Socially inclusive transport strategy

Draft for consultation: November 2022

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH

Contents

Our consultation

How to respond

Our consultation is open to organisational and individual responses on any part of the draft Strategy. You can respond in three ways:

1 An online form, which links to specific elements of the strategy and requests closed and open responses: **www.transportforthenorth.com/social-inclusion**

2 A written response submitted by email to **research@transportforthenorth.com**. If you are providing a written response, please specify if this is an organisational or individual response, along with your contact details.

3 A written response submitted by post to **SITS Consultation, Transport for the North, 2nd Floor, 4 Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1 3BN**. If you are providing a written response, please specify if this is an organisational or individual response, along with your contact details.

The consultation is open from Monday 7th November 2022 to Monday 12th December 2022. TfN will publish an anonymised summary of the consultation responses, and use these responses to shape the final version of the Strategy.

The Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy brings together research, analysis, and policy development undertaken since the launch of TfN's first Strategic Transport Plan in 2019. This plan set out TfN's vision for a thriving North of England, where world class transport supports sustainable economic growth, excellent quality of life, and improved opportunities for all.

Following this vision, TfN have undertaken a programme of research to understand the nature, extent, causes and consequences of social exclusion linked to transport issues in the North. TfN's report, **Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England**, sets out the process and outcomes of this research, and defines the inclusion challenge present across the region. We have also published a **data tool** that shows how the risk of transport-related social exclusion varies across local areas in England; bringing together data on access to employment, education, healthcare and key services with analysis of socioeconomic and demographic vulnerability.

Taking this research as a starting point, the Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy sets out how TfN will act to reduce transport-related social exclusion, how progress towards this aim will be monitored and measured, and the broader policy agenda necessary for significant process on this issue. Through consultation, we are seeking your input in shaping in this strategy – ensuring it provides a comprehensive and realistic route to a transport system that delivers for all people and places in the North.

Transport and the social inclusion challenge in the North

Transport is vital social infrastructure, providing access to work and education opportunities, key services, community life, leisure, and recreation. And while digital service access is expanding, our ability to fulfil our needs and aspirations remains linked to our ability to travel and access transport resources. Because of this, inequalities in access to transport contribute to poverty and economic deprivation, inequalities in health and wellbeing, and social isolation.

TfN's 2019 Strategic Transport Plan committed to "improving inclusivity, health, and access to opportunities for all", and to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Linked to this, in 2021/22 TfN conducted research to determine how issues with the transport system in the North cause and exacerbate social exclusion, and to identify the population groups and area types most affected. This Strategy buildings on this evidence base by defining TfN's role on inclusive transport, and the broader policy agenda necessary for significant progress on this issue.

TfN's research indicates that 3.3 million people in the North live in areas where there is a significant risk of transport-related social exclusion (TRSE). These are areas in which there is the combination of poor access to key destinations by public transport and active travel, and high vulnerability to social exclusion based on local economic conditions, the demographics of the population, and multiple forms of deprivation. This risk of TRSE is higher in the North than the rest of England, with 21.3% of the population of the North living in areas with a high risk of social exclusion specifically because of transport issues, compared with 16% of the population of the rest of England.

Local areas with a high risk of TRSE are found across the North, including in every Local Authority District and Local Transport Authority. However, there are significant variations in this risk across area types. Data analysis conducted by TfN estimates that this risk is particularly concentrated in former manufacturing and mining areas such as County Durham and Doncaster, coastal areas such as Hartlepool and Blackpool, and in smaller towns and cities in rural areas such as Barnsley and Blackburn. Table One gives the ten local authority districts in the North with the highest risk of TRSE, based on the size and proportion of the population living in local areas with a high risk.

Table One – Risk of TRSE in the North

Local Authority District	Rank of the size of the population in TRSE Risk Category:		Rank of the proportion of the population in TRSE Risk Category:		Average Rank
	3-5	5	3-5	5	
Doncaster	2	4	11	6	5.8
Redcar and Cleveland	12	3	4	4	5.8
County Durham	1	10	9	8	7.0
Barnsley	4	6	8	11	7.3
Blackpool	10	19	3	2	8.5
Northumberland	3	9	12	12	9.0
Rotherham	6	2	16	17	10.3
Hartlepool	21	17	2	3	10.8
Scarborough	18	11	6	9	11.0
Cheshire West and Chester	8	1	22	15	11.5

TRSE is caused by the combination of fragmentation, unreliability, and high costs in the public transport system; poor conditions for walking, cycling, and wheeling in car-dominated environments; and the high levels of car dependency that result from this. This leads to poor access to key destinations for those primarily dependent on public transport and active travel, alongside forced car ownership, in which households feel compelled to have access to a car, despite the costs of car access causing them significant hardship. These factors act in a vicious cycle, with poor active travel conditions and public transport provision reinforcing car dependency, and high levels of car use undermining local public transport and worsening active travel conditions.

Diagram One - A vicious cycle of transport-related social exclusion
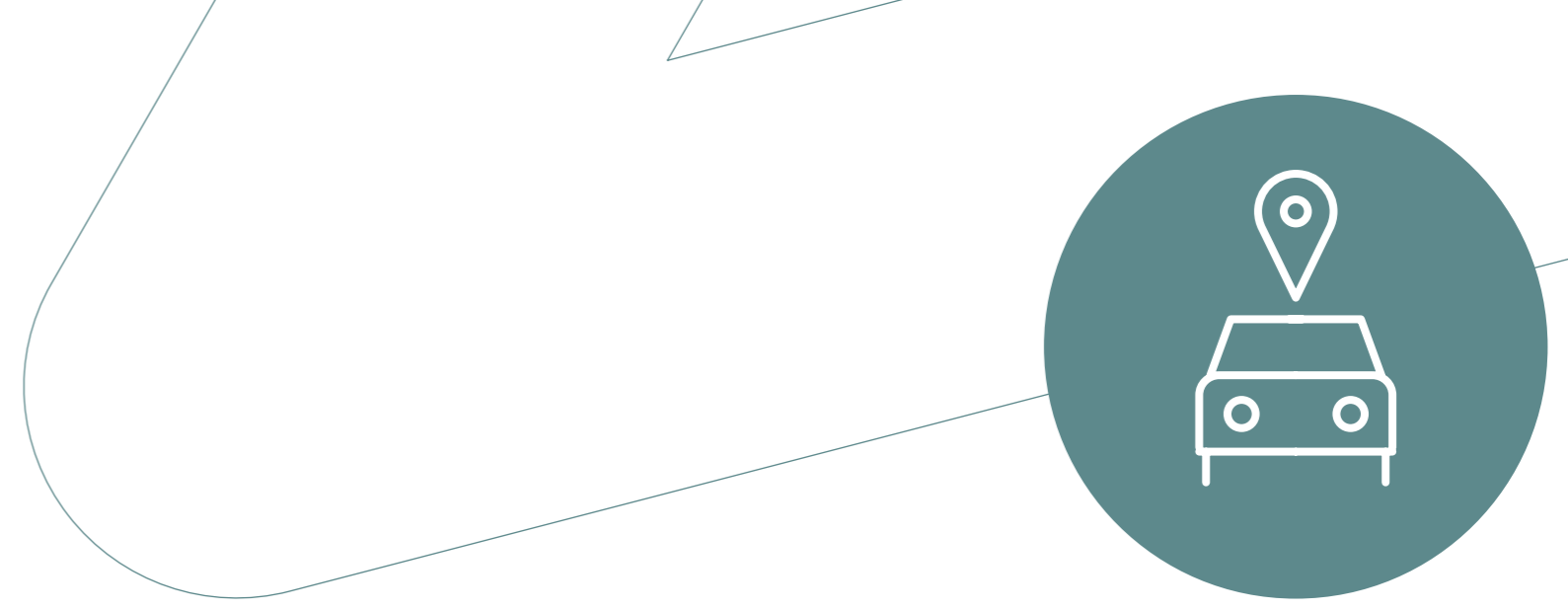
A societal context of

Poverty, multiple deprivation, and income inequality. Inequalities relating to disability, gender, caring, ethnicity, and LGBTQ identities.

Alongside a transport system that features

Car-dominated environments with poor conditions for walking, cycling, and wheeling. Fragmented, infrequent, and unreliable public transport services. High costs of public transport, particularly for multi-mode and cross-boundary trips.

The combination of which leads to

A large gap in access to opportunities, key services, and community life between those with unconstrained car access, and those relying on public transport and active travel.

Alongside

High levels of car dependency, including forced car ownership.

Which results in social exclusion through

Limited access to opportunities, key services, and community life for those reliant on public transport and active travel.

