



TRANSPORTEAST

Annual Report
2025-26

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Attendees at our Future of Rail Event



Alexander Nicoll, Chair of the East West Rail Eastern Section Board with Hon. Frances Stanley DL and Andrew Summers at our East West Rail: Eastern Section event

Foreword



Will Quince
Chair, Transport East

As I reflect on my second year as Chair of Transport East, I am struck by how much stronger our partnership has become.

The value we bring in promoting the East and making the case for investment is increasingly recognised – not just locally, but nationally.

This region has so much to offer the nation, from clean energy and food production to our vital ports and airports. Transport is a crucial piece of the puzzle that will unlock growth and opportunities for all our communities.

The past year has seen significant change. Over a year into a new government, we are already witnessing major shifts in transport policy and delivery.

We have welcomed important funding announcements and policies such as the rail fare freeze, the commitment to delivering major road schemes, and the extension of the £3 bus fare cap, which make a real difference to people's lives.

The public ownership of c2c and Greater Anglia, alongside progress on the Rail Bill, marks a new chapter for rail in our region.

However, there is still more to do. Critical projects like the Ely and Haughley rail upgrades remain essential to unlocking the East's full potential, and we continue to advocate strongly for these investments, along with other road and rail infrastructure our partners consider vital to unlocking opportunities.

Looking ahead, Mayors will play an important role in uniting the East, and the proposed Local Government Reorganisation means the largest change in local governance in decades. While the government's decision to delay mayoral elections was unexpected, Transport East

and our partners stand ready to support our local authorities as they work to transition to new structures.

This year will undoubtedly bring some uncertainty. But Transport East, our dedicated team, and our strong partnerships are well prepared for whatever lies ahead.

Together, we will continue championing the transport connections that enable everyone in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Thurrock, and Southend to thrive – ensuring access to jobs, education, healthcare, and opportunities, no matter where they live.

My thanks go to all our partners, our local transport authority leaders and the Transport East team for their commitment to our shared vision of a thriving Eastern region.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Quince'.

Foreword



Andrew Summers

Chief Executive, Transport East

Collaboration has been central to Transport East's impact this year. Together with our regional and national partners, we have made a clear, united case for why transport investment in the East matters to the nation that relies on our region to feed, supply and power it.

Through evidence, advice and advocacy, we highlighted the East's importance to the UK's economic future and housing ambitions. This includes speaking at UKREiiF, co-hosting the East of England Net Zero Conference and presenting to the East of England APPG.

Strategic rail has been a key focus during the year. We welcomed continued Government backing for East West Rail and set out the economic and social benefits of extending it to Norfolk, Suffolk and north Essex. Our Eastern Section Board event demonstrated strong partner support for improving connections beyond Cambridge.

We also hosted our Future of Rail event to explore the opportunities within rail reform with industry and regional stakeholders. We the inaugural Thameside Taskforce meeting, bringing together MPs and industry partners to shape a rail-led growth vision for south Essex.

Major infrastructure milestones were welcomed, including the opening of Beaulieu Park Station – the first new station on the Great Eastern Main Line in a century – and the Long Stratton Bypass, improving safety and enabling growth.

Through the Spending Review, we outlined priority investments, contributing to local authorities securing a £135 million multi-year transport grant and commitments to funding many of the region's priority road schemes.

We launched TRIP - a digital insights platform now with over 100 officers signed up. Data from this platform is already supporting the development of plans and policies.

Our Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence supported national programmes, helped four East-based pilots secure funding and published *the Rural Roots, Limited Routes* report on young people's travel challenges.

This work informed Government and Select Committee discussions and contributed to our shortlisting for Regional Transport Authority of the Year.

Looking ahead, we will continue making an evidence-led case for the transport improvements our region needs.

While the plans for devolution have changed, our partnership working will be more important than ever.

Thank you to all who have supported our work this year.

