



# **North East Transport Plan 2021-2035**

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Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East

**CONSULTATION DRAFT SUMMARY DOCUMENT'**

# Executive summary

**This is our first region-wide Transport Plan for the seven local authority areas in the North East, covering two Combined Authorities, brought together by the North East Joint Transport Committee:**

## **The North East Combined Authority**

(comprising Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland)

## **The North of Tyne Combined Authority**

(comprising Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland)

## **This North East Transport Plan sets out the transport priorities for our region up to 2035.**

Home to two million people, our region is distinct and diverse. It consists of urban and rural communities all with a rich history and positive people who want to contribute to moving our country forward.

This mixture of urban, suburban and rural communities results in a range of transport challenges, from rural isolation in more remote areas to poor air quality and congestion in parts of our cities, along with pockets of 'transport poverty' across the entire region.

We already have a well-established integrated public and sustainable transport system which makes a real difference to people's everyday lives, allowing them to get to work, to visit friends and family, to the shops, and to get to essential services such as schools and hospitals.

This Plan will show that our region has the potential to improve it further to expand its reach, capability and quality.

In some areas of our region, the existing network needs to be improved and expanded so that it better connects the people and communities which it is supposed to serve, leaving no one and nowhere behind. Creating, one, total network with integration at the heart is key. Solving our transport challenges will go a long way in enabling the region's long-standing health, social and economic inequalities to be overcome.

Recent years have seen rising levels of car use and ownership in the region and reductions in

the use of public transport, cycling and walking, resulting in congestion and poor air quality. However, the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in 2020 gave us cleaner and quieter towns, cities and neighbourhoods. **We will work to sustain some of the benefits this afforded and this Plan will help take us towards carbon neutrality.**

Ultimately, our approach recognises that different communities across the North East have different transport needs and will need different transport solutions. For example, the role of the car and of public transport is very different in rural and urban communities.

Those transport links need to be fast, reliable, resilient, accessible and affordable. They must have the capacity we need and, crucially, be sustainable. **Better integration is also key.**

This is our Plan for how we will rectify our wider regional and transport challenges and grasp future opportunities by 2035.

We already have the foundations to launch a world-class sustainable transport network. This Plan builds on our existing assets and gives us the framework to enable us to deliver a more seamless, co-ordinated and integrated transport system across the region.

The Plan sets out our priorities and forms the basis for bids and requests for funding for transport investment in the North East up to 2035.

**This Plan is for the whole of the North East. It recognises the different needs of communities. It considers why we travel and how those trips are made and how journeys can be improved. Our Plan is for everyone, young and old and for people traveling to, from, and within North East England.**

The North East Transport Plan vision is:

**'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East'.**

The objectives of the Transport Plan are:

-  **Carbon-neutral transport**
-  **Overcome inequality and grow our economy**
-  **Healthier North East**
-  **Appealing sustainable transport choices**
-  **Safe, secure network.**

## **Implementation Plan**

We have an ambitious but deliverable timeline which will lead us towards delivering our vision and achieving our objectives by 2035. We have clearly set out the timeline showing our priorities and ambitions in our Delivery section of this Plan and this will be accompanied by a forthcoming Implementation Plan.

A programme of schemes has been developed and this will be managed as a live programme with regular updates to the schemes and evidence that underpins them to ensure that the region can continue to address our challenges and grasp opportunities. Our Plan is divided into the following timescales:

- Shovel-ready schemes
- Schemes for delivery in the next five years – requiring funding to be accelerated
- Schemes for development and delivery in the next 10 years
- Schemes for development and delivery beyond 10 years

We have set schemes across 7 work programmes consistent with our Policy Areas:

- Making the right travel choice;
- Upgrading North East active travel infrastructure;
- Public transport: travelling by bus, ferry and on demand public transport;
- Public transport: travelling by local rail and Metro;
- Private transport: travelling by car and using road infrastructure;
- Maintaining and renewing our transport network; and
- Connectivity beyond our own boundaries.

We have compiled a Technical Appendix, available on request, containing all of our data sources and evidence used.