Alongside the wider impacts of

Using the transport system for key journeys causing significant stress and anxiety. The money spent on transport causing significant financial hardship. The time spent travelling for key journeys crowding out leisure & recreation.

Which reinforces and leads back to

Poverty, multiple deprivation, and income inequality. Inequalities relating to disability, gender, caring, ethnicity, and LGBTQ identities. Transport and spatial planning decisions that prioritise car use.

TRSE has the potential to impact people of any background, but it has a disproportionate effect on specific population groups. TfN's research on TRSE in the North and the wider literature on TRSE in a variety of contexts demonstrates that three population characteristics are particularly significant to TRSE:

→ **Disability and long-term health conditions:** People with disabilities and long-term health conditions are disproportionately impacted by poorly adapted public transport facilities, by poor conditions for active travel, by the costs of using public and private transport, by anti-social behaviour and discrimination when using the transport system, and by fragmentation between transport modes and operators.

→ **Caring responsibilities:** People with significant caring responsibilities within and outside of their household often travel in ways that differ from the best-served commuter routes, and through this are more exposed to fragmentation and unreliability in the public transport system. Linked to this, they are more likely to face forced car ownership, in which they are only able to fulfil their responsibilities by having access to a car, but the costs of doing so causes them significant hardship. They are also more impacted by poor active travel conditions, particularly when travelling with children or when accompanying those using mobility aids.

→ **Low income & insecure work:** Those on low incomes are particularly impacted by cost constraints across public and private transport, the impacts of which are exacerbated by fragmentation between transport modes and operators. This constrains the journeys they are able to take, and their ability to adapt to disruption and delays in their journeys. Alongside this, those in insecure work face additional consequences from delays and unreliability in their journeys, with delays having the potential to lead to loss of pay or loss of work.

TfN's research demonstrates that disability and long-term health conditions, caring responsibilities, and low income and insecure work are key differentiators in exposure to social exclusion because of transport issues. However, alongside this, the following population characteristics are also significant to TRSE:

→ **Gender:** Women are on average more dependent on public transport for everyday journeys, and because of this are relatively more exposed to fragmentation and unreliability in these systems. Alongside this, women are more likely to be on lower incomes, and to devote a greater amount of time to caring responsibilities. Because of this, they are more likely to be exposed to the sets of determinants of TRSE linked to income and caring responsibilities. Finally, women are more likely to be impacted by harassment and discrimination in transport spaces, and to face constraints in how, where and when they travel as a result of this.

→ **Ethnicity:** Ethnic minority communities are more likely to be impacted by anti-social behaviour, harassment, and discrimination when using the transport system. These experiences can cause those affected to change or constrain how and where they travel, and consequently limit access to opportunities, key services, and community life. The persistent and significant gap in average incomes between ethnic minority and White British residents of the North also means that ethnic minority communities are more exposed to the set of determinants linked to low incomes.

→ **Age:** Exposure to TRSE varies across life stages, but is particularly likely to impact those transitioning from full time education into full or part time work. This reflects the combination of a loss of access to discounted public transport, a lack of access to private transport, and the increased requirement to travel to new destinations in order to find and access work. This combination of effects often occurs at a time in which incomes are low relative to other life stages, and can form a vicious cycle of low incomes and limited access to opportunities.

→ **Sexuality and gender identity:** LGBTQ people are more likely to be impacted by anti-social behaviour, harassment and discrimination when using the transport system. These experiences can cause those affected to change or constrain how and where they travel, and consequently limit access to opportunities, key services, and community life.

Shared experiences of transport and social exclusion

As well as quantifying the risk of TRSE across the North, TfN's research examined the lived experience of TRSE for a diverse range of populations and area types. The five examples below illustrate how TRSE manifests in these different circumstances. Each example combines the experiences of multiple participants to illustrate the findings of the research.

Rob

Rob is in his early 20s, and lives in a small town in the North East. He has struggled to hold down regular work since leaving school, and while he has a driving licence, he cannot afford to own and run a car. Since COVID-19 restrictions eased, he has been looking for work in hotels and restaurants, most of which are a few miles away on the coast. While he has found a few vacancies, with the bus services available in his town it is impossible for him to make it in time for early morning shifts, and this is proving a major barrier to him finding work. He has lost work before after bus cancellations caused him to repeatedly run late for his shifts, and knows that with the insecure work available to him, there is a risk he could end up paying the bus fare only to find there is no work available if he is late.

Lakshmi

Lakshmi lives in a suburb of a city in Yorkshire, with her partner and two-year-old son. She is the main carer for her mother, who lives on the other side of the city. Her partner commutes in their car, so she balances her caring responsibilities using public transport most of the time. Her mother's house is only a few miles away, but getting there requires a bus to the city centre and then a tram out, with a typical wait of 20 minutes in between. It should only be a five-minute walk to the bus stop, but there are more and more cars parked on the pavement, and it can take a long time to safely cross the main road to her stop when she has the pushchair. Because of this, she often ends up leaving 15 minutes before the bus is due, to avoid missing her connection. This extra time really adds up, and she has recently had to give up her part time job to make these journeys work. She also has to buy two return tickets to complete the journey – one for the tram and another for the bus – which with the drop in her income is putting major pressure on her finances.

Mahomed

Mahomed lives in a town in the North West, and works on an industrial estate on the outskirts of the town. He starts work at 7AM, and with the public transport options in the area he has no option but to drive to work. His car recently failed an MOT, and while he was able to borrow a car from a friend while his car was off the road, the cost of the repairs have caused him major financial hardship. He had to cut down on his food shop and fall behind on bill payments to get his car back on the road, and knows he will have to do the same again when his car insurance is up for renewal. He can walk to see friends and family nearby, and only really uses his car for travelling to work, but it is almost impossible for him to lead an active social and community life with the money he has left after paying for his car.

June

June has lived all of her life in a rural village in the North West, and is in her 80s. Her husband has recently had to enter residential care after being diagnosed with dementia, and as her eyesight has worsened, she has reluctantly given up driving. She uses a community transport service to visit her husband, and has her shopping delivered, but she feels increasingly isolated from friends in the area. The bus service in her village only operates one return journey to the nearby town per day, and there are no connecting services out to other areas that she can use and still get the return bus home. She can afford to take a taxi some of the time, and uses these for hospital appointments, but her fixed income means this is not an option for most trips she would like to take. She is also finding the walk to the bus stop in her village increasingly difficult, as part of this involves crossing an unlit rural road with national speed limit, and no pavement on one side. Because of this, she does not feel able to use the bus during winter months.

Katie

Katie lives in a suburb of a city in Yorkshire. She has a progressive health condition which limits her mobility, and has recently started using a wheelchair. Katie moved to her neighbourhood because it was close to local shops and the train station, but she feels increasingly isolated. Cars parked on the pavement, increasing amounts of traffic on the roads, and a lack of safe pedestrian crossings in her area means that she is unable to access local services in her wheelchair – even though the distance itself is manageable. Her local rail station is wheelchair accessible, but many of the stations she would like to travel to are not, and the requirement to book assistance in advance restricts her from using rail at short notice. She has also faced anti-social behaviour from other passengers when travelling by rail, particularly when she has attempted to use the designated wheelchair space at busy times, and the lack of staff available while travelling makes her feel vulnerable. This stress and anxiety add to her feelings of isolation.

Our vision for a socially inclusive transport system

TfN's vision is for a transport system that meets the needs of the diverse places and populations of the North – reducing inequalities and enhancing social inclusion.

Underlying this vision are eight principles, that draw together key elements of the evidence base published in **Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England.**

1 **The role of car access:** Having unconstrained access to a car should not be a prerequisite for social inclusion; including accessing opportunities, key services, and community life. Safe, convenient, reliable, and affordable public transport and active travel options should be available across the diverse areas of the North.

2 **Diverse travel patterns:** Public transport services should function equally well for those travelling outside of peak periods and major commuter routes as for those who fit these conventional travel patterns.

3 **Integration:** Public transport information and ticketing should be integrated across administrative boundaries and modes of transport, such that those taking multi-modal journeys across boundaries do not face excessive additional costs and complexities.

4 **Equality of access:** Public transport and active travel infrastructure should be accessible to those with disabilities and limited physical mobility. This accessibility should be fundamental to the design of infrastructure, and offer equality of access.

5 **Technology:** The introduction and use of technology in public transport should be inclusive of those with limited or no access to the internet and to banking services, both at the point of use and in the provision of information.

6 **Local and digital access:** Transport, spatial planning, and digital connectivity policies should combine to expand local access to services, opportunities, and community life, and thereby reduce the impacts of limited access to transport on social inclusion.