2 Year at a glance

April - June

Launched TRIP (Transport Regional Insights Programme) a digital platform providing access to data and planning tools

Represented the East's infrastructure needs at UKReif

Provided oral evidence to House of Lords Social Mobility Policy committee

July - September

Co-hosted Net Zero East Conference with LGE, EEH and CILT

Brought regional partners together to amplify case for extending East West Rail beyond Cambridge

Shared our *Shorter-Term Rail Opportunities* report

Transport East evidence supports Government's Buses Connecting Communities report

October - December

Inaugural *Thameside Taskforce: Rail-led vision of south Essex* political meeting

Shortlisted at the National Transport Awards

Hosted the Future of Rail in the East event, bringing together regional and national partners to shape the region's rail

Represented the East at party conferences and supported the Logistics UK panel

Visited Southend with Board and partners to build understanding of the Better Queensway Project

Published *Rural Roots, Limited Routes* report to highlight challenges young people face making journeys

Connected Places Catapult report showcased 8 innovative rural mobility schemes which Transport East supported

January - March

Joined East of England APPG panel to outline transport's role in delivering housing goals

Transport East partnership met National Highways to amplify ambitions of the region's road network

Lilian Greenwood, Transport Minister, highlights our work with partners on Ely and Haughley during a debate in Parliament

Met the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to align our shared priorities

Joined the Rural Transport Group's roundtable event in Parliament

Represented the East with partners at Interchange 2026

2 Year at a glance



4 Large scale
events hosted



6 Reports
published



12 New tools
on TRIP

6 Webinars
held



10+ Major conferences where
we represented the East



2 New team
members



1 National transport
award nomination

75+ Organisations
collaborated with

3x Provided oral
evidence to Gov
committees



10 Consultations
responded to



3 Why the East matters

Home to over 3.7m residents – and predicted to grow to 4m by 2041 – the region has 1.7m jobs from 140,000 enterprises, contributing £94bn GVA to the UK economy.

The East is a rapidly growing region with a vibrant economy. It's crucial for supporting the government's missions and growth ambitions, mainly through supplying, feeding and powering the nation.



Supplying the nation

The region's 13 ports and three airports have firmly established it as a vital gateway for people and goods.

Half of the nation's container traffic flows through key ports, including Felixstowe, Harwich, and Tilbury.

London Stansted Airport ranks as the UK's fourth busiest passenger airport and the third busiest for cargo. Its £1bn investment plans will support further growth. Norwich and London Southend airports are poised for significant growth in the near future.

Meanwhile, Freeport East and Thames Freeport are already showcasing their value by driving investment and innovation in the East.

Feeding the nation

The East is renowned for its thriving agricultural sector. The region holds 15% of England's farmed land, ensuring a secure food supply, creating high-quality jobs, and

supporting UK farmers in adopting innovative technologies. It is also home to numerous agri-tech businesses, making the East a lead innovator in the sector.

Powering the Nation

The UK is determined to achieve net-zero emissions, and the East is pivotal in achieving this ambition. The region produces 60% of the UK's offshore energy through over 1,000 wind turbines located off its coast.

Last year, the Sizewell C development received the green light from Government. Once completed, it will provide 7% of the UK's electricity needs.

Currently, approximately 19,000 people are employed in the East's energy sector. This number is set to grow significantly with the construction of Sizewell C, which will create thousands of local jobs and provide 7% of the nation's energy needs upon completion.

4 How we work

4.1 Who is Transport East?

Transport East is one of the seven Sub-national Transport Bodies (STB) that together cover all of England outside London. STBs were established through the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act (2016) to provide a single voice for transport for their sub-national areas.

Across England, STBs bring leadership on strategic transport, recognising that local partners working together are best placed to identify regional priorities.

Transport East is an independent partnership comprising local authorities, business groups, national agencies and other partners across Essex, Norfolk, Southend-on-Sea, Suffolk and Thurrock.

Our partnership is the single voice for transport investment in the Eastern region.

4.2 Our Vision

“A thriving Eastern region with safe, efficient and net-zero transport networks advancing a future of inclusive and sustainable growth for decades to come.”



4 How we work

4.3 Structure

Board

We are governed by the [Transport East Board](#), our principal decision-making board. It agrees our core plans and strategies. It comprises transport portfolio holders from the five transport authorities and three elected members representing the three county groups of district authorities.

Business interests are represented by the Chambers of Commerce. The Board also includes observer partners who provide advice and support for our work, including the Department for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, National Highways, the UK Innovation Corridor, neighbouring local authorities and STBs. All meeting dates, papers, agendas and minutes are available at www.transporteast.gov.uk

Transport East Senior Officers Group (TESOG)

TESOG oversee our annual work programme. It comprises officers from all

transport authorities, district representatives, National Highways, Network Rail, Local Government East (formerly EELGA), UK Innovation Corridor and DfT.

Business Unit

The strategic direction, work programme, and day-to-day management of Transport East is led by the [Business Unit](#). Suffolk County Council hosts the Business Unit and is the accountable body for all grant funding from the DfT.

