe that an acceleration towards a zero-carbon transport network must be at the heart of public policy making and investment decisions. Our ambition for the North is to travel faster and further than national policy and maximise the clean growth opportunities that decarbonisation can provide for the North. Through our Decarbonisation Strategy, TfN and our partners have committed to a regional near-zero carbon surface transport network by 2045.

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<sup>10</sup> This relates to surface transport and does not include emissions from aviation and shipping.

<sup>11</sup> National Statistics from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Available [here](#).

As important as the end date, are our interim milestones along our trajectory, including a 56% reduction in emissions by 2030 and a 96% reduction by 2040. If as a region, we can achieve these reductions by these milestones, it will mean we've restricted the cumulative transport emissions produced in the lead up to the near zero date – living within the total carbon budget identified within our Decarbonisation Strategy.

Engagement with both our partners and the public during the development of our Decarbonisation Strategy indicated that the provision of real modal choice through the development of a world class, reliable, flexible and cost-efficient public transport system, needed to be at heart of the North's transport decarbonisation journey.

One response to this challenge has been TfN's Clean Mobility Visions, developed using evidenced based policy packages, demonstrating the benefits of reduced car usage both in terms of carbon reduction, but also in tackling issues such as local air quality, Transport Related Social Exclusion and boosting local economic growth. As an organisation, we operate at a geographical and institutional level that allows us to both understand what works best for our different places in the North, and to communicate this to Government to ensure that tools such as the Clean Mobility Vision framework, are in place to support the capability of our partners to incorporate national decarbonisation objectives within their local policy making in the most effective ways.

TfN can also facilitate regional approaches to decarbonisation measures and research where it's needed, for example, developing a pan-regional electric vehicle charging infrastructure framework, identifying en-route charging locations between our different places, recognising that travel often crosses administrative boundaries. As well as 'cross-boundary', TfN is also able to work effectively across sectors with organisations which operate at a similar regional scale, for example research with our universities and Gas Distribution Network Operators around hydrogen refuelling locations for heavy duty transport in the North. Indeed, a high proportion of the emissions from private road vehicles is generated by longer distance regional-level trips, with our analysis indicating that around 70% of road transport emissions in the North originate from trips on the Major and Strategic Road Networks. This means TfN has both an opportunity and a responsibility to help reduce this significant share of road transport emissions.

## Components of Strategic Ambition

**Reducing Carbon:** Supporting the agreed TfN decarbonisation trajectory requiring the North to bring all greenhouse gas emissions from surface transport to close to zero by 2045 and ensuring TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy and the actions contained within it are achieved. TfN will also continue to explore how to effectively consider embodied carbon within our investment programme.

**A Fair Transition:** Major changes are going to be needed in terms of our physical transport systems but also in our travel choices. It's important that opportunities that this transition presents for reducing existing inequalities in

health, wellbeing and accessibility are not passed up – and indeed that new distributional impacts are not created.

**Health and well-being:** Contributing to improved health outcomes for people of the North but particularly those living in close proximity to TfN’s major road network and rail stations. This includes improving air quality and reducing the impact of noise created by the North’s transport network.

**Nature Based Solutions:** Recognising the ecological crisis alongside the climate crisis and the critical interplay between our natural environment and the climate. Many of the North’s unique habitats are at risk from the effects of climate change, whilst at the same time the North’s natural environment will have a critical role to play in both climate change mitigation (e.g. peat restoration and reforestation schemes) and in adapting to a changing climate through nature-based solutions that can reduce flooding, stabilize soils and reduce the need for mechanical cooling. New legislation around Biodiversity Net Gain creates an opportunity to better integrate new transport infrastructure with these solutions, supporting Local Nature Recovery Strategies.



## Headline objectives

Impact	Target	Reporting
Eliminate surface transport CO2 emissions	Reduce surface transport CO2 emissions from 25 million tonnes in 2018 to near zero by 2045	Every three years
Modal shift to public transport and active travel	Share of trips made by sustainable modes increases from 43% to 51% by 2050	Annually
Modal shift to public transport and active travel	Zero overall increase in travel demand on the road network by private car to 2045	Annually
Freight modal shift to rail	Treble rail's share of freight carried in tonne kilometres to 25.5% by 2050	Every five years
Accelerate the roll-out of EV charging points	Uptake of public EV charging points at scale and pace across the North to support TfN's regional decarbonisation trajectory to 2045, increasing to at least 141,000 by 2050	Annually
Reduce population exposure to air pollution from transport	Eliminate the need for Air Quality Management Areas in the North announced due to NO2 or PM10 by 2045 by bringing air quality within legal limits	Annually
Reduce population exposure to air pollution	Reduce to zero the number of paths on the North's Major Road Network that exceed WHO Nitrogen Dioxide exposure limits by 2045 (currently 57%)	Annually
Improve biodiversity around the North's transport network	All new major transport infrastructure development to aid local nature recovery by achieving 10% biodiversity net gain, for projects gaining approval from 2025 (in line with the Environment Act 2021)	Every five years

