

Conservative Transport News



Conservative Transport Group

A Special Interest Group of the Conservative Party

Founded in 1992 by Dr Robert Kinghorn

Newsletter: Conference October 2021

4



Transport: where the Conservatives have the better moves

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the article authors and not necessarily those of the Conservative Party or the Conservative Transport Group.

Chairman's Chat

Despite the restrictions of the national emergency the Transport Group has been very active this year. The group has been holding committee meetings on Zoom every month. And during the meetings the group has discussed many of the key issues facing the U.K. in the Transport area.

Also this year the Transport Group has been continuing carrying out research into transport matters. This year the group made links with the civil engineering department of Loughborough University. The University has been receiving research papers written by the Transport Group.

The Transport Group has been continuing discussing the HS2 railway project and the Northern Power House project. The group has taken a great interest in these matters for some time. In 2019 members of the Transport Group attended an All - Party Conference on the Northern Power House in Leeds.

Perhaps the most important issue at the time is lorry transport. Recently the Transport Group made links with LOGISTICS U.K. who represent the lorry transport industry.

The Transport Group this year has been active looking at all the major issues in U.K transport. The group will do much more when normality resumes.

Immediate Past Chairman's Chat

Transport post-Covid on the journey to 'Net Zero Carbon 2050'

By Chris Belk (VP & Immediate Past Chairman)

UK transport should efficiently provide all the critical and much of the desirable mobility services for the public and for businesses. Historically the record has been reasonably successful but the UK and the world at large is at the beginning of a period of rapid in-depth societal changes.

Living in a post-Covid world committed to achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2050 whilst maintaining the quality of life we've come to expect (or better) is going to demand big changes most of which will require the support of major changes in the provision of 'transport services'.

In this introductory article let's look at what has already happened and what is already on the horizon

First the working from home (WfH) revolution. A change in this direction was evolving but Covid converted this to a revolution which is unlikely to be fully reversed. The general view is that a form of hybrid working will dominate (maybe 2 or 3 days a week at home or locally). This will substantially reduce the demand for both short and long-distance commuting

Next there is the increasing worldwide interest in the progressive restructuring major cities into a series of locally interconnected '20-minute Neighbourhoods' (aka 15-minute Cities) accelerating as a result of the WfH way of life. Each Neighbourhood becomes a thriving social community with local housing, local business hubs, all essential services and a wide range of social activities (restaurants and local entertainment) almost all within 20 minute

walking or cycling for all able bodied inhabitants. On-line mobility assistance for the disabled becomes freely available.

Paris is well advanced in this urban restructuring process as is Melbourne and several other large world cities. The process is being facilitated by city centre land becoming available for re-development due to retailers closing city centre stores, the downsizing of large city centre office complexes and a big reduction in car parking space provision as car ownership progressively declines for a variety of interconnected reasons (not least the expense of electric cars and which still produce health damaging Particulate Matter (PM) from tyre, road and brake abrasion). If you want a quick introduction to '20-minute Neighbourhoods' go to the 'TED Talk' web site and listen to Carlos Moreno who was and still is a process leader https://www.ted.com/talks/carlos_moreno_the_15_minute_city#t-2306 .

Amongst other things this urban restructuring process creates the opportunity to radically address the very large UK housing shortages and, in particular, social housing which not only needs to be affordable but also must (self-evidently) not be car dependent

And finally the really big one - Namely how to implement all the necessary changes in everyone's daily life that are/will be necessary in order for the UK to become 'Net Carbon Zero' by 2050.

Clearly all the above changes will radically affect the provision of public 'mobility services' aka 'Transport'. Hopefully the CTG can play a constructive part.

TRANSPORT OVERVIEW

Membership News

Our year end is December 31 2021. Subscriptions are £15 per individual per calendar year. Subscriptions from new members paid from October 01 will be allocated to the next calendar year.

TRANSPORT NEWS

Air News



International Air Transport Association

IATA data confirms that 2020 was the worst year on record for the airline industry. The 1.8 bn passengers then compares with 4.5 bn in 2019, a fall of 60.2%. International demand fell by 75.6% while domestic demand fell by 48.8%. Freight did better because falls due to COVID were offset by rises in vaccines, PPE and other COVID requirements.

European Winter Airport Slots

For winter 2021 the European Commission has decided to set a 50% slot usage threshold. This means that, between November 2021 and April 2022 airlines operating at slot-regulated hubs must use at least half their slot allocation or lose part of it. IATA (Willie Walsh) has criticised this action and argued that the usage threshold should be lower or more flexible.