4.4 How we're funded

In 2025-26, we secured grant funding from the DfT of £1,040,667. See page 25 for a breakdown of spending for 2025-26.

We are also funded by subscription fees from our five transport authorities and 24 district authorities at a total of £273,188 for 2025-26.



Transport East Business Unit and Chair, Will Quince, at the Transport East Summit 2025

5 Our Strategy

The Government-endorsed Transport Strategy is our blueprint for transport investment across the region until 2050. It sets the long-term vision and priorities for transport in the region and informs not only our work, but local transport plans, and priorities of national bodies including National Highways and Network Rail.

With endorsement from government, it puts the East in a much stronger position to secure investment. We will continue to work with our members and partners to identify investment priorities and embed the Strategy through Local Transport Plans.

We also provide a regional Centre of Excellence for strategic transport planning. By providing evidence, insight and tools, our partners can develop and make the case for investment that meets the Strategy goals and the region's wider objectives.

Guiding our strategy are four priorities:

Connecting growing places: Better links between our fastest growing places and business clusters. This helps the area function as a coherent economy and improves productivity.

Energised Coastal and Rural

Communities: A reinvented, sustainable coast for the 21st century that powers the UK through energy generation. Supporting our productive rural communities and attracting visitors all year round.

Global Gateways: Better connected ports and airports to help UK businesses thrive. Boosting the nation's economy through greater access to international markets and Foreign Direct Investment.

Decarbonising transport: 42% of the region's carbon emissions come from transport - the largest sector. If we are to tackle our contribution to climate change and reach net zero emissions, we need to act quickly.

I want to recognise the powerful and united voice of local and regional stakeholders, including Transport East, England's Economic Heartland, local authorities, ports and freight operators, and indeed MPs from across the political spectrum.

Lilian Greenwood MP, Transport Minister
Hansard 3rd December 2025 - Ely: Railway Upgrade

5.1 Delivering the strategy through our Business Plan

Each year we set out how we will work to meet the Transport Strategy goals and the region's wider objectives through our Business Plan and review how we've achieved those in our Annual Report.

The following pages show the progress Transport East has made over the last 12 months against our transitional corporate plan, adding value for our partners.

6 Regional Successes

6.1 Speaking as a single voice

We have continued to raise our profile and highlight our priorities at national and regional events. We have maintained active engagement with councillors, parliamentarians, businesses, and transport groups. By fostering stronger partnerships, we can make a more compelling case for investment in the East's transport infrastructure.

Leading the region's rail partnerships

This year we have focused effort on our strategic connections, and rail has been central to our work.

Thameside Taskforce:

Reflecting the increasing importance of economic and homes growth along the Thames, we established the Thameside Taskforce. The meeting brought together MPs along the rail corridor with rail, ports and business representatives in south Essex, to set out a rail-led vision that can

support the projected growth and opportunities.

East West Rail: Eastern Section:

We developed the case for investment, reinforcing the significant economic and social gains extending East West Rail could unlock for Norfolk, Suffolk and north Essex. At our East West Rail: Eastern Section Board event, partners showed firm support for building on the existing plans, to improve connections beyond Cambridge.

The government also reaffirmed its commitment to the delivery of East West Rail including proposals for a Cambridge East station and partial dualling of the line to Newmarket. This is particularly promising and we will be supporting progress throughout 2026.

Future of Rail in the East:

We also hosted our Future of Rail in the East event, bringing Network Rail, c2c, Greater Anglia and regional stakeholders into one room to explore what the next era of rail reform means for our region.

We will continue to work closely with these bodies as they transition into the new integrated setup under Great British Railways.



Our Thameside Taskforce document clearly presented the case for investing in south Essex's rail



Transport East Board and partners in Southend

6 Regional Successes



"We were delighted to join Transport East's event, which brought together partners committed to improving rail for our region."

"Collaboration is key on our journey to Great British Railways, and we will continue working closely as a route and region to deliver a safe, reliable, and high performing railway that best serves our communities."

Jamie Burles, Network Rail's Deputy Managing Director for the Eastern Region



Partners from the East and beyond pledged their support to extend East West Rail's benefits beyond Cambridge



Network Rail, Greater Anglia, c2c and Rail Freight Group with Transport East



Partners with Pam Cox MP at the Future of Rail in the East event



Roundtables at the Future of Rail in the East event

6 Regional Successes

Amplifying the case for investing in the region's roads

In February 2025, as part of our Spending Review submission we set out compelling evidence on behalf of local authority partners for the priority, growth-supporting major and strategic road schemes.

