

Maidstone and The Weald; Tunbridge Wells

Transport for the South East (TfSE) has just submitted its Strategic Investment Plan to government. This plan determines the investment needed to grow the south east's economy and deliver a high-quality, safe, sustainable and integrated transport system that makes the south east more productive and competitive, improves the quality of life for all residents, and protects and enhances its natural and built environment.

Since 2017, TfSE, the sub-national transport body for the south east, has become a powerful and effective partnership for the region, bringing together local transport authorities, local enterprise partnerships, district and borough councils, transport operators and strategic network owners to speak with one voice on our region's strategic transport needs.

Central to the development of this plan has been engagement and consultation with all stakeholders to ensure what we put forward aligns with both their needs and their expectations in a sustainable and financially responsible manner. It is a plan developed by the south east, for the south east.

To the right, we have mapped the prioritised schemes for Maidstone and The Weald, Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding area; the schemes within the Strategic Investment Plan will be delivered from now to 2050.

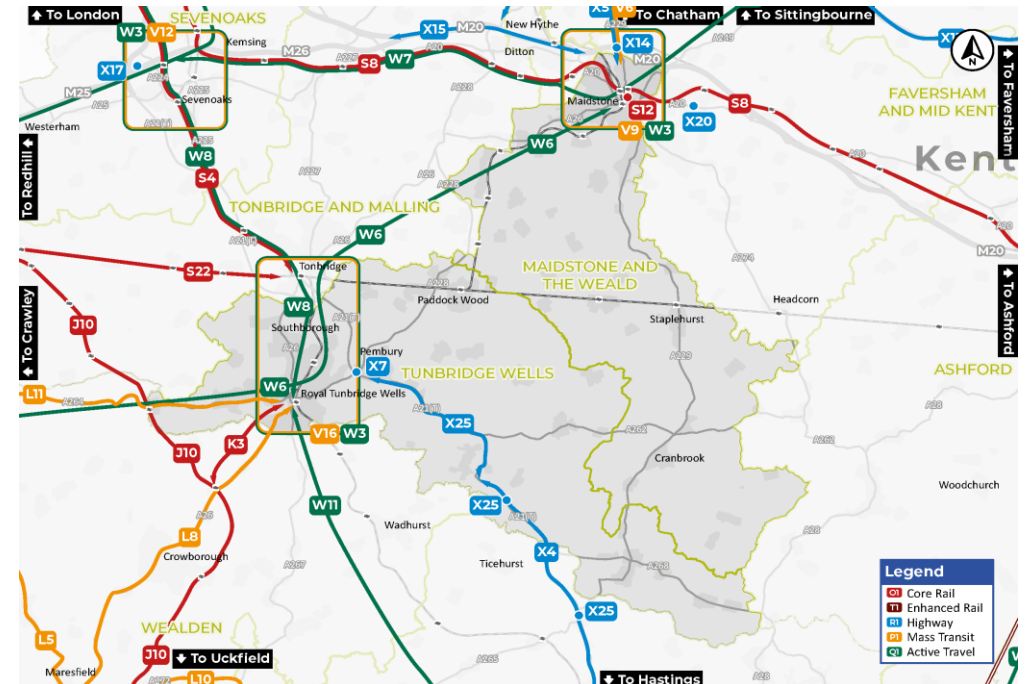








Figure 1: Maidstone and The Weald; Tunbridge Wells schemes from TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan

In addition to place-specific schemes, a number of wider policy interventions have been identified. These include:

-  **Decarbonisation:** faster delivery on net zero carbon, including through the use and adoption of green technologies
-  **Public transport fares:** support for public transport, including subsidies for reduced fares
-  **New mobility:** capturing the benefits for new modes of travel, new ways of paying for our travel, and new technologies
-  **Road user charging:** support for a national scheme, and one that local areas can integrate with for additional measures (e.g. Clean Air Zones)
-  **Virtual access:** making best use of technology to reduce the need to travel and help plan better, more sustainable journeys
-  **Better integration:** at stations, hubs and between modes, but also better integration with spatial planning and service delivery

Strategic Investment Plan Factsheets

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Figure 2: Maidstone and The Weald; Tunbridge Wells scheme descriptions and phasing