7 **Affordability:** The level of transport use necessary to access opportunities, key services and community life should be affordable to those on low incomes, those out of work, and those unable to access work and social welfare.

8 **Safety:** Journeys on, to, and from public transport access points should be safe and be perceived to be safe, particularly for women, LGBTQ people, ethnic minority communities, and people with disabilities.

Measuring progress on social inclusion

TfN's TRSE **data tool** provides a rigorous means of estimating the risk of social exclusion resulting from transport issues across local areas of England. This is based on analysis of the following factors:

1 **Accessibility:** The level of access to jobs, education, healthcare, and basic services by car and public transport, and the accessibility gap between car and public transport. Drawing on DfT Journey time Statistics, this includes analysis of the level of access, the number of destinations that are accessible, and journey times.

2 **Vulnerability:** The extent to which the population is vulnerable to social exclusion, based on the combination of socioeconomic and demographic indicators. Drawing on the English Indices of Deprivation, this considers how vulnerable the population of an area is to poor access to jobs, education, healthcare, and basic services.

A threshold analysis of these factors is used to produce the TRSE Risk Category, which forms TfN's primary measure of the risk of TRSE in the North. This measure is available for all Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. LSOAs in categories three, four and five have a high risk of TRSE, with those in category 5 having the highest risk.

Headline metrics of inclusion in the transport system

TfN will engage the TRSE Risk Category to measure progress towards an inclusive transport system, and the impact of the set of actions provided in this Strategy. Specifically, TfN will monitor the following headline metrics:

1 A reduction in the size and proportion of the population of the North living in areas with a high risk of TRSE (TRSE Risk Categories 3 to 5). Data for 2019, which forms the baseline for this measure, is shown in Graph One and Table Two.

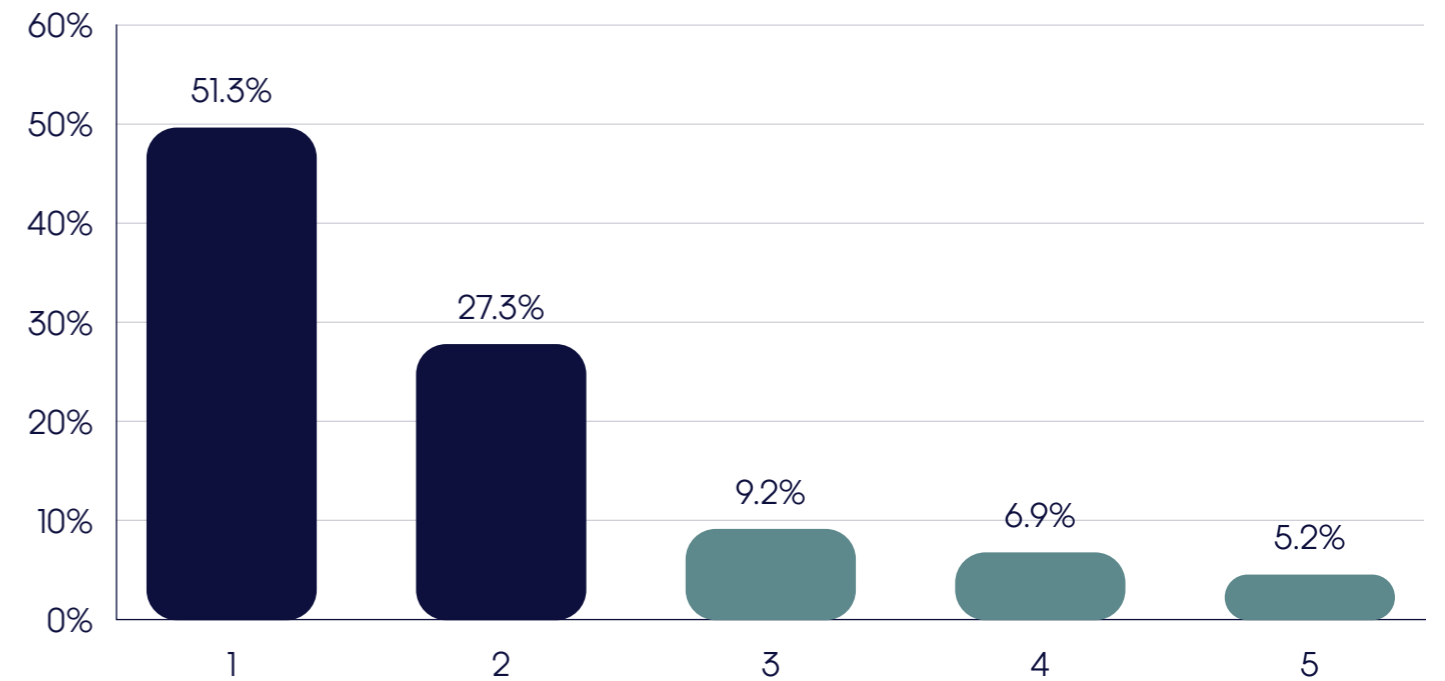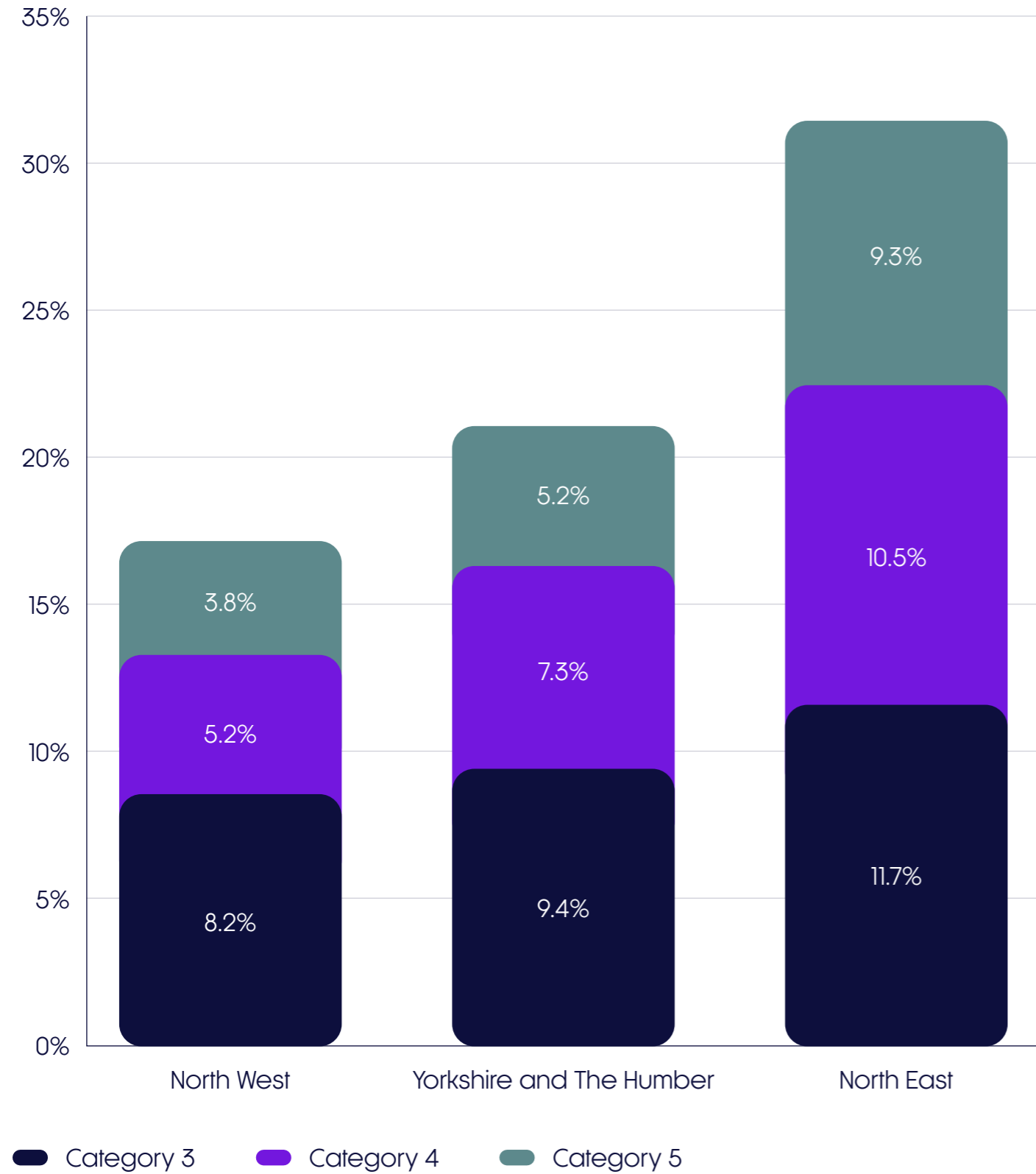Graph One: % of the population of the North by TRSE Risk Category

Table Two: Population of the North by TRSE Risk Category

Category	Population (millions)
5 - Largest Risk	0.81
4	1.07
3	1.43
2	4.24
1 - Smallest risk	7.97

2 A reduction in the inequality of risk of TRSE between the three regions of the North. Data for 2019 for this measure is shown in Graph Two and Map One.