During the year, funding was confirmed for several key schemes included in our submission that support housing delivery and economic growth, including the Army and Navy Junction, A12 improvements east of Ipswich and the West Winch Link Road. The November 2025 Budget also confirmed an additional £891 million for the Lower Thames Crossing.

We also provided evidence to partners on the importance of the Strategic Road Network in supporting housing ambitions and convened a meeting between our regional leaders and the CEO of National Highways to discuss the role of strategic infrastructure in enabling growth.

Opportunity East

We supported Local Government East with their *Opportunity East: One Year On* report. Unveiled at a parliamentary reception, it was jointly produced with the East of England All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and sets out how the East can drive the Government's growth ambitions, deliver new homes, and support the transition to clean energy.

We contributed evidence to the section 'Transport Challenges and the East: Driving Growth in the UK', which includes the region's current strategic transport challenges across rail and road.

Providing evidence to Parliament

We provided evidence to several Government inquiries, setting out the case for improved transport investment and policy reform. This included presenting evidence to the East of England APPG, demonstrating why sustained transport investment in the

region is essential to delivering the Government's housing ambitions.

We also contributed to the Transport Select Committee's *Buses Connecting Communities* inquiry and gave evidence to the House of Lords Social Mobility Policy Committee. In addition, we submitted written evidence to several legislative processes, including the Railways Bill and Devolution Bills.



MPs from the East of England launching Opportunity East: One Year On



Andrew Summers sharing insight on why investment in transport will benefit the East's housing growth ambitions

6 Regional Successes



With partners at UK:REiif to make the case for investing in the East



Convening the East's Local Transport Authorities with National Highways



Representing the East at party conferences, with Logistics UK

Net Zero East Conference

Alongside Local Government East, England's Economic Heartland (EEH) and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, (CILT), we co-hosted the Net Zero East conference. Over 200 attendees discussed regional sustainability, with Daniel Zeichner MP highlighting the need for climate adaptation.

LGE's Opportunity East report also demonstrated the region's potential to drive economic growth through green sectors.

Party Conferences

Members of the Transport East team attended the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative Party Conferences to showcase what the East has to offer - and to highlight why investment in transport is vital to enable sustainable growth and help communities across our region thrive.

At the Labour and Conservative conferences, we shared our insight at the

Logistics UK panel discussions, exploring the critical role of transport and logistics to support economic growth and opportunities.

Throughout the party conference season, we were delighted to meet with parliamentarians, local politicians, and stakeholders from both across the region and the nation.

Collaborating with partners to amplify the region's offer

We consistently collaborated with partners to represent the East. Notable examples include presenting at UKREiif and maintaining ongoing engagement with local authority leaders.

These partnerships enabled us to gather up-to-date insights into local priorities and challenges, provide support through our insight and advocacy work, and ensuring regional voices informed national discussions.

6 Regional Successes

6.2 Regional Centre of Excellence

A key part of our role is supporting local authority partners to plan and deliver transport improvements. We do this by offering simple, accessible tools and insights all in one place. Last year, this included:

Our TRIP platform - Better data for better decisions

Through our digital platform, partners have access to easy-to-use tools that help them understand how people travel, where challenges exist, and what improvements could make the biggest difference.

These include:

- Travel pattern insights (Mobile phone data)
- What if? Scenarios (BERTIE/ABM)
- Road Safety (trend & hotspot analysis)

The nation's Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence

This year we:

- Provided insight on the transport challenges younger people encounter - shaping future decisions
- Supported Connected Places Catapult by showcasing innovative solutions in rural mobility - testing real solutions in local places.

Collectively, this work helps our partners design transport solutions that are responsive, inclusive, and evidence-led.



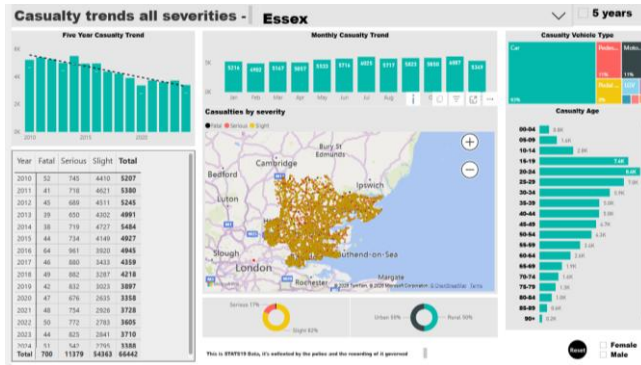
Sharon Payne, Regional Rural Mobility Manager, with the Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire at a Rural Transport Roundtable



Andrew Summers speaking at Transport Planning Day



6 Regional Successes



An example of data from BERTIE

TRIP (Transport Regional Insights Platform) a single place for clear, accessible transport insights

TRIP is our digital platform that brings together easy-to-use tools, dashboards and reports to help partners understand local travel needs and plan improvements with confidence. It provides consistent, trusted data for every part of the region.

