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Transport Strategy
2035



Ministerial Foreword



Transport plays a fundamental role in shaping our economy and our communities. It underpins growth, enables connectivity, and supports regional balance. That is why I am proud to publish the Transport Strategy to 2035.

This Strategy sets out a clear and ambitious framework for developing a transport system that supports sustainable economic growth, strengthens regional balance, and enhances connectivity for people and communities across the region. It provides long-term strategic direction for how transport will support our social, economic, and environmental objectives.

Transport influences how we live, work and connect. A modern, efficient, and sustainable transport system is essential for our future prosperity. As we look to the future, we face new challenges and opportunities that demand a fresh approach to transport and a collaborative effort to create change. This Strategy provides a strong and coordinated foundation for future decision-making.

The Strategy establishes a comprehensive vision that is both actionable and adaptable. It addresses the needs of both urban and rural areas, supports cleaner and greener travel choices, and underpins my commitment to improving regional balance and accessibility. It will guide future investment and policy decisions, ensuring our transport system is resilient and fit to meet the demands ahead. I recognise that transport is not just about infrastructure, it's about the people who rely on it daily. My commitment is to build a system that is safe, efficient, and inclusive, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their location, income, or ability can access the opportunities they need to thrive.

This Strategy sets out a shared approach to shaping the future of transport and has been developed using a people-centred approach, helping to ensure that policies and investment decisions reflect lived experience, real needs, and everyday journeys. Its implementation will be supported through ongoing monitoring and evaluation, with evidence and data identifying what works well and where further action is required. In doing so, it will help deliver a transport system that enables growth, improves journeys, and protects our environment for future generations.

LIZ KIMMINS
Minister for Infrastructure

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Transport Vision 2035

To provide a **sustainable, safe, accessible, inclusive and effective transport system** which meets the region's climate change requirements, serves the needs of urban and rural communities, and supports economic growth.

Northern Ireland Transport System Overview

14 million rail passenger journeys.
The rail network comprises of approximately
223 route miles across five lines
with 22 stations and 32 halts.

There are **three main airports** in Northern Ireland, Belfast International Airport, George Best Belfast City Airport, and City of Derry Airport.

A total of
9 million passenger movements
in and out of Northern Ireland Airports.

70 million
bus passenger journeys
made on 1,392 vehicles.

45 million
operating miles for bus and rail.

The Road network consists of over
26,000km of public roads
with over **9,700km of footways, 5,800 bridges**
and approximately
290,000 streetlights
and is an asset of approximately £36Bn.

The road network has an extensive network of signage, traffic signals, controlled pedestrian crossings, and other **traffic monitoring and management infrastructure.**

* Average Statistics

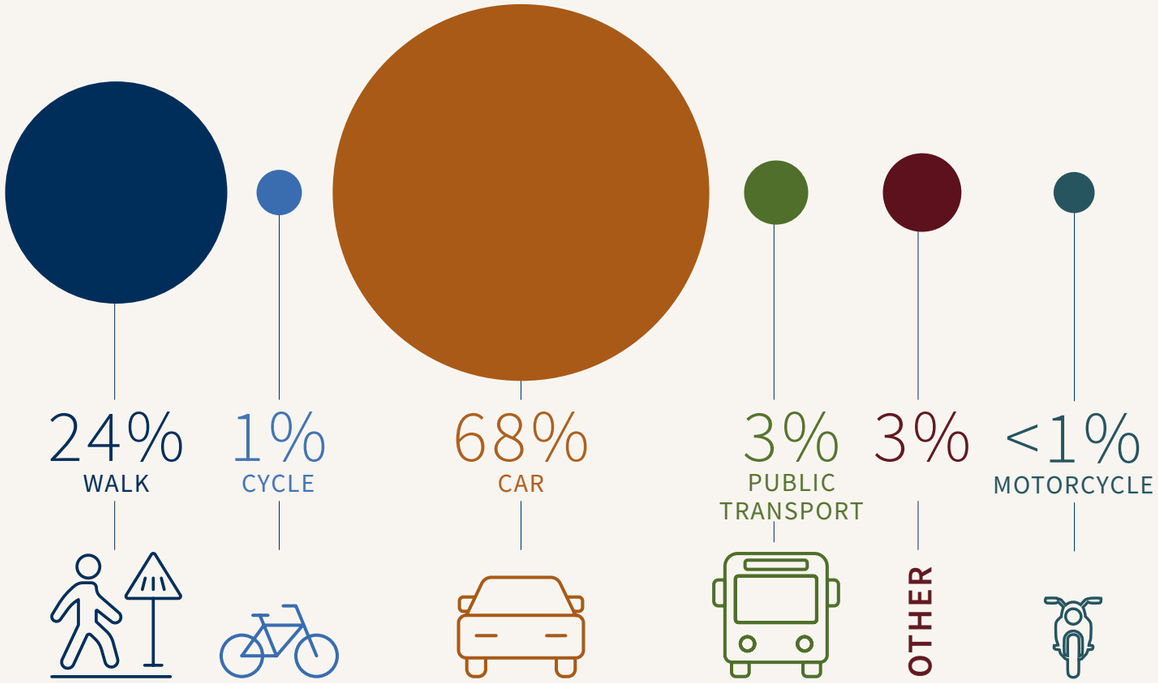
Connecting communities by running the **Strangford Ferry** and managing the **Rathlin Island Ferry** contract.

The estimated total tonnage through Northern Ireland's major ports is **29 million tonnes.**
Additionally, a total of **560,000** non-freight vehicles passed through Northern Ireland Ports.

There are **5 commercial ports in Northern Ireland.**
4 Public Trust Ports - Belfast, Foyle, Warrenpoint and Coleraine; and **1 is in private ownership** - Larne, which is owned by P&O Ferries Group.

How we Travel

FIGURE 01: **How we Travel**
Average Journeys Per Person by Travel Mode



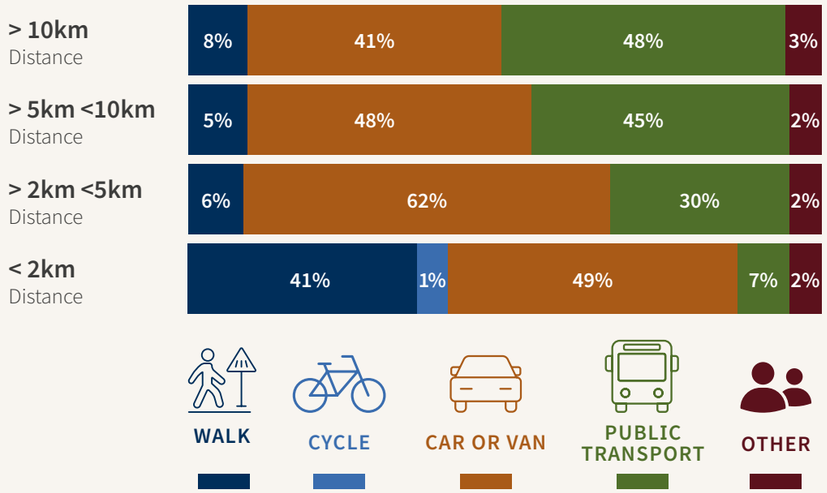
*For indicative purposes only. The 5-year average (2019–2023) is influenced by COVID-19 travel restrictions and methodological changes to the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland. **Other includes, 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'.



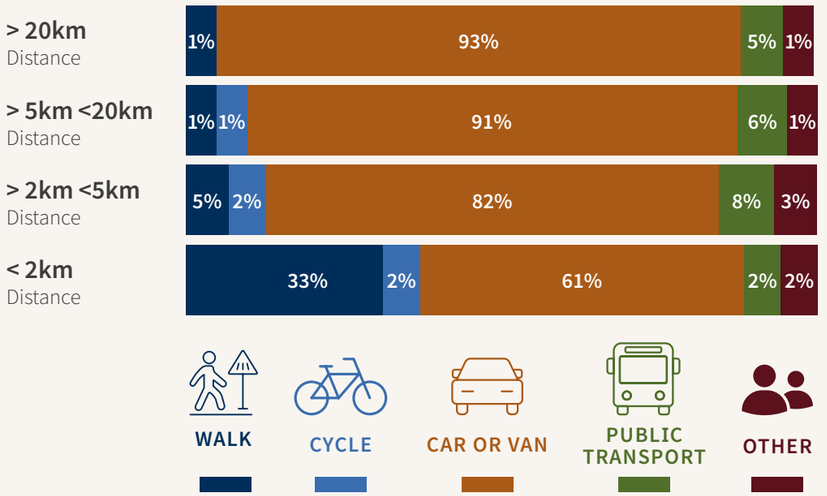
PEOPLE WITH LIMITED DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITY ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO HAVE NO ACCESS TO A CAR

24% vs 10%

% Mode Split by Distance Travelled to Study



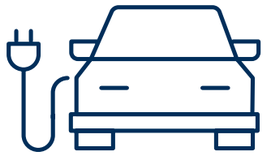
% Mode Split by Distance Travelled to Work



*Source: Northern Ireland Census 2021

The Need for Change

Climate Change



Climate Change poses a major global challenge. Through the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (CCA) we are committed to reducing Northern Ireland emissions and have identified a pathway to decarbonise the domestic transport sector.

The Greenhouse Gas Inventory reporting identifies domestic transport as a key source of emissions in Northern Ireland, second only to agriculture, with road transport accounting for the majority of these emissions.

The inventory also highlights that domestic transport (and agricultural) emissions are still above the 1990 reported baseline figure.

Emission savings have been generated from advancements in technology over the last 30 years, however, the savings from improved vehicle engines and fuels for Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) vehicles have been offset by the increasing numbers of ICE private vehicles on the network, and the number of vehicle journeys being undertaken across all distances (short and long).

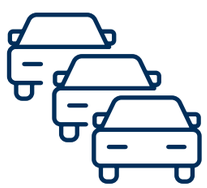
Road Safety



Every death or serious injury on the road network is a tragedy and there remains much work to do to make road transport safer for all users.

Improving safety for all is critical for encouraging an increase in the percentage of journeys made by active travel and public transport. It is also central to good placemaking and for creating an inclusive transport system.

Traffic Congestion



Travel in Northern Ireland continues to be dominated by private car use, with limited change in mode share over time. On average around 68% of all journeys are made by car, compared with approximately 24% by walking, 3% by public transport and 1% by cycling, with the remainder by other modes.

This sustained reliance on private vehicles affects the quality of urban environments, contributes to congestion, and drives higher carbon emissions and poor air quality. Congestion also imposes economic costs through lost productivity and increased travel costs for businesses and consumers.

Health & Wellbeing



Northern Ireland faces growing public health challenges, including rising obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, with around two-thirds of adults overweight or obese. It also has the highest prevalence of mental health problems in the UK, alongside increasing dementia levels, affecting over 24,000 people and expected to double by 2040.

A transport system that encourages more people to stay connected, want to travel by active means, for all or part of their journey, can play a role in improving people's mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Transport influences health, not only through levels of physical activity and connectivity, but also through exposure to traffic-related air pollution and noise. There is increasing evidence linking long-term exposure to these factors to adverse impacts on mental wellbeing, brain health and quality of life.

A clean green transport system that supports walking, cycling and public transport for all or part of everyday journeys can deliver significant population-wide health benefits by embedding physical activity into daily routines, reducing exposure to harmful emissions and noise, improving safety, and enabling better access to employment, services and social connections.

Equality, Inclusion and Accessibility



Over time, the assumption that access to services and opportunities is achieved by the private car has disadvantaged large sections of our society, particularly those with disabilities and low-income households. This can limit their life choices and result in social exclusion.

Data from the 2021 Census shows that around 40% of social housing tenants in Northern Ireland do not have access to a car, significantly higher than the Northern Ireland average. In urban areas such as parts of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry, communities with lower levels of car ownership can experience some of the worst impacts from traffic congestion, such as poor air quality. This means those who contribute least to the problem can feel the impacts the most. In rural areas limited transport alternatives and longer travel distances can restrict access to essential services and opportunities for those without a car.

Although there have been significant improvements in the provision of accessible and inclusive travel options, the lived experience for many people shows that access to transport remains a major issue that limits the number of travel options.

Local Action that Contributes to Global Change

The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals provide an internationally agreed set of high-level interconnected global targets to address environmental, economic, and social challenges. The four high-level strategic priorities of this Strategy are mapped to the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that the task of change is approached holistically and is shared equitably across society. This will ensure that local communities enjoy the benefits from a more sustainable transport system while also looking towards our global commitments.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Strategic Priorities for Transport

Four Strategic Priorities for Transport have been developed to reflect the contribution that the transport system can make to the improvement of people's everyday lives, and to our society in general.

The priorities reflect the collective responsibility of everyone - government, business, and individuals, to embed sustainability into the decisions we make.

Under each strategic priority there are a range of transport measures. They do not operate in isolation, rather they will work together to holistically achieve the Transport Vision for 2035.

Our Strategic Priorities are that Transport:

01 Is Resilient and Sustainable
PAGES 16-47

02 Supports Connected and Inclusive Communities
PAGES 48-69

03 Is Safe and Healthy
PAGES 70-79

04 Supports Green Growth
PAGES 80-95



01
Is Resilient and Sustainable

A carbon neutral transport system that is resilient and adaptable to a changing climate and the needs of communities and businesses.



The Climate Change Act (CCA)

1. The CCA sets the legal target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions (carbon emissions) by 2050, with challenging bridging targets for 2030 and 2040. These ambitious legislative targets represent a decisive change in our approach to decarbonisation, requiring a step change in all sectors to achieve this.
2. There are no sector-specific targets; however, the Act places a legal duty on all Northern Ireland departments to exercise their functions, as far as possible, in a manner consistent with achieving the Act's targets and associated carbon budgets.
3. To support this, a comprehensive approach across sectors, encompassing both mitigation reducing emissions and adaptation to the impacts of climate change is required.
4. The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has a specific requirement to develop and publish a transport and infrastructure sectoral plan outlining how in a 'just manner' it will contribute to meeting the 2030, 2040 and 2050 emissions reduction targets. After agriculture, domestic transport is the second largest emitting sector in Northern Ireland.
5. For the last 30 years the carbon emissions from the transport sector have broadly remained above the 1990 baseline greenhouse gas inventory reporting figures. During this time, emission savings were generated by technology advancements in Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) and fuels, however these have been offset against the increasing number of ICE vehicles on our networks and the length of journeys they travel. The growth of new electric vehicles will play a pivotal role in decarbonising the transport sector here, supported by a change in behaviours and a recognition that it will need to be implemented in a 'just' manner.
6. The infrastructure sectoral plan includes the planning, design, construction and maintenance of physical assets such as transport, water and digital networks that support society and the economy. As a cross-cutting sector, it does not have a dedicated greenhouse gas inventory, reflecting its role in enabling emissions reductions across multiple sectors.
7. Going forward it will not be sufficient to simply show that our decisions avoid emission increases. Decisions will need to proportionately demonstrate how they contribute to the wider decarbonisation programme as well as delivering other sustainability objectives.
8. This does not mean that every decision must result in a reduction in carbon emissions. Some decisions that result in increased emissions may be necessary to support wider strategic priorities. However, these decisions must not impede the wider decarbonisation programme.
9. DfI has a critical role in ensuring that the transport system supports the transition to net zero, including the provision of infrastructure that

1 In this strategy the word carbon is used to refer to all the greenhouse gases as defined in Section 60 of the CCA.

enables sustainable travel and low-emission technologies. More widely, the Department must ensure that all infrastructure, both existing assets and new developments, is designed, delivered and maintained to be resilient to the impacts of climate change, safeguarding connectivity, supporting economic activity, and protecting communities now and in the future.

10. Given the geographical characteristics of Northern Ireland, not all places will be able to decarbonise in the same way and at the same pace. It is expected that, in the near term, larger urban areas will lead decarbonisation efforts with lesser carbon reductions coming from smaller settlements and rural areas. Longer distance journeys will also offer the potential for significant carbon reductions. Transport in all areas will need to almost completely decarbonise by 2050 to help meet the statutory net zero climate target in 2050.

11. These actions and targets will link closely to the development and delivery of the Transport Plans that the Department is responsible for.

12. To provide an evidential basis for transport decarbonisation, the Department has developed the Northern Ireland Transport Emissions Model (TEM). This model, along with other data and evidence, is being used to support policy, planning and operational decisions and will ensure that the Department's actions, as a whole, will see a reduction in emissions from transport. The TEM will also help identify where more work is required to ensure we meet our responsibilities in the CCA.