## Trade Offs

**Environmental Protection and Enhancement:** The delivery of transport infrastructure schemes has the potential to adversely affect our natural, built and historic environments, and mitigating these impacts can substantially increase scheme costs. However, these challenges are also opportunities to

enhance our wider environment, improving local air and water quality, reducing noise and responding to the new requirement to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, thereby complementing partners' Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

***Compliance with Paris Agreement and Climate Change Act & Scheme***

***Delivery:*** The requirement for proposed transport infrastructure schemes to demonstrate compliance with the Paris Agreement is likely to delay or stop the development of schemes which have demonstrated economic and social benefits.

Additional scheme requirements for climate change adaptation, in order to future-proof schemes against climate change effects, as well as other additional environmental requirements such as biodiversity net-gain, could increase overall scheme costs in the short term, although designing for climate change and utilising nature-based solutions are likely to reduce costly mitigation works later in the scheme's life.

***Capital Costs associated with Low/Zero Emission Vehicles:*** Purchase prices for low or zero emission vehicles and locomotives vary widely but are still substantially more expensive than internal combustion engine equivalents. In the case of public transport (e.g., train locomotives, buses), there may be a trade-off between the number of low emission vehicles that can be purchased and the rate of overall fleet renewal. It is important that this does not affect public transport service provision as it is through modal shift that the most substantial emissions reductions can be realised.

***Balancing freight and passenger services:*** Expanding rail freight and passenger services simultaneously requires managing trade-offs between the two, particularly on constrained parts of the network.

***Economic Growth vs Decarbonisation:*** See above under Transforming Economic performance.

## **Reducing Transport Related Social Exclusion**

### **Rationale for Strategic Ambition**

Transport-related social exclusion (TRSE) is the "process by which people are prevented from participating in the economic, political, and social life of the community because of reduced accessibility to opportunities, services, and social networks".<sup>12</sup> This occurs where the transport options available provide limited or no access to some key destinations, and where there are significant financial, time, and wellbeing costs linked to using the transport system.

TfN's focus on TRSE is rooted in the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER). Specifically, the NPIER highlighted the barriers that populations in the North of England face in accessing employment, education and training caused by fragmented and limited transport links. Following from this, TfN's 2019 STP committed to improving "inclusivity, health, and access to opportunities for

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<sup>12</sup> Based on the definition developed by Kenyon et al, 2003: 210. Cited in Lucas, 2012. Available [here](#).

all”, and the ambition in the Northern Transport Charter is for TfN to champion “an inclusive and sustainable North”.

Following the 2019 STP, TfN has undertaken extensive research to identify the nature, causes, distribution, and extent of TRSE in the North.<sup>13</sup> This research demonstrates that 3.3 million people live in areas in which there is a high risk of TRSE, and that there is a significantly greater concentration of TRSE in the North compared with the rest of England. The following factors, that are widely present in the North of England, are key to this relationship:

1. Fragmented, unaffordable, and unreliable public transport services, that do not provide adequate access to key destinations for all populations and areas.
2. A lack of safe, convenient, and accessible walking, cycling, and wheeling infrastructure, combined with car-dominated environments.
3. The high levels of car dependency and forced car ownership that result from poor public transport and active travel conditions.

TfN’s research demonstrates that TRSE has a fundamental impact on the everyday lives of many in the North. This includes being at higher risk of poverty and deprivation, poor health, and social isolation. Across these themes, TfN’s strategic ambition on TRSE is driven by the following factors:

1. A focus on reducing TRSE is closely linked to the reduction of inequalities between areas of England, and to economic growth. This is primarily through expanding access to good quality and secure employment opportunities for deprived communities, and through expanding access to high quality education and training opportunities for these communities.
2. A focus on reducing TRSE is closely linked with improved quality of life. As well as through improved access to employment and education, and the reduction in deprivation this is associated with, this will result from improvements in access to leisure, recreation, and to family and community life. These benefits occur directly, and through improved health.
3. A focus on TRSE is closely linked to the reduction of highly pervasive social inequalities. This includes inequalities based on income, disability, caring responsibilities, gender, and ethnicity. A growing evidence base demonstrates that transport plays a significant part in sustaining these inequalities.

## Components of Strategic Ambition

**Reducing car-dependency and forced car ownership:** Reducing the requirement for access to a car in order to access key destinations, and through this reducing the significant financial hardship that can be associated with maintaining car access.

**Improving access to key destinations by public transport and active travel:** Improving the distribution of public transport infrastructure and services in areas where there is currently a high risk of TRSE. Alongside this, ensuring that

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<sup>13</sup> See TfN (2022) Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England. Available [here](#).

transport infrastructure and information is accessible for all, and delivering a step-change in the quality and availability of active travel infrastructure.