Loganair

The UK's largest regional airline is adding to its network services between Norwich and Exeter (formerly Flybe) and Aberdeen and Dublin (formerly Stobart Air). They will be operated with Embraer ERJ145s.

JetBlue

JetBlue began transatlantic services, from New York /JFK to Heathrow in August, using A321LRs. Flights to Gatwick are due in September 2021 whilst flights from Boston/Logan are scheduled for in September 2022.

Manchester

Manchester Airport Terminal 2 opened in July. Four years in construction, it forms the centrepiece of MAN-TP, the Manchester Airport Transformation Programme. Services from it have since been operated by Jet2com, TUI, Singapore Airlines, Etihad, Qatar, Brussels Airlines, AirBaltic, Ethiopian, Aegean, Eurowings and PIA. The airfield works contractor was Galliford Try.

Cork

Cork Runway 16/34 is to be upgraded between September 13th and November 22nd. The works are necessary to ensure the main airstrip at Southern Ireland's largest airport at least meets international regulations.

Berlin

Monthly passenger numbers at Berlin Brandenburg exceeded 1 million for the first time this July. Passenger load factors averaged 75%. The 11,600 flight movements at Brandenburg in July 2021 compares with 25,700 at Schonefeld and Tegel in July 2019.

Perth (Australia)

Perth Airport has introduced "animal relief" areas to help travellers who are dependent on support animals. See the airport's Access and Inclusion Customer Reference Group for more information.

Maritime & Waterways News



Ever Given

The 20,000TEU/220,940gt container ship which blocked the Suez Canal for six days in March 2021

has been drydocked in Asia. Before going off hire and sailing for Asia on 5th August it had discharged cargo at Rotterdam and Felixstowe. It is owned by Evergreen Marine of Taiwan and flagged Panama.

Dual-Fuel Ships

China's CIMC Raffles will build six dual fuel ships for Wallenius Marine with four being chartered to Volkswagen. They will be of 7,000 Car Equivalent Units and powered by 13,300 kw on LNG. Ten similar are being built for Singapore's Eastern Pacific Shipping and Japan's NYK Line.

Eastern Pacific has also ordered three 210,000dwt bulk carriers to run on MAN B&W engine capable of running on LNG.

At 90,000 cu m the Bellavista Explorer, delivered by Hyundai to a Chinese lessor, is the largest LPG carrier. It has a range of 19,700 miles before refuelling.

China's Jiangnan yard is currently building five LNG-powered container ships of 15,254TEU for CMA CGM.

Hyundai is also building six Very Large Crude Carriers for Frontline Ltd of Bermuda. They have been designed to operate on various fuels, including biofuel and could be converted to run on ammonia.

Fully Electric Ferry

The ferry, Sandoy, delivered to Brevik Fergeselskap of Norway, is powered entirely by batteries (1,300kwh). Its capacity of 98 passengers and 16 cars. Recharging is automatic when docked.

E-flexers

Brittany Ferries has ordered two more E-flexer ships from the Jinling Weihai yard where two are currently building. They will use a combination of LNG and battery power and shore power when in port.

Hapag-Lloyd

The German container ship operator has sold five 3,237TEU vessels formerly of CP Ships to London based Lomar Shipping. Built in China in 2002/3 for service to Central America they were among the largest container ships in the world at the time. Meanwhile Hapag-Lloyd has ordered twelve 23,500TEU vessels from Daewoo Shipbuilding. These will be powered by the new MAN B&W 11cyl dual fuel engine.

COSCO

China's COSCO has ordered ten 14,092TEU container ships from their associate, COSCO Shipping Heavy Industry. COSCO also has another twelve 23,000TEU ships on order from other COSCO yards, all for delivery in December 2023 to September 2024.

Felixstowe

Harwich Harbour and its approaches are to be deepened. This will enable the latest Ultra Large Container Ships to access the harbour fully loaded and berth at Felixstowe, the UK's busiest container port. The work is scheduled to take 18 months.

Rail & Tram News



Much has happened to the railway in the last year. The coronavirus epidemic lockdowns decimated rail travel during 2020. The Government deserve our praise for the way they took over financial responsibility for rail services so that essential workers could get to work. But their performances in getting people back to using rail left a lot to be desired. Rail passenger levels are moving back to pre-Covid levels, but it is very likely that commuting by rail will be reduced as people will continue to work at home. With leisure travel having been greatly restricted in the last year, some expect the optional leisure may increase. However, rail operators will need to raise their product quality to enjoy the full rewards of potential demand.