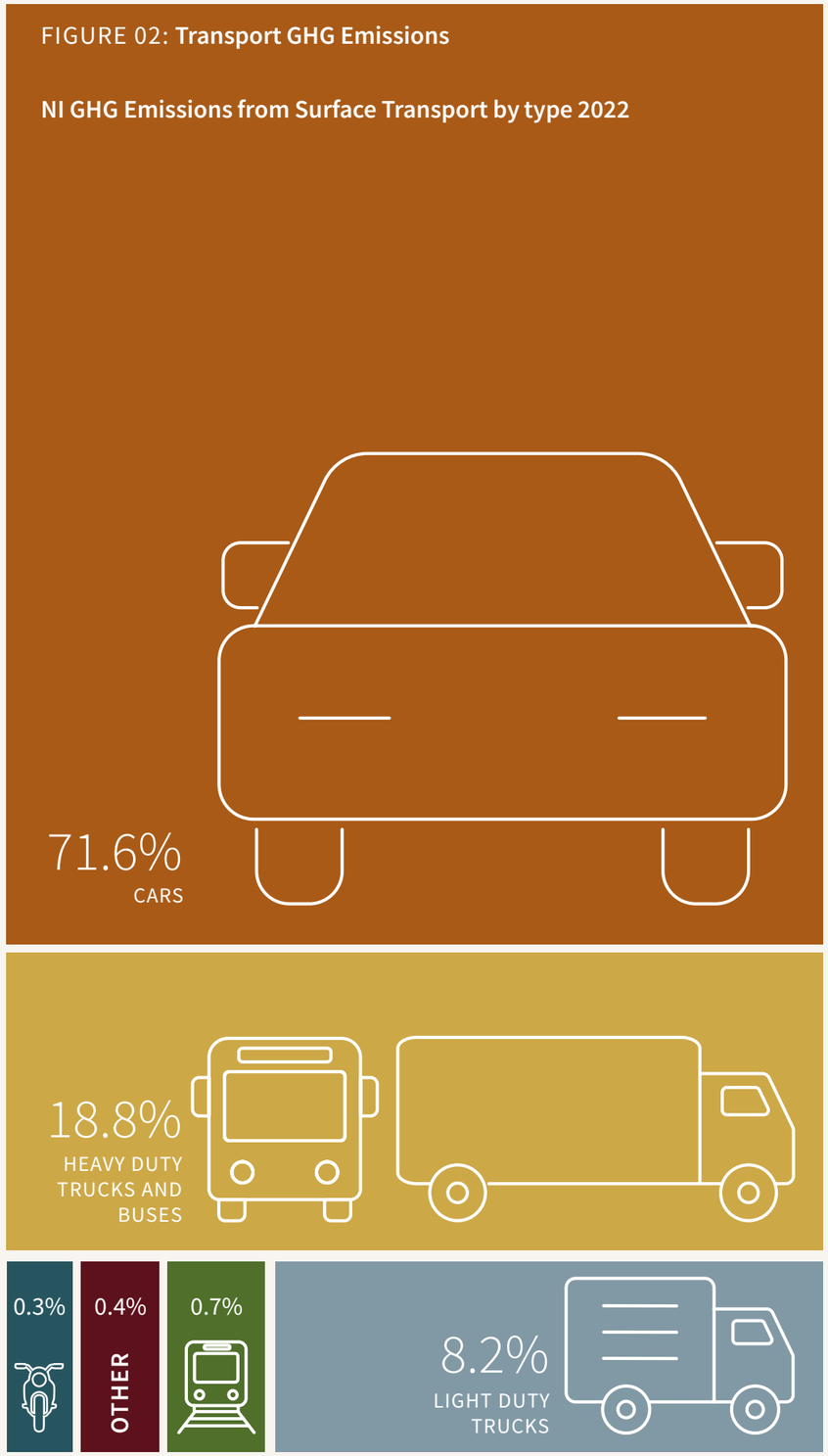
MEASURE **RS01**

The Department will develop and publish a transport and infrastructure sectoral plan.

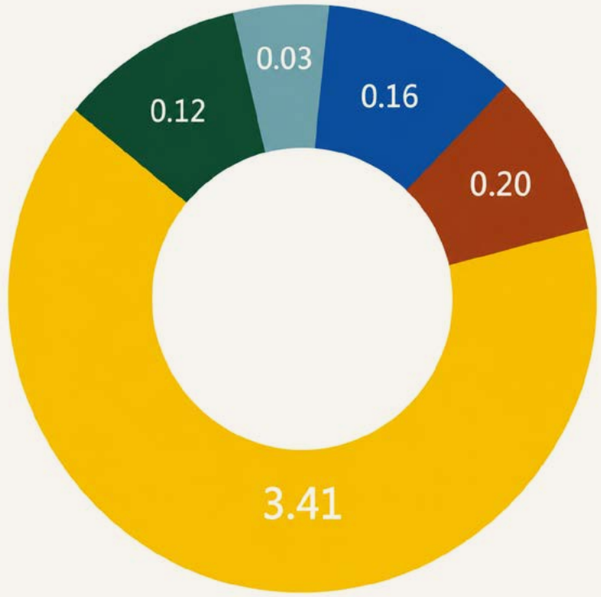


FIGURE 02: **Transport GHG Emissions**

NI GHG Emissions from Surface Transport by type 2022

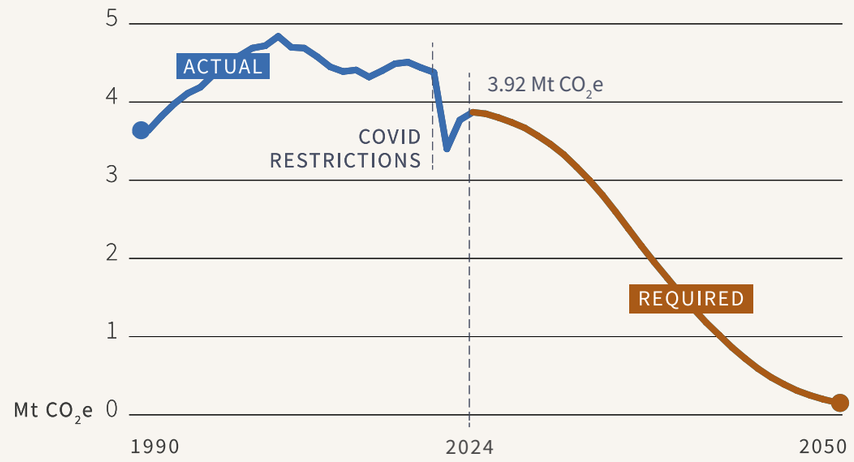


NI GHG Emissions Domestic Transport



Domestic Transport	$MtCO_2e$
Waterborne	0.16
Civil Aviation	0.20
Road	3.41
other Domestic Transport	0.12
Railways	0.03

GHG emissions from transport and projected reductions to meet 2050 target



Reducing the Carbon Impact of Transport

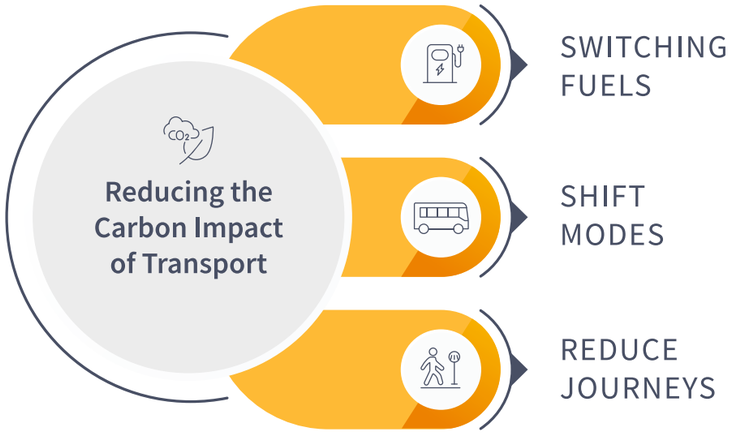
13. The Department has a three-pronged approach to reducing the carbon impact of transport: switching fuels, shifting modes and reducing journeys, as shown in Figure 3.

14. The TEM has allowed the Department to consider various transport decarbonisation pathways and their ability to deliver against emission reduction targets. This has identified that, by a large margin, the switching of fuels to zero emission and low emissions vehicles ZEVs/LEVs provides the most realistic and deliverable means to reduce transport carbon emissions. This takes account of a range of factors, including settlement patterns and travel behaviours. Therefore, the transition to ZEVs and LEVs will be at the centre of the Department's approach to reducing the carbon impact of transport.

15. Shifting modes and reducing the length of journeys are also important for transport decarbonisation, and these are the most sustainable solutions when consideration beyond direct tail pipe emissions is taken into account. It is recognised that shifting modes and reducing journeys can have an impact on reducing congestion, supporting clean, green and vibrant city and town centres. These measures can also improve people's health and wellbeing and support the social inclusion of all members of society.

16. However, it is recognised that opportunities for mode shift and journey reduction will vary depending on local context.

FIGURE 03: **Reducing the Carbon Impact of Transport**



Switching Fuels

17. Switching fuels is critical to our transport decarbonisation pathway and is explained later in this Strategy under the heading Zero and Low Emission Fuels.

18. However, simply transitioning to alternative fuels is insufficient to deliver a sustainable transport system and therefore, there is a need to facilitate increased use of other modes in order to meet environmental, economic and social objectives related to emissions, health, congestion and car-dependency.

19. Some journeys will always need to be undertaken by private vehicle. For example: journeys in more rural areas, where public transport services are more limited; journeys where health or mobility make other modes infeasible; or journeys by people working in occupations which require regular travel to multiple locations such as tradespeople or those working in the community.

20. In Northern Ireland, freight is moved almost exclusively via road transport. In this sector the options currently for reducing vehicle kilometres travelled and electrification are also more limited. Therefore, a focus on switching to alternative fuels will be required.

Shifting Modes

21. This seeks to encourage more people to replace some, or all, of their private car journeys with more sustainable modes where it is feasible to do so. Achieving modal shift will require a range of complementary measures that prioritise and promote sustainable modes. The Department defines sustainable transport as active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) and public transport (bus, coach, bus rapid transit and rail). These modes reduce emissions, require less space, support economic growth, promote healthier lifestyles, and strengthen communities.

22. The 2021 Northern Ireland Census indicates that a significant proportion of short journeys (under 2km) to work and study are undertaken by private car.

23. This relatively short journey distance presents an opportunity for modal shift, particularly in our towns and cities where the average journey is shorter again.

24. To achieve this there needs to be viable alternatives that are safe, accessible, reliable, efficient, and affordable.

25. Sustainable transport is not a single solution or a competition between transport modes. It is an integrated ecosystem where walking, cycling, public transport, shared mobility and private vehicles each have a role to play. A truly sustainable transport system is built on a network of interconnected solutions.

Reduce Journeys

26. This seeks to reduce the need, length and frequency of private car journeys, particularly for single car occupancy trips. This change requires better physical and digital connectivity, appropriate local services, and the facilitation of home working and remote working hubs.

27. This requires integrated working between town planners, transport planners, private developers, and central and local government. It needs solutions that efficiently bring people and key services closer together. This can be through digital services and through integrated transport and land-use planning that provides for homes that are close to people's everyday needs.

MEASURE **RS02**

The Department will support and promote the use of the Transport Emissions Model (TEM) and other Departmental tools to quantify emissions and support the monitoring, evaluation and appraisal of transport policies, ensuring evidence-led decisions and effective prioritisation of carbon reduction measures.



Integrated Transport and Land Use Planning

28. Currently transport, housing and wider land use planning are often considered in isolation, leading to developments that lack good public transport and safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes. A joined-up approach will lead to better places where people want to live and can travel how they choose.

29. The planning system has a key role to play in supporting transport priorities. The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035, The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) Edition 2, councils' Local Development Plans (LDPs), and guidance within Living Places will continue to guide decision- making, to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.

30. In tandem with the councils' LDPs the Department is preparing a suite of new transport plans. Integrated LDPs and transport plans are fundamental to future sustainable development. The Department's transport planners and councils' LDP teams have been working closely together to ensure that the policies, land-use allocations, and key site requirements of LDPs are closely linked with the transport policies, proposals and investment identified in the transport plans.

31. The Department is preparing eight new transport plans in total. This will include a regional plan, covering the Strategic Transport Network, and 7 Local Transport Plans (LTPs) covering council areas.

32. The regional plan for the Strategic Transport Network is concerned with the future development of the strategic road network, the limited stop interurban buses which run on them, and the rail network across all of Northern Ireland. The Strategic Transport Network is shown later in Figure 09.

33. The local transport plans consider the shorter, local transport movements. Figure 4 shows the transport plan areas.

34. The transport plans will assess the transport needs and challenges of each area and identify a range of policies and measures to address them. These may include improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, improvements to the road network, enhancements to public transport services, changes to the management of road space, and the provision of facilities such as Travel Hubs that support the seamless interchange between different modes of travel.

35. The transport plans may also identify where changes to parking provision or the introduction of other transport measures (such as road user charging) could support the transport and placemaking objectives for an area.

36. The preparation of the transport plans has a heavy focus on stakeholder engagement and will allow local people to shape and influence the creation of more sustainable transport for their community.

37. Before any individual scheme or policy measure is advanced, it will need to undergo its own relevant decision-making processes, such as legislative approval, feasibility studies, and environmental and equality assessments.

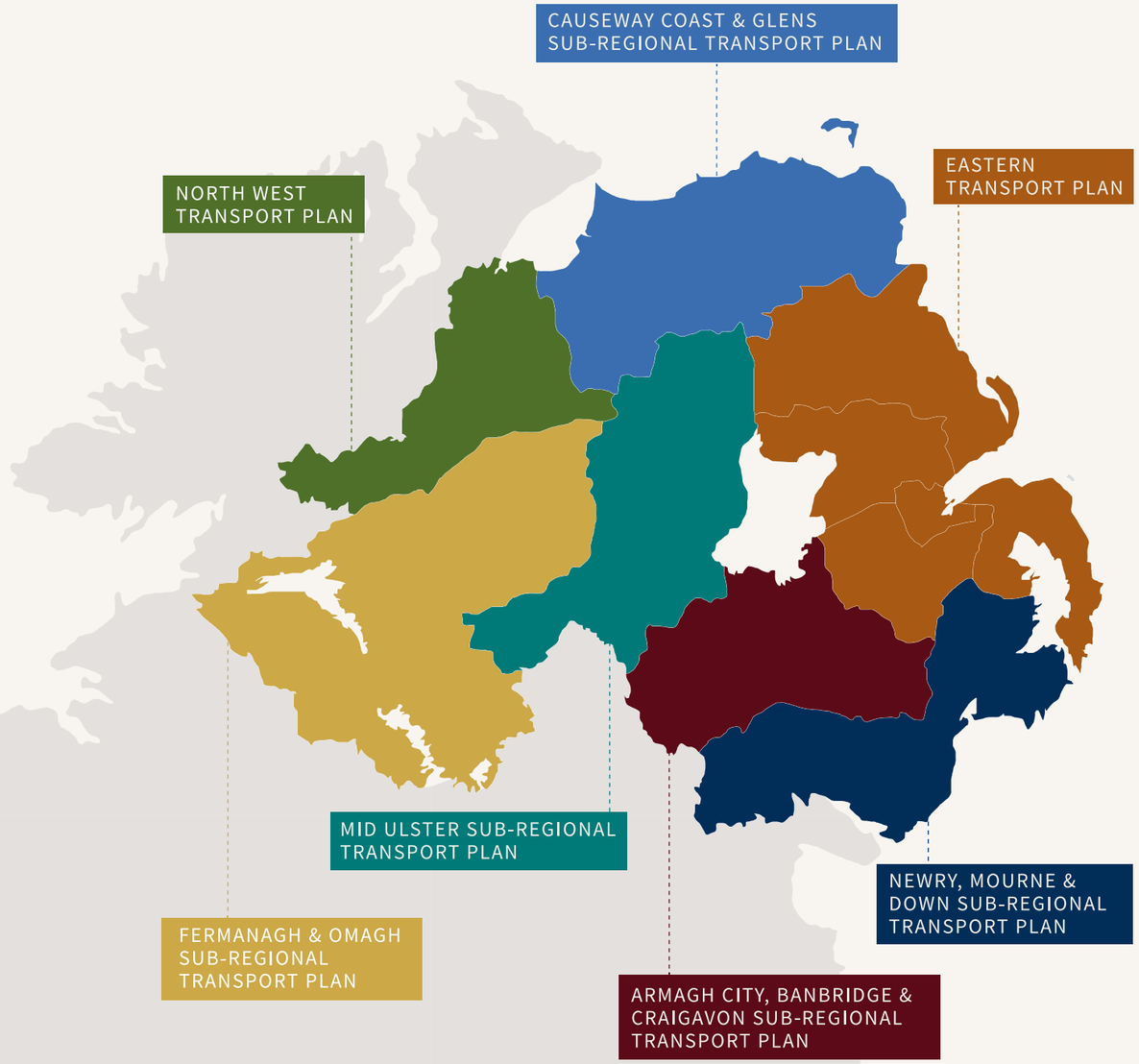
38. The Department, in its role as a statutory consultee within the planning process also considers Transport Assessments and Transport Statements. These assessments represent an important mechanism for ensuring that development is appropriately integrated with the wider transport network, supports the use of more sustainable modes of travel, and appropriately assesses and mitigates potential impacts on the capacity and safe operation of the transport network, thereby supporting the integration of transport and land-use planning.

MEASURE RS03

The Department will work collaboratively with councils to align transport planning and land use planning, ensuring that Local Development Plans, Transport Plans and Transport Assessments support improved connectivity and more sustainable patterns of transport and travel.