Graph Two: % of the population of the North East, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber by selected TRSE Risk Categories

Bar chart data:

North West
- Category 3: 8.2%
- Category 4: 5.2%
- Category 5: 3.8%

Yorkshire and The Humber
- Category 3: 9.4%
- Category 4: 7.3%
- Category 5: 5.2%

North East
- Category 3: 11.7%
- Category 4: 10.5%
- Category 5: 9.3%

Legend: ■ Category 3 ■ Category 4 ■ Category 5

Map One: Population at high risk of TRSE by region

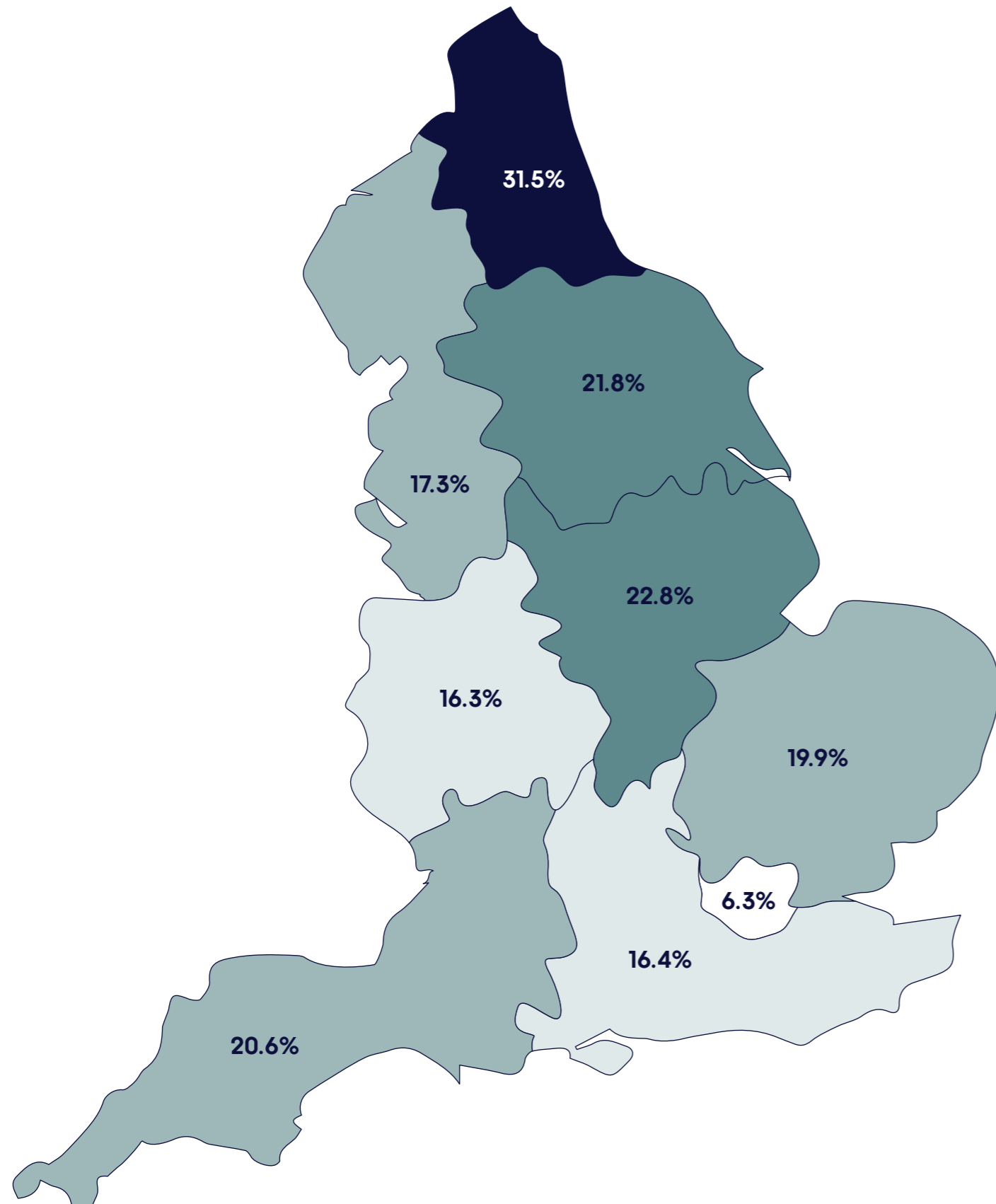

31.5%

21.8%

17.3%

22.8%

16.3%

19.9%

6.3%

16.4%

20.6%

3 A reduction in the inequality of risk of TRSE between the North and the rest of England. Data for 2019 for this measure is shown in Graph Three.

Graph Three: % of the population of the North of England and the rest of England by selected TRSE Risk Categories

	Rest of England	North of England
Category 5	3.8%	5.2%
Category 4	5.0%	6.9%
Category 3	7.8%	9.2%

● Category 3 ● Category 4 ● Category 5
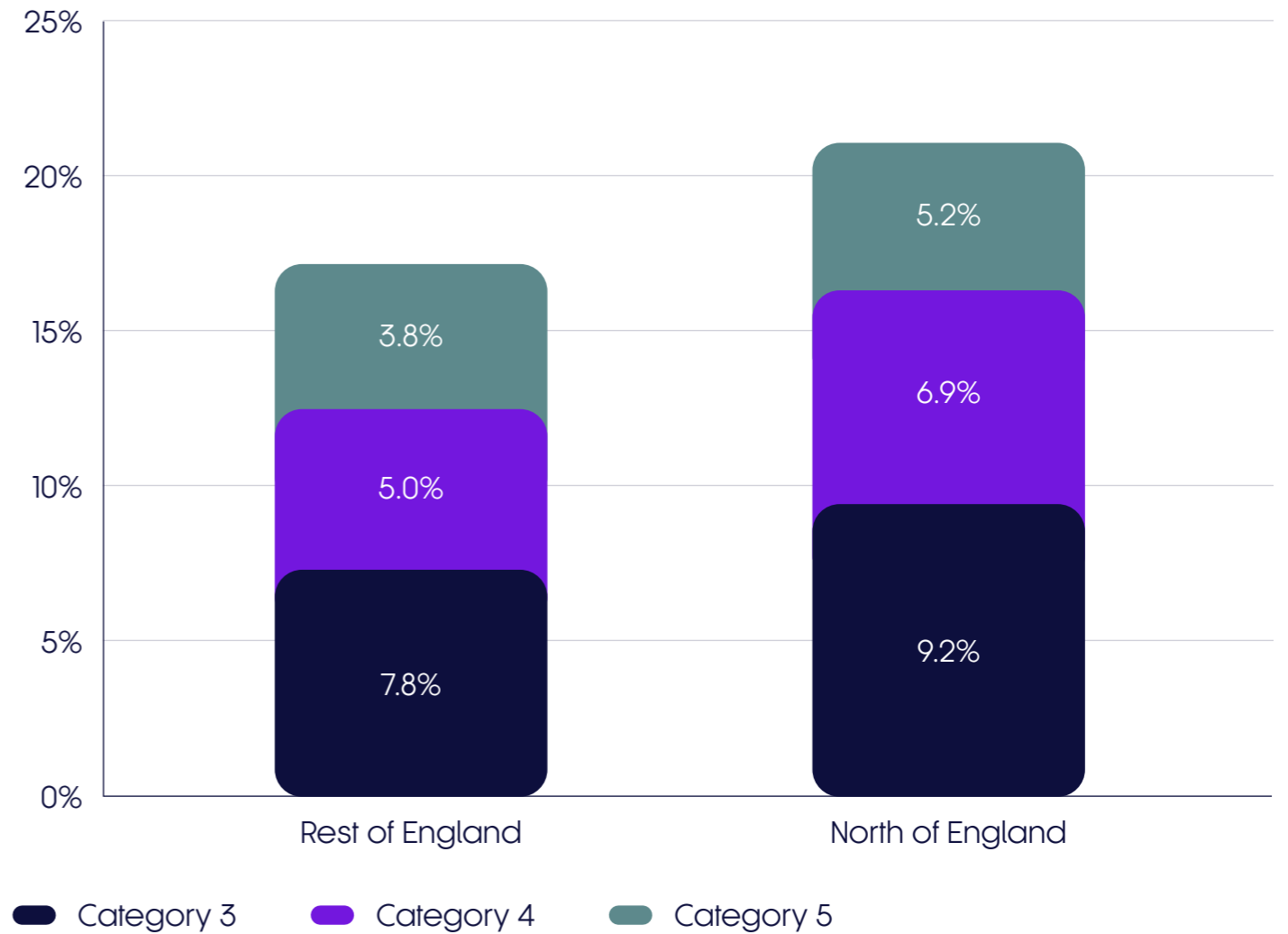
Future reporting

The TRSE Risk Category is based on analysis of Journey Time Statistics tables published by the Department for Transport and the English Indices of Deprivation published by the Office for National Statistics. Because of this, TfN's capacity to update and report on the metrics is dependent on the continued publication of these datasets, and data for 2019 provides the baseline against which future progress will be measured. Based on previous publication timelines, it is expected that an update to the TRSE Risk Category will next be provided in 2023.