Map Ref.	Intervention name	What is the scheme?	What will the scheme do?	Phasing
J10	Uckfield Branch Line - Hurst Green to Uckfield Electrification	Electrification of the railway from Uckfield to Hurst Green via Edenbridge.	This will support the decarbonisation of the rail network and improve its cohesion.	Long term (2040s)
K3	Spa Valley Line Modern Operations Reopening - Eridge to Tunbridge Wells West to Tunbridge Wells	Conversion of the Spa Valley Line between Eridge and Tunbridge Wells to modern operations.	This will create an alternative rail route between Brighton and London and complement improvements to the Wealden Line.	Medium term (2030s)
L8	A26 Corridor Lewes - Royal Tunbridge Wells Rural Bus Service Enhancements	Inter-urban bus enhancements along the A26 between Lewes and Royal Tunbridge Wells, including bus priority measures where appropriate.	This will increase bus service frequencies, reduce journey times and improve reliability for residents between Lewes, Uckfield, Royal Tunbridge Wells and nearby centres.	Short term (2020s)
L11	A264 Corridor Rural Bus Service Enhancements	Inter-urban bus enhancements along the A264, including bus priority measures where appropriate.	This will increase bus service frequencies, reduce journey times and improve reliability for residents between Horsham, Crawley, Royal Tunbridge Wells and nearby centres.	Short term (2020s)
S1*	St Pancras International Domestic High Speed Platform Capacity	A new platform at St Pancras International station for domestic high speed rail services.	Support an increase in station capacity to provide more HSI services between London, Medway and Kent.	Medium term (2030s)
S2*	London Victoria Capacity Enhancements	Additional capability at London Victoria station, taking advantage of a major track renewal in CP8/9, as well as digital signalling on lines approaching the station from the South East in the longer-term.	Enable more services between London and Kent, Medway and East Sussex, reduce headways and improve journey time reliability.	Medium term (2030s)
S4	South Eastern Main Line - Chislehurst to Tonbridge Capacity Enhancements	Improvements to the South Eastern Main Line between Chislehurst and Tonbridge, including signalling upgrades.	Facilitate increased capacity and service frequencies on the line.	Medium term (2030s)
S8	Thameslink - Extension to Maidstone and Ashford	Extension of Thameslink services from Otford to Maidstone East and Ashford.	Improve onward connectivity for existing users and attract potential new users within rail catchments in Maidstone and Ashford.	Short term (2020s)
S12	Integrated Maidstone Stations	Improvements to the pedestrian link between Maidstone Barracks and Maidstone East.	Provide easier interchange between the Medway Valley Line and the Maidstone Line and contribute to an improved rail offer for Kent and Medway.	Medium term (2030s)
S17*	Rail Freight Gauge Clearance Enhancements	Delivery of W12 gauge clearance between the Channel Tunnel and the West Coast Main Line via Maidstone and/or Tonbridge.	Support the growth of rail freight, contributing to decarbonisation and helping to realise the aspirations of the Network Rail Freight Strategy.	Medium term (2030s)

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Map Ref.	Intervention name	What is the scheme?	What will the scheme do?	Phasing
S22	Gatwick - Kent Service Enhancements	Enabling of direct rail services between Gatwick Airport and Kent.	Provide an alternative to private car for trips between Gatwick Airport and Kent and reduce journey times.	Short term (2020s)
V6	Medway to Maidstone Bus Priority	Mass Rapid Transit enhancements connecting centres in Medway and Maidstone, including segregated infrastructure where appropriate.	Improve journey times and reliability for public transport by increasing service frequencies, extending operating hours and delivering timetable integration.	Short term (2020s)
V9	Maidstone Bus Enhancements	Urban bus enhancements within Maidstone and adjacent economic hubs, including bus priority infrastructure where appropriate.	Improve journey times and reliability for public transport by increasing service frequencies, extending operating hours and delivering timetable integration.	Short term (2020s)
V16	Royal Tunbridge Wells/Tonbridge Bus Enhancements	Urban bus enhancements within Royal Tunbridge Wells/ Tonbridge and adjacent economic hubs, including bus priority infrastructure where appropriate.	Improve journey times and reliability for public transport by increasing service frequencies, extending operating hours and delivering timetable integration.	Long term (2040s)
W3	Kent Urban Active Travel Infrastructure	Urban walking and cycling enhancements across Kent.	Facilitate local active travel movements and provide safer, faster and more accessible segregated trips.	Short term (2020s)
W6	Tonbridge - Maidstone National Cycle Network Enhancements	Enhancements to the inter-urban cycling route between Maidstone and Tonbridge (and onwards towards East Grinstead and Crawley), utilising and enhancing the National Cycle Network.	Connect points of interest and provide safer, faster and more accessible segregated cycle infrastructure.	Short term (2020s)
W7	Sevenoaks - Maidstone - Sittingbourne National Cycle Network Enhancements	Enhancements to the inter-urban cycling route between Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Sittingbourne, utilising and enhancing the National Cycle Network.	Connect points of interest and provide safer, faster and more accessible segregated cycle infrastructure.	Short term (2020s)
W11	Royal Tunbridge Wells - Hastings National Cycle Network Enhancements	Enhancements to the inter-urban cycling route between Royal Tunbridge Wells and Hastings, utilising and enhancing the National Cycle Network.	Connect points of interest and provide safer, faster and more accessible segregated cycle infrastructure.	Short term (2020s)
X5	A229 Bluebell Hill Junction Upgrades (LLM)	Upgrade of Bluebell hill by remodelling the junctions at either end (A229/M2 J3 and A229/M20 J6) to ensure free flow traffic.	Build resilience to the strategic highway freight network.	Short term (2020s)
X7	A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link (MRN Pipeline)	Targeted improvements along the A228.	Ensure that the road becomes the main link between the A21, the M20 and Maidstone, replacing the A26 through Tonbridge and Hadlow for local movements.	Medium term (2030s)