The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) also accompanies this Plan. The appraisal seeks to identify any impact of our programme on key factors.

**Delivering this Plan, achieving our vision and objectives will support a shift to a more sustainable and healthier way of life in the North East, through lowered emissions, better air quality and travel choices.**

- Easier access to, education, skills, and higher value jobs
- Health levels at least equal to other regions in the UK
- Better connections from the North East to national and international destinations
- A transport network with improved environmental credentials including more sustainable journeys, better air quality and reduced carbon output
- A safer and more reliable integrated transport network which is more intuitive for customers with a sustainable cost base
- Direct job opportunities in the transport and infrastructure sectors
- Enabling new development and housing sites and improving accessibility to existing communities

**This Plan will deliver profound and lasting improvements that will shape the North East and its people for decades to come.**

**To 2035, our region requires an estimated £6.1 billion of capital investment, an amount which will grow as further schemes are developed over the lifetime of the Plan.**

**We believe this to be a fair share of national transport funding which should be allocated to our region from Central Government to 2021-2035.**

# What is the North East Transport Plan?

**The North East Transport Plan is the first ever comprehensive Transport Plan for the region, bringing together the seven local authorities in North East England: Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.**

A single Plan giving a truly regional focus is a step forward for the North East. Travel patterns in our region are complex but 95% of our population live and work within our seven local authority areas' and travel behaviour isn't constrained by administrative boundaries.

**This is not a 'business as usual' Transport Plan. It sets out the region's transport priorities up to 2035 and how the North East can address our main future challenges, ultimately delivering profound and enduring improvements to our transport network.**

The Plan is centred around connecting people to good employment opportunities, generating economic growth, while enabling the region and its people to move to healthier and greener more sustainable ways of travel.

The improvements we have identified have been agreed by the region and will be delivered by a number of organisations through the range of programmes and schemes set out in the Implementation section of this Plan.

We will use this Plan to communicate opportunities for investment and improvements to our transport network. The Plan is our bedrock for bids and requests for funding inward transport investment to the region from Central Government and other sources. This is the long-term transport strategy for our forward-looking region.

## Making journeys is good

Covid-19 accelerated the demand, ambition and delivery of both digital transformation and mobility but we want to encourage people to make trips around the North East. We travel to school, to work, to shop, to care for others and to socialise with friends. For businesses, the ability to travel enables the opportunity to acquire, move and sell products and goods. Doing so benefits local economies of communities which make up our region. Transport can also enable social connectivity to people who are isolated, and can enhance independence and opportunity. It is also the key to tackling inequality and deprivation by facilitating access to jobs and leisure. High-quality and integrated transport links can also help promote and strengthen tourism and regional development. Making journeys of course leaves an impact on our environment and plays a big role in our health and wellbeing, so how we choose to travel is important. That is why connecting people to opportunities using greener, healthier and sustainable transport options is key to this Plan.

## Why is transport important?

Transport is a means to an end, a way of being able to do the things that make up our lives and enables our region and its people to keep moving. It enables physical connectivity between people and jobs, businesses and workers, and businesses to suppliers and customers. Within our region, it's important that our population of two million residents can reach work, education and healthcare and visit friends and loved ones. Links to and from other regions and to other countries are also fundamental for facilitating economic growth and trade.

Well-coordinated transport investment and land use planning can foster social mobility (OECD 2018), and collectively lead to better economic performance of specific areas as businesses are located closer together.

## £42-50m

For example, if the economies of Ashington, Blyth and Newcastle are brought 'closer' together through restored passenger rail links, there will be an increase in the level of interaction between the two, resulting in economic growth for both areas. £42m to £50m wider economic benefits.