At the time of writing, everyone is waiting for the publication of the Integrated Rail Plan, which will presumably show how HS2 and Northern Powerhouse rail will combine. In this context the Government has dropped a very large hint that the Eastern arm of HS2 may be dropped. This has provoked a large response from local Government and business leaders all the way from Birmingham to Leeds to ask that 'HS2 is completed in full'. Put bluntly, the eastern arm of HS2 is very badly designed and needs to be changed. A parkway station at Toton will not attract investment in Nottingham or Derby and connecting Toton to Nottingham and Derby will add congestion to the very busy lines through Trent.

In the light of changing travel patterns post the pandemic, the role of HS2, and how it integrates with the full rail network will need to be carefully re-examined. There is little wisdom in running London to Newcastle trains via HS2 and seems only to be included by HS2 Ltd. to boost the business to cost ratio on the HS2 route. In the longer term upgrading the capacity and speed of the East Coast main line will deliver much better value. Leeds to London will also be better served by the ECML. London to Sheffield will be marginally faster than HS2 plans with a link from HS2 East into Derby from the south and using existing train paths on classic lines between Derby and Sheffield (at much less cost). London to Nottingham can also be served via extending HS2 East as far as East Midlands Parkway as suggested by the NIC.

Large savings on HS2 could also be possible by cutting out the tunnelled route under Manchester and the parkway station near the airport. The plan to route Liverpool to Manchester trains via the HS2 route into Manchester has not been properly evaluated and would not pass any competent business case compared to a straight route between the cities. HS2 trains could access Manchester from the west via the new Liverpool to Manchester line. The potential savings could be large, but maybe it is too late to change.

Despite the difficulties during the pandemic, air travel is not going to go away and people are going to want convenient rail access to airports. Airport rail links will be needed even more to save the environment.

The fare structure for rail travel will need very strong leadership from the top. Rail competes with the car for shorter distances so needs a fare structure that is easy to use. Pay-as-you-go fares applied digitally would seem a way forward. On long distances, rail competes with air which is very good at offering low price tickets if you travel when convenient for the airlines. Integrating both commercially different fare offerings into a railway will be a challenge that has to be taken.

We all await the Integrated Rail Plan from the Government. We cannot expect it to be perfect, but we do expect that the new Great British Railways management will have full authority to adapt it as needed.

Graham Nalty

Bicycle & Motorcycle News



Making cycling and walking the natural choice

The biggest barrier to cycling and walking in the UK is that our streets and communities are not designed to make active travel feel safe and easy.

When we design streets in our communities that are cycle-friendly, we help to develop healthier and happier places. But delivering this requires investment to build separated cycle lanes and create an environment where people feel that it's safe and pleasant to cycle.

In all of the nations and every region across the UK, we need to see more money dedicated to cycling, to enable local authorities to plan and then build networks of high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure.

Why design streets for cycling

The benefits of designing our streets for cycling are enormous. By making it feel safer and easier to cycle and walk we improve air quality and public health, help to address climate change, and bring customers back to the high street. What's more, it's widely supported by the public.

The Government in Whitehall promised to double levels of cycling by 2025, and governments across the UK have put forward strategies, plans and proposals to increase active travel. But to achieve those targets, and make cycling the natural form of transport requires a significant increase in funding.

That's why we campaign across the UK for more money for cycling, for streets that are designed for active travel and for high quality cycling and walking infrastructure.

You can help to shape the kind of places you want to live, work and move around in. Make sure your voice is heard and support our campaigning to transform our streets.

Road News



MOVING TIMBER

“We couldn’t be happier with our new DAF,” explains Sam Mayor, Director of NWTT. “We’ve been really well served by our existing DAF fleet, so when the time came to specify a brand-new vehicle, we knew we wanted a DAF. By ordering new, it has allowed us to tailor the truck specifically to our needs. DAF’s tridem set-up,” adds Sam, “is helping to make us more efficient. By working with DAF, Forshaw Engineering and Hiab on the truck, body and crane, we’ve created an exacting specification. The service we’ve received from all three companies has been excellent and our local DAF dealer, Lancashire DAF, was there to support us throughout the whole purchasing process.

LARGER AND GREENER GOODS VEHICLES SET FOR OUR ROADS?