It is made up of several modules developed through our technical programme, each focused on a different aspect of transport. Since launching, users have explored data across a suite of modules, including:

The Mobile Data Tool:

Visualises where people in the Transport East region are travelling to and from. Users can filter the information by spatial location, origin or destination, travel mode, trip purpose, day type, and time of day.

BERTIE:

An Agent-Based Model (ABM) dashboard that simulates the travel choices of individuals, providing insight into how the transport network is used by communities and allowing users to test the impact of different scenarios. The tool has been used as an example of using data well in the Government's *Better Connected Strategy*.

Road Traffic Casualties Tool:

Provides users with insight into collisions across the East, including data on location, vehicle type, age and gender of those injured, and severity of injuries.

By the end of the year, nine new Power BI models had been added, and TRIP will continue to grow in 2026.



6 Regional Successes

Leading the case for better Rural Mobility

Young People's Journeys:

Under the Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence, we published new research highlighting the significant transport challenges faced by young people aged 16–24 living in rural communities across the East.

Titled '*Rural Roots, Limited Routes*', the study has been delivered through Transport East's Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence, and draws on extensive engagement with colleges, sixth forms, and educational experts from the region.

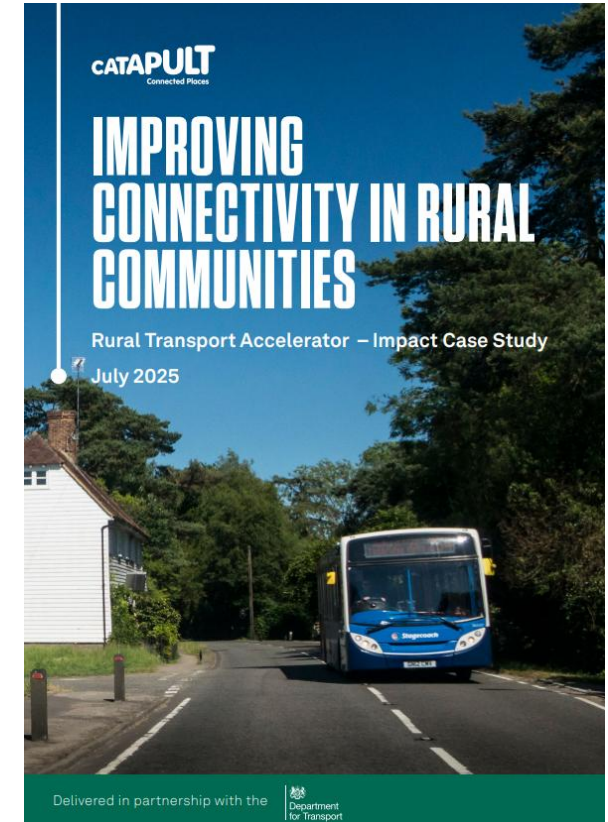
The study also surveyed 1,000 young people, uncovering how transport options - or the lack of them - directly affect access to education, apprenticeships, and employment. Limited transport also impacts young people's opportunities to socialise, affecting mental health and confidence.

Supporting innovative solutions in rural mobility:

We supported Connected Places Catapult in delivering the Rural Transport Accelerator - a programme funded by the Department for Transport to develop and deliver innovative travel and transport solutions in rural communities.

Eight projects across the country each received up to £150,000 to run demonstrator trials tackling key rural transport challenges - from off-grid electric mobility charging and sustainable freight to more efficient passenger transport services. Four of these projects are based in the East, showcasing the value of regionally-led approaches.

As the lead Sub-national Transport Body for rural mobility, Transport East welcomed the opportunity to support this pioneering initiative through workshops and a series of national webinars to demonstrate opportunities within rural mobility.