Successful delivery of the Plan will lead to the North East having a world-class sustainable transport network. Carrying out our Plan and achieving our vision and objectives will lead to better outcomes for our region's residents, businesses and visitors and overcome our long-standing challenges:

-  We have a growing population but a one that is ageing over time (2m people, average age 43.7).
-  There are major health and income based inequalities. High percentage of economically inactive people in the region are long-term sick (North East: 28.5%, UK 22.1%)
-  Plans for substantial housing growth need to be supported by good public and sustainable transport connections: 109,555 new homes planned by 2036.
-  Average productivity in our region remains 16% below the output for England. This has an impact on the potential competitiveness and resilience of our businesses.

-  Gross Value Added output rising but challenged by external pressures with a persistent productivity gap GVA of £20,338. This is below the national average of £24,181.
-  We have fewer businesses per head and fewer jobs in high skilled occupations than other areas.
-  Analysis by IPPR North suggests that in 2019, planned Government on transport in London was £3,636 per person, over seven times more than the £519 per head in the North East.
-  A range of transport issues has led to a contrast between rural isolation in our remoter areas and poor air quality and congestion in parts of our cities.
-  Commuting to workplaces is dominated by car travel, so congestion is a significant issue on our roads, which affects public transport access and attractiveness, reduces productivity and increases inactivity and vehicle emissions.
-  Public transport use is falling over the long-term, despite an increase in bus use in 2019 as a result of investment by bus operators.
-  Transport contributes a significant proportion of carbon emissions and we have an air quality problem in our region.
-  Cars are our region's most used form of transport and car ownership in the North East is increasing, leading to more traffic congestion and vehicle emissions.

# Our vision and objectives

The vision and objectives for the Plan set the standard of what we want to achieve and where we want to be by 2035.

## The Vision

“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”

## The Objectives



### Carbon neutral North East

We will initiate actions to make travel in the North East net carbon zero, helping to tackle the climate emergency declared by our two Combined and seven Local Authorities, addressing our air quality challenges, and help in to achieve the UK’s net zero by 2050 commitment.



### Overcome inequality and grow our economy

The Plan is aligned with the North East LEP’s long term goals to first return the region to pre-Covid-19 GDP and employment levels and then to move forward in pursuit of the economic ambitions set down in their Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).



### Healthier North East

The North East has the lowest life expectancy of all the English regions. The Plan will help achieve better health outcomes for people in the region by encouraging active travel and getting people to travel by more sustainable means, improving air quality, helping our region to attain health levels at least equal to other regions in the UK.



### Appealing sustainable transport choices

We will introduce measures which make sustainable travel, including cycling and walking, a more attractive, greener, and easy alternative to getting around.



### Safe, secure network

We will improve transport safety and security, ensuring that people are confident that they will be able to feel safe and secure when travelling around the North East.

## Policy areas



### Making the right travel choice

We will enable people to make greener and healthier travel choices whenever they can and ensure our sustainable network takes everyone where they need to go at a price they can afford.

We must ensure all our actions improve transport across the region and deliver to the objectives of this Plan so we are greener, more inclusive, healthier, safer and our economy thrives.



### Active travel

We will help more people use active travel by making the cycle network better across the North East. This will include being flexible in how we use road space to help cyclists and pedestrians.



### Public transport: travelling by bus, ferry and on demand public transport

We will improve bus travel and attract more passengers with new rapid bus corridors. This will include changing how road space is used to help buses move more quickly. We will take action to continue to support the Ferry and develop potential improvements where possible. We must help more people to reach the sustainable transport network with more ‘on demand’ solutions.



### Private transport: travelling by car and using road infrastructure

We must make our roads flow better for goods and essential car journeys. We must strengthen use of cleaner, greener cars, vans and lorries.



### Public transport: travelling by local rail and Metro

We must invest in Metro and local rail to extend and improve the network. We will take action to drive our partners to make travelling and moving goods around our region more efficient and greener.



### Connectivity beyond our own boundaries

We must work with partners to make movement of people and goods to and from our region, more efficient and greener. We must work with partners to strengthen connections from destinations in our region to everywhere in the UK and beyond.



### Research, Development and Innovation

We will embrace new technologies to meet our transport objectives and set innovation challenges to industry creating new opportunities with our network as the testbed.