A trial of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) has found greener, longer goods vehicles to be safer, more economical and better for the environment.

These longer lorries could be rolled out to cut emissions on Britain's roads as early as next year. This news follows a nine year trial and public consultation. Government also plans to launch a trial of heavier, 48 tonne freight vehicles to help shift more cargo from road-only journeys onto rail.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has recently published its response to its consultation on the introduction of longer semi-trailers (LSTs) for which the majority of residents were in favour of their use. It follows the nine year trial of the vehicles (which can be up to 15.65 metres in length) that found them to be safer, more economical and better for the environment.

It is estimated LSTs could remove up to one-in-eight freight journeys by carrying the same amount of cargo in fewer lorries. This would support the Government's Transport Decarbonisation plan by reducing mileage, congestion and carbon emissions.

The announcement about steps to reduce the impact of the haulage sector on the environment comes as the UK prepares to host COP26 in Glasgow this November. In the words of Transport Secretary Grant Shapps: "This government is committed to fighting climate change and decarbonising our transport network and we are working at pace to achieve net zero by 2050".

Some 57% of those surveyed in the government consultations felt LSTs should be in general circulation and could see their positive effects. The nine year trial saw a reduction in the number of lorries making journeys across the country with an average 8% reduction in miles covered by freight as well as a 6.2% reduction in pollutants expelled. It also found the use of LSTs reduced the number of road traffic collisions because fewer journeys were being made.

The Government will also launch a separate trial using heavier than normal 48 tonne lorries. These lorries will be able to transport heavier containers directly to and from rail depots so that goods can be transported across the country by train.

Currently the 44 tonne maximum weight of a lorry makes it difficult to convey heavier goods to rail depots, meaning goods are dispersed between more lorries to be taken to their end destination by road. Taking more goods in heavier trucks to rail depots to be transported by train will help reduce congestion across the country and help reduce emissions.

The trial would ensure these heavier Lorries are used only on specific routes and would limit their use to a maximum journey length.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INDUSTRY CALLS FOR DECARBONISATION PLANS BEFORE BANS

New analysis reveals that due to a lack of clear diesel replacement technology just 0.2% of HGVs on the road are alternatively fuelled (the same proportion as cars in 2007). One in 38 new vans registered in 2021 is pure electric, compared to 1 in 12 cars. Government support for infrastructure technological development and long-term market transition will be needed to give industry the clarity to encourage further investment in fossil fuel-free commercial vehicles.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) has called on government to work with industry to develop a plan that facilitates the transition to zero emission HGVs before it commits to an end of sale date for conventionally fuelled trucks.

All of Europe's major truck manufacturers have agreed that new HGVs will be fossil fuel-free by 2040 and are investing £billions in new power transmissions to replace diesel, the most commonly used HGV fuel. However, at present, there is no clear technology that can provide full zero emissions operations for all weights and uses of HGVs.

Battery electric van usage, meanwhile, reached 0.3% in 2020 – the same proportion as cars in 2019. Uptake rates for electric vans have continued to grow rapidly reflecting how battery power can effectively replace fossil fuels in this vehicle as in cars though just 2.6% of new vans registered between January and June this year were battery electric vehicles compared to 8.2% for cars.

Established manufacturers have already brought a range of fossil fuel-free HGVs and vans to market, with several new manufacturers entering the market. With new technology comes new opportunities and government needs offer the industry appropriate support to ensure objectives are achieved and the full benefits gained of creating a strong domestic market.

Infrastructure, the SMMT argues, is acting as one of the biggest barriers to uptake. The UK needs a dedicated public HGV charging network and needs it rolling out urgently. It has been forecast that by 2030 the UK will need 8,200 public HGV charging points. (Alternative technological solutions, e.g. hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, face an even tougher challenge with only 11 refuelling locations across the country.)

Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive, has said that the industry is committed to fossil-free fuel but needs government support to achieve its objective. “Plans before bans is the key. The new models are there, with many more coming, but without investment in incentives and infrastructure the commercial vehicle sector will struggle to meet our shared ambition to reach net zero”.

MORE TO THE POINT...

