

Transport and Social Inclusion Policy Position Statement

V7.0 October 23 2023



Context

The UK is a prosperous nation that for most of the past 50 years has experienced economic growth. However, during this time, inequality has risen.

There is a direct relationship between inequality, deprivation, and people's access to transport, key services, and amenities such as job opportunities, education and healthcare. Travelling, whether it be by car or public transport can be disproportionately expensive for individuals and families on lower incomes. The costs of travel can, therefore, exacerbate deprivation, particularly for those with limited access to services, amenities, and wider opportunities.

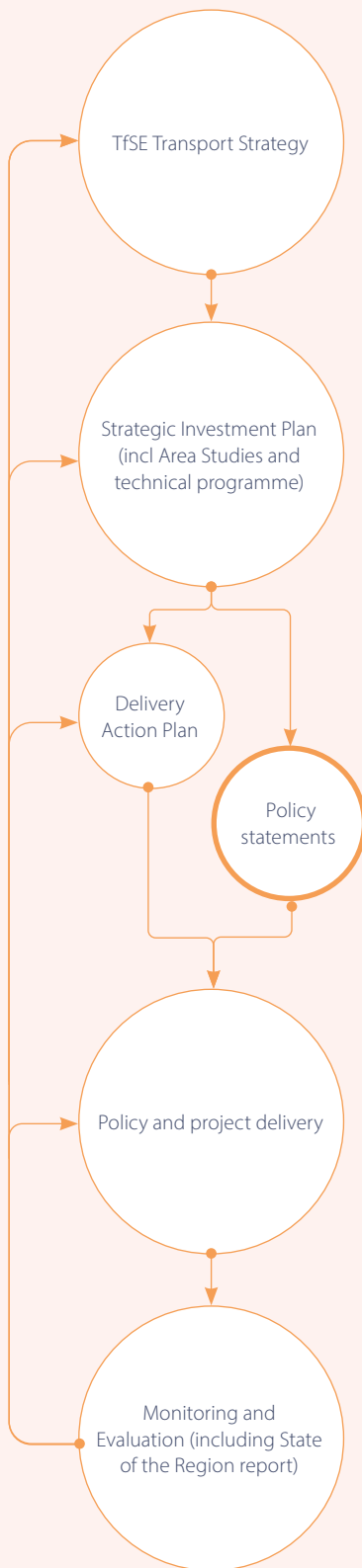
Like all the UK's regions, there are pockets of the south east suffering from high levels of inequality and deprivation. These are the communities we seek to "level up" through working in partnership to deliver targeted transport interventions, integrated with the provision of other services and investment. It is also clear that many areas that need levelling up are also served poorly by strategic rail connectivity; and locally reduced levels of public transport provision particularly by bus services and by ageing active travel, bus and highways infrastructure.

Consequentially, investment in transport infrastructure and services presents direct means of levelling up left-behind areas by increasing access to key services; making it easier for businesses to access a larger workforce and grow; allowing goods to travel more reliably around the region; facilitating business travel; and encouraging investment into our local communities from outside.

This policy position statement aligns with Transport for the South East's (TfSE's) Transport Strategy published in 2020 and with the government's 'Levelling Up' White Paper, which recognises widening inequality as a continuing challenge faced across the UK and the role of transport to support addressing that challenge.



Transport for the South East



The south east does not have one dominant urban centre, but is influenced by London’s status as a global city, and it is home to the country’s most significant international gateways for trade and movement. However, there are large urban areas in the south east with significant populations and communities in need of levelling up. Our goal to level-up left behind areas in the south east requires an integrated, multi-modal approach that makes best use of what we already have with target investments in the right places at the right time.

Our **Transport Strategy**, sets out how we will tackle these challenges and achieve our goals. In it, we set out the following vision for 2050:

By 2050, the south east of England will be a leading global region for net zero carbon, sustainable economic growth where integrated transport, digital and energy networks have delivered a step change in connectivity and environmental quality. A high-quality, reliable, safe and accessible transport network will offer seamless door-to-door journeys enabling our businesses to compete and trade more effectively in the global marketplace and giving our residents and visitors the highest quality of life.

To support our vision, Transport for the South East submitted a **Strategic Investment Plan** to government in 2023. We have engaged widely with stakeholders to ensure what we put forward in the plan 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.

The Strategic Investment Plan is supported by a suite of thematic plans, including one about **Levelling Up**. This document builds on the thematic plan and presents Transport for the South East’s position on Levelling Up and social inclusion in realising our vision. It also sets out the actions Transport for the South East will lead on and deliver with our partners.

What we're going to do to deliver our 2050 vision



Most interventions identified within the Strategic Investment Plan are in or connected to areas in need of levelling up and so will support the missions identified within the Levelling Up White Paper. There are also three far-reaching policy interventions aligned to the Levelling Up agenda: reducing public transport fares; facilitating virtual living and remote working; and enabling enhanced physical connectivity and accessibility.

We have identified three priorities to support delivery of these global policy interventions:

- collaboration and engagement;
- advocacy and promotion; and
- guidance and policy development.

Collaboration and engagement

The types and scale of levelling up varies across the south east, with a suite of specific, targeted, and effective interventions needed to meet the challenge.

We recognise that each local authority area has a unique range of challenges to tackle inequalities and deprivation. As such, the appropriate combination of transport and related interventions will vary. The best understanding of these challenges and opportunities for investment and change will come from local partners and as such, a collaborative approach is required to develop appropriate place-specific outcomes.