FIGURE 04: **Local Transport Plans**



Vision and Validate Approach to Transport Planning

39. Past approaches to transport planning focused on predicting future travel demand and providing capacity for that travel. This used historical traffic patterns, specifically peak commuter traffic, and socio-economic trends to determine the future need for infrastructure. This approach could result in decision-makers favouring private vehicle road-based solutions, reinforcing existing travel behaviours and limiting opportunities to promote more sustainable modes.

40. The Vision and Validate approach has been widely adopted by the transport planning discipline as a better way of achieving sustainable transport outcomes. It starts with setting a vision of what we are seeking to achieve, and then, through an evidence-based validation process, identifies the infrastructure and services needed to deliver that vision.

41. This approach focuses on the movement of people and goods rather than vehicles. This will help to ensure that appropriate measures are considered at the outset. In doing so, this approach will improve the quality of individual transport and land use schemes and support the Strategic Priorities of the Northern Ireland Executive and Local Councils.

42. The Department will also publish updated Transport Assessment Guidelines outlining how developers and practitioners are expected to implement a vision-led approach. This represents an important step in progressing our ambition for developments to be truly vision-led in practice. This will ensure that the assessment of development proposals align with the principles of this Strategy, moving beyond a focus on vehicular capacity towards consideration of the efficient movement of people and goods, sustainable mode share, and place-based outcomes.

MEASURE **RS04**

The Department will update the Transport Assessment Guidelines in a phased manner to support the delivery of sustainable transport outcomes and the Development Management process.

Vision and Validate and the Transport Plans

43. The Vision and Validate approach recognises that roads and streets often have dual functions. They facilitate the ‘movement’ of people and goods by various modes of transport, as well as providing ‘places’ for people and activity. The approach establishes a shared vision that can balance both the place and movement functions of areas.

44. To support this, a Place and Movement Framework (PMF) will be applied through the transport plans, to assess and classify the road network. The framework will define the role and

function of streets and roads based on the character of the surrounding area, setting out how place and movement are prioritised and identifying the transport measures required to deliver the Vision.

45. Different road types can have the same movement function or the same place function, albeit for different underlying reasons. For example, a Regional Strategic Transport Network Route can have high movements of vehicles, whereas a town centre can have high movements of pedestrians. The key thing is they cannot share the same place and movement function. The RSTN route has a low place function, whereas a town centre has a high place function.

46. Figure 5 presents the different movement types, or transport modes, that can be prioritised within each Place and Movement Framework classification to reflect the intended function of the transport network.

47. Figure 6 provides the classifications for the Place and Movement Framework that will be applied throughout the development of the transport plans to classify all transport links and provide a structured basis for future design and investment decisions. Upon completion, the framework will offer greater certainty around the evolving role and required interventions for each transport link, while establishing clear expectations for developers and other stakeholders seeking to integrate with the wider transport network.

48. Providing sustainable transport solutions cannot be achieved through a one-size-fits-all approach and instead requires a localised approach. The PMF will be supported by individualised approaches to network planning that reflect local constraints and opportunities. Factors such as available road widths and the functioning of the network will influence what transport measures can be introduced and the degree to which it is appropriate or possible to promote one road user over another.

49. Many urban roads will adopt a transport user need approach, recognising that different users have different needs. In many locations, this may result in increased provision for walking and wheeling, cycling and public transport, reflecting opportunities to support more sustainable travel choices. However, in some locations, local constraints, such as limited road space and the function of the network, mean that the needs of vehicles will remain a key consideration in planning and design. This will help ensure that necessary car trips, where no viable alternative exists, and freight movements can continue to be facilitated and managed effectively.

MEASURE RS05

The Department will apply the Vision and Validate approach in the planning and development of the transport system.

FIGURE 05: **Example of a Place and Movement Framework**

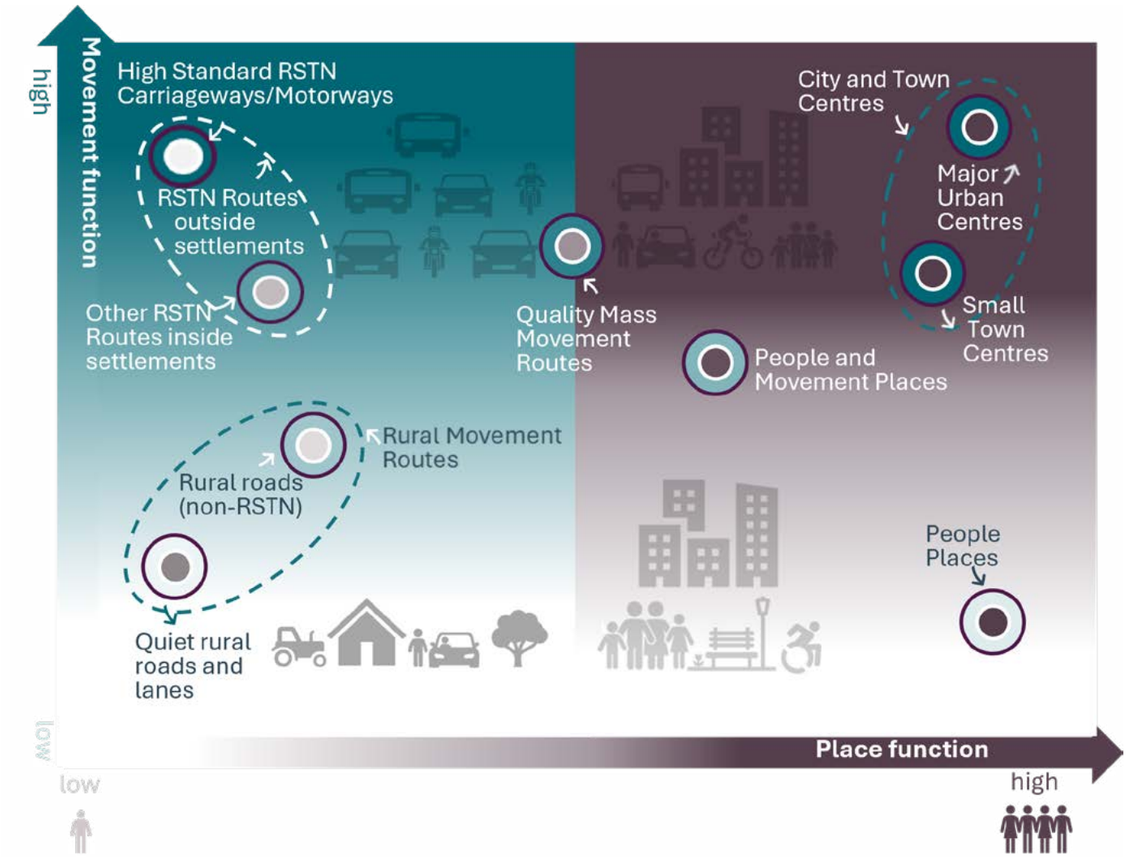
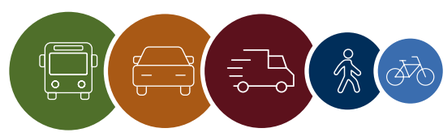


FIGURE 06: **Place and Movement Framework – Area Types**

AREA TYPES	MODE TYPE	DESCRIPTION
PEOPLE PLACES		Neighbourhood areas including residential streets. Sustainable transport hierarchies may promote walking/ wheeling and then cycling, followed by public transport and then private vehicles.
TRAFFIC FREE ROUTES		Traffic free transport routes facilitating active travel connections, including greenways. As with all active travel infrastructure, these will consider the needs of the most vulnerable road users first.
PEOPLE AND MOVEMENT PLACES		Mixed use places that serve the local community. Sustainable transport hierarchies will need to reflect the character of the area and may generally promote walking/wheeling and then cycling, followed by public transport and then private vehicles.
CITY AND TOWN CENTRES		Destination places that also facilitate high volumes of delivery and access movements. Sustainable transport hierarchies will seek to support economic vitality and placemaking. This may promote walking/ wheeling and then cycling, followed by public transport and then private vehicles. The access needs of disabled people and businesses will remain important considerations.
CONNECTING MOVEMENT ROUTES		Routes that facilitate connecting movement within settlements. Sustainable transport hierarchies will need to reflect the character of the area and the function of the network, balancing the promotion of active travel and public transport while maintaining vehicle movements.
QUALITY MASS MOVEMENT ROUTES		Routes that facilitate high volume of movement into urban areas, focused on public transport. Sustainable transport hierarchies may seek to give greatest priority to public transport. The requirements of other road users will need to reflect the character of the area and the function of the network, balancing the promotion of active travel, while maintaining vehicle movements.
URBAN STRATEGIC MOVEMENT ROUTES		Routes that are part of the Strategic Transport Network and are located within settlements and therefore facilitate both local and strategic movement. These will continue to provide private vehicle movements with public transport priority and active travel measures provided where it is appropriate.
RURAL MOVEMENT ROUTES		Routes that connect settlements but are not part of the Strategic Transport Network. These will continue to provide private vehicle movements with public transport priority and active travel measures provided where it is appropriate.
REGIONAL STRATEGIC MOVEMENT ROUTES		Routes that are part of the Strategic Transport Network. They are the primary road network connecting main settlements and gateways. These will continue to provide for public transport and private vehicle movements (particularly the movement of goods/ freight) with active travel infrastructure only where it is appropriate.

Behavioural Change

50. Supporting the decarbonisation of the transport sector, at the pace required by the CCA, requires a change in people's travel behaviour. Behavioural change encompasses a wide range of measures which aim to encourage and incentivise sustainable travel.

51. Travel choices can be complex and are influenced by several factors. This includes personal characteristics such as age, gender, learned behaviour/ habit, and income. They can also depend on where people live and/ or work, caring responsibilities, geography, availability of transport, convenience, and the built environment.

52. The reasons why people are travelling have also changed. For example, more time spent on leisure activities means people are choosing to travel greater distances to take part in outdoor activities. Also, the changing nature and location of work, and the move to more online services and retailing has transformed many people's behaviour in recent years.

53. The Consumer Council published research on the Decarbonisation of Transport in June 2023, the results of which are summarised in Figure 07. Understanding attitudes towards travel is key to implementing changes so people can make their own sustainable travel choices and create a better transport system for everyone.

> "Consumers generally agree that there is a need to reduce congestion and to reduce carbon emissions in towns and cities. Transferring their journeys to public transport is the obvious answer for them, but many say that comfort, convenience, timetabling and safety need to be improved before they would consider using it instead of their cars. People with families who travel with buggies do not see buses as a viable alternative, and those whose journeys are complicated say that using public transport to get from A to B via C and D would be challenging."

54. Measures such as improving road safety, improving the attractiveness of public transport, and active travel promotion and education will all support behavioural change. However, it is recognised that these will need to be complemented by actions that disincentivise private cars where possible, especially within our urban areas.

55. Clear and consistent communication of the personal and societal benefits of sustainable travel will be essential to support these changes. The Department will use its communication channels, including social media and advertising campaigns to provide accessible information and address common misconceptions.

MEASURE RS06

The Department will use a range of communication tools and targeted campaigns to actively promote and normalise sustainable travel behaviours, supporting modal shift and reducing reliance on private vehicles.



FIGURE 07: **Consumer Council research on the Decarbonisation of Transport (2023)**

Reducing Private Car Use

61%

Believe that it would be **difficult to reduce** their **use of private cars** (easy, 28%). This rose to 78% for those living in rural areas.

65%

Support traffic calming measures to reduce the speed of traffic to accommodate other road users.

56%

Support increasing the number of **cycle lanes**.

Living in a **rural area** with a **lack of nearby public transport** is the most common reason consumers believe it would be **difficult to reduce** their use of **private cars** (25%), with the convenience offered by a private car over public transport cited by 18% of consumers and being disabled or having mobility problems cited by 9% of consumers.

30%

Support congestion charging for those driving into cities and large towns in Northern Ireland.

73%

Feel they **need more information** before deciding to change the way they travel.

Younger consumers said they would be **prepared to pay more** on average to **park their car**, with those who most often use a car to get about saying they would be prepared to pay less compared with those who most use alternative forms of transport.

Increasing the use of Public Transport

25%

Say they are **dependent on public transport** but most consumers say they are not (75%).

16%

Used public transport in the past but no longer use it.

Those more likely to say they are **dependent on public transport** included **younger consumers**, those in **lower social grades,** those with a **disability** and those in **lower income groups**.

<1/2

Less than half of consumers believe that public transport in Northern Ireland is **affordable (49%)**, **convenient (45%)** or is **frequent enough** to meet their needs **(36%)**.

29%

Say **poor service availability/frequency** is the **single biggest barrier** to using **public transport** (locationally inconvenient to access public transport, 20%: cost, 15%).

29%

Never think about using public transport.

28%

Regular user of public transport.

5%

Planning to start using public transport.

13%

Starting to think about using public transport.

9%

Recently started using public transport.

CASE STUDIES

Active Travel and Education

56. In partnership with schools, the Department delivers a range of programmes to support road safety awareness and promote active travel among young people. These include:
    - Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training
    - Cycling Proficiency Scheme
    - Active School Travel Programme (co-funded with the Public Health Agency)
57. The Department will continue to support and expand these initiatives, working with schools and delivery partners to encourage safe and sustainable travel behaviours from an early age.
58. Safer and more confident journeys to school are an important enabler of active travel. The Safer Journeys to School Programme complements wider active travel initiatives by addressing safety and driver behaviour at key points around schools and bus stops, helping to remove safety-related barriers to short, local, non-car journeys.

CYCLING Proficiency Scheme

MEASURE **RS07**

The Department will commit to providing pedestrian road safety and active travel education and promotion programmes to young people, in partnership with schools and other delivery partners.

Media and Communications

59. The Department is supporting behavioural change through targeted communication initiatives. For example, the departmental podcast “Little Changes” highlights practical, everyday actions that individuals can take to make their journeys more sustainable.
60. In addition, the Department will continue a multi-platform media campaign designed to encourage people to consider alternative travel choices and reduce the carbon impact of their trips. This campaign is supported by a dedicated range of information and resources available on the Department’s website.
61. Investment in sustainable modes of transport, combined with effective communication and engagement, can significantly influence travel behaviour. Encouraging individuals to choose more sustainable options will deliver positive outcomes for the environment, while also improving public health and overall well-being.

Little Changes PODCAST

Travel Demand Management

62. Travel demand management aims to influence travel behaviour (how, when, and where people travel) to increase the efficiency and resilience of the transport system. It is also about achieving other policy objectives such as reducing congestion, improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions from transport.

63. Demand management is about making it easier and more desirable to travel by the most sustainable means. Demand management is not about stopping people from making their own travel choices. It recognises that travel needs and options vary across Northern Ireland, particularly between urban and rural areas, and must be responsive to these differences.

64. To outline the range of potential measures necessary to manage and shape demand on the transport system, the Department will develop a Demand Management Framework (DMF). The Framework will be based around three key pillars:

- Creation of Capacity
  These measures include (but are not limited to) the reallocation of road space and/or the provision of new space for active travel and public transport priority measures.

  It also includes the enhancement and refinement of public transport routes and timetables to improve frequency and better serve local need (including those with reduced mobility), demand and capacity.

- Network Management
  These measures include (but are not limited to) improvements in public transport ticketing systems as well as more accessible timetables, real-time information, vehicle restrictions around schools, residential areas and urban centres, as well as the optimisation of traffic signal timings to promote active travel and public transport.

  The Department may also consider the potential role of pricing mechanisms, including road user charging, as part of a wider package of measures to manage demand, recognising that such interventions are only appropriate where viable alternatives are available.

- Behavioural Change
  As outlined in the previous section, these measures are wide ranging and encourage and incentivise sustainable travel behaviour.
  It will be an integral part of the Department's work over the period of the Transport Strategy.

65. The DMF will consider how best practice from other places could be applied in Northern Ireland. The Framework will also consider potential economic impacts and the potential impacts on communities, particularly for disabled people and those with reduced mobility. The DMF will consider the sequencing/ timing of demand management measures in parallel with the delivery of improved sustainable mobility alternatives.

66. Development of the DMF will require a strong focus on stakeholder engagement, and cross-departmental and local government collaboration.

MEASURE **RS08**

The Department will develop a Demand Management Framework.

Parking

67. The SPPS states that a regional strategic objective for transportation and land-use planning is to promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion.

68. The cost and availability of car parking is a major influence on the mode of transport people choose for their journeys, even for those locations well served by public transport.

69. Within many town and city centres it is recognised that the provision of adequate short-stay public parking facilities is required to maintain economic vitality and viability. Suitable parking is also important for people that have no alternatives to the private car, such as those with specific mobility needs.

70. However, inappropriate supply and locations of car parking, particularly long-stay commuter parking, can act as an impediment to economic growth and works against the Strategic Priorities for Transport set out earlier in this strategy.

71. Parking management is therefore an important demand management tool that can help shape travel behaviour, support wider climate and sustainability objectives, and improve the quality of urban environments.

72. Parking Strategies will be developed for each council area alongside the Local Transport Plans and the Council's LDPs. This will be a toolkit to outline the scalable measures that will reflect local circumstances and support wider transport, economic and environmental objectives.

73. Parking measures that seek to reduce reliance on the private car by influencing the number and length of journeys will remain a key priority for the Department. This approach aligns with the PMF and the reallocation of road space as set out earlier in this Strategy.