6 Regional Successes

6.3 Funding benefitting the East*

£135m multi-year local transport grant allocation for Local Authorities

£8.5m funding for Local Transport Authority resource

£171m bus funding

£55m active travel capability funding

£1.1m LEVI funding

£590m Government funding for Lower Thames Crossing

£600,000 to support rural mobility pilot schemes

£500,000 NHS Charge point Accelerator Funding

£1bn new 'road structures fund'**

*Notable funding, not comprehensive.

**National funding pot the East can bid into.



6 Regional Successes

6.4 Major Schemes List

The following list of projects have been identified in our [Strategic Investment Programme](#) as bringing benefits to the region and their local areas.

The below projects are currently being, or have recently been, delivered:

1. **West Winch Access Road:** Funding confirmed to deliver the scheme, connecting the A47 to the A11 and supports planned housing.
2. **Thickthorn Junction:** Construction started.
3. **Long Stratton Bypass:** Formally opened in October.
4. **A12 East of Ipswich Improvements:** Funding announced to progress programme of improvements.
5. **Colchester Rapid Transit Corridor:** Northern Approach Road section opened.
6. **A1331 link road:** Funding committed to deliver scheme.
7. **Army and Navy Junction:** Funding secured to progress the scheme.
8. **Chelmsford's Beaulieu Park station:** The GEM's newest station in 100 years opened to passengers.
9. **FirstBus Electric Depots in Basildon and Great Yarmouth:** The first electric bus depot opened in Essex.
10. **Better Queensway Project:** Construction started on this road scheme supporting regeneration in Southend.
11. **Lower Thames Crossing:** Received approval from Government to be delivered.



Long Stratton Bypass



At the formal opening of Chelmsford's Beaulieu Park station



Transport East learning about Southend's Better Queensway Project

7 Strategic Plan: 2025-26

7.1 Overview

With a one-year settlement for 2025-26, this year acted as a transition year, recognising the changing nature of transport governance from devolution and proposed local government reform.



By 2026, we wanted to:

1. Operational excellence and a devolution partner

Strong business operations and good financial management

Be a devolution partner to changing local authorities

Maturing governance and partnership

2. Plan the next generation of transport projects

Enhance local authority capacity & capability

Expand the Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence

Enhance regional-level transport data & analytics

3. Integrate transport at a regional level

Lead regional-level policy development

Lead regional-level rail

Strategic support for passenger transport

4. Lead the East's 'Single Voice' to put our transport priorities on the UK map

Formal partnerships with national bodies to steer investment

Regional Task Forces for our transport priorities

Communications and engagement programme amplifying our single voice

7 Strategic Plan: 2025–26

7.2 Operational excellence and a devolution partner

What does this mean?

Be a strong, well-coordinated partnership with the skills, capacity and influence needed to deliver the Transport Strategy and be recognised nationally as an effective Sub-national Transport Body.

What we delivered in 2025–26

- We expanded the team to ten full-time, permanent positions, covering technical, communications, and engagement expertise. In 2025, we recruited a Regional Rail Lead and Analysis Manager to build on our rail and data capability.
- We supported partners throughout the devolution process through consultation responses, ongoing engagement and maintaining strong relationships across our partnership through TESOG.
- Worked in partnership with Local Government East to ensure the voice for transport was present on a pan-regional scale e.g. the *Opportunity East: One Year On* report
- Regular insight and training provided to our member organisations through webinars and in-person events.
- Convened our Board regularly throughout the year, expanding membership to include the new Business Boards to increase business representation. We also brought the Board to Southend-on-Sea to see first hand the importance of good walking and cycling connections to delivering high-quality housing regeneration, and experience an autonomous shuttle bus.
- Maintained strong financial rigour and value for public money, with outgoings matching income.



7 Strategic Plan: 2025–26

7.3 Build regional capacity & capability

What does this mean?

Maximising value from regional data and analysis, providing analytical support, leading rural mobility excellence, and strengthening pan-STB collaboration through shared tools and insights.

What we delivered in 2025–26

- Increased analytical capability through the recruitment of an Analysis Manager. This additional support is shaping and delivering our single source of data to support Local Transport Authorities.
- Formally launched our TRIP platform, a single source platform for data and digital tools to support officers in delivering schemes across the East. The platform has over 100 registered users and 12 modules, with further expansion planned in 2026.