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Map Ref.	Intervention name	What is the scheme?	What will the scheme do?	Phasing
X9*	A20 Enhancements for Operations Stack & Brock	New smart traffic management systems.	Build greater resilience when there is disruption at the Port of Dover or the Eurotunnel, relieving Operations Stack and Brock by increasing capacity on the A20 for freight parking.	Short term (2020s)
X10*	Kent Lorry Parks (Long Term Solution)	New smart traffic management systems.	Build greater resilience when there is disruption at the Port of Dover or the Eurotunnel, relieving Operations Stack and Brock by considering long-term solutions.	Short term (2020s)
X14	M20 Junction 6 Sandling Interchange Enhancements	Improvements to the M20 Junction 6, Sandling, with focus on supporting strategic freight movements to/from Dover.	Build resilience by increasing capacity, leading to improved journey times, reliability and junction safety.	Medium term (2030s)
X15	M20 Junction 3 - Junction 5 Smart Motorway	Smart motorway initiatives along the M20 between Junctions 3 and 5.	Build resilience by increasing capacity, supporting strategic freight movements.	Medium term (2030s)
X20	New Maidstone South East Relief Road	A new relief road in Maidstone South East.	Build resilience by increasing capacity and improve connectivity between Maidstone South East and the strategic highway network.	Medium term (2030s)
X25	A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Dualling and Flimwell and Hurst Green Bypasses	A new A21 Bypass and dualling of the road between Kippings Cross and Lamberhurst.	Reduce conflicts between strategic and local movements and improve reliability and safety for all road users.	Long term (2040s)
Y1*	Lower Thames Crossing	A second highway crossing of the Thames Estuary alongside supporting infrastructure.	Relieve the existing Dartford Crossing to support strategic freight movements between Kent and the rest of the country.	Medium term (2030s)

* Intervention outside of constituency area and/or off-map.

Delivering interventions for Maidstone and The Weald and Tunbridge Wells

Working with our partners we will now begin delivery of the nearly 300 interventions within the Strategic Investment Plan. Appropriate scheme and business case development will be required for each intervention, along with stakeholder engagement. Delivery will be dependent on each individual intervention and its local context, the complexity of the scheme, the stage of the scheme and business case development, as well as funding.

TfSE's role will be to support the appropriate delivery partners as we progress each scheme and secure funding for scheme development and delivery.

Along with local transport authorities, central government and its agencies, and other delivery partners, we will establish appropriate governance to oversee the development, delivery, and benefits realisation arising from interventions included in this strategy as we work to achieve the vision set out in our Transport Strategy.

By 2050, delivery of the Strategic Investment Plan will achieve for the south east:



21,000 additional new jobs



500,000 more rail trips each weekday



an additional £4 billion in GVA each year by 2050



1.5 million more bus, mass transit and ferry trips each weekday



1.4 mega tonnes less CO₂ equivalent emitted each year and a pathway to net zero identified



4 million fewer car trips each weekday

Help us to secure investment in the region's transport network

Please promote this investment plan in your local communities. We have submitted this plan to government and asked them to consider it when making future investment decisions for the region. Collectively we can deliver this ambitious plan and deliver a high-quality, safe, sustainable and integrated transport system that makes the south east more productive and competitive, improving the quality of life for all residents.

You can find the Strategic Investment Plan, the technical work behind it and our Transport Strategy on the TfSE website - www.tfse.org.uk, along with other factsheets.

For more information contact TfSE at tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk or [0300 3309574](tel:03003309574).

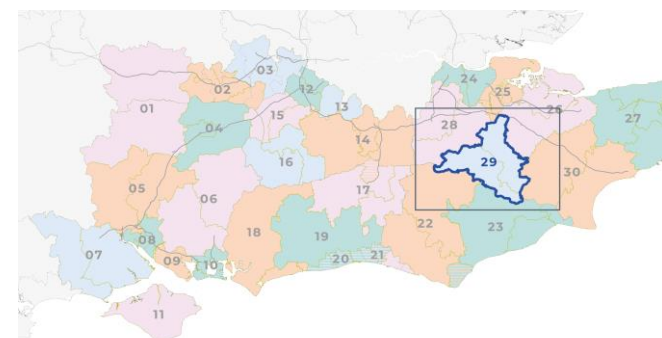


Figure 3: Map of factsheet locations and numbers