**Improving affordability and reducing transport poverty:** Ensuring that the necessary levels of transport use for work, education, recreation, and family and community life are affordable for all. This includes ensuring that the costs of the necessary levels of transport use for these purposes do not compromise the ability of people to afford other essentials.

**Improving safety, security, and belonging:** Ensuring that all potential users are safe, secure, and welcome in transport spaces. This includes ensuring that roads provide safe and convenient routes for active travel, that those waiting for and using public transport are not exposed to crime and anti-social behaviour, and that security approaches do not exclude any potential users.

**Improving transport availability outside of peak commuter routes:** Ensuring that a sufficient and suitable level of transport provision is available outside of peak commute times and routes. This includes ensuring that cross-boundary, inter-neighbourhood, and multi-modal trips do not result in disproportionate time and financial costs.

## Headline Objectives

Impact	Objective / Target	Reporting
Improve the performance of the rail network	Public Performance Measure (PPM) of at least 91.2% for both TransPennine Express and Northern by 2028, returning to levels last seen prior to 2018	Annually
Lower proportion of the populated affected by transport related social exclusion	Reduce the number of people in the North living in areas with a 'high' risk of TRSE by 1,000,000 by 2050.	Every three years
	Reduce the number of people in the North living in areas of 'highest' risk of TRSE by 370,000 by 2050.	Every three years
Improved safety of the transport network	Vision zero: reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in traffic incidents from 6,429 (2018-19 average) to zero by 2040	Annually
Improved physical accessibility of the transport network	All stations in the North to meet TfN's desired accessibility standards by 2050 (currently at 54% of required level)	Every five years



## Trade Offs

**Local vs national connectivity:** On a constrained rail network, there is a trade-off between local stopping services and express intercity services. With finite funding for transport schemes, there is also a need to allocate adequate funding for both, balancing benefits for social inclusion and economic transformation. This also applies to the strategic and major road networks, where people making short local journeys can often account for a significant share of the traffic, impacting on congestion and on the reliability of longer strategic journeys.

**Electric vehicle uptake:** Transport decarbonisation and social inclusion are largely complementary aims, with the impacts of climate change likely to disproportionately impact deprived and socially excluded communities. However, the rapid adoption of electric vehicles has the potential to increase transport-related social exclusion. This is likely to occur if and where electric car charging infrastructure is prioritised over active travel accessibility, where the falling per-mile costs of electric vehicles leads to an increase in traffic levels, and where spending on electric vehicle infrastructure is prioritised over local public transport.

**Short term economic growth:** Initiatives to reduce transport-related social exclusion do not necessarily align with those most likely to boost economic growth in the short term. Prioritising transport interventions for relatively wealthy rather than relatively deprived communities can, for example, provide a greater short-term economic boost than the reverse. However, mitigating the role that transport plays in social exclusion, and through this reducing social exclusion more widely, is aligned with long term and sustainable economic growth.

**Car dominance and dependency:** Reducing TRSE and delivering an inclusive transport system requires transformation in public transport and active travel, in order to significantly narrow the gap currently present with private car travel. In a financially constrained environment, this will inevitably require funds that would otherwise be devoted to improving conditions for private car travel to be spent on public transport and active travel. Transforming places to reduce levels of car dominance, and through this improving inclusion and reducing carbon, will also entail trade-offs with convenience for car users, even where overall levels of accessibility are improved.

**Network performance vs disruption:** Delivering projects and their benefits faster through Project Speed, including rail electrification, may lead to greater network disruption in the short term, as well as reduced opportunities for efficient delivery (e.g. by undertaking enhancements alongside planned renewals). This could deter passengers from the network and have a potential negative impact on modal shift at a time when we need to grow patronage on the network.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

TfN's Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy is key to ensuring a continued focus on the STP Vision and Objectives following publication and adoption of STP2, covering the bottom two elements of the STP2 strategy hierarchy.

The purpose of this strategy is to monitor the North's progress towards the collective ambitions set out in the STP. The proposed approach reflects how achieving these ambitions is a collective effort enabled by TfN and delivered by national government, local transport authorities, delivery agencies and the private sector. These metrics are intended to compliment and inform KPIs of delivery bodies such as National Highways and Network Rail and Local Transport Plan objectives.

The Strategy has two key elements that support the STP:

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:** This consists of the headline metrics detailed above, plus a series of core and supplementary metrics. To ensure transparency, TfN will publish these metrics and develop a dashboard containing them that will be made available to partners.
- **Action Plan and KPIs:** our action plan will form part of our annual business planning process, clearly setting out what TfN will do as an organisation to support delivery of our collective vision. Through our monitoring and evaluation dashboard we will articulate how the North is performing against the headline and core metrics and include a summary of this in our annual report.



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