Challenges in achieving an inclusive transport system

TfN's research demonstrates that there are entrenched inequalities in access to transport and vulnerability to social exclusion between population groups and areas, and that a significant proportion of the population of the North is at a high risk of TRSE. Many of the issues observed, such as the extent of car dependency and fragmentation between modes of public transport, are highly entrenched, and are not easily subject to change. Alongside this central challenge, this Strategy reflects and responds to the following challenges:

→ **Attitudes to car dependency:** Addressing the current high level of car dependency and car-dominated environments evident across areas of the North is a necessary element of achieving a socially inclusive transport system. However, current levels of car use and dependency can also mean that TfN and partners may face controversy and resistance in seeking to make progress on this issue. The context of growing levels of car use and ownership, and the significant gap between car and public transport accessibility also pose significant obstacles to change in this area.

→ **Link to multiple policy areas:** Achieving an inclusive transport system requires action across multiple policy areas at the national, regional, and local levels, the vast majority of which are outside of the remit of TfN. This issue also interacts with several other TfN Strategies and Policy Positions. This includes transport decarbonisation, active travel, digital, spatial planning, rail, and major roads. Evidence on inclusion impacts has influenced the development of these policy positions, but is often not a core aspect of these existing Strategies and Policy Positions.

→ **Cross-boundary and organisational collaboration:** There is a need for significant cross-boundary and cross-organisational collaboration in order to achieve a socially inclusive transport system. This includes collaboration between TfN, Local Transport Authorities, National Highways, Network Rail, transport operators across multiple modes, national government, third sector organisations, and planning authorities.

→ **The difference to current ways of assessing transport schemes:** Social inclusion and equality considerations are often secondary in transport-decision-making, when compared to factors such as journey time savings and economic benefits. The emphasis on these factors is entrenched in practice and in policy, and results in fundamentally different decisions to what would be the case if equivalent emphasis were placed on social inclusion.

→ **Interactions with transport decarbonisation:** Decarbonisation is a key element of the current transport policy context, and is an increasingly significant driver of transport decision-making at all levels. There is the potential for both significant risks and opportunities for social inclusion, depending on the approach to decarbonisation that is pursued. Broadly, an approach to transport decarbonisation that prioritises private electric vehicles without delivering measures to significantly increase the use of public transport and active travel is likely to increase inequalities and social exclusion. By contrast, an approach that prioritises modal shift towards public transport and active travel is likely to reduce inequalities and social exclusion.

→ **Measurement and metrics:** Social inclusion is fundamentally more challenging to measure than other aspects of the effectiveness of the transport system in the North, and this measurement challenge has contributed to the relative lack of prominence of this issue in transport decision-making at all levels. TfN's TRSE Risk Category offers a systematic means of measuring the size of the population in the North exposed to a high risk of TRSE, including comparisons to other areas of England.

→ **The impact of averages:** Transport planning and investment decisions that – implicitly or explicitly – are shaped around an 'average' or 'typical' user can contribute to social exclusion for those whose circumstances and behaviours differ. For example, a focus in public transport decision-making on peak routes serving city centre locations may align well with the needs of an average commuter, but less so for those making trips between neighbourhoods to fulfil caring responsibilities.

→ **Access to power and decision-making:** There is a significant overlap between the demographic and socioeconomic groups that are most exposed to TRSE and those that have historically had relatively limited access to power and decision-making, and have been the subject of structural inequalities. This includes people with disabilities, women, LGBTQ people, people on low incomes and in insecure work, and ethnic minority communities. This relative lack of access to power and decision-making supports a context in which decisions can be disproportionately shaped by and for relatively advantaged demographic and socioeconomic groups.

→ **Competitive and fragmented funding for transport investment:** The funding of transport investment is and has long been fragmented and competitive. This model means that LTAs are forced to compete for funding that can be specific to particular modes of transport or forms of investment. The fragmentation of the transport system between modes and across administrative boundaries is a significant contributor to TRSE, and in part reflects the approach that successive governments have taken to the allocation of transport funding.

→ **The impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic had widespread and fundamental impacts on the lives of people across the UK, but there is an increasing body of evidence that demonstrates that these impacts were not evenly distributed among different populations. In particular, those on low incomes and in insecure work, ethnic minority communities, those with disabilities and long-term health conditions, and those with caring responsibilities were particularly impacted by the health, economic, and societal consequences of the pandemic. The fact that these population groups are also relatively more exposed to TRSE means that it is reasonable to expect that the COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated TRSE.

The role of TfN and other organisations in achieving a more inclusive transport system set out below reflects and seeks to overcome these challenges.

TfN's role in achieving an inclusive transport system

As a sub national transport body, TfN's role is to set a regional transport vision, and to provide statutory advice on planning and priorities for large scale transport investment in the North of England. Within this context, TfN develops evidence and provides expertise, supports Local Transport Authority Partners, and works with a range of transport stakeholders to achieve our vision for a thriving North of England, where world class transport supports sustainable economic growth, excellent quality of life, and improved opportunities for all. This section sets out TfN's existing role in achieving a socially inclusive transport system, and the new set of actions linked to this Strategy.

TfN's current role

TfN's role reflects, and is shaped by, the commitments in the 2019 Strategic Transport Plan and the wider transport inclusion agenda, as follows:

TfN's Strategic Transport Plan for the North of England

TfN's 2019 STP made the following key statements in relation to social inclusion:

"Income, social and health inequalities are widely seen as one of the defining challenges of the 21st Century. As such inclusive growth should be at the heart of public investment. This Strategic Transport Plan should provide a way for inclusive benefits from investment to be embedded and secured across the North".

"Transport is social infrastructure which should provide opportunity for all potential users, and TfN wants to drive forward the inclusive growth agenda. Strategic transport improvements should not just better connect already connected areas or people to other similar areas or people, improvements should ensure that all areas of opportunity are connected, and that communities are not disconnected and further isolated".

TfN will "Work with partners to identify transport interventions that deliver inclusive economic growth by improving access to employment and skills opportunities for all."

" *The Strategic Transport Plan must work for everyone who lives and works in the North through improved access to opportunities. Economic growth in the North should be as inclusive as possible, avoiding transport poverty where the transport network limits access opportunities in communities. Investment in the strategic transport network should enable better access to key opportunities, including employment, health, social activities and education, regardless of an individual's age, income level, location and mobility."*

Links to other TfN workstreams, positions & strategies

This strategy draws on a number of other TfN workstreams, policy positions and strategies. The key links from inclusive transport to other areas TfN workstreams are as follows:

→ **Active Travel Policy Position:** Progress towards a socially inclusive transport system in the North requires significant progress in the quality of infrastructure and conditions for walking, cycling, and wheeling – collectively known as active travel. Car-dominated environments, community severance, and high levels of car-dependence contribute to social exclusion through limiting access to opportunities, key services, and community life, limiting access to public transport, and increasing the inequality between those with and without unconstrained access to private transport. TfN's Active Travel Policy Position sets out a number of actions for TfN to support Partners and to work with national government to improve conditions for active travel.

→ **Spatial Planning Policy Position:** The manner in which spaces are designed – particularly the extent to which spaces enable active travel and access to public transport or prioritise car access – plays a central role for social inclusion. This is relevant for both the planning of new residential and commercial developments, and to how existing spaces are repurposed and adapted to ensure equality of access and social inclusion. TfN's Spatial Planning Policy Position sets out how TfN will support those involved in the planning process in rebalancing away from car-dominated environments to promote healthier and more liveable places for all.