- The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) wants the Government to set up a road users consultative group to ask car, van and PTW (powered two wheeler) users their views. Drivers, they argue, should decide for themselves how to use Britain's roads.
- Ministers are under pressure to cut the drink-driving limit. The ABD says such demands are unsupported by the evidence. It quotes the Institute for Alcohol Studies (IAS) review of Scotland's lowering of the BAC (blood alcohol content) which argues the lowering of the limit there from 0.08% to 0.05% “had no impact on any type of road accident”. Cheers!
- Britain's car factories are producing their lowest number of vehicles since the 1956 Suez crisis. A global shortage of microchips, the “pingdemic” and summer holiday shutdowns meant only 53,000 cars were produced in July (more than a quarter hybrid or electric). On a rolling annual basis the UK is now producing just over 1 million cars a year – compared with the 2 million forecast before leaving the EU. Commercial vehicle output, on the other hand, has now increased for the fifth consecutive month though it remains 23.9% below the five year average – according to the SMMT.
- A study by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change think tank argues a new system of road pricing should be introduced within five years to prevent traffic gridlock and a £30bn hole in public finances. It argues government will need to act with “real urgency to create an alternative to fuel duty revenues which will dry up as motorists shift to electric cars”. The suggestion is that charges to drive on particular roads should rise and fall at different times of the day depending on congestion levels and the size of vehicle. Government currently collects £40bn+ in vehicle taxes (mostly fuel duty); pure electric cars pay no fuel duty or VED.
- A shortage of (100,000?) HGV drivers is responsible for empty supermarket shelves, delayed GP flu jabs and could even lead to the cancellation of Christmas, it

has been suggested. Government is being urged to ease post-Brexit immigration rules. It is resisting industry demands (e.g. from the British Retail Consortium) to allow more EU drivers into the country, arguing the answer is to train (and pay) more UK drivers to fill the gap. The shortages are expected to continue for months and raise prices for consumers. Government also has plans to streamline driver testing to help avert a supply chain crisis at Christmas.

- Pumps at petrol stations up and down the country now serve greener E10 petrol – which could cut emissions by the equivalent of taking 350,000 cars off the road each year. (E5 petrol remains available for the 5% of older vehicles which are not compatible.) Blended with up to 10% renewable ethanol and made up of materials such as slow-grade grains, sugars and waste wood E110 is greener than existing petrol helping cut transport CO2 emissions by 750,000 tonnes a year. The move should particularly help the north-east economy with its increased production of biofuels at bioethanol plants there.
- Government celebrated World EV (electric vehicle) day by encouraging drivers to go electric. It has produced a new (free) app (EV8 switch) backed by £2.7m of UK Space Agency funding which shows the cost benefit of making the switch. Additional support is also to be given to small businesses and renters to install EV chargepoints – helping create 40,000 UK jobs by 2030? As the UK prepares to host the COP26 climate summit the Government is working with industry to provide the tools and practical advice drivers need to go electric.
- The Go-Ahead Group plans to spend £250m annually with small businesses across all of its UK bus and rail operating companies starting next year. A range of initiatives is planned including a new SME Champion Group and the publication of a simple “how to do business with Go-Ahead” guide. Go-Ahead currently works with more than 3,200 SMEs which represent 75% of the company’s suppliers and one-third of their infrastructure spend (£247m) was focused on SMEs in 2020. The Group plans to spend an extra £115m and bring in one hundred new SME suppliers by end 2023.
- Liverpool City Region has ordered 20 zero emission hydrogen double deck buses from Alexander Denis Ltd (ADL) following on a competitive tendering process. It is the first order for ADL’s H2.0 second generation hydrogen platform which has been designed to be more energy efficient to cover greater distances between refuelling. The 2.0 ADL Enviro 400FCEV buses are being directly purchased through the Liverpool City Region’s Transforming Cities Fund and will be owned by the people of the city. They will serve, initially, the city’s busiest route, the 10A between St. Helen’s and Liverpool city centre.
- Stagecoach has launched a new long-term sustainability strategy, part of its plan to become a carbon-neutral business by 2050. “Driving Net Zero: Better Places to Live and Work” sets out plans to leverage the power of public transport to address climate change, support post-covid recovery and boost prosperity of employees and communities across the UK. It will see investment in new zero-emissions fleets and other green technologies over the next fifteen years to reduce the impact of the company’s operations on the planet as well as initiatives to cut waste, boost recycling and conserve water. Stagecoach is aiming to have a zero emission UK bus fleet by 2035.
- The noise from living next to a busy road (or railway) could raise the risk of dementia research suggests. Researchers at the University of Southern Denmark

have found that exposure to rail or road traffic sounds was linked to an increase in the risk of dementia by more than a quarter. After air pollution, transport noise is considered the second worst environmental risk factor for public health in Europe.

Bus, Coach & Taxi News

Flying Taxis?

Airbus has unveiled its new all-electric next-generation CityAirBus. The company hopes to have the flying taxis in our skies by 2025. The zero-emissions aircraft is capable of running autonomously but the taxis will be piloted in the initial stages.

£226 million package to support vital bus services

Government funding to maintain and improve bus services as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and passenger numbers start to return to pre-pandemic levels.

From: [Department for Transport](#) and [Baroness Vere of Norbiton](#) – Published 6 July 2021



- funding will maintain bus services as passengers begin to return in higher numbers in the months following lifting of restrictions
- Department for Transport also announces 35 expressions of interest for share of first tranche of £120 million to roll out zero emission buses across England
- both packages come as part of government drive to build back greener from the pandemic

Bus operators across the country will benefit from £226.5 million in government funding to help ensure they continue to run vital services as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, Roads Minister Baroness Vere has announced today (6 July 2021).

The funding will run from September 2021 to April 2022 and will support operators across England, outside of London, cementing the government's commitment to level up transport links as passenger numbers begin to return to pre-pandemic levels.

It comes as the Department for Transport also announces it has received 35 Expression of Interest applications for the [Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas \(ZEBRA\) scheme](#), which

gives local transport authorities the opportunity to compete for a share of £120 million to support the rollout of zero emission buses across England.

Both schemes are part of the government's drive to build back better and greener from the pandemic, as the UK prepares to host [COP26](#) and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

Buses are the lifeblood of our communities, helping us get to work, school and to see friends and family.

The recovery funding will ensure vital services continue to run by supporting operators in those initial months, as restrictions are lifted and passengers begin to return in higher numbers.

And as we build back greener from the pandemic, the £120 million to roll out zero emission buses will have a profoundly positive effect on our towns and cities, lowering emissions, improving air quality and reducing noise pollution.

The recovery funding announced today will follow the current emergency support package, which is due to end next month after providing more than £1 billion to keep bus services running throughout the pandemic - and will be provided on a formula basis, ensuring the sector can begin to return to commerciality. The funding will be the final tranche of COVID-19-related support provided to the sector.

In addition to helping maintain services, recovery funding will support the key aims of the [National Bus Strategy](#) of encouraging local authorities and operators to work together to deliver better bus services.

The [ZEBRA fund](#) was launched in March this year with local transport authorities able to apply under either a fast track or standard process.

The following local transport authorities have been selected under the fast track process to progress to the next stage of the competition:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Kent County Council
- Leicester City Council
- Milton Keynes Borough Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- West Midlands Combined Authority

The 6 shortlisted authorities will now develop business cases for investment, with the government awarding the first tranche of funding from the ZEBRA scheme to authorities that produce the strongest business cases.

More local transport authorities will be announced as being selected to produce business cases under the standard process in due course.

The ZEBRA funding comes from the wider £3 billion fund announced by the government to improve bus services in our national bus strategy, published on 15 March 2021.

Other News

TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH

Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham said: “Major decisions are looming which will have a massive bearing on life in the North of England for the rest of this century.

“At such a crucial moment, it is important that the North comes together as one and makes the case for the investment needed to build an integrated, affordable, 21st century public transport system.

“This conference gives us the chance to do just that and get the voice of the North heard clearly in Whitehall. The country will not be levelled up until people here can benefit from public transport of the same quality, at the same cost, as London. They have had to put up with over-priced, second-class services for far too long and now deserve to see real change.”

Transport for the North Chief Executive Martin Tugwell said: “We’re delighted to be holding Transport for the North’s third annual conference, setting out how our ambitious vision to boost opportunities for our region’s people and businesses can be brought to life through investment in our transport networks.

“It’s so exciting to be bringing local political and business leaders together in one room, alongside government representatives and industry experts, to discuss how we can work together under the banner of levelling up.

“The panel sessions will showcase the need for change and demonstrate the practical, and innovative, plans and projects that we have set out to transform connectivity and overcome the decades of underinvestment that the North has dealt with. Our speakers bring to the conversation a wealth of insight, experience and data, which underpin our collaborative, strategic goals and have informed the many schemes and initiatives we now need to get on and deliver with Government backing.

“They’ll be looking at everything from post-pandemic economic recovery and encouraging people to return to public transport, to decarbonising our transport network and our future travel needs.”

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