## Overarching policy areas

We will strive to integrate within and between different types of transport, so that each contributes its full potential and people can move easily between them.

We must constantly seek funding opportunities to deliver our Transport Plan objectives.

We will take action to make travel in the North East net carbon zero and improve transport safety and security.

We must ensure that we work with partner organisations to drive new, quality roles and innovate in the transport sectors.

# North East England – our region

Home to **2 million people**

## 5 sea ports

Port of Berwick, Port of Blyth, Port of Sunderland, Port of Tyne and Seaham Harbour

## Newcastle International Airport

– 80 direct routes, 5.2 million passengers, 4,745 tonnes of freight in 2019.

## Value of exports

£13.3 billion (2019)

## Value of imports

£14.4 billion (2019)

## 5 national catapult centres

Digital, Energy Systems, High Value Manufacturing, Offshore Renewable Energy and Satellite Applications

## Home to a range of national innovation centres

Newcastle Helix, NETPark in Durham

## Manufacturing

15% of our GVA and 11% of employment

## Home to Nissan Motor Manufacturing

One in 3 British cars is made at this plant – 442,300 in 2018

## Nationally significant offshore energy hub

**31 National Rail stations** with 15.6 million entries and exits in stations in 2018/19

## 54 million tonnes of freight in 2018 were lifted by GB registered HGVs

4.7% of all freight (by tonnage) lifted in England exc London

## Growing cycling and walking network

## Shields Ferry

400,000 passenger journeys a year

## Two UNESCO World Heritage sites

## Tyne and Wear Metro

60 stations  
89 trains  
36m passenger journeys in 2018/19

Every journey on our Metro and Local Rail network brings an **£8.50 direct benefit to our economy**

**28% of households do not own a car** – the highest proportion outside of London – shrunk by 9% since 2002/03

**162.4 million bus passenger journeys in 2018/19**

## Home to the largest purpose built datacentre campus in the UK

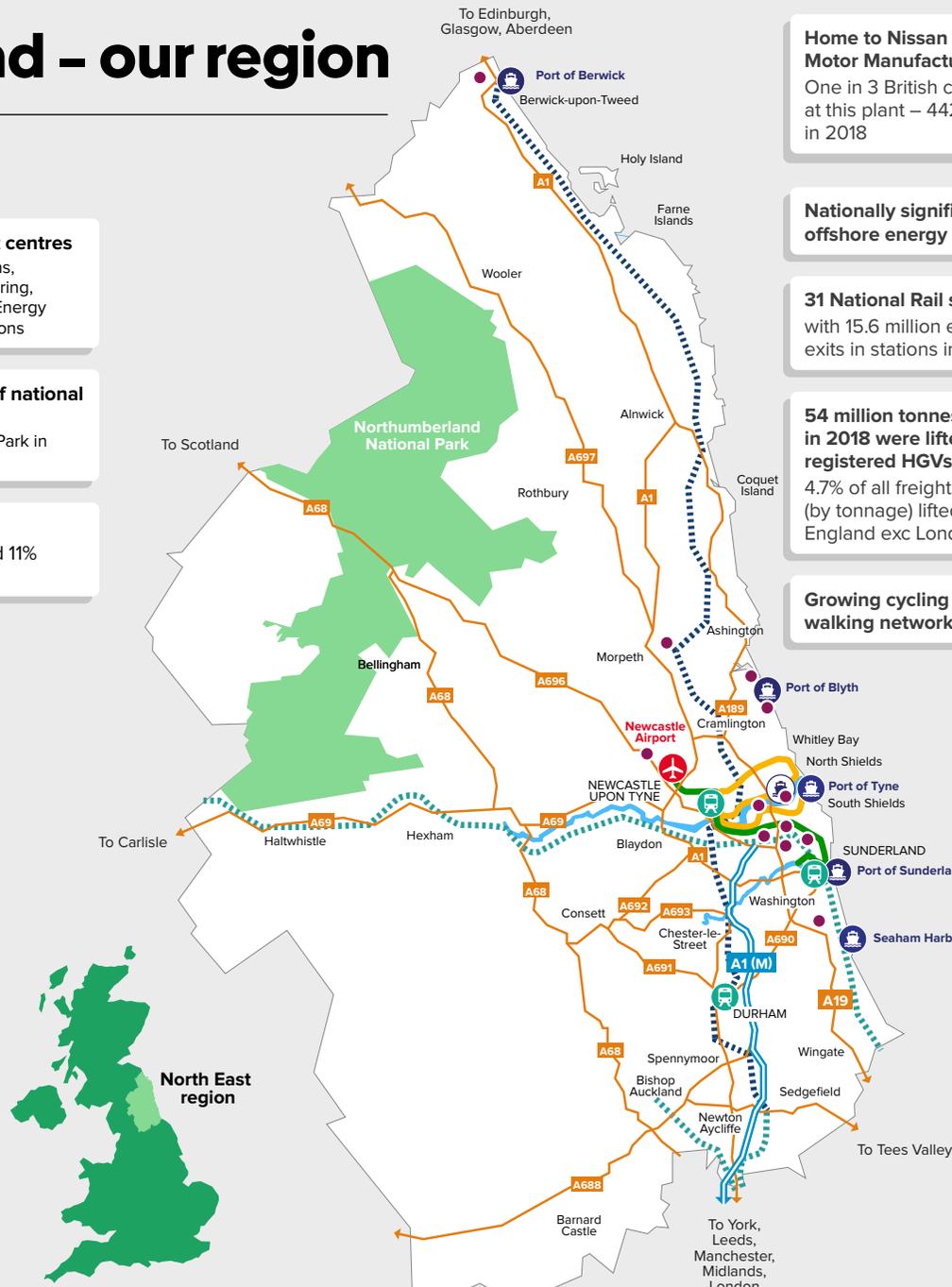
Stellium Data Centres, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside

## Four universities

80,000 students, 17,000 international

## Key

-  Ports
-  Port of Tyne – Ferry Terminal
-  Newcastle International Airport
-  Tyne and Wear Metro
-  Railway Line
-  East Coast Main Line
-  Motorway
-  Major Road Network
-  Enterprise Zones



# Our call to action

## Vision and objectives

### What is our vision?

Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East

### What are our objectives?



Carbon neutral North East  
Overcoming inequality and grow our economy



Healthier North East  
Appealing sustainable public transport choices



Safe, secure network



## Vision and objectives

### What options might we consider to deliver our vision and objectives?

- Encouraging people to make journeys by sustainable means.
- Encouraging active travel through behaviour change initiatives.
- Delivering affordable services.
- Expanding the reach of the active travel, public transport and road networks.
- Reducing adverse environmental effects.
- Reducing accidents.
- Increasing speed, frequency and reliability of the public transport network and highways.
- Reducing severance of major infrastructure projects.
- Understanding demand associated with future travel scenarios.
- Working with partners to connect people and places to the wider North, UK and internationally.



## How we will monitor success? Our Key Performance Indicators

### What options might we consider to deliver our vision and objectives?

- Increase sustainable transport mode share.
- Increase accessibility of public transport.
- Improve greener journeys by reducing carbon output per capita.
- Increase the take up of ULEVs.
- Improve Air Quality.
- Improve Network Performance.
- Managing Motor Vehicle Mileage.
- Improving Road Safety.