Current modules include:

- The Mobile Data Tool: Visualises where people in the Transport East region are travelling to and from.
- BERTIE: An agent-based model dashboard that simulates the travel choices of individual people.
- Road Traffic Casualties Tool: Provides insight into collisions across the East.
- Continued to lead our Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence, amplifying the challenges and opportunities faced by rural communities. We shared insight into the barriers young people in rural areas face when accessing education and employment, through roundtables and surveys that will be built upon in the coming year.
- Supported the DfT's Connected Places Catapult initiative to launch pilot transport schemes. Our evidence base and support during the application

process contributed to four of the eight funded pilot schemes being in the East. We also delivered webinars attended by officers nationwide, showcasing the schemes and their potential benefits for other rural communities.

- Following our Rural Connections report, we undertook further analysis of travel patterns within the visitor economy. We engaged with the sector to understand challenges and opportunities to grow the East's tourism offering. A report will be published in 2026-27.
- Conducted additional research into shared mobility schemes, including car clubs, lift sharing and micromobility. This forthcoming report will provide valuable insight into how these schemes could be further embedded within communities across the region.
- Worked with Active Travel England to share good practice and learnings across the East, to improve walking, wheeling and cycling connections.

7 Strategic Plan: 2025–26

7.4 Integrate transport at a regional level

What does this mean?

Identify, advocate for and progress the next generation of strategic programmes and projects to deliver our priorities set out in our Transport Strategy and the wider objectives of our partners.

What we delivered in 2025–26

- Recruited a Regional Rail Lead to build and deliver our rail programme. Working with partners, this additional capacity will support the transition to devolution—unlocking new rail responsibilities for the region—and the ongoing transition to Great British Railways (GBR).
- Published our Shorter-Term Rail Opportunities report and produced in-depth studies into delivering service enhancements between Clacton–Colchester and Ipswich–Cambridge/Peterborough.
- Launched the East West Rail: Eastern Section report, presenting a strong, evidence-led case for extending the benefits of the East West Rail scheme beyond Cambridge to Norfolk, Suffolk and north Essex.
- Collated and shared insight to help build the narrative for delivering rail improvements along the Thameside Corridor in south Essex.
- Supported Freeport East in developing its Transport Masterplan, which seeks to prioritise transport interventions to support the area’s growth potential.



7 Strategic Plan: 2025–26



7.5 Be a Single Voice – put the East's transport priorities on the UK map

What does this mean?

A loud, sustained and credible Single Voice to government, bringing together local authorities, Chambers of Commerce, businesses and MP, with our strategic transport priorities embedded within the investment planning of government and transport delivery bodies.

What we delivered in 2025–26

- Hosted the Future of Rail in the East event, bringing together stakeholders from across the region and beyond to discuss why rail is critical to supporting growth in the East. Roundtable sessions enabled participants to share their views on how the region's rail network should develop.
- Supported the production of Local Government East's *Opportunity East: One Year On* report.

- Provided oral evidence to the East of England APPG, leading discussions on the role of transport in effectively delivering housing ambitions.
- Presented insights into the travel and transport challenges faced by rural communities at a House of Lords Social Mobility panel.
- Highlighted the challenges and opportunities for East's freight and logistics sector at the Labour and Conservative Party Conferences by participating in Logistics UK panel sessions.
- Co-hosted the Net Zero East event with Local Government East, England's Economic Heartland and CILT.
- Worked in partnership across the region to maintain momentum on key transport challenges including improvements at Ely & Haughley rail junctions, A12 improvements and Thameside rail.

8 Funding and Resources

Transport East is funded from two main sources, local contributions from our partners and an annually agreed funding allocation from the Department for Transport (DfT) for our technical programme.

8.1 Local contributions

The local contributions, established in 2019 and set out in the Terms of Reference, contribute to the Transport East team, non-technical work, operations and communications activities.

It is important to maintain local funding to ensure the ongoing growth of Transport East and maintain a level of independence from government.

This financial year local contributions totalled £273,188.

We will continue to review the scope of funding members, considering the

changing role and remit of Transport East and the external operating environment.

8.2 DfT contributions

Since 2020/21, and in response to the demonstrable financial and political commitment from local partners, Transport East has also received funding from the DfT to support the delivery of our technical work programme. In 2025/26 this amounted to £1,040,667 of funding for technical work, including joint work with other STBs. In addition to this, we received a further contribution from the DfT for joint work to enhance BERTIE our Agent-based model (ABM), in support of a national innovation programme.

Transport East has an annual indicative funding settlement from the DfT up to 2026/27. Release of this funding requires an annually agreed business plan.