→ **Digital Mobility strategy:** The rollout of digital payment, ticketing, and information technologies in public transport presents significant risks and opportunities for those affected by TRSE. This includes the potential benefits of increased integration between modes, reducing the additional cost burdens on those taking multi-stage and cross-boundary trips, and improving access to real time information at access points. Alongside this, there is the potential that moves towards digital-only payment and information delivery could further exclude those with limited access to smartphones, banking services and internet connections. TfN's Digital Mobility Strategy will set out how the North will deliver digital mobility across areas including mobility ticketing, open data, fares reform, and demand responsive transport.

→ **Transport Decarbonisation Strategy:** The extent of car-dependency inherent to the transport system in the North is both a major source of carbon emissions, and a significant contributor to TRSE. This is evident both in the impact of high levels of car use on public transport and active travel, and in the extent of forced car ownership that results from the significant accessibility gap between public transport and car travel. TfN's Transport Decarbonisation Strategy sets out a trajectory to achieve close to zero carbon emissions from surface transport in the North by 2045, and the level of policy commitment needed to achieve this, including a need to reduce private car vehicle by up to 14% from predicted baseline levels by 2030. The Strategy includes policy recommendations to enable modal shift away from private car use through investment in public transport and active travel, as well as supporting the transition to electric vehicles, as well as a number of activities that TfN can undertake to support this.

→ **Clean Mobility Visions:** One of the practical activities, falling out of TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy is Clean Mobility Visions. This activity supports our Partners by developing evidence-based and contextualised policies that enable modal shift away from private car use, helping to visualise both the carbon and wider health and accessibility benefits of doing so. Alongside long-term investment in public transport, this includes a range of more immediate interventions to transform car-focused spaces to enable active travel and access to public transport – such as low traffic neighbourhoods, school streets, and managing levels of car parking.

→ **Electric vehicle charging infrastructure framework:** The transition to electric vehicles is a necessary and critical component of transport decarbonisation. TfN's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Framework supports this through robust evidence on charging demand and requirements, a comprehensive and consistent regional route map towards an effective and inclusive network, and through reducing investment uncertainty in EV infrastructure. This includes working to ensure that the diverse area types are well served by EV charging provision, and that provision is not only focused in the most commercially viable areas. The EVCI framework capabilities also provide a means to make better assessments regarding the many social and spatial considerations associated with EV charging infrastructure, particularly those impacting the non-EV users.

→ **Analytical Framework Development:** Limitations in how the social impacts of the transport network have been analysed, and the relative weight given to social and economic impacts in transport appraisal, have contributed to the inequalities evident in the transport system. TfN's Analytical Framework consists of a set of models and analytical tools that analyse the current pan-northern transport network and the impact of transport investments. This implements and expands on DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance, and includes impacts on the road and rail network, on land use, and on decarbonisation. The further development of TfN's Analytical Framework will directly incorporate the measurement of transport-related social exclusion, and through this expand the capacity to provide robust evidence on how specific transport investments impact inclusion.

→ **Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER):** TRSE is fundamentally connected with economic conditions across the North, including access to secure and high-quality employment, the extent of poverty, and where key services are located relative to different population groups and areas. The 2022/23 NPIER will build on the 2016 review, in part by expanding the focus of analysis to include the foundational economy, and by expanding the level of detail in the analysis of where different sectors of the economy are concentrated. This will complement and expand the evidence base on the causes of social exclusion, and outputs from the updated NPIER will be engaged in the further development of the evidence base on TRSE.

→ **Major Roads Report:** The gap between what is accessible to those primarily dependent on active travel and public transport and those with unconstrained access to private transport is central to TRSE in the North. The 'predict and provide' approach to road planning, in which road development is based on catering for indefinitely increasing demand, is a significant contributory factor to this. TfN's Major Roads Report sets out TfN's vision for the major roads network as part of a multi-modal transport system. This includes an initial appraisal process to explore alternatives to road expansion to address the challenges faced in different local contexts, actions to identify and reduce the negative externalities associated with road transport, and a focus on integration with local transport networks.

→ **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Strategy:** The dominance of journey time saving metrics, network efficiency metrics and macro-economic outcomes in transport decision-making is linked to inequalities evident in the transport system in the North and elsewhere. TfN's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework provides a set of indicators that measure a broad range of impacts of the transport system including measures of TRSE. TfN's Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy provides a set of processes for monitoring these impacts at a Pan-Northern scale and ensuring they are considered across TfN decision-making. This enables TfN to transparently track progress towards the objectives set out in the 2019 STP in a way that is balanced across transport system metrics, economic metrics, social impacts, and decarbonisation. TfN will also engage with partner organisations to promote best practice in Monitoring and Evaluation.

→ **Strategic Rail:** Rail plays a key part in the integrated and flexible transport network required to reduce levels of TRSE in the North. As part of the development of the 2024 STP, TfN is developing a rail policy that supports access to work, education, and other key destinations, ensures that rail services better reflect changing travel habits following the COVID-19 pandemic, and improves multi-modal integration at stations across the North. Alongside this, TfN contributes to business cases in areas currently poorly served by rail, in which inclusion is an explicit aim, and is working with the Great British Railways Transition Team, Network Rail, and DfT on local integration.

→ **Future Travel Scenarios:** TfN has adopted a scenario planning approach to help futureproof decision-making and establish a detailed and holistic representation of TfN's vision. TfN's Future Travel Scenarios represent strategic factors that are external to TfN's direct control and are used as 'reference case' scenarios to test different TfN strategies and policies in terms of their performance against objectives. In exploring economic, social, and environmental interdependences, TfN's approach is aligned to the National Planning Policy Framework and ensures our strategies recognise and address interdependencies with non-transport sectors. There is an important balance to be achieved between improving the North's economic performance, ensuring that transport becomes increasingly sustainable in line with meeting carbon reduction targets, whilst supporting improvements in inclusivity and prosperity.

The wider transport and social inclusion policy agenda

TfN's research on transport-related social exclusion and the development of this Strategy sits within a wider inclusion policy agenda, including:

→ **Levelling Up White Paper:** The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities' Levelling Up White Paper sets out how the Government will work to "end the geographical inequality which is such a striking feature of the UK". This brings together a range of funding announcements across infrastructure, skills, and health, linked to a set of 'missions' across transport, skills, housing and health and wellbeing. The focus here is on geographic inequalities rather than inequalities within geographies. However, delivery of the Levelling Up missions could significantly reduce vulnerability to TRSE across the North, both through improved connectivity, and through improved provision of local services that reduce the need to travel.

→ **The Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving equal access for disabled people:** DfT's Inclusive Transport Strategy "sets out the Government's plans to make our transport system more inclusive, and to make travel easier for disabled people". This includes an "ambition for disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else, and to be able to travel confidently, easily and without extra cost", and a set of actions to achieve this ambition.[1] TfN's research demonstrates that people with disabilities and long-term health conditions are the population group most impacted by TRSE, and the full delivery of the actions set out in the Inclusive Transport Strategy will significantly contribute to the reduction of TRSE in the North.

→ **Inclusive mobility: A guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure:** DfT's inclusive mobility guide provides information on "best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure" for people with disabilities; updating previous guidance in part by drawing on the Inclusive Transport Strategy.[2] Given the extent of exposure to TRSE among people with disabilities and long-term health conditions in the North and the link of this exposure to the design of pedestrian and transport infrastructure, the full implementation of this guidance in new developments would contribute to reductions in TRSE.

→ **Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking:** Environments that are dominated by car use and storage contribute to TRSE. This is through the direct barriers that such environments provide to active travel, the impacts on access to public transport, and the car-dependency that this reinforces. DfT's Gear Change strategy sets out the need for a "step-change in cycling and walking", and to realise the benefits that cycling and walking can generate for public health, air quality, and climate change.[3] Gear Change includes a summary of inclusive design principles for cycling and walking, the full implementation of which would have significant benefits for populations affected by TRSE in the North.

→ **Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20):** LTN 1/20 provides Local Authorities with a recommended set of design standards for cycling infrastructure. It is "an expectation that local authorities will demonstrate that they have given due considerations to this guidance when designing new cycling schemes and ... when applying for government funding that includes cycle infrastructure".[4] TfN's research demonstrates that the current conditions and infrastructure available for active travel in many areas of the North limits what is otherwise a practical and highly affordable mode of transport, and contributes to car dependency and forced car ownership. Widespread implementation of cycling infrastructure at LTN 1/20 standards has the potential to reduce transport costs and car dependency in the North, and through this reduce TRSE.