74. Alongside parking management measures, Parking Standards represent an important policy tool for influencing travel behaviour by shaping the level and type of parking provision provided for new developments.

75. The Department will review and update its current Parking Standards to ensure they support sustainable transport objectives and reflect current policy and best practice.

MEASURE RS09

The Department will develop Parking Strategies alongside the Local Transport Plans.

MEASURE RS10

The Department will undertake a phased update of its Parking Standards for new development to ensure they align with and support sustainable transport objectives.



Inconsiderate Parking

76. Many streets were not designed to accommodate current volumes of car ownership. In some locations insufficient road width, or the absence of off-street parking or competing demands for road space can result in motorists parking on the pavement rather than obstructing the road or impeding traffic flow.

77. While parking on the pavement may appear to help keep vehicular traffic moving, it can often create other issues. At some locations, especially where footways are narrower, it forces pedestrians onto the carriageway and into the flow of traffic, increasing the risk of collisions between vehicles and pedestrians. This can impact everyone.

78. In November 2023, the Department prohibited parking wholly or partly on a footway at a number of specific locations. This includes bus lanes, mandatory cycle lanes and school keep clear areas. The Department continues to encourage parking compliance across the road network through the promotion of initiatives such as 'think before you park'.

79. The Department is committed to bringing forward legislation which will ban parking wholly on a pavement; parking across dropped kerbs for pedestrian access; and double parking.

MEASURE **RS11**

The Department will introduce legislation to prohibit pavement parking and obstructions.

Residents Parking Scheme

80. A Residents' Parking scheme is an area where only vehicles with a valid permit or ticket can park during the specified time period the scheme is in operation. The primary aim is to discourage vehicles from outside an area from parking within residential streets.

81. The Department intends to adopt a more strategic approach to parking, ensuring that parking policies and measures are aligned with transport priorities and considered as part of wider transport planning through Local Transport Plans and parking strategies.

82. In March 2026 the Department introduced a new demand-led application process, providing a streamlined and cyclical approach to assessing and prioritising requests for Residents' Parking Schemes. The expansion of residents' parking schemes will support improved neighbourhood liveability and help encourage a shift towards more sustainable travel choices.

MEASURE **RS12**

The Department will introduce a demand-responsive application process for residents' parking schemes.

Enforcement

83. Keeping people safe, while maintaining the efficiency of our transport system relies on a high degree of compliance with road traffic laws and The Highway Code.

84. Road rules also support good placemaking and promote sustainable modes of transport, as people feel safe to use active travel options and have confidence in reliable public transport journeys.

85. Knowing and applying the rules is a responsibility shared by all. Only collectively can we reduce road deaths and casualties occurring on our roads and create a more efficient, sustainable and accessible network for everyone.

86. The Department will continue to work with voluntary and community organisations, councils, and relevant agencies such as the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to ensure that rules are enforced robustly, and enforcement capabilities continue to be fit for purpose.

87. The Department will also continue to influence driver behaviour through education and media campaigns so that courteous and rule-abiding behaviour is the norm for everyone and the need for enforcement action is reduced.

88. Operational experience indicates that behavioural change is most effectively driven by visible, consistent enforcement activity supported by clear and targeted communications. Education alone is unlikely to deliver sustained change without a credible enforcement presence.

89. The Department will, where appropriate, adopt a targeted and data-led approach to enforcement, focusing on areas of persistent non-compliance, increasing visible enforcement presence where appropriate, and expanding the use of technology (e.g., camera-based enforcement) to support consistency and efficiency. Consideration will also be given to reviewing existing enforcement policies to ensure they remain effective in driving compliance.

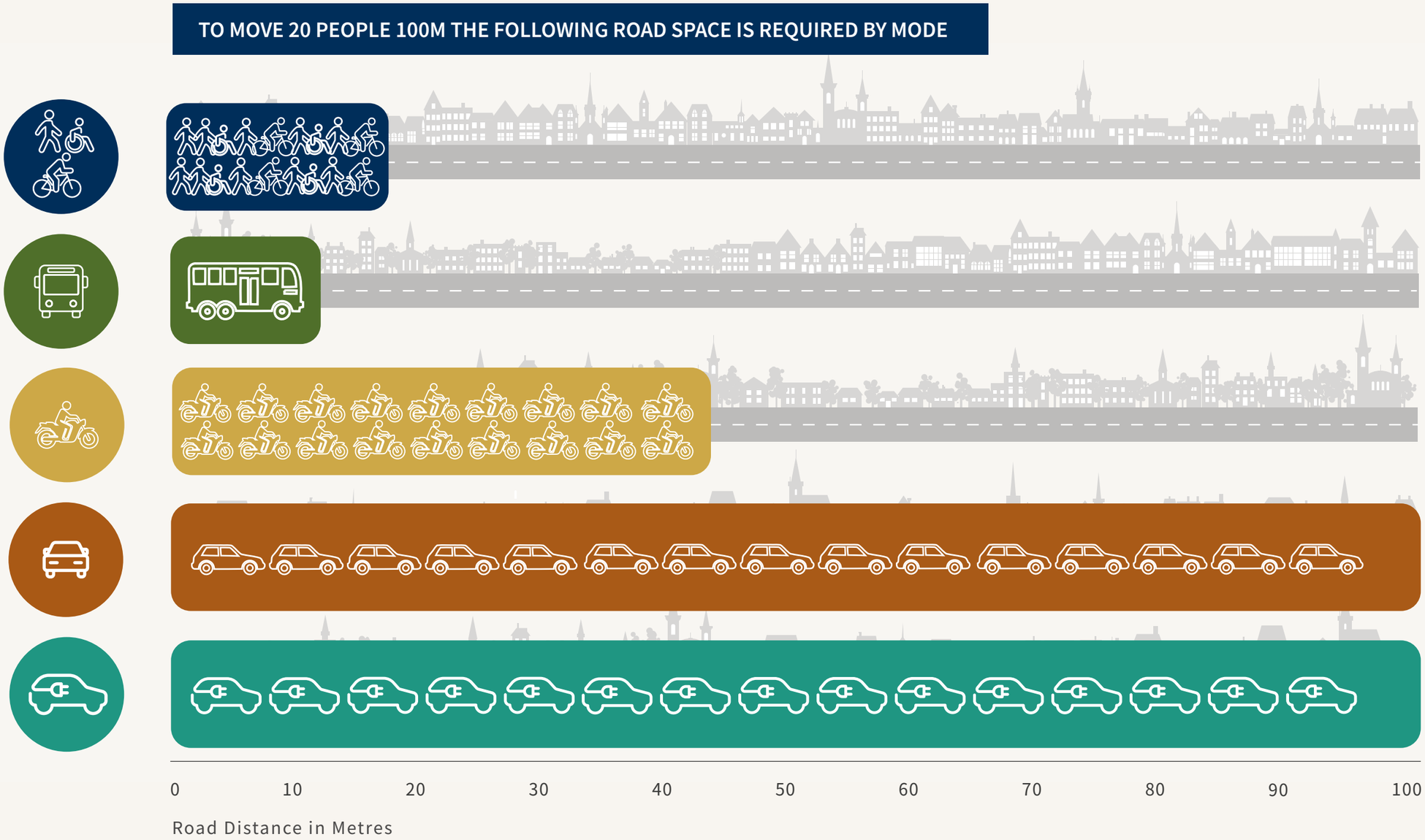
MEASURE **RS13**

The Department in conjunction with other organisations will ensure that investment in sustainable transport is protected through appropriate enforcement of road traffic laws.

Reallocation of Road Space

90. The prioritisation and reallocation of existing road space in our urban areas towards public transport and active travel will be a key measure to support the Department's strategic priorities for transport.

FIGURE 08: **Illustrative Road Space Requirement by Mode.**



91. Reallocating existing road space to better facilitate public transport and active travel infrastructure will be key to providing the efficient and effective movement of people in our larger towns and cities.

92. Road space may also be reallocated to create better urban places for people to enjoy, for example, as part of a pedestrianisation scheme. This can encourage active travel, stimulate economic activity, support council place shaping plans and improve the environmental and urban quality of the area.

93. When considering the reallocation of road space, the needs of all users, including people with disabilities, goods delivery, and servicing vehicles will be considered.

94. The approach to road space reallocation will be informed by the Place and Movement Framework, recognising that different streets and routes serve different movement and place functions and therefore require tailored solutions. This reflects the wider Vision and Validate approach set out earlier in the Strategy, ensuring that interventions support the movement of people and goods rather than vehicles and will be considered through the development of transport plans for each area.

95. Reallocation of road space will, where appropriate, be subject to stakeholder engagement and the relevant statutory processes. When reaching a decision, the Department will give significant weight to our policy priorities of creating modal shift, improving road safety, reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and improving the quality of the urban environment.

MEASURE **RS14**

The Department will implement a programme of road space reallocation guided by the Place and Movement Framework as a means of achieving the following:

- Providing sufficient capacity for sustainable modes;
- Improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Encouraging mode shift from the private car and reducing emissions; and
- To create opportunities for improving the quality of the urban environment.





02

Supports Connected and Inclusive Communities

A transport system that facilitates sustainable and inclusive connections to social and economic opportunities close to where people live and further afield. A quality urban environment that people can use and enjoy and allows everyone to participate in society.



Inclusive Transport, Streets and Places

96. A fundamental principle of good design is ensuring that places and travel are accessible and inclusive. This means enabling both disabled people and non-disabled people to use space, transport and travel on an equal basis and where possible by the same means.

97. The Department recognises that the current design of some of our streets and spaces create physical barriers for disabled people and others. Narrow cluttered footways, the absence of dropped kerbs, a lack of accessible crossing points or a complex and confusing streetscape make everyday journeys challenging.

98. In addition, parts of the public transport network and infrastructure have limited accessibility. The Department is actively working with Translink and other partners to remove physical barriers across services, stations and stops. This includes prioritising investment in accessible vehicle fleets, upgrading associated infrastructure to provide step free access, and embedding inclusive design and technology principles in all new and refurbished assets.

99. The Department will build in accessibility as a condition of public investment in our transport system and spaces. To achieve this, we will use best practice design standards including Inclusive Mobility and adhere to the latest statutory and technical requirements at a minimum. The Department will continue to keep advice and guidance under review to ensure the highest standards of accessibility can continue to be met.



100. The Department recognises that disabled people, including people with hidden disabilities, face additional barriers to travel. These include communication barriers, affordability barriers and attitudinal barriers. The Department is supporting targeted interventions to address these barriers including through the Concessionary Fares Scheme, through adopting high-quality training such as Disability Equality Training for policy-makers and through supporting innovative technology such as NaviLens. We will continue to support innovations and interventions to remove all barriers to travel.

101. This will include the development of an inclusive transport strategy, focused primarily on the needs of older, d/Deaf and disabled people, to improve accessibility, remove barriers to travel and support safe, confident and independent mobility.

102. The Department recognises the importance of ongoing engagement with disabled people and their organisations when planning and making changes to travel, streets and places. We will continue to engage directly with The Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and other stakeholders in the preparation, implementation and review of the new transport plans and in the development and implementation of schemes to ensure investment provides safe and accessible travel and places for everyone. Proactive engagement is also key to the Department meeting its statutory obligations around the promotion of equality and good relations.

MEASURE CC01

The Department will engage with disabled people to ensure barriers to travel are addressed in the design and management of the transport system and built environment.

Urban Design and Placemaking

103. Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, invest and spend time in. Quality urban design will encourage more people to choose to walk, wheel, cycle or use public transport by making the overall experience safer, more accessible, and attractive.

104. The Department's Urban Stewardship and Design Guide, 'Living Places' establishes the key principles behind good place making. It seeks to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland.

105. The Department will continue to incorporate the guidance within 'Living Places' in the planning and development of the transport system. This includes removing unnecessary traffic from urban areas to create inclusive space for people and sustainable modes of transport.

106. The Department will continue to work with the Department for Communities and with the councils to ensure a holistic approach is taken to public realm that recognises and balances placemaking and transport functions. The multi-stakeholder approach in the preparation of the transport plans has a key role in supporting integrated transport and quality urban design.

MEASURE CC02

The Department will endeavour to embed best practice design and placemaking guidance, aligned with the Place and Movement Framework, to ensure streets balance movement with inclusive, safe and high-quality places.

Personas

107. Transport users across Northern Ireland have diverse needs, preferences and behaviours, which shape how they interact with the transport system.

108. While personas exist in other jurisdictions, they do not fully reflect Northern Ireland's distinct context, highlighting the need for a tailored approach.

109. The development of Northern Ireland specific transport personas will provide a clearer understanding of how different groups experience the network, including accessibility needs, digital access and safety perceptions, supporting more inclusive decision-making.

110. By integrating transport personas specific to Northern Ireland into decision-making, the Department will ensure that the lived experiences and safety needs of all users are meaningfully reflected, enabling more inclusive and responsive transport outcomes.

MEASURE CC03

The Department will seek to develop and apply Northern Ireland specific transport personas to better understand user needs and support inclusive transport outcomes.

Transport Integration

111. A sustainable and low carbon transport system requires the opportunity for people to move from one mode to another easily. For example, walking or driving to/from a bus stop; cycling to a train station; changing from one bus to another; using a park and ride facility; or using a travel hub to transfer to a bike share or use of a car club.

112. The integration of transport modes will be a key consideration in the preparation of the transport plans and in the design of individual transport schemes.

Park and Ride / Park and Share

113. Due to the dispersed settlement pattern in Northern Ireland, there are a substantial number of people who do not have access to high quality public transport by active travel from their home.

114. Park and Ride/Share can allow people who are reliant on a private vehicle at an early point in their journey to transfer to public transport services or shared transport for their onward journey. This may be at formal Park and Ride / Park and Share sites or through informal parking arrangements along the transport network. These increase the usage of public transport and maximise the value of investment in existing and new schemes.

115. Park and Stride sites can remove traffic from urban centres by allowing private vehicle users to park at the edge of settlements or urban centres and choose a more sustainable mode (park and choose) to continue their journey into the centre. These sites or Travel Hubs can be particularly useful for towns that serve rural populations with high private vehicle dependency.

116. The Department will further develop and increase the capacity and attractiveness of Park and Ride/Share. This will include creating new, or enhancing existing, Park and Ride/Share sites and by providing better infrastructure along transport routes, such as improved shelters and waiting facilities.

MEASURE CC04

The Department will increase the capacity of Park and Ride and Park and Share facilities.

Travel Hubs

117. Travel hubs are places on the transport system where different services intersect. While they can vary in scale, these hubs bring together various modes of transport into convenient and accessible locations, enabling people to make seamless transitions and encouraging multi-modal journeys.

118. Travel hubs can range from neighbourhood hubs, providing access to local services and sustainable transport options, to strategic hubs that facilitate longer-distance travel and interchange between transport modes.

119. The Department will continue to invest in high quality interchange facilities or travel hubs to ensure that the full benefit of transport investment is realised by linking services and infrastructure.

MEASURE CC05

The Department will invest in high quality Travel Hubs to ensure that the full benefit of multi modal transport is realised by linking a range of services and infrastructure facilities.



Regional Strategic Transport Network

120. The Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN) incorporates Northern Ireland's railway network and the Strategic Road Network that includes the five Key Transport Corridors (KTCs), four Link Corridors, the strategic routes in the Belfast Metropolitan Area, and the remainder of the trunk road network. In addition, it includes:

    - Inter-urban bus services primarily using the RSTN and serving regional Hubs, including cross-border services.
    - Park & Ride (P&R) / Park & Share (P&S) sites serving an inter-urban bus service or a rail station or located on the RSTN.

121. The RSTN provides the principal routes for moving goods and people throughout Northern Ireland. The RSTN enables economic activity across the region, addresses regional imbalance, facilitates connectivity to services and opportunities, and provides access to the gateways. As such the maintenance and improvement of the RSTN remains a key priority for the Department when planning, funding, and developing the transport system.

122. The future development of the RSTN will be set out within a new Regional Strategic Transport Plan (RSTP) that will run to 2035. This plan will take account of the Executive commitments such as the Flagship and City and Growth Deal transport projects, as well as considering the recommendations of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review and their timescales. Strengthening economic competitiveness and connectivity across the region, improving the resilience and safety of the network and creating placemaking opportunities are all important considerations.