## Outcomes we can achieve

### What options might we consider to deliver our vision and objectives?

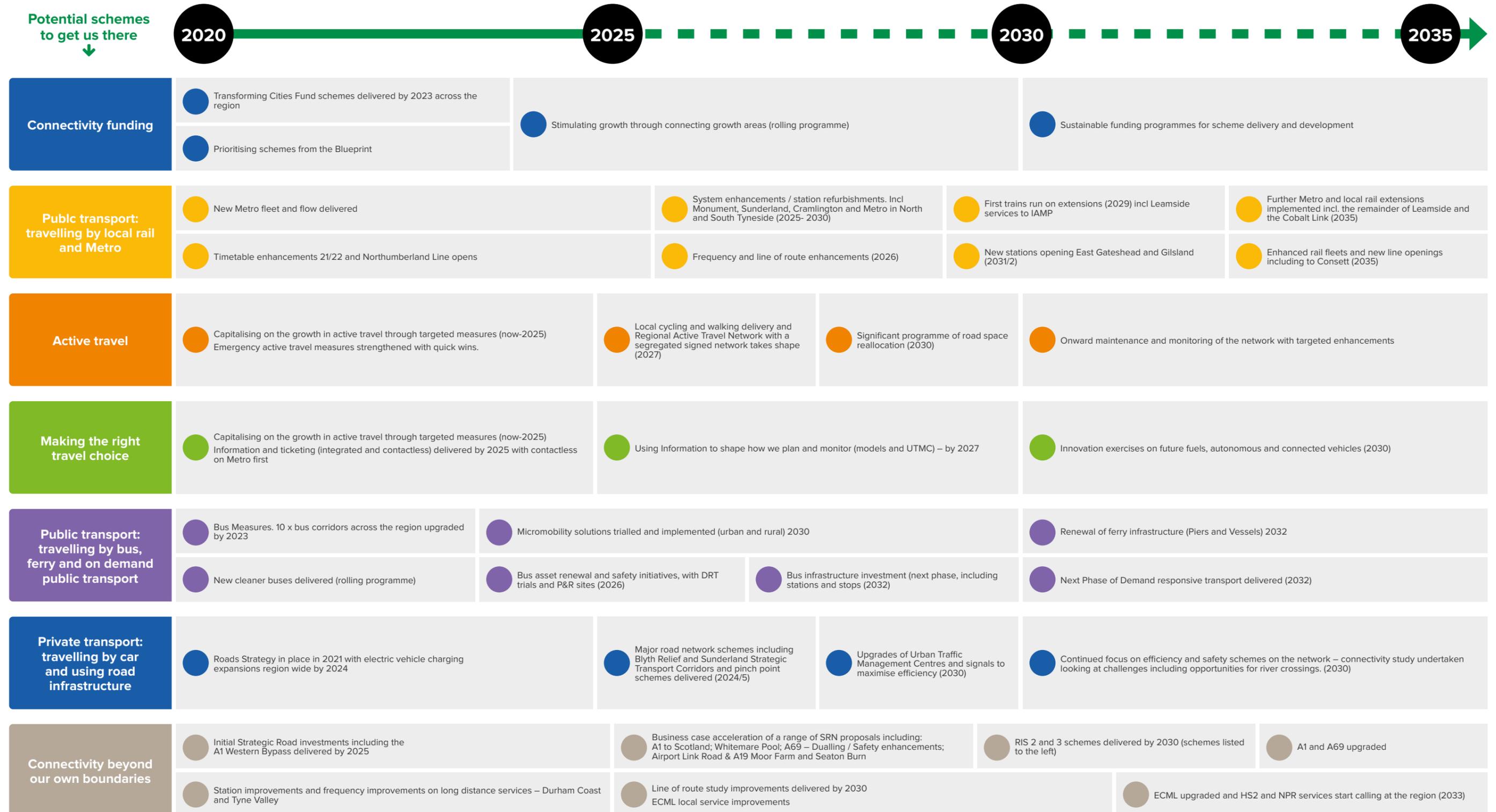
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- Direct job opportunities in the transport and infrastructure sectors.
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# Our call to action- timeline (strategic interventions)

We have an ambitious but deliverable timeline shown below which will lead us towards delivering our vision of a Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East and enable us to meet our objectives.

This timeline of interventions demonstrates the dates we can achieve and informs our development and delivery planning. This is subsequently expanded through the delivery maps on pages 51-54.

This programme is live and will be regularly updated through changes to the Implementation Plan which will be developed to accompany the final plan in March 2021.



**We have the ambition, drive and knowledge needed to improve regional transport dramatically over the coming years. We'd welcome your feedback as we look to the future for the North East.**

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**Transport North East**