[1] The Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People
[2] Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure
[3] Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking
[4] Cycle Infrastructure Design

→ **Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England:** The combination of widespread declines in the frequency and availability of bus services alongside above-inflation in average bus fares over the last decade is a major driving factor of TRSE in the North. DfT's National Bus Strategy for England provides long term funding commitments and strategic direction for bus services outside of London, and highlights how investment in bus services supports multiple government priorities – including access to work and education, decarbonisation, and the reduction of regional inequalities.[5] This Strategy highlights many of the same challenges with local public transport than TfN's research demonstrates are among the key drivers of TRSE in the North, including fragmentation between operators, inequalities in levels of services between areas and times of day, and the complete loss of services in some rural communities.

→ **Bus Service Improvement Plans:** Linked to the National Bus Strategy for England, Local Transport Authorities have developed Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs). These plans act on the strategy by setting out how LTAs and bus operators will deliver an "a fully integrated service with simple, multi-modal tickets, more bus priority measures, the same high-quality information for all passengers in more places, and better turn-up-and-go frequencies that keep running into the evenings and at weekends".[6] In 2022, DfT awarded funding of £1.1 billion for 31 BSIPs in England. Eight LTAs in the North received some level of funding, and ten had no part of their BSIP funded.

→ **Rural Mobility Fund:** The lack of frequent and reliable public transport options in rural communities results in high levels of car dependency, including forced car ownership, and limited or no access to opportunities, key services, and community life for many. In 2021, 17 rural areas – including three in the North – received funding to support the development of business cases to improve rural bus services.

→ **The Green Book:** Revisions to the appraisal methodology and process set out in The Green Book were undertaken "in response to concerns that the government's appraisal guidance may mitigate against investment in poorer parts of the UK, and undermine the Government's aim to "level up" these areas".[7] The revisions did not fundamentally change the core methodology, but has led to a greater emphasis on the strategic context of proposals – including the "specific social and economic features of different places". Given the uneven distribution of TRSE in the North and the link of this issue to local social and economic features, this greater emphasis on strategic context provides significant opportunity for schemes and investment that combat TRSE.

→ **Equality Act 2010:** The population and identity groups that are most impacted by TRSE overlap with the Protected Characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. This includes disability, sexual orientation, sex, and race. The Act prohibits both direct discrimination and indirect discrimination, and sets out a duty to make adjustments for disabled persons. These provisions are relevant to many of the physical aspects of TRSE, including the design of public transport access points and street environments, and may also be relevant to questions of access to opportunities and key services for different population groups.

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[5] Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England
[6] Bus service improvement plans: guidance to local authorities and bus operators
[7] The Green Book Review 2020: Findings and Response

How TfN will act to support a socially inclusive transport system

In addition to the workstreams detailed previously, this Strategy commits TfN to taking the following actions to support an inclusive transport system:

→ **Develop and share evidence on TRSE:** TfN will take a leading role in developing the evidence on the causes, consequences, extent, and distribution of TRSE in the North of England. This will include:

  • Further development of TfN's TRSE data tool to measure the relative risk of TRSE across small areas in the North: TfN's current tool provides LSOA-level analysis of TRSE across England, based on a transport accessibility analysis and population vulnerability analysis with a 2019 base year. Further development of this tool will consider change between 2015 and 2019, and between 2019 and 2023, once data becomes available. TfN will use this to analyse the key drivers of change in the risk of TRSE over time, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. TfN will publish and share outputs from this analysis.

  • Validation and refinement of the TRSE data tool: TfN will validate and refine the results of the TRSE data tool by undertaking local area case studies. This will take place through cross-checking the outputs of the tool with outputs from TfN's Analytical Framework, and through additional primary research in selected areas. These case studies will validate and refine the estimates of the risk of TRSE provided through the data tool.

  • Further research with primary data gathered from populations affected by TRSE: TfN has gathered a significant body of primary data on the lived experiences of TRSE in a diverse range of areas of the North of England. TfN's report, **Transport-related social exclusion in the North of England**, sets out the major findings from these data. In 2022/23, TfN will conduct further research and analysis using these already collected datasets, in order to maximise the use and value of the contributions gathered from members of the public in areas of the North affected by TRSE. TfN will publish the findings of this further research.

→ **Integrate TRSE metrics into TfN's Analytical Framework:** TfN's Analytical Framework consists of a set of tools and models to analyse the transport network in the North of England, and to appraise the impacts of transport interventions. Currently, TfN's Analytical Framework implements elements of DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance relating to social and distributional impact analysis. Drawing on the data analysis conducted during the TRSE research, and the ongoing development of data tools to measure TRSE, TfN will improve the capacity to measure how a range of transport interventions will impact areas and populations impacted by TRSE.

→ **Develop minimum public transport service standards:** Access to affordable, reliable, and integrated public transport services is central to an inclusive transport system. TfN will use the data resources and other evidence available to develop a set of minimum public transport service standards for a range of area types, that would produce socially inclusive outcomes. This will include rural areas, post-industrial towns, coastal communities, and other area types where the risk of TRSE is relatively high.

→ **Develop a social inclusion checklist to support business case development:** As well as enhancing the appraisal of transport interventions through expanding the Analytical Framework, TfN will develop a social inclusion checklist to support LTAs and other decision-makers in developing schemes that will reduce transport-related social exclusion. This will bring together a set of principles and resources, and provide decision-makers with a checklist that can be implemented early in the scheme development process with minimal additional resources required.

→ **Improve access to decision-making for population groups affected by TRSE:** There is a significant overlap between the socioeconomic and demographic groups that have historically had least access to transport decision-making at all levels, and the population groups that are most affected by TRSE. This includes people with disabilities, those on low incomes and in insecure work, women, older people, and ethnic minority communities. Reflecting this, TfN will increase engagement with organisations and groups that represent and advocate for these populations, and work to embed this engagement in TfN's decision-making.

→ **Identify severance on the Major Roads Network and rail network:** The issue of community severance is a direct contributor to TRSE through its impact on access to opportunities, key services, and community life, and an indirect contributor through impacts on access to public transport. However, while these impacts of severance are well documented, tools to measure severance beyond the micro level are currently under-developed. TfN's Transport, Health, and Wellbeing in the North of England research project has developed an initial methodology for measuring severance across a broader geography, and TfN will further develop and share this tool. Development of this tool will enable TfN and LTAs to identify areas of the current Major Roads Network and rail network where there is a significant risk of severance, and to support the development of business cases.

Policy impact and outcome framework

TfN has a significant role to play in moving towards a socially inclusive transport system – including through developing and sharing evidence, coordinating across LTAs and other boundaries, and providing statutory advice to government. However, the majority of the policy changes and investment required to achieve a socially inclusive transport system are outside of the control of TfN. The policy priorities set out here recognise this broader context, and highlight the key policy priorities which together would deliver significant progress towards a socially inclusive transport system.

The policy priorities set out here are divided into public transport, road transport, active transport, and planning and process. Each provides a key impact and a number of policy outcomes to deliver that impact. This is intended to support transport stakeholders including DfT, local authorities, and transport operators in developing policies with outputs linked to social inclusion – providing an impact and outcome framework to which policies can be developed and aligned. Reflecting our role as a sub-national transport body, TfN is not prescriptive about how these impacts and outcomes should be achieved, which will necessarily be shaped by local place and population contexts.
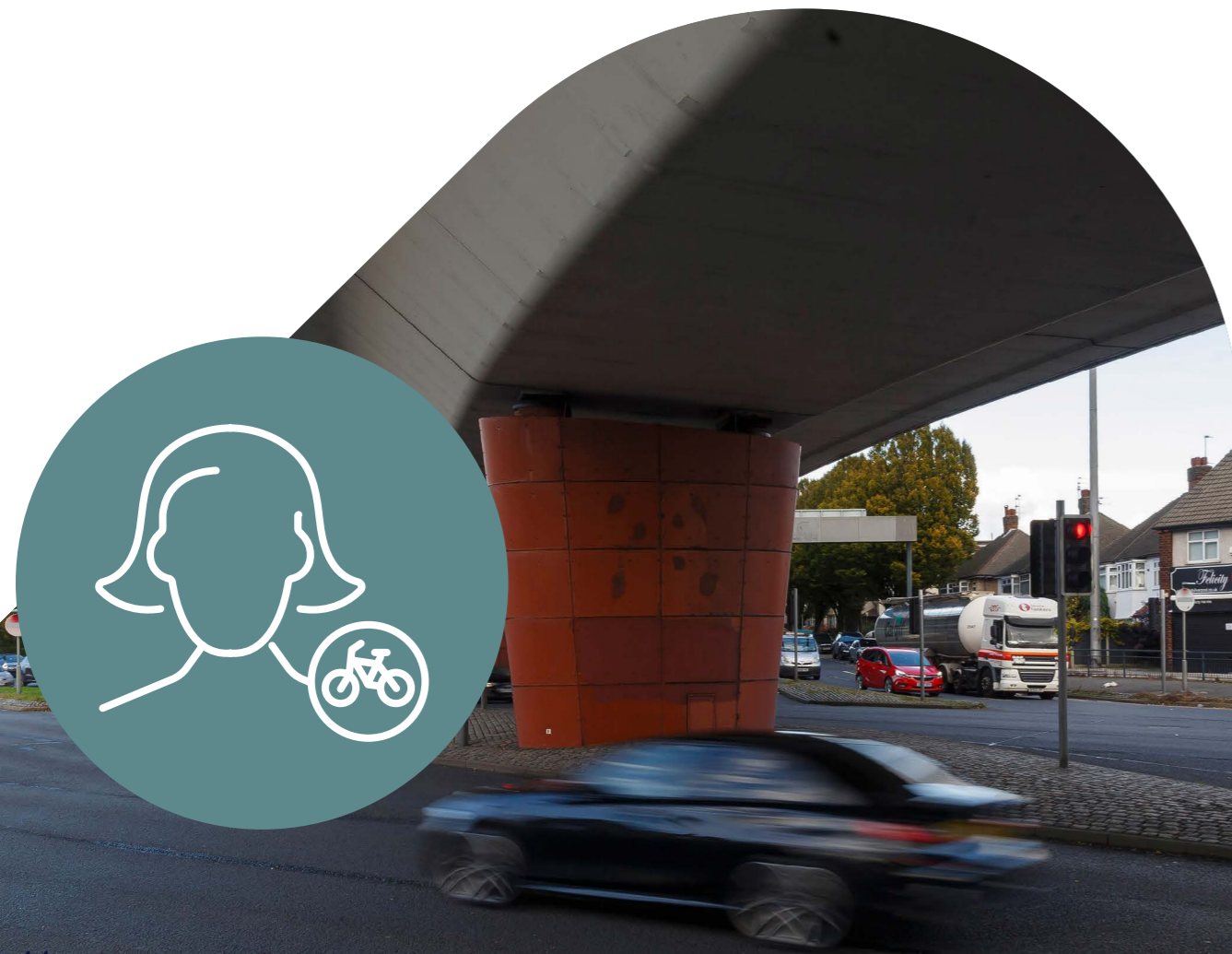
Public transport impacts and outcomes

Impact: Public transport services that provide a safe, reliable, and affordable means of accessing opportunities, key services, and community life.

→ **PT1:** Significant improvements in the frequency and coverage of local bus services, which at a minimum reverse the significant declines in services seen in the last decade, across rural and urban areas. This reflects the fact that those exposed to TRSE are far more likely than the wider population to use buses, and to have little or no alternative to these services when they face disruption.

→ **PT2:** Greater public transport connectivity between deprived communities and peripheral employment and service locations, including industrial areas and out of town centres that are commonly designed around car access. This should address the imbalance that is common between routes serving traditional commuter journeys, and those linking deprived communities with the industrial and service sectors.

→ **PT3:** Proportionally greater improvements in public transport connectivity in those areas of the North where there is a higher risk of transport-related social exclusion, such that the gap between areas reduces over time.

→ **PT4:** Greater connectivity between neighbourhoods and communities, particularly through the expansion of orbital bus routes that do not require journeys into and out of a central hub. This should address the significant imbalance that is common between routes serving commuter journeys from suburban areas to urban centres, and those serving journeys between neighbourhoods and local centres.

→ **PT5:** Reallocating road space to give greater priority to public transport, particularly local bus services. This is both to improve the reliability and viability of services in congested areas, and to address the significant gap between car and public transport accessibility common across the North.

→ **PT6:** Integrating ticketing, fares, and routing across modes of public transport, and removing the significant additional costs faced by those travelling across local boundaries. This should include efforts to rebalance services between neighbourhood routes and the most commercially lucrative commuter corridors, and to target areas where there is currently a marginal service.

→ **PT7:** Providing equality of access to public transport spaces and vehicles to those with physical disabilities, and those with reduced mobility. This should provide equality of access when using public transport and when transitioning between public transport modes, and avoid placing additional burdens on those with disabilities that are not faced by others. This includes improving the quality and quantity of space that is dedicated to those using mobility aids, and improving public transport information.

→ **PT8:** Addressing the significant affordability challenges present for those on low incomes and in insecure work when using public transport. This should end the vicious cycle that is currently evident between poor access to opportunities with the transport options available and low income and insecure work.

→ **PT9:** Maintaining and improving ways to pay for public transport and access public transport information that do not require a smartphone with internet access. This includes the ability to pay by cash at public transport access points, digital information screens showing live running service information, and up to date printed material.

→ **PT10:** Addressing the safety concerns and disproportionate exposure to harassment and discrimination in public transport spaces faced by women, LGBTQ people, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities.

→ **PT11:** Active travel infrastructure that is integrated with public transport access points, and that enables access to public transport for those walking, cycling, and wheeling. This acknowledges the key role that active travel routes play in access to public transport, and should provide greater priority to those walking, cycling, and wheeling than is currently common across public transport infrastructure.

Road transport impacts and outcomes

Impact: Reduced levels of forced car ownership and the negative externalities associated with car-dominated environments, while reducing congestion and maintaining high quality road links.

→ **RT1:** Reduced severance effects for those walking, cycling, and wheeling associated with high traffic volumes and speeds, and with environments and infrastructure designed around car use. This is relevant both to the expansion of existing roads, and the development of new roads.

→ **RT2:** Pricing of different travel options that more closely reflects the direct and the wider costs of those travel options on society as a whole, including on health and wellbeing and local economies.

→ **RT3:** Reduced severance effects and safety concerns associated with underpasses and pedestrian bridges, including addressing the disproportionate negative impacts of such infrastructure on women, people with disabilities, and older people.

→ **RT4:** Provision of on-street and off-street car parking and electric vehicle charging infrastructure that is compatible with high quality active travel and public transport, particularly in densely populated areas.

→ **RT5:** Reduced levels of traffic congestion through modal shift away from private car use and towards public transport and active travel, particularly for short and medium length journeys.

→ **RT6:** Reduced levels of induced demand for short car trips associated with new and expanded road infrastructure.

Active transport impacts and outcomes

Impact: Reduced levels of forced car ownership and the negative externalities associated with car-dominated environments, while reducing congestion and maintaining high quality road links.

→ **AT1:** Reduced severance effects for those walking, cycling, and wheeling associated with high traffic volumes and speeds, and with environments and infrastructure designed around car use.

→ **AT2:** Proportionally greater improvements in active travel connectivity in those areas of the North where there is a higher risk of transport-related social exclusion, such that the gap between areas reduces over time.

→ **AT3:** Equality of access to new and existing active travel infrastructure for those with disabilities and limited physical mobility; including high quality provision for those using a range of mobility aids.

→ **AT4:** Improved pavement conditions, such that pavements provide an accessible, safe, and convenient experience for all potential users. This includes expanding the provision and quality of pavements in rural areas, and reducing pavement clutter.

→ **AT5:** Increased proportion of children and young people travelling actively to access education, alongside a reduced proportion of trips taking place by car.

→ **AT6:** Increased provision for active travel at workplaces, education sites, public transport access points and other key destinations, including secure and convenient storage for cycles and changing facilities where required.

→ **AT7:** Proportionally greater increases in the level of active travel undertaken by women, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities, such that demographic and socioeconomic gaps in levels of uptake are significantly reduced.

→ **AT8:** A greater proportion of residential areas that enable active travel and do not induce car use for shorter journeys.

Planning and process impacts and outcomes

Impact: Planning and policy processes that reduce socioeconomic and demographic inequalities, and improve access to power and decision-making among population groups that are relatively more exposed to social exclusion because of transport issues.

→ **PP1:** Increasing participation in transport consultations among people with disabilities, people with caring responsibilities, young people, women, people on low incomes, and other groups that are disproportionately exposed to TRSE.

→ **PP2:** Adopting and implementing a 'vision and validate' approach to transport planning, policy, and strategy, with social inclusion a key part of that vision.

→ **PP3:** Increasing the level of qualitative engagement with communities impacted by transport interventions, particularly with those population groups that are likely to be disproportionately impacted by TRSE.

→ **PP4:** Expanding the quantity and quality of distributional impact assessment of transport interventions, including metrics of social inclusion.

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