8 Funding and Resources

8.3 Summary

	Amount
Income	£1,569,319
Actual & committed	£1,569,319
Reserves	£222,605
Balance carried into 2026/27	£0

8.4 Income

2025/26 Income	Amount	Notes
Local Authority Subscriptions	£273,188	
DfT Grant	£1,040,667	
Under-spend from 2024/25	£ 0	
Additional in-year funding	£255,464	Contribution from DfT for BERTIE update, sponsorship from C2C and Rail Freight Group, WSERP Secretariate
Total Income	£1,569,319	

8 Funding and Resources

8.5 Expenditure*

2025/26 Spend	Amount	Notes
Business Unit		
Staff	£794,602	Full staff costs including people working on technical programme
Operational costs	£203,497	Governance, major events and conferences, HR and business management.
Technical Programme		
DfT core funding	£315,757	Technical programme
Additional funding	£255,464	Rebaselining BERTIE & WSERP Secretariate
Under-spend from 2022-23 grant	£0	Full staff costs including people working on technical programme
Total Spend	£1,569,319	

*Expenditure includes work we are committed to completing in 2026/27

9

Measuring Success

In last year’s Business Plan, we set out how we would monitor the effectiveness of the work programme using both quantitative and qualitative data, including partner feedback. To support this, we developed a new balanced scorecard to track our performance with measures in four categories: **Financial**, **Customer**, **Process** and **Impact & Growth**. Performance measures were designed to align with our core roles and priorities for 2025/26, and ensured we focused on priority behaviours and activities throughout the year.

Financial

Measure	Indicator	Target	Result
Good financial management (programme)	% of forecast budget spent or committed on agreed business plan outputs	100% by 31 March 2026	All funds committed to delivery better transport in the Eats
Good financial management (efficiency)	Maintain ratio of operational costs to income	Maintained from 2024/25 by 31 March 2026	Maintained
Additional income	Income received beyond core subscriptions and DfT grant	Secure additional income over base funding by 31 March 2026	£255,464k received over and above core funding

Customer

Measure	Indicator	Target	Result
Partner awareness of TE and services	Number of website & social media interactions	Increase on 2024/25	LinkedIn engagement rate increased by 2%
Partner usage of tools and services	Number of interactions/downloads for the new data & analysis centre	New metric	Average time spent on TRIP per user: 12 minutes
Partner satisfaction	New satisfaction index	New measure – 2025/26 will be the baseline	Not set due to changing external environment

Process

Measure	Indicator	Target	Result
Efficiency ‘value added’ by convening role	Number of regional coordinated events held on behalf of national bodies	Maintain level achieved in 2024/25	9
Meeting process management	Service Level achieved for core meetings*	SLA met by 31 March 2026	Achieved for Board; not achieved for TESOG due to internal resourcing gap
Staff development	Achievement of two development goals per staff member	2 per staff member achieved by 31 March 2026	Achieved

* Core meetings include Board, TESOG and named others. Service Level to be determined by meeting Terms of Reference

Impact and Growth

Measure	Indicator	Target	Result
Single Voice – advocacy to decision makers on region’s priorities	Meetings with the right people at the right time to make the case for the East	To cover all four of Transport Strategy priorities over the year	Achieved
Single Voice – speaking to the region & UK	Total number of people attending TE led events	Maintain on 2024/25	Maintained
Future of TE	2026/27 Business Plan and 3-5yr corporate plan agreed by Board & DfT	By March 2026	Business Plan achieved. Target changed in year to completion of Transition Plan.

10 Our Thanks

We cannot undertake the work of Transport East without the ongoing support of our partners. Our thanks this year go to:

- **The Transport East team members:** for their hard work, dedication and commitment to making the East better.
- **The Transport East Board:** for their ongoing commitment and guidance.
- **The Senior Officers Group:** for their deep knowledge and expertise, and many, many valuable conversations.
- **Our local authority partners:** for their involvement, engagement and insight.
- **Our parliamentarians and politicians:** For helping us advocate for investment and policy changes that benefit the East.
- **Our home team at the DfT:** for supporting our work in the department and across government.
- **People in the East:** for giving us your views and choosing to use sustainable transport when you can.
- **Our regular officer contacts** at National Highways, Network Rail, GBRTT, DfT, ATE, LGE and the regions' Chambers of Commerce: for their continuing positive engagement.
- **Our consultancy team:** for close working to bring our ideas to reality.
- **Our wider stakeholder community:** for your views, input, engagement and challenge.
- **The other 6 STBs:** for your collaborative, innovative approaches and your commitment to sustainable transport.



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