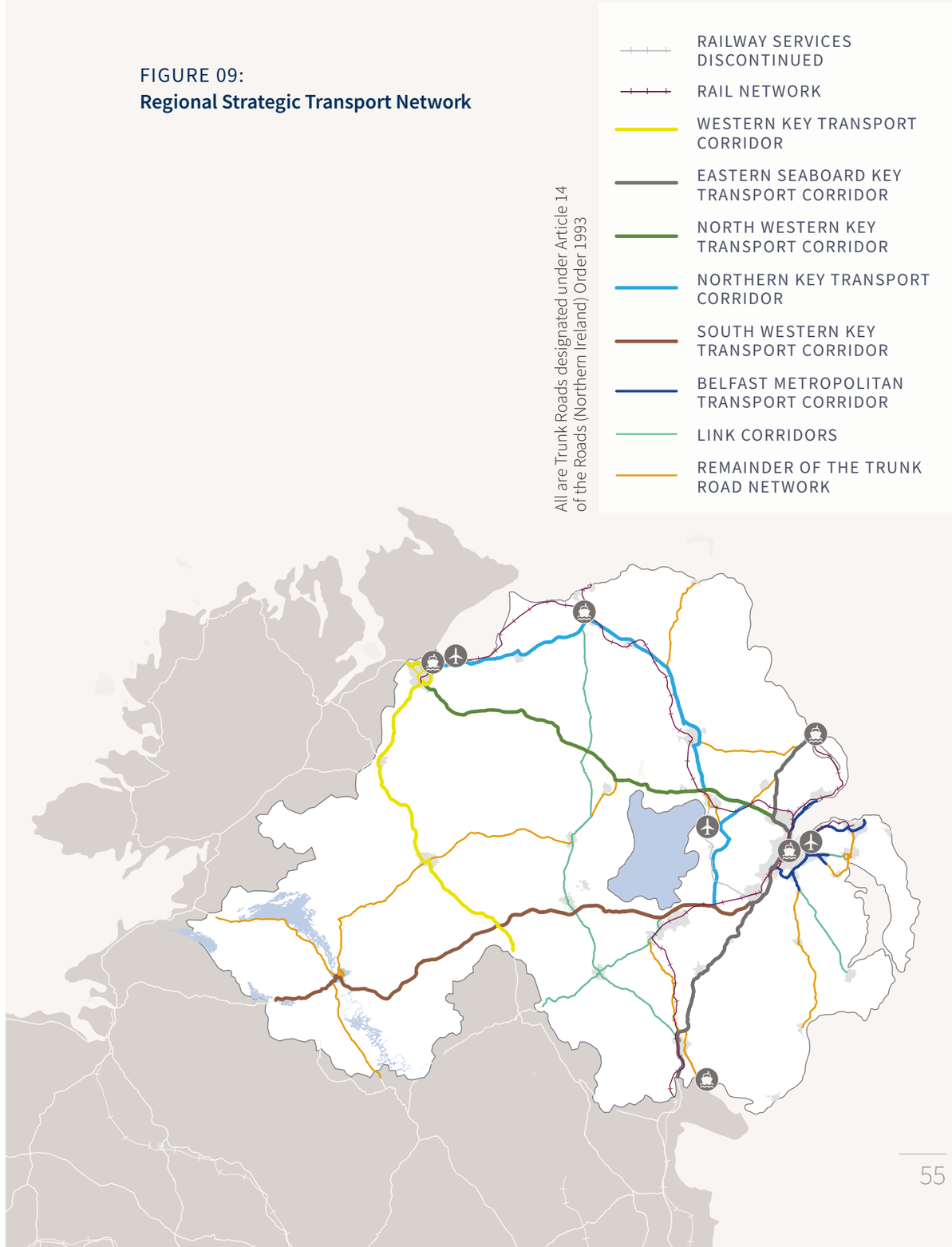
123. Figure 09 illustrates the Regional Strategic Transport Network.

124. The Department also recognises the highway as a workplace and is committed to the pursuit of good management practices in every aspect of its business. A formal review of health and safety policies continue to be carried out on a five-year cycle.

MEASURE CC06

The Department will develop a new Regional Strategic Transport Plan.

FIGURE 09:
Regional Strategic Transport Network



Road Network

125. Roads form the main transport arteries across Northern Ireland and provide the corridors by which pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, freight, cars and motorcycles move. Roads are the backbone of an effective and sustainable transport system.

126. To deliver the Department's strategic priorities, the development of roads will continue to focus on the Strategic Road Network.

127. Non-strategic road schemes will focus on improving road safety, resilience, decarbonising transport (particularly through modal shift) and placemaking.

Maintaining the Road Network

128. Over the last decade there has been a shortfall in funding for road network structural maintenance. This primarily involves road resurfacing programmes but also includes structural drainage and road surface dressing. It has been independently determined that the Department needs an annual structural maintenance budget of approximately £190m each year. On top of that, it is estimated that approximately £60m is needed for essential routine maintenance activities.

129. This is further exacerbated by limited revenue funding for essential maintenance operations, such as pothole repairs, meaning the Department has had to operate a limited maintenance service policy.

130. As a result, there has been a gradual but steady deterioration in the condition of road assets which then fail to meet the demands and expectations of road users. This can impact journey time reliability, increase carbon emissions, and create risk of injury or damage to people and property. It also reduces overall resilience to adverse events.

131. In response, the Department will adopt a more targeted and data-driven approach to maintaining the road network. The Department will expand the use of digital technology to capture road condition, enabling a more targeted programme of high-quality repairs.

132. A comprehensive network-wide highway condition survey will be undertaken using advanced data collection to determine road condition across Northern Ireland's public road network to support informed short, medium and long-term investment and maintenance planning.

133. Maintenance interventions will be delivered through an intelligent, risk-based approach, ensuring better value for money while protecting the long-term integrity of the network.

MEASURE CC07

The Department will deliver improvements in road condition through the implementation of the Road Maintenance Strategy, supported by a targeted programme of intelligent investment, and a sustainable maintenance regime.

Embodied Carbon Emissions from Transport Infrastructure

134. Embodied carbon emissions from infrastructure are the carbon emissions associated with materials and processes throughout the whole lifecycle of construction. It includes any emissions created during the manufacturing of materials (extraction, transport, manufacturing), the transport of those materials to the construction site, and the construction practices used. It also refers to the emissions produced in subsequent maintenance and any disposal of end-of-life materials.

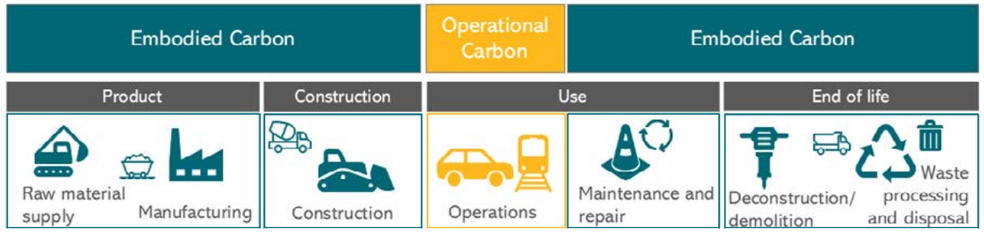
135. For example, in a typical road development project, the production of materials represents about 70% of the embodied carbon, with concrete and asphalt the main emitters. There is no method of reducing embodied carbon after construction. This is why the amount of embodied carbon produced or potentially produced must be addressed now to meet short and long-term climate targets.

136. To inform the broader management of carbon emissions from infrastructure projects across Northern Ireland (not just transport), the Department is developing an Infrastructure Sectoral Plan (ISP), as required under the CCA which will support the management of carbon emissions across the full lifecycle of infrastructure.

137. The Department will continue to improve the sustainability and resilience of the transport network through climate adaptation measures and the increased use of low-carbon materials and construction practices. Whole-life carbon management will be embedded within policy and delivery, aligned with recognised standards including PAS 2080, to support a consistent approach to managing and reducing carbon emissions and to inform decision-making across the project lifecycle.

MEASURE CC08

The Department will adopt a whole-life carbon approach to the planning, design, construction and maintenance of transport infrastructure, aligning with recognised carbon management standards, including PAS 2080 and supporting the transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure.



Resilience

138. Resilience is the ability of the transport system to withstand the impacts of adverse events, and to recover promptly from its effects. This can include extreme weather events, major road traffic collisions, and equipment or infrastructure failures.

139. The exposure of the transport systems to adverse events is influenced by the age, condition, and location of infrastructure. The impact from disruption is influenced by the character of the network in terms of journey movements or number of areas and services supported.

140. Potential disruption from adverse events in the future is likely to increase for two main reasons.

141. First, because of climate change and an increase in the intensity and frequency of storms leading to more frequent and severe flooding events, land instability, including landslides and landslips, falling trees and damage to structures. Sea level rises and increases in the height of storm surges may also affect port operations and damage and/or disrupt coastal transport systems and defences.

142. The Department's actions to manage and adapt to the risks of climate change are recorded in the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme. Action IS36 of Northern Ireland's third Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP3) requires the Department to undertake a Resilient Road Network Plan. The Department will prepare a Plan that will consider future risks posed or exacerbated by climate change, alongside the adaptations required to address both current and emerging challenges.

143. The second strategic driver of lower network resilience is the ageing state of much of our transport infrastructure, particularly the road network. Prolonged underinvestment in maintenance has weakened the inherent resilience of the network and left it more exposed to problems that cannot always be fixed promptly and often require more extensive and costly interventions when they fail. Good maintenance of transport infrastructure is an essential part of enhancing resilience so that it is less susceptible to failures during adverse events. As a result, the Department will need to consider its strategic approach to achieve the right balance between investment in maintenance activities and other aspects of asset management such as adding to or developing the network.

144. In July 2026 the Department published its Road Maintenance Strategy which introduces a modern, data-driven approach to maintaining Northern Ireland's road network, ensuring that resources are used effectively and efficiently. The Strategy aims to improve maintenance standards through higher-quality, longer-lasting repairs and by targeting investment where it is most needed. It will also embed environmental and financial sustainability, including reducing carbon impacts, strengthening resilience to climate change and supporting long-term investment planning.

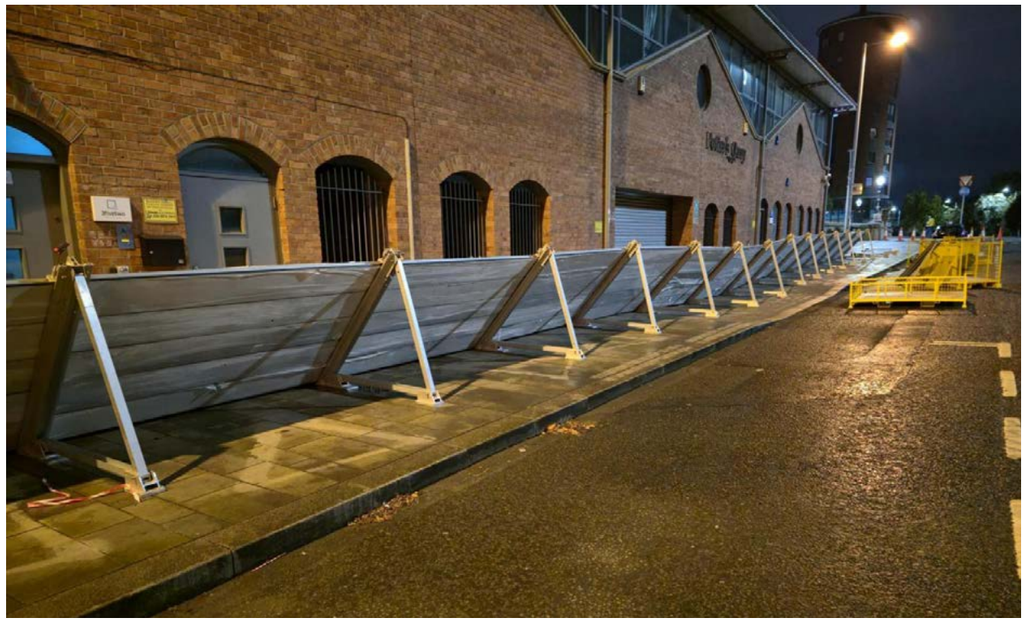
145. The Department will also enhance resilience through the planning and design of infrastructure. This includes the application of flood risk management measures such as the Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme (BTFAS), recognising that flooding can damage infrastructure, disrupt journeys and reduce connectivity across the network.

146. In addition, as part of the Northern Ireland Civil Contingencies Framework, the Department and its transport partners have Emergency Response Plans to prepare, respond and recover from adverse events.

147. Providing a range of transportation options for people's journeys also increases resilience. For example, having viable and accessible public transport or active travel alternatives during a road closure may allow people to still make their journey by alternative means and help to reduce pressure on the other diversionary traffic routes around the disruption.

MEASURE CC09

The Department will develop a draft Resilient Road Network Plan.



Ecologically Responsible

148. The way in which the Department delivers infrastructure services can have a positive impact on the natural environment.

149. The Department has published its Environmental Mission Statement for Infrastructure Development and Management. This Statement is used to guide the work of the Department to ensure that there is an environmental focus through all the Department's activities, from major works to routine operations and maintenance.

150. This will include the use of nature-based solutions and development of nature positive practices across the planning, delivery, operation, and maintenance of transport assets. These approaches will seek to protect, restore or sustainably manage ecosystems in order to promote both human well-being and biodiversity, and/or provide other environmental, social and economic benefits.

151. The continuing development of the Department's transport evidence base and modelling tools will also support evidence-based decision-making through the statutory environmental assessment process.

MEASURE **CC10**

The Environmental Mission Statement for Infrastructure Development and Management will be used to guide the planning, design and delivery of Transport.



Active Travel

152. Active travel is defined as *'travelling by physically active means such as walking, wheeling, or cycling'.* The health benefits of increased physical activity are widely accepted, and this presents an opportunity not only to improve the efficiency of our transport network, but to improve the general health and wellbeing of society.

153. Enabling more people to walk, wheel or cycle for shorter journeys is a cost-effective way of reducing transport emissions and increasing capacity in our urban transport network, while also making our towns and cities more pleasant places to live, work and socialise. Efficient and accessible active travel networks can also help to combat transport inequalities by providing inexpensive travel options for the many people in society who cannot drive or do not own a car.

154. For active travel to become the natural choice for shorter everyday journeys, the associated infrastructure needs to be improved, expanded and well maintained. Integrated land use and transport policy will help influence this also. The cycling network in particular needs considerable investment for it to become a comprehensive and coherent network that feels safe for everyone to use.

155. The CCA requires the sectoral plan for transport to set a minimum spend on active travel from the overall transport budgets of 10%. Increased investment in this area will facilitate accelerated development of the active travel network across Northern Ireland in the years ahead.

156. The Everyday Active Travel: The Urban Delivery Plan will support the delivery of this increased investment in active travel. The Plan sets out how we will develop, prioritise, and deliver well designed, connected, high quality active travel networks within our larger towns and cities. It complements the Strategic Plan for Greenways and delivery of the Belfast Cycling Network to provide a firm basis for the development of active travel infrastructure for the next ten years and beyond.

157. Implementation of high quality active travel infrastructure can include the reallocation of road space and rethinking traffic management on some streets to create a safe, connected, coherent network that is easy for everyone to use. When determining the types of interventions that are most beneficial in either a rural or an urban context, it is important to understand the shorter everyday journeys that people value most, and then make these as attractive as possible for the widest range of people to have the choice to walk, wheel or cycle.

158. Active travel measures will be designed to be used by a wide range of people and will consider the needs of the most vulnerable road users first.

159. These network improvements can be further complemented by other important measures such as education programmes and robust enforcement of traffic regulations.

160. When investing in active travel the Department will also seek to maximise benefits through continued collaborative working with other departments, councils, schools, community organisations, the third sector, businesses, developers, and private landowners.

161. High-quality, secure cycle storage and supporting maintenance facilities will play an important role in shaping travel behaviour and encouraging a shift towards more sustainable modes. The update of the Department's Parking Standards will seek to review and strengthen provision in this area, aligning with broader sustainable transport objectives.

MEASURE **CC11**

The Department will increase investment in Active Travel to create a safe, connected, coherent network that is easy for everyone to use.

Active Travel Infrastructure Maintenance

162. Active Travel infrastructure needs to be maintained to an appropriate standard to encourage use. Footways and cycle tracks are generally less expensive to maintain than carriageways, however addressing key issues such as ineffective street lighting, regular street sweeping, and sustainable management of vegetation will be crucial to ensuring that facilities are well used and offer viable and accessible alternatives to the private car.



Micro-mobility

163. Micro-mobility refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles operating at speeds typically below 25 km/h (15 mph) and driven by users personally.

164. Personal light electric vehicles such as electric scooters or electric skateboards cannot be used on public roads or footways in Northern Ireland.

165. While these personal mobility vehicles could contribute to more sustainable travel choices for people, there are also concerns about their safe introduction for the rider and other road users. The Department will continue to monitor emerging trends in this area and any decision regarding their future role as part of the transport system will be evidence driven and subject to broad stakeholder engagement.

Motorcycles

166. Motorcycles and Mopeds are an established form of transport and have a role to play in reducing the impact of traffic, particularly in urban areas where they take up less parking and storage space.

167. The Department will continue to improve motorcycle awareness among other road users and promote safe driving practices for all, to improve motorcycle safety.

MEASURE **CC12**

The Department will continue to improve motorcycle awareness among other road users and promote safe driving practices for all, to improve motorcycle safety.



Public and Shared Transport

168. Public transport in Northern Ireland comprises of Translink bus, coach and rail services, private bus and coach services, Rathlin and Strangford ferry services, and community transport (that operates as a public membership service). Shared transport options include car and bike share schemes and taxis.

169. Public and shared transport plays a vital role in connecting people to employment, education, healthcare and social opportunities. It also supports economic growth, reduces congestion and contributes to improved environmental outcomes.

170. Public transport networks often face competing pressures, including the need to increase passenger numbers while maintaining service-wide coverage. Different services and modes address these priorities in different ways. For example, services like Metro tend to focus on high-demand urban routes, while Ulsterbus provides broader regional coverage. Rail, meanwhile, is particularly effective for serving densely populated areas and longer-distance journeys.

171. Public transport in Northern Ireland currently accounts for a relatively small share of overall travel, highlighting a significant opportunity to increase its use by making it a more desirable and convenient alternative to the private car for certain journeys and distances.

172. The Department supports the need to develop a public transport system which, in terms of frequency, reliability, comfort and journey time, provides an attractive alternative to the car for certain journeys.

173. To maximise its impact in achieving modal shift and increasing public transport use, the Department must prioritise funding and target services where they can deliver the greatest benefit. Demand for public transport is generally strongest in major towns and cities, and on corridors between large urban centres, where higher population densities create the greatest potential for growth in passenger journeys. However, the goal of increasing overall journeys must be balanced against the need to address market failures, including ensuring adequate public transport provision in rural areas.

Bus and Coach

174. Having a greater reach, bus and coach services account for the majority of all public transport journeys. These journeys can be increased further through improved and expanded services and infrastructure.

175. These improved and integrated services need to be supported by improved bus priority measures on key corridors. This will reduce journey times and improve the reliability and punctuality of services to encourage more people out of private cars and onto bus services.

176. In many rural locations it can be challenging to provide the same frequency of services along direct

routes to make conventional public transport a realistic alternative to private vehicles. However, it remains important that people in rural communities, particularly those with no or limited access to a private car, are able to access key services, employment, training and education opportunities by sustainable means. In Northern Ireland, community transport plays an important role in meeting these needs and providing essential connectivity in rural areas.

177. The Department will continue to consider the benefits of providing appropriate minimum levels of service by settlement type and size and will explore ways to ensure that community transport is delivered effectively and in a manner that complements and integrates with existing public transport services, drawing on best practice and initiatives from other jurisdictions to improve rural connectivity.

178. The continuing development of Park and Ride or Travel Hub sites on the edge of larger urban areas and along the RSTN will also allow rural dwellers to switch to more sustainable modes of travel for some or most of their journey.

MEASURE CC13

The Department will develop a Bus Strategy to guide the future planning and delivery of bus services, recognising the differing roles and needs of urban and rural networks, and supporting improved connectivity and sustainable travel.

Rail Network

179. The rail network provides an attractive transport option for the communities it serves, helping to unlock regeneration and growth opportunities, attracting investment, and supporting sustainable development.

180. The All-Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR), published in July 2024, examined how the rail network could contribute to the decarbonisation of the island's transport system, promote sustainable connectivity into and between major cities, enhance regional accessibility and support balanced regional development. This review sets out the long-term aspirations for rail on the Island of Ireland out to 2050.

181. The AISRR includes 32 recommendations, providing an evidence-based framework to guide future investment in railways across the island. Delivering these recommendations will require a wide range of projects and schemes. Some are already underway, including a new fleet of trains for the Enterprise service, while others focus on skills development and improved integration with the existing public transport network. New lines and major infrastructure works represent a major financial commitment for the Executive, and will be subject to appropriate feasibility, options appraisal, affordability, and environmental assessment.

182. As rail is less suited to serving lower-demand corridors and dispersed communities, future feasibility work will prioritise connections identified in the Rail Prioritisation Strategy, published in December 2025, and how it links between larger settlements with the greatest potential to achieve modal shift. However, there will also be opportunities for smaller settlements to connect to an expanded rail network through enhanced bus services.

183. In June 2026 the Irish Government announced Shared Island funding for capital expenditure on rail projects on the Northern Ireland rail network. This funding provides a valuable opportunity to accelerate the delivery of key rail projects identified in the AISRR. It supports earlier investment in critical infrastructure, particularly along the Belfast–Dublin and Belfast–Derry corridors, strengthening regional and cross-border connectivity. It is additional to existing departmental budgets, complementing planned investment and creating headroom to advance both short-term improvements and longer-term strategic developments. Subject to departmental budgets being agreed, work will focus on targeted upgrades that improve capacity, reliability and journey times, while supporting enhanced Enterprise services and wider network performance. Overall, it reflects strong North–South collaboration and supports a more coordinated, all-island approach to rail delivery.

184. The Rail Safety and Transport Bill is being developed to modernise the legislative framework for rail in Northern Ireland. This includes the establishment of enhanced regulatory oversight, strengthened safety enforcement powers, and new provisions to support the safe development and expansion of rail infrastructure. Collectively, these measures will ensure a safer, more accountable, and future-ready rail system.

MEASURE CC14

The Department, alongside Translink and rail network partners, will work to progress the Rail Project Prioritisation Strategy.

Community Transport

185. Community transport services funded by the Department, comprising of the urban based Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS), the rural based Dial-a-Lift (DAL) schemes and Shopmobility schemes, plays a vital role in supporting and sustaining local, particularly rural, communities. Its main objective is to address social isolation by providing transport for those who cannot avail of or find it difficult to use public transport. It helps connect communities and ensures that some of the most vulnerable in our society can access essential local goods and services and more actively participate in society.

186. Transport is a key part of many of the strategies being taken forward by various government departments. There is a need to consider how the current services and benefits provided by community transport are maximised, and how its future potential can be realised, funded, and resourced.

187. An evaluation of community transport has been completed and a review will be undertaken to consider community transport provision for the medium to longer term and how the benefits and flexibility of the provision can be captured and more fully used in the wider transport system.

188. The Department will look to improve the operation of the 10b permit system, reflecting the outcomes of a recent review. The Department will engage with the community and commercial transport sectors to examine how collaboration between providers can be developed to provide effective transport services within the community.

MEASURE CC15

The Department will continue to monitor community transport services to determine how the benefits and flexibility of the provision can be captured and more fully play a role in the wider transport system.

Private Operators

189. Private operators play an important role in maintaining connectivity by delivering a range of local and long-distance services, extending the reach of the public transport network in areas not well served by subsidised bus or rail. They are also key providers of home-to-school transport, private hire services and tourism-related travel, supporting both everyday journeys and the wider economy.

190. Through the provision of services, private operators can offer flexible and responsive transport solutions that meet the specific needs of communities. They are well equipped to deliver tailored services, particularly in rural areas or locations where fixed route services are not viable, complementing and enhancing existing public transport provision.

191. The integration of public and private operators, along with shared infrastructure and services, can enhance the overall effectiveness of private operators within the broader public transport system. Coordination between the two can enable innovative and locally tailored solutions to connectivity gaps, strengthen links within and between communities, and provide enhanced access to key destinations for residents and visitors to Northern Ireland alike.

192. Private operators who provide public transport services under a service permit are required to comply with the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations. While this ensures vehicles meet minimum accessibility standards, operators should strive to utilise low-floor vehicles to support inclusivity and ensure ease of access for all passengers.

MEASURE CC16

The Department will build on its engagement with operators and establish a forum to explore opportunities for joint working and ensure the views of providers can be taken on board.

Taxis

193. The Department is responsible for the regulation of the taxi industry.

194. Taxis provide an important transport service offering door-to-door trips and the ability to complete one-off journeys that are difficult to efficiently provide by other modes. They can be particularly important for people with disabilities and older people who may not have easy access to private cars or public transport. Taxis can also play a role in Travel Hubs and interchanges.

195. Taxis are often essential to the nighttime and evening economy of our towns and cities, supporting the health and vibrancy of Northern Ireland's hospitality sector. Providing a safe means of getting home after public transport services have finished improves the safety of our transport network and communities.

196. Having a range of transport options is also important for our tourism sector, with taxis playing a role, alongside public transport, in connecting gateways and key destinations.

197. The Department will continue to work with taxi providers, recognising their role within the transport system.

MEASURE CC17

The Department will continue to work with taxi providers, recognising their role within the transport system.



03

Is Safe and Healthy

A transport system by 2050 where no-one is killed or seriously injured.



Travel Safety

Road Safety

198. In 2025, 56 people were killed in road collisions. Every death or serious injury on the road network is a tragedy and there remains much work to do to make road transport safer, in particular addressing dangerous road user behaviours (including carelessness/ inattention, driving at excessive speed or being impaired through alcohol/ drugs) which cause approximately 95% of road casualties.

199. Improving road safety underpins all aspects of the Department's work. Improving safety (and perceived safety) is critical to increasing the percentage of journeys made by active travel and public transport. It is also central to good placemaking and for creating an inclusive transport system.

200. The Department has published the Road Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2030. The Road Safety Strategy has three strategic outcomes:

- Safe People: Our people will be safer on our roads.
- Safe Roads: Our roads will be safer for all.
- Safe Vehicles: Our vehicles will be safe.

201. The Road Safety Strategy sets out a collaborative and partnership approach by providing a framework for government and other road safety stakeholders to establish their own road safety plans, objectives, and interventions to eliminate road crashes which result in serious injuries or fatalities.

202. Beyond 2030 the Department's ambition is that by 2050 fatal accidents should no longer occur on our roads. This ambition is not beyond our reach. New technology will offer many opportunities to improve road safety. However, new technologies alone cannot address all the issues and reaching zero fatalities will require the collective effort of road users, stakeholders and public authorities.

CASE STUDY.

"Initiatives such as the 'Share the Road to Zero' campaign seek to encourage safer road user behaviours and highlight the role everyone has in achieving the long-term ambition of eliminating road deaths and serious injuries."



MEASURE **SH01**

The Department will continue to work with our partners to improve road safety.

CASE STUDY.

"The Department launched the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) in Northern Ireland on 1 October 2026. It is a new, phased approach to driver licensing, designed to improve road safety for new learners and drivers, particularly those drivers aged 17 to 23 who are disproportionately represented in fatal road traffic collisions. GDL is designed to improve safety by giving new drivers the time, skills and experience they need before driving or riding independently."



Safer Journeys to School

203. Safer Journeys to School is a Department led programme focused on protecting children and young people on their daily journeys to and from school. School journeys often take place at busy times and on roads shared by cars, motorcycles, buses, pedestrians and cyclists. Evidence shows that children are at heightened risk at specific moments, particularly when boarding or leaving a bus and when crossing the road immediately afterwards.

204. The programme focuses on a combination of clear and enforceable measures, alongside education and behaviour change initiatives for road users, pupils and parents, to reduce traffic danger and create safer environments around schools and bus stops. It applies across both urban and rural settings and reflects the reality that many children travel on regular service buses as well as dedicated school services.

205. By addressing safety risks at key points on the school journey, particularly around buses, the Safer Journeys to School Programme supports the Strategy's ambitions on road safety and contributes to safer, calmer environments around schools and bus stops.

MEASURE **SH02**

The Department will deliver coordinated legislative, behavioural, engineering and enforcement measures to improve the safety of children travelling to and from school, with an initial focus on school buses and bus stops.

20mph Speed Limits

206. To improve road safety and encourage active travel the Department will introduce more 20mph speed limits in appropriate locations. This will be a targeted approach and will take account of factors including road safety; the character of the area; the function of the transport network; the promotion of active travel; and urban place shaping.

207. The Department has already reduced the speed limit to 20mph in many areas such as outside schools, residential areas, and in urban centres. This has made these places safer, particularly for vulnerable road users. A person is five times less likely to be fatally injured if struck by a vehicle at 20mph than at 30mph. It can also make places more attractive to walk and cycle.

208. The imposition of any new speed restriction, or amendment to an existing speed restriction, requires a Speed Limit Order to be made. As part of the statutory process the Department will seek the views of the PSNI, local communities and other interested groups before changing the speed limit.

MEASURE **SH03**

The Department will introduce more 20mph zones in appropriate locations in line with the Place and Movement Framework.



Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

209. Most women and girls have become used to limiting how, when and where they travel due to gender-based violence and harassment.

210. Violence against women and girls is an umbrella term used to cover a wide range of harm, abuse, and violence against women and girls because of their gender. Some women and girls may face particular risks to their safety, such as those with disabilities.

211. Violence against women and girls can lead to significant and lasting impacts. Acknowledging the scale of this violence, and the impact it is having on their lives is an important first step in addressing the problem.

212. The safety of all users is a feature of the planning and design of the transport network. This may include ensuring that crime and the fear of crime is considered in the design of transport schemes through measures such as appropriate lighting and natural surveillance across streets, transport infrastructure and public spaces.

213. The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) for Architecture and the Built Environment has produced Guidance 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls through the Built Environment'. Its aim is to promote the creation of safer and more inclusive places for women and girls.

> "Vision: to ensure that the built environment in Northern Ireland becomes genuinely safe, inclusive, and equitable, enabling women and girls to travel to and through their communities freely, without fear or limitation."

214. A safer environment benefits everyone: it supports wellbeing, strengthens social cohesion, and promotes economic vitality. When women and girls can comfortably and visibly occupy public space, through walking, resting, meeting friends, or engaging in civic life, the entire community becomes more vibrant and resilient.

215. To support the Executive's Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls, the Department will use communication channels to promote positive attitudes and behaviours to prevent violence against women and girls on the transport network.

MEASURE SH04

The Department will embed personal safety in the planning, design and operation of transport, creating safe and inclusive environments, informed where appropriate by safety and inclusive design audits.



Railway Safety

216. Railway safety is an issue which affects everyone who interacts with the rail system, whether that is as a passenger, someone who works on the railway, or as a member of the public who crosses a level crossing when travelling.

217. The Department, as the Rail Safety Authority, monitors safety performance on the rail network and publishes an annual safety performance report and a report of performance against Common Safety Indicators (CSIs). In comparison to GB, Ireland and other EU countries the Northern Ireland rail network is among the safest in Europe across most CSIs.

218. The Department, in its rail safety regulatory role, works closely with Translink, the wider rail sector and other health and safety partners, to bring about improvements in railway safety. Each year, the Department conducts audits and inspections of mainline railway operators to ensure their safety management systems are adequately managing risks on the rail network.

219. There are emerging challenges for railway safety as the Department supports investment in new and upgraded railway infrastructure and rolling stock - partly as a result of maintaining an ageing network, and partly as a result of efforts to encourage modal shift and decarbonisation of our transport system. These challenges will bring new people into contact with our railway network, primarily as passengers but also as employees working on the railway.

220. The Department will continue to work with partner organisations to undertake work to improve our approach to railway safety, including on a cross-border basis, and has established the Northern Ireland Rail Safety and Technical Standards Group to engage with industry on safety and standards issues.

MEASURE **SH05**

The Department will continue to work in partnership with other public authorities and stakeholders to improve railway safety through the development of the Rail Safety and Transport Bill.

Healthy Places

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

221. Transport is a key enabler of wider social, economic and environmental outcomes. The decisions we make about transport influence where people live, work and interact. By recognising transport as part of a wider, interconnected system, we can support sustainable growth, create healthier communities, reduce inequalities and deliver environmental improvements for future generations.

222. A key way in which transport can support healthier places is through active travel. Active travel offers a wide range of benefits that enhance our health, environment, economy, and society. By incorporating active travel into our daily lives, we can create healthier communities, reduce our environmental impact, and build more vibrant, connected communities.

223. Active travel is an easy and effective way to improve physical and mental health. By integrating activities like walking, wheeling or cycling into daily routines, individuals can maintain a healthy weight, boost cardiovascular fitness, and lower the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Regular physical activity also strengthens muscles and improves joint health. Beyond physical health, active travel also has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing. It can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while improving mood and mental clarity.

224. Through the development and delivery of Local Transport Plans, the Department will apply the Place and Movement Framework approach to support healthier, safer and more inclusive communities. Recognising that streets perform both movement and place functions, the Vision and Validate approach will also ensure that sustainable transport measures are considered at the outset of a plan or in policy development, helping to improve accessibility, encourage healthier travel choices and deliver better place outcomes.

MEASURE **SH06**

The Department will recognise the role of transport as an enabler of wider social, economic, environmental and health outcomes in the development of its policies, plans and investment decisions.

Improving Air Quality

225. Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK as long-term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer, leading to reduced life expectancy.

226. Chronic air pollution has also been shown to have links between dementia and cognitive decline. All of which has social impacts, particularly for the elderly and their families.

227. Road transport is responsible for a range of pollutant emissions, those of greatest concern are nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. In 2022, road transport contributed 30% of the UK's Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) emissions. In terms of human exposure it is the location of these emissions – at ground level, often close to homes, schools and shops in urban areas that make their health impacts greater than those from other sources such as energy and industry.

228. Northern Ireland has 17 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) declared because of NO2 emissions from road traffic. These primarily occur in urban areas experiencing high volumes of traffic.

229. Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) arises as a by-product of the combustion of petrol and diesel and from physical processes, such as brake pad, tyre, and road surface wear. Although no objectives for particulate matter are exceeded in Northern Ireland, there is still a need to address what levels there are, as there is 'no safe level'.

230. Improving opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, alongside the transition to lower emission vehicles, can help reduce transport-related emissions and improve air quality. These measures will support healthier communities while contributing to wider environmental and climate objectives.

231. For AQMAs that have transport-related issues, the Department is working with local councils as they prepare and implement their Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs). These AQAPs contain actions that the Department, alongside other 'Competent Authorities' are taking to address air quality issues.

MEASURE **SH07**

The Department will continue to work in partnership with councils and Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in the preparation and implementation of AQAPs and the Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Noise

232. The Department will continue to fulfil its statutory obligations under the Environmental Noise Directive (END) and the Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 by preparing, publishing and reviewing Road Noise Action Plans on a five-year cycle. As the competent authority for road traffic noise, the Department will use strategic noise mapping to inform targeted actions for major roads and designated agglomerations, including Belfast. These plans aim not only to manage and reduce exposure to environmental noise where necessary, but also to protect and preserve identified Quiet Areas.

233. Reducing exposure to road traffic noise delivers important public health and wellbeing benefits. Prolonged exposure to noise is associated with a range of adverse health outcomes, including stress, sleep disturbance and cardiovascular impacts. By addressing noise as part of a wider sustainable transport system, the Strategy supports healthier places, improved quality of life, and more liveable communities.

234. The Department will also continue to work closely with DAERA and local authorities to ensure that noise mitigation is appropriately considered in the planning, design and delivery of transport and development schemes. This includes establishing a clearer framework of roles and responsibilities to support effective and coordinated noise management within the wider context of sustainable development and place-making.

MEASURE **SH08**

The Department will produce strategic noise maps to inform the development and ongoing review of Road Noise Action Plans.





04

Supports Green Growth

A transport system that provides businesses with efficient and reliable connections, particularly to our gateways and creates economic opportunities though sustainable investment, network management and better places.



Transport and the Green Economy

235. Companies in Northern Ireland are looking towards delivering innovative sustainable growth that creates both commercial and societal value while lowering their carbon impact. These companies can deliver significant impacts on clean energy and low carbon technology. Their expertise and passion for innovation and engineering will create opportunities to deliver lasting generational transformation in Northern Ireland.

236. The Northern Ireland Executive's Energy Strategy will support the growth of a new skills base for a low carbon economy.

237. The Department will continue to assist in reducing the carbon associated with its operational activities and drive sustainable economic growth through its transport and workplace policies.

238. Companies across the public, private and voluntary sectors can also play a crucial role in promoting workforce policies that reduce the carbon impact of travel, for example, through working from home policies and travel incentives that promote active and sustainable travel options.

239. The Department will also continue to work with other authorities in Northern Ireland, the UK and Ireland to develop green growth policies and investment opportunities.

Freight Movements and Economic Growth

240. Almost all of Northern Ireland's freight is moved by road. This will not change significantly in the Strategy period. Businesses and consumers rely on efficient, reliable, safe, and resilient connections between our towns and cities and to our gateways to Ireland, Britain, and the rest of the world.

241. Providing a more regionally balanced RSTN will support many of our indigenous businesses with better linkages to our gateways and will provide enhanced opportunities to attract foreign direct investment. Being able to tap into every part of Northern Ireland is crucial for us to reach our full potential by providing greater accessibility, improved safety and increased inclusion.

242. Ensuring the transport system (and particularly the RSTN) is safe, well maintained and is operating efficiently is central to supporting the freight sector and economic growth. Further improvements to the RSTN will provide freight movements with efficiency savings and better journey time reliability.

243. There is currently no rail freight in Northern Ireland. Rail transport can offer key advantages for longer distances, particularly across the island of Ireland, and regional freight movements. Future rail feasibility studies will, where appropriate, explore opportunities to develop rail freight.

244. Last mile freight movement is the final stage of a product's journey. It is typically the movement of a single or small number of packages from a delivery warehouse to a customer's home or business, usually as part of a larger consignment of other small packages being delivered to multiple locations. The majority of these movements are conducted by Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) rather than Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

245. In addition to switching fuel of LGVs, a priority for last mile freight movements is to reduce their number in our towns and cities, and reducing the time they spend there. Having appropriate loading and servicing spaces can improve safety and reduce disruption to other travellers (including bus lanes, cycleways and pavements). Appropriate provision of loading and servicing spaces can also reduce the amount of time freight vehicles need to spend finding an appropriate location to load/unload their goods, preventing congestion at pinch points and reducing emissions.

246. Loading and servicing plans for urban centres can reduce the adverse impacts from goods vehicles while supporting logistic operations. The Department will continue to monitor freight movements within urban centres and will introduce Loading and Servicing Plans with key stakeholders where this is considered beneficial.

247. The improvement of active travel infrastructure and the encouragement of cycle freight could also reduce LGV traffic in larger urban areas. Improving the efficiency of last mile freight movements through freight consolidation will also be encouraged.

MEASURE GG01

Through the maintenance and development of the Regional Strategic Transport Network, the Department will support the efficient movement of freight across Northern Ireland and to gateways.

MEASURE GG02

The Department will continue to monitor freight and logistics operations in urban areas to support efficient operations and reduce adverse impacts.

Gateways: Ports and Airports

248. Northern Ireland is reliant on its gateways for the import of essential goods and for access to key export markets and destinations for travellers. Safe and efficient access is essential for the functioning of our ports and airports.

249. As gateways to international trade and supply chains, it is vital that our ports and airports are appropriately equipped to decarbonise their operations. Our ports and airports have already started to take steps to decarbonise with ZEVs and zero-emission energy sources now widely used.

250. As next generation technologies and fuels become available our Gateways will need to provide appropriate infrastructure to facilitate the move away from fossil fuel energy. This is needed to meet commitments in the CCA and to allow our Gateways to attract trade and investment from industries that require low carbon infrastructure to support their own climate objectives and operational needs.

251. Aviation and maritime shipping sectors are inherently global in nature, and this makes them some of the most challenging modes of transport to decarbonise. Given their global nature, the UK Government is leading in decarbonisation through the Jet Zero strategy: delivering net zero aviation by 2050 and Maritime 2050: Navigating the Future.

252. The Department has introduced a new Ports Bill, which is progressing through the Assembly Stages. The Bill is intended to address challenges faced by the Trust Ports, such as their current Office for National Statistics (ONS) classification and limitations on their commercial powers.

MEASURE GG03

The Department will continue to work with air and seaport operators and other public authorities, such as the Department for the Economy and UK Government, to ensure our Gateways have the necessary support and legislative basis to sustainably grow their operations, meet climate change commitments and other regulatory requirements.

MEASURE GG04

The Department is committed to advancing legislation to address the challenges facing Trust Ports.



Sustainability through Innovation

253. Technology has a significant role in improving the efficiency, accessibility and sustainability of the transport system. Advances in digital connectivity, data analytics and automation present opportunities to optimise network performance, reduce emissions, and enhance the user experience across all modes of transport.

254. To harness these opportunities, the Department will continue to develop and implement its Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Strategy, providing a framework for the deployment of innovative technologies and data-driven solutions across the transport network.

255. This will support the Department in meeting its responsibilities required under the CCA, to exercise their functions in a manner consistent with achieving emissions reduction targets and carbon budgets.

Intelligent Transport Systems

256. The Department already uses Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to process multi-modal data from sources such as smart sensors, real-time data on traffic flow, weather conditions, transport operations, incident reporting and other factors that can impact the transport system through its Traffic and Information Control Centre (TICC). These systems are used to inform decision-making regarding routing, traffic management, and other operations.

257. The Department will continue to deliver its ITS Strategy and integrate more ITS into the management of the transport system. This will include the utilisation of technologies such as predictive analytics, artificial intelligence and connected data platforms to support real-time network optimisation and promote more sustainable forms of travel. Examples include prioritising public transport and active travel through adaptive traffic signals and implementing demand-responsive interventions on routes at appropriate times.

258. As part of this approach, the Department will explore and develop Digital Twin capabilities for transport infrastructure and networks. By creating data-driven digital replicas of transport assets and operations, proposed strategies and operational changes can be tested and assessed in a virtual environment before deployment. This will support evidence-based decision-making, reduce implementation risks, improve value for money and enable the Department to better understand the potential impacts of interventions on network performance, safety and sustainability.

MEASURE **GG05**

The Department will explore and develop Digital Twin capabilities for transport infrastructure and networks.

259. Real-time decision-making linked to ITS will enhance the performance of public transport and the wider network. This includes the ability to identify and predict surges in demand associated with major events, for example at sporting or cultural events, incidents or adapting routes to mitigate disruption such as roadworks or collisions.

260. Other advancements in public transport include the continuing rollout of Translink's integrated ticketing, which will make journeys more seamless by enabling passengers to use a single payment method across bus and rail services. The development of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) will make it easier to transfer between public transport services, integrate journey planning and booking and payment across multiple transport modes, improving convenience and encouraging modal shift away from private car use.

MEASURE **GG06**

Translink will continue the rollout and enhancement of integrated ticketing across bus and rail services to enable seamless journeys using a single payment method.

Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

261. Connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) represent an emerging and potentially transformative development in road transport. Connected vehicles are capable of communicating with other vehicle-to-vehicle (v2v), transport vehicle-to-infrastructure (v2i) and vehicle-to-everything else (v2x), wider digital networks. This connectivity can support improved traffic management, enhanced road safety, more reliable journey times and more efficient use of the transport network through real-time data sharing and coordination.

262. Autonomous vehicles use advanced technologies, including sensors, cameras, radar, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) and artificial intelligence, to undertake some or all driving functions with limited or no driver intervention. As these technologies mature, they have the potential to improve transport efficiency, enhance road safety and increase accessibility, particularly for people with reduced mobility, older people and those who face barriers to accessing conventional transport services.

263. The Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles, a unit of the Department for Transport is leading on the development of policy, regulatory frameworks and safety standards for CAV deployment. This provides a foundation for testing, innovation and eventual deployment of autonomous

vehicles, ensuring alignment with wider UK developments.

264. Led by Belfast Harbour, the Harlander project initiative is already demonstrating leadership in this area, to deliver the UK's first fully driverless passenger transport system, providing a two-vehicle autonomous shuttle service within the Belfast Harbour estate, providing sustainable last-mile connectivity from the Titanic Quarter railway station to Thompson Dock in Queen's Island. It also provides a live testbed for the integration of CAV technologies with existing transport infrastructure. The lessons learned will help inform future deployment across Northern Ireland, supporting innovation, developing specialist skills and strengthening the region's position within the growing connected and autonomous mobility sector.

Drones

265. The Department recognises the potential of emerging technologies, including drones, to support a more integrated, efficient and sustainable transport network. Subject to appropriate regulation, safety and airspace management, drones may play an increasing role in freight and logistics, particularly for first and last mile deliveries. Their use could improve connectivity, reduce delivery times and emissions, increase accessibility for remote communities, and strengthen supply chain resilience.

266. The Department will continue to monitor developments in drone technology and their role within an integrated transport system.

MEASURE **GG07**

The Department will continue to consider the role of technological innovation through the use of data and emerging technologies in improving the efficiency, safety, and sustainability of the transport system.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making

267. Data and technology will underpin the delivery of an integrated, innovative and accessible transport system for the future.

268. The Department will invest in the collection of high-quality evidence and the development of robust, data-led decision-making tools. This will support more informed and transparent decision-making, enable the identification of strategic priorities aligned to the Department's vision, and facilitate the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and interventions.

Data

269. Data plays a significant role in understanding the current state of the transport system and is fundamental to the delivery of an integrated transport network that supports growth, enables safe journeys and optimises the performance of the transport network. As travel patterns evolve with emerging technologies, climate goals, and societal needs, the Department recognises the critical need to invest in the collection, management, and use of both traditional and new data sets - including real-time mobility data, active travel metrics, freight movement, and behavioural insights.

270. Smart sensor technology is already deployed in Belfast as part of the initial use of new technologies for monitoring and evaluation. It provides real-time, anonymised data on how the transport network is used, capturing movement across different modes and supporting a better understanding of travel patterns, congestion and network performance to inform evidence-based decisions.

271. A more strategic and integrated approach to data will enable better decision-making, targeted investment, and responsive policy development. The Department will work collaboratively with industry, GB and Irish transport authorities, academia, and public sector partners to establish data-sharing frameworks, improve data quality, and enhance analytics capacity.

272. The Department will work with partners to establish clear, consistent and user-focused data standards, ensuring data is accessible, interoperable, and able to flow seamlessly across systems for maximum use and efficiency.

273. Key actions will include investment in digital infrastructure, the development of a Transport Data Hub for Northern Ireland, and the adoption of open data principles to support innovation, accountability, and public engagement.

Transport Modelling

274. The Department has developed a suite of strategic transport modelling tools that can estimate the transport impacts of land-use decisions, infrastructure changes, transport policies, and changes to transport services (such as public transport). The strategic modelling tools cover all of Northern Ireland with greatest detail provided in the cities of Derry/Londonderry and Belfast.

275. Transport modelling will provide the default evidence base for many of the Department's decision-making processes. This will ensure a consistent and transparent approach to developing a sustainable transport system.

276. To facilitate this consistent and transparent approach, the Department is working towards making this suite of strategic transport modelling tools available to appropriately experienced external users, with the expectation it will be used in the transport assessment process of planning applications where the scale, location or impact would warrant this approach.

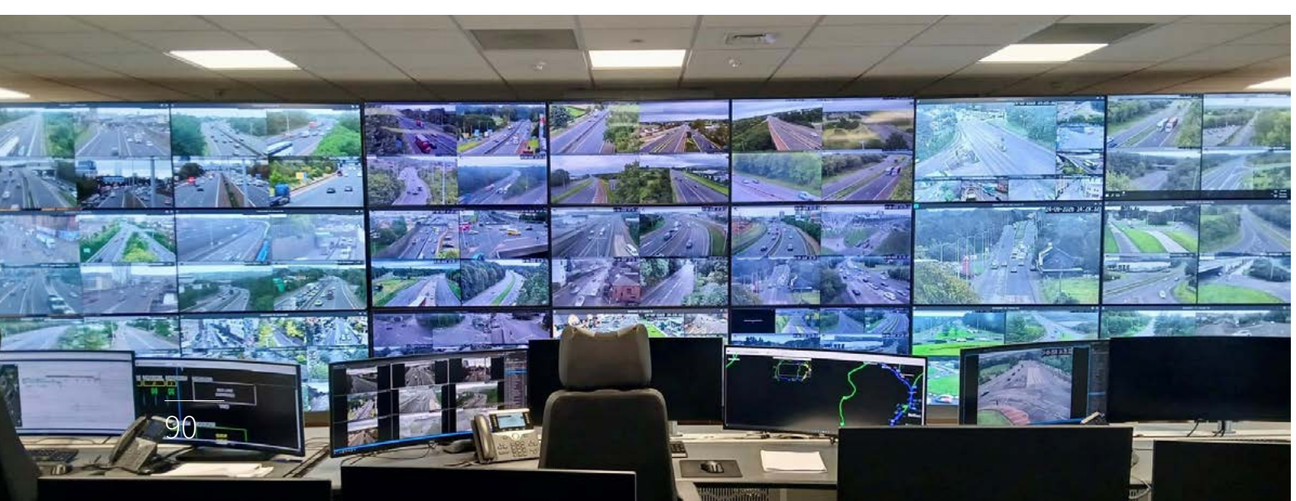
277. Transport modelling is not suitable for all decision-making, for example the nature, location and scale of some decisions would not warrant, or cannot utilise transport modelling processes.

MEASURE **GG08**

The Department will invest in enhancing its data and evidence base, including the use of innovative technology and techniques.

MEASURE **GG09**

The Department will establish its transport modelling tools as the primary evidence base for decision-making, and will regularly review, upgrade and enhance these digital tools to ensure they remain accurate, effective and fit for purpose.



Transport Emissions Modelling

278. The Northern Ireland Transport Emissions Model (TEM) provides a key evidence base for understanding transport emissions and supporting strategic decision-making, including insights into fleet composition and the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

279. The Department will enhance the use and accessibility of TEM, including developing a hosted version, and will use its outputs, such as EV uptake and associated energy demand, to improve local emissions data and support cross-sector planning, particularly in relation to future electricity demand.

MEASURE **GG10**

The Department will develop and implement a hosted version of the Transport Emissions Model (TEM) to improve accessibility and consistency of use across industry.

MEASURE **GG11**

The Department will use the Transport Emissions Model (TEM) and its underpinning fleet data to predict future electric vehicle uptakes and share analysis with relevant departments and agencies to support electricity demand planning and wider infrastructure decision-making.

Zero and Low Emission Fuels

280. Northern Ireland is working collaboratively with nations across the UK to phase out new non-zero emission cars, vans, motorcycles, scooters and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

281. Responsibility for the policy and regulation of zero emission fuels, and the associated infrastructure, is spread across many public bodies. Moving to zero emission fuels will involve collaborative efforts across a wide range of public and private stakeholders from the energy and transport sectors and require the adaption of Northern Ireland 's energy infrastructure and the transport system.

MEASURE **GG12**

The Department will work collaboratively with nations across the UK to phase out new non-zero emission cars, vans, motorcycles, scooters and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs).

Electric Vehicle (EV) Uptake

282. The Department's research shows that there are a range of factors that can influence the uptake of EVs, including purchase and resale prices, overall running costs, vehicle range and availability of public charge points.

283. The Department established an EV Infrastructure Task Force to bring together representatives from government, consumers, energy providers and industry, to consider the EV infrastructure required to deliver a fit for purpose, modern accessible EV charging network.

284. The Task Force published the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Action Plan in November 2022. This plan agreed key actions that were critical enablers to provide greater confidence and certainty for the EV market. These actions have delivered encouraging commercial market developments and have been enhanced by the introduction of the ZEV mandate and Vehicle Emissions Trading Schemes. Following the publication of the EV Action Plan and implementation of agreed actions, the task force was transformed into a Statutory Body Group to allow for ongoing engagement. These interventions alongside a new approach to direct stakeholder engagement are collectively driving EV uptake and creating demand and stability in the vehicle retail, and commercial charging infrastructure markets.

285. The Department will also work with stakeholders to identify and support the introduction of other cross pavement solutions (including hubs) as innovations and technologies develop to support at home charging.

MEASURE **GG13**

The Department will work with chargepoint operators and key stakeholders to identify and develop suitable charging solutions that enable Electric Vehicle owners to charge at home and access cheaper home tariffs.



Alternative Fuels

286. UK Government policy on the transition to zero emissions is technology neutral. Key market and technology interventions will dictate the best solutions for zero emission cars, vans, motorcycles and road freight. Whilst battery electric is likely to dominate the car and van sectors, it is expected that battery electric, hydrogen fuel cell, and other alternative fuels, will have both interim and longer-term roles to play in the decarbonisation of the HGV sector.

287. For lighter vehicles in the logistic markets battery electric solutions are already widely used. Solutions for long haul HGVs are also currently available, with industry considering and trialling various options including electric, hydrogen and also synthetic fuels. DfI is the lead Department for Northern Ireland on the Shared Island Initiative – Green Hydrogen Transport Corridor project. This supports the deployment of Hydrogen Refuelling Stations on a cooperative cross-border basis across the island of Ireland. The development of refuelling infrastructure for hydrogen is at an early stage in the North, although we do have some existing capability through refuelling stations which service the Translink Hydrogen Fleet. The focus of the Green Hydrogen Transport Corridor project is aimed at infrastructure provision that enables the commercial freight sector rather than public transport.

288. The progression of this work is important in Ireland, which is bound by EU Alternative Fuels Infrastructure

Regulations law. The aim of the AFIR regulations is to ensure a minimum level of infrastructure to support the required uptake of alternative fuel vehicles across all transport modes and in all EU Member States to meet the EU's climate objectives by mandating national targets for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the EU for road vehicles.

289. A significant volume of freight moves cross-border each day, with over 3.5m vehicles per year in total, and with the importance of HGV linkages across these islands established under the British Irish Council forward work programme, the scope of this project aligns with the Department's wider transport decarbonisation strategies.

290. Alternative fuel technologies, such as biomethane or biofuels including Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils, may provide interim solutions in delivering CO2 emissions reductions until the zero-emission technologies and associated refuelling infrastructure, under development, are more prevalent in the HGV market. Moving to both zero emission fuels and interim alternative fuel technologies in this sector will be heavily influenced by developments in GB, Ireland, and across Europe given the international nature of supply chain logistics.

MEASURE **GG14**

The Department will continue to work with other public authorities and stakeholders to support the development of alternative fuel options on the transport system.

Decarbonising Public Sector Fleets

291. Considerable funding has already been provided or committed for the purchase of zero and low emission buses. The focus to date has been in the metropolitan areas of Belfast and Derry/Londonderry where battery electric and hydrogen fuelled vehicles have been deployed, improving air quality in those areas.

292. In addition to decarbonising the public transport fleet, the Department has established a public sector fleet working group and is working with other departments and local councils, to explore options to meet the Executive's commitment for all departmentally owned or leased cars and vans being zero emission by 2035.

293. The Department will also continue to consider how alternative fuels can be adopted to decarbonise the plant and machinery we use to manage the transport network.

MEASURE **GG15**

The Department will continue to work with public sector partners to increase the overall percentage of zero emission vehicles in the public sector fleet.

MEASURE **GG16**

The Department will continue to work with Translink on the ongoing decarbonisation of the bus fleet.

Decarbonising the Rail Network

294. Decarbonisation of the rail network will take time and significant investment. To ensure the right decarbonisation solutions are identified the Department will continue to work with Translink.

295. This will consider the most appropriate option for decarbonising the region's railways and will identify which sections of the network are best suited to electrification, battery electric, hydrogen, or multiple options. In the meantime, when purchasing rolling stock, the Department will explore options for these to have the capability for conversion to decarbonised fuel options at a later date.

MEASURE **GG17**

The Department will work alongside Translink on a rail decarbonisation strategy and prioritise where the carbon reduction impact is greatest.



Investment and Delivery

Investment Priorities

296. Northern Ireland has a legacy of underinvestment with the spend on transport services the lowest spend per head of population of all the UK Nations, as shown in Figure 10. Likewise, investment in Ireland has also been higher. This has resulted in a backlog in maintenance over the past decade.

297. This sustained period of underinvestment has also affected staffing levels. Recruiting, retaining and developing a skilled workforce is a key priority for DfI in meeting current demands and delivering long-term strategic outcomes.

FIGURE 10: **UK identifiable expenditure on services by function (Transport), country and region, per head, 2008-2022**

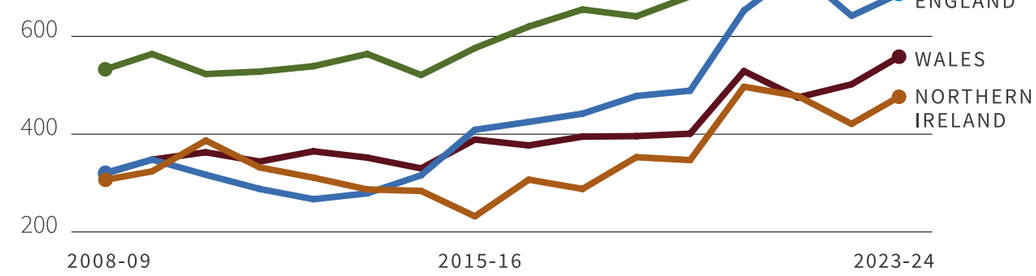
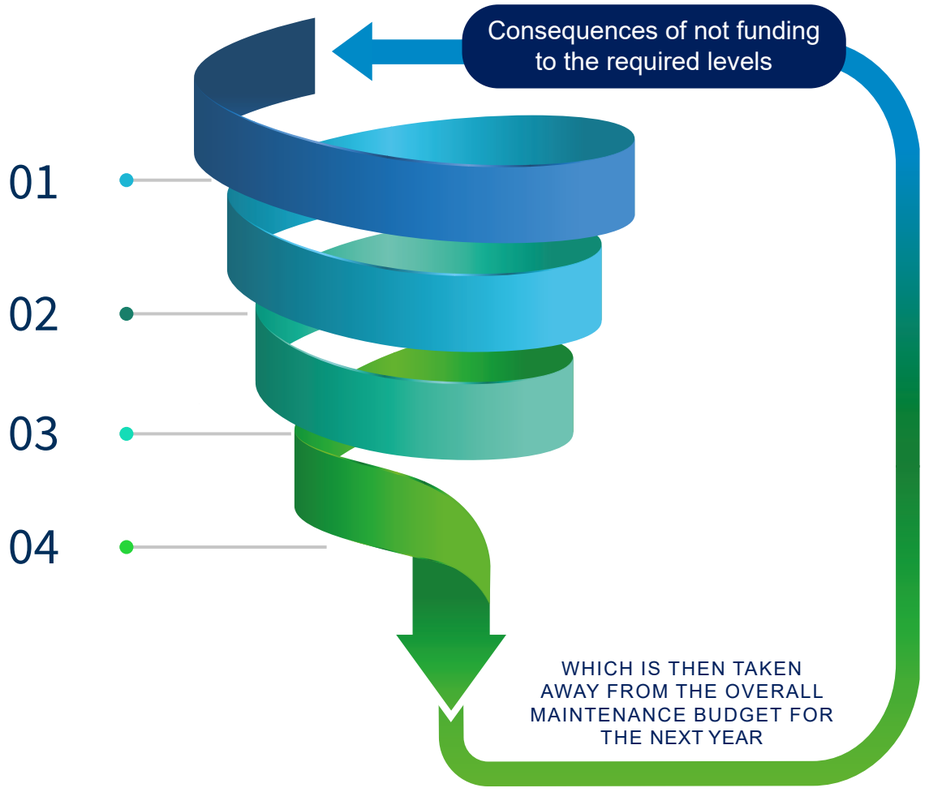


FIGURE 11: **Consequences of not funding infrastructure to required levels**



01 Not funding our infrastructure to the required level means that maintenance is delayed or reduced in scale.

02 Infrastructure becomes more unreliable and can expose the public to greater health and safety risks or a reduction in services and requires more short term repairs.

03 These repairs often take longer to complete, are more expensive or occur more regularly leading to more delays and disruption or closures.

04 The infrastructure is then in place for longer than it is designed for and when required to be replaced costs more to undertake.

Maintenance

298. Figure 11 shows the downward spiral and implications caused by underinvestment in maintenance. Put simply, it is better value to maintain the asset well and in a timely fashion to avoid the asset deteriorating more quickly, which results in more costly and complex interventions in the future.

299. However, it is important that a balanced approach is taken, combining the maintenance of existing assets with investment in new and upgraded infrastructure where this supports wider strategic, economic, safety and connectivity objectives.

300. The existing transport network is the platform on which society functions; its quality and utility are an implied assumption in all public services. A failure to safeguard its condition and address the deterioration experienced over the past ten years is likely to see some parts of the network being rendered unusable. Addressing maintenance backlogs is key to managing risks to public safety and ensuring that the base level assumption of connectivity for citizens and businesses is sustained.

MEASURE **IN01**

Through the Road Maintenance Strategy, the Department will prioritise maintenance investment using asset condition data to target resources where they deliver the greatest benefits.

301. The rail network must also be maintained to a high standard of safety in compliance with the rail safety regulatory framework. A backlog in historic investment means increased funding will be required over the period of this strategy to ensure the railway can operate efficiently and adhere to statutory standards. Maintaining standards and customer satisfaction is also important to ensure the railways continue to offer an attractive form of transport, particularly compared to car travel.

Delivering our Transport Objectives

302. This Strategy sets out a clear direction to deliver the Department's vision for transport to 2035. Investment will play a central role in responding to the need for change identified in this Strategy such as addressing car dependency, reducing emissions, improving health and wellbeing, and tackling inequality in access to transport.

303. Investment decisions will be driven by clearly defined outcomes aligned to the Strategic Priorities for Transport:

- **Resilient and Sustainable:** prioritising interventions that reduce emissions, support climate adaptation and improve long-term network resilience.
- **Connected and Inclusive Communities:** improving access to employment, education and services for all.
- **Safe and Healthy:** delivering safer streets, improved air quality and greater opportunities for active travel.
- **Supports Green Growth:** enabling efficient movement of people and goods to support productivity, regional balance and economic development.

Funding and Prioritisation

304. The Transport Strategy provides a long-term framework to guide investment decisions, ensuring that available resources are directed towards the outcomes we seek to achieve.

305. While funding settlements are determined through future budget processes, the Strategy establishes a clear and consistent basis for decision-making, ensuring that all decisions regardless of scale contribute to a coherent, long-term vision for the transport system.

306. This approach provides flexibility to respond to changing funding environments, while maintaining a strong strategic focus. It enables the Department to:

- prioritise interventions that deliver the greatest impact;
- align short-term decisions with long-term objectives; and
- ensure consistency across programmes, projects and partners.

307. Transport investment will also be supported by strong collaboration with key partners, to maximise the benefits of continued collaborative working. Deliverability will be a key consideration in determining priorities.

308. Strengthening capability in modelling and data will enable the Department to better demonstrate the contribution of investment decisions to strategic outcomes and ensure that projects are brought forward in a timely, effective and evidence-based manner.

Public Transport Investment

309. The Department invests both significant capital and revenue funding in Public Transport.

310. There will continue to be a need for ongoing fleet renewal programmes. In recent years bus fleet renewals has focussed on replacing diesel vehicles with electric vehicles, with much of the Metro fleet in Belfast and Derry/ Londonderry having been replaced.

311. An electric bus is currently more expensive than a Euro 6 compliant diesel bus. Affordability and the most effective means to reduce the carbon emissions from transport will need to be considered before embarking on full replacement of all Translink buses and coaches with zero and low emission alternatives.

312. The All-Island Strategic Rail Review, published in July 2024, outlined proposals to expand rail provision and electrify the network. This was followed in December 2025 by a Prioritisation Strategy, which identified 'Priority Projects' for delivery in the short to medium term and 'Major Projects' for longer-term development, recognising the need for comprehensive business cases, substantial public investment and land acquisition. All new lines will be progressed subject to detailed feasibility studies and value for money assessment. Implementation of the AISRR is already in progress, including the procurement of hybrid rolling stock, targeted skills development, and enhancements to line speeds on the existing network. Maintaining affordability will be challenging in the current economic climate, particularly in relation to new lines. Funding from the UK and Irish governments has been instrumental in delivering new trains for the Enterprise service. Building on this, and alongside departmental investment, we will continue to engage with public and private sector partners to secure the funding required to deliver the AISRR's recommendations, where they provide value for money.

313. Through the Public Service Agreement (PSA), the Department includes a commitment that funding should be maintained at such a level to ensure that the public service obligation activities performed by Translink enable it to maintain its financial viability over the life of the Corporate Plan. This will continue.

Alternative Funding Opportunities

314. Given the pressures on the transport budget the Department will explore alternative forms of funding for the maintenance and improvement of the transport system.

315. This could involve consideration of areas such as road user charging (tolls), congestion charging, greater partnership working and shared prioritisation with delivery partners and a broad review of the fees and charges managed by the Department in the delivery of its transport functions. The Department will also continue to make effective use of developer contributions to improve transport in line with the provisions in the SPPS.

316. The All Island Strategic Rail Review presents a major opportunity to reshape our economy and society, but the costs of delivery are substantial. To make the programme financially sustainable, we will consider new funding models including partnership with other governments, borrowing, and establishing Special Purpose Vehicles to design, finance and build new track. Where exploration of these options identifies value for money opportunities, we will bring forward the legislation required to make them possible.

Monitoring and Delivery

317. The delivery of this Strategy will be achieved through a combination of new and existing transport programmes and decision-making processes. This will see both immediate and incremental change. For example, creating behavioural changes will require immediate action combined with long-term planning. This is to ensure change becomes embedded and the transport system is future-proofed for societal needs and demands.

318. This Strategy will be accompanied by a series of **Delivery Frameworks** that will outline the progress towards the Strategic Priorities for Transport. The first Delivery Framework will be published following the adoption of the Strategy and will set out the actions and measures that are expected to be taken forward in three-year phasing plans across the period:

- 2026 - 2029
- 2029 - 2032
- 2032 - 2035

319. Subsequent Delivery Frameworks will review the effectiveness of the actions taken in the previous phasing plans so that positive change can be reinforced, and changes made where necessary. The Delivery Framework will be accompanied by monitoring indicators following the principles of evidence-based decision-making as set out earlier in this Strategy.

320. The content of the Delivery Frameworks will be closely linked to the preparation, delivery and outworking of the Department's key transport workstreams such as the Climate Action Plan chapters, CCA Transport Sectoral Plan, Transport Plans, Everyday Active Travel 'The Urban Delivery Plan', The Road Maintenance Strategy and the Road Safety Strategy. As these programmes are developed further, they may provide the delivery reporting of this Strategy. This will ensure that action is focused in the correct areas and duplication of effort is avoided.

321. Delivery of this Strategy will also be dependent on the actions of key transport partners and stakeholders, the choices of individuals and wider changes in the transportation sector (such as the uptake in low and zero emission vehicles and technological advancements in transport). Reflecting this, the Delivery Frameworks will take account of wider transport developments such as the preparation and adoption of the councils' LDPs, changes in other related UK and Northern Ireland government policies and changes in the public's travel behaviours.

Impact Screening and Assessments

322. Throughout the delivery phases, individual projects will be appropriately screened in line with the Department's Equality Scheme.

323. Other assessments, such as Strategic/ Environmental Impact Assessments, will be undertaken, where appropriate.

Abbreviations List

AISRR	All-Island Strategic Rail Review
AFIR	Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulations
AQAP	Air Quality Action Plan
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BTFAS	Belfast Tidal Flood Alleviation Scheme
CAV	Connected and Autonomous Vehicle(s)
CCA	Climate Change Act
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
CSI	Common Safety Indicator
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DAL	Dial-a-Lift
DATS	Disability Action Transport Scheme
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DMF	Demand Management Framework
END	Environmental Noise Directive
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
GB	Great Britain
GDL	Graduated Driver Licensing
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
ICE	Internal Combustion Engine
IMTAC	Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee
ISP	Infrastructure Sectoral Plan
ITS	Intelligent Transport Systems
km/h	kilometres per hour
KTC	Key Transport Corridor
LDP	Local Development Plan
LEV	Low Emission Vehicle
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MaaS	Mobility as a Service
MAG	Ministerial Advisory Group
mph	miles per hour
NI	Northern Ireland
NICCAP3	Northern Ireland's 3rd Climate Change Adaptation Programme
NO2	Nitrogen Dioxide
ONS	Office for National Statistics
P&R	Park and Ride
P&S	Park and Share
PM	Particulate Matter
PMF	Place and Movement Framework
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RSTN	Regional Strategic Transport Network
SPPS	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
TEM	Transport Emissions Model
TICC	Traffic and Information Control Centre
UK	United Kingdom
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle

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