



Our Shared Vision for the East Midlands





“The East Midlands has a strong track record in delivering high levels of housing and employment growth in the national interest. But with better connectivity we could so much more. The eight strategic priorities we have highlighted will unlock growth across the region and allow our towns and cities to thrive. Delivery will also contribute to increasing the level of national spending on transport in the East Midlands towards the UK average.”

SIR PETER SOULSBY
CHAIR OF TRANSPORT FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS



“At Midlands Connect we are committed to working closely with TfEM to help deliver growth opportunities and better connections. Investment in this region’s transport will have a remarkable benefit for the whole country and create a positive ripple effect to boost the development of industry, skills and infrastructure. Taking forward these joint priorities will help lay the groundwork for improved connectivity across the Midland, unlocking the potential of major economic hubs such as the EmDevCo and the two Freeports – opening the region’s businesses to the world.”

SIR JOHN PEACE
CHAIRMAN OF MIDLANDS CONNECT



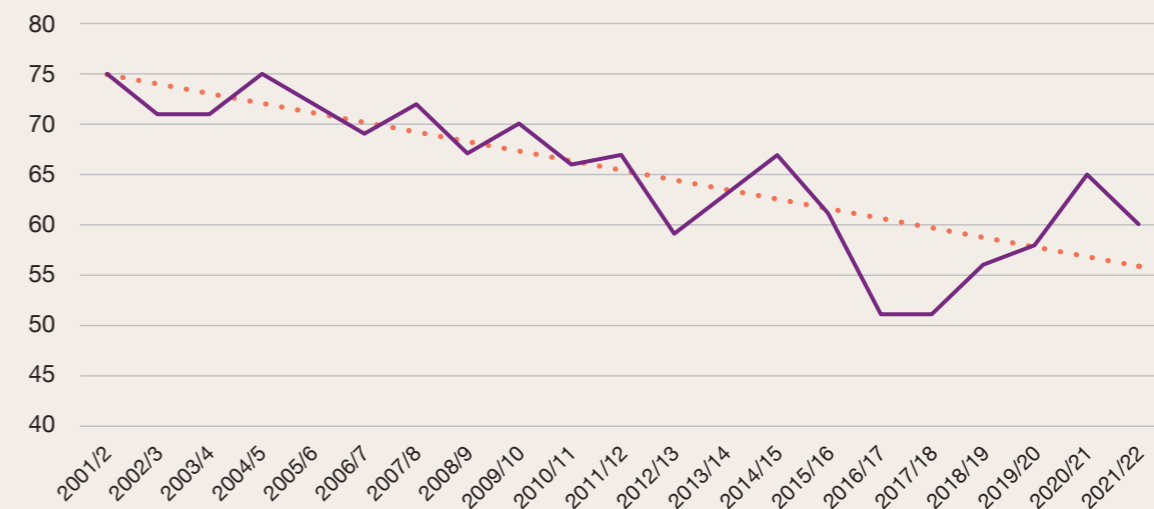
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TfEM & Midlands Connect have a shared vision for the rollout of electric vehicle charging points and alternative fuels such as hydrogen. We are also working together to promote eight key strategic investment priorities that will contribute to the Government’s ‘Levelling Up’ and ‘net zero’ commitments and help to address the historic underfunding of the East Midlands:

- ▶ Midland Main Line Electrification
- ▶ Nottingham-Leicester-Coventry Rail Connectivity
- ▶ Midlands-Leeds & North East Rail Connectivity
- ▶ A46 Growth Corridor & Newark
- ▶ A50/A500 Growth Corridor
- ▶ A5 Growth Corridor
- ▶ Improving Safety & Reliability on the A1
- ▶ M1 Junction 24 & Surrounding Area

Transport spend per capita in the East Midlands

100 = UK Average (& trend)



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-expenditure-statistical-analyses-2023> and previous releases.



Midland Main Line Electrification (MMLe)

Electrification of the Midland Main Line will reduce the running costs of the railway, improve reliability and punctuality, reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality. Electrification will complement exciting proposals to regenerate Leicester Midland Station led by the City Council and similar plans for Derby, Nottingham and Chesterfield stations which are being developed by the East Midlands Development Company.

There is also a major industry opportunity to use the MMLe project to develop a permanent skilled electrification workforce and deploy new technology to minimise costs and avoid rebuilding bridges and tunnels. This will be particularly important through Derbyshire, where the integrity of the ‘Stephenson Bridges’ is key to maintaining the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site designation.

The MML remains the only mainline route not to be fully electrified. After pausing the project in 2015 and then cancelling it in 2017, the Government’s 2021 Integrated Rail Plan committed to electrifying the MML to Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield by the early 2030s. This will enable EMR’s new Aurora Class intercity trains to run in electric mode when the wires south of Bedford are upgraded from 100mph to 125mph.

TfEM has published a comprehensive assessment of the wider benefits of MMLe titled *The Future’s Electric!*

Nottingham-Leicester-Coventry Rail Connectivity

Leicester and Coventry are two important and rapidly growing Midlands cities - just 25 miles apart - and without a direct rail connection. Passengers from Leicester and Nottingham must get off one train at Nuneaton, change platforms and board another, resulting in a slow, inconvenient service. Because of this, just 3% of trips between Coventry and Leicester are made by rail, compared to 30% of trips between Coventry and Birmingham.

In May 2021, Midlands Connect published an initial business case for improvements at Nuneaton, creating space for services to pass through the station area, alongside plans to improve line speed along the route. Journey times would be cut significantly. Trips from Coventry to Leicester would fall from 54 to 38 minutes, with trips from Coventry to Nottingham down to 70 minutes from 108 minutes.

Midlands Connect is currently updating the Strategic Outline Business Case with new analysis and growth assumptions post-Network North, and plan to resubmit this to government during 2024. We will continue to raise the profile of the project politically in light of the upcoming general election.

Further development and delivery will now require investment from the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP), which has yet to be agreed by the Government.

Midlands-Leeds & North East Rail Connectivity

The publication of Network North confirmed the cancellation of HS2 to the East Midlands and the potential for further extensions to Leeds and the North East.

However, the strategic need to improve rail connectivity along the route of the former Eastern Leg of HS2 – a corridor comprising 13 million people, six million jobs and 20% of the UK’s GDP – remains.

TfEM is working with Network Rail and Midlands Connect to understand the most effective package of interventions, along with a credible delivery strategy, making the most of existing and planned infrastructure including the Midlands Rail Hub and the new Birmingham Curzon Street Station.

Improved rail connectivity between the East and West Midlands, Yorkshire and the North East will bring people and businesses closer together, improve supply chains through additional rail freight capacity and contribute to the delivery of the Government’s ‘Levelling Up Missions’.

These economic benefits, alongside improved reliability, will make rail travel more attractive to passengers and industry, also helping to deliver the Government’s ‘net zero’ commitments.



A46 Growth Corridor & Newark

The A46 forms a nationally significant trade route linking the Humber and East Midlands Freeports with Bristol, identified by Midlands Connect as the ‘Trans-Midland Trade Corridor’. Delivery of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass remains TfEM’s top strategic road priority. The A46 around Newark from Farndon to the interchange with the A1 and A17 has been a ‘bottleneck’ for many years, which has caused congestion, pollution and safety issues.

National Highways have identified a preferred route for enhancement to the A46 around Newark, including improving the junctions with the A1 and A17, which will enable ambitious plans for growth and development in and around Newark to be fully realised, including the recently agreed ‘Town Deal’. It would also improve connectivity to the Lincolnshire Food Hub to support the ‘Levelling Up’ agenda across the County. But, delivery funding has yet to be agreed by the Government.

Further south, Midlands Connect has also prioritised the A46 around Syston for investment in RIS3 to ease congestion and help support sustainable growth to the north of Leicester. There are also capacity and safety issues between M1 Junction 21 and 21a.

Rail services between Lincoln and Nottingham are infrequent and slow and do not offer an attractive alternative to the car. The IRP raised the prospect of replacing the ‘enduring constraint’ of the ‘flat crossing’ at Newark between the Lincoln-Nottingham Line and the ECML (also enabled by the A46 improvement), which would allow for more regional services. In the shorter term, there is an opportunity to raise the line speed from 50mph to 75mph by enhancing planned re-signalling, which would make better use of rolling stock (including the Lincoln-London Azuma trains) and help make rail travel more competitive.



A50/A500 Corridor

Running from Derby to Stoke, this 56-mile corridor is home to around a million people and half a million jobs, many in globally significant firms like Toyota, JCB, Rolls Royce and Alstrom. However, at several pinch points, the A50/A500 corridor is slow and unreliable, with average rush hour speeds below 20mph.

Improving transport reliability and shortening journey times will open job opportunities to a wider pool of skilled workers and give businesses more reliable access suppliers and international markets. Access to the A50 is also crucial to unlocking East Midlands Intermodal Park adjacent to Toyota's manufacturing facility, one of the three key sites in the East Midlands Freeport proposition.

Working with partners, Midlands Connect has developed a phased programme of interventions along the route, which, if delivered, will provide the capacity, resilience and reliability required to unlock sustainable growth, increase productivity and support the transition to electric and hybrid vehicles.

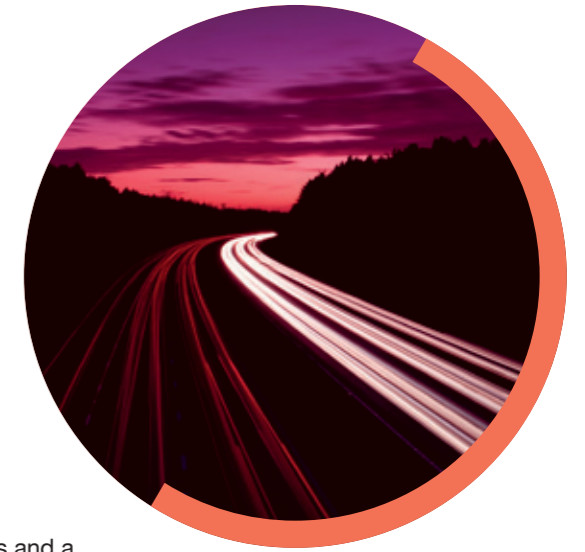
Consistent with Network North, TfEM & Midlands Connect are keen to work with the Government and national bodies like National Highways to find ways to progress these interventions to ensure the businesses and communities along the route can reach their potential.

Improving Safety & Reliability on the A1

The A1 corridor is a nationally significant freight artery linking the North and Scotland with London and the South East. The route is particularly vital for connections to major ports on the East Coast, including Felixstowe, Grimsby, Immingham and then Dover (via the M25).

The A1 corridor also has a key economic role within the East Midlands, particularly for agri-food, logistics, manufacturing and tourism, with very significant levels of proposed housing (up to 100,000 units) and employment growth - in addition to the ground-breaking 'Step Fusion' Facility at the West Burton Power Station site in Nottinghamshire.

In sharp contrast to the motorway standard sections immediately to the north and south, the A1 through the East Midlands is a dual carriageway 'A' road characterised by sub-standard junctions and right turn movements,



collision blackspots and a lack of resilience or alternative routes during closures. There have been 201 closures of the A1 in the East Midlands (in at least one direction) over the past 5 years, some of which have lasted up to 10 hours.

National Highways (Midlands) have made available funding to improve lane markings and signage to reduce collisions, but a more strategic approach is required to enhance the route to improve reliability and resilience and bring the road up to a standard reflecting its national and regional economic role.

A5 Growth Corridor

The A5 through Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire is a key freight route and an alternative to the M6. The A5 is also driving major housing and employment growth – including the MIRA Enterprise and Technology Park, DIRFT near Daventry and Magna Park in Lutterworth. But congestion and safety are major problems because of the sub-standard nature of much of the road, and as a result, the route requires major investment.

The Government has recognised the strategic importance of the route in Network North and previously allocated funding to develop a strategic enhancement to the A5 between the M69 and the M42 (Hinckley to Tamworth) – although a preferred route has yet to be published by National Highways.

In the shorter term, Midlands Connect has identified potential for an improvement to the junction between the A5 and A426 at Gibbet Hill, which would enable existing planning permissions for new employment to be implemented ahead of the full National Highways scheme.



M1 Junction 24 & Surrounding Area

The East Midlands Freeport is one of only eight such designations made by the Government across the country and the only 'Inland' Freeport based around the freight operation at East Midlands Airport.

EMDevCo is a company owned by five local authorities in the East Midlands that brings together the ambition of partners from business, academia, and government.

Together, EM Freeport and EMDevCo support four key growth locations that sit between the cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham: East Midland Airport & Gateway industrial cluster; East Midlands Intermodal Park; Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station and Toton & Chetwynd Barracks.

Together, these locations have the potential to deliver transformational levels of employment growth and new models for living and working fit for the 21st century. However, the area has a congested road network and very poor levels of public transport provision. The key to unlocking growth will be improving capacity in and around M1 Junction 24, which is close to capacity and heavily constrained. TfEM is working with regional and local partners to ensure that National Highways give priority to investment in and around M1 Junction 24 within the RIS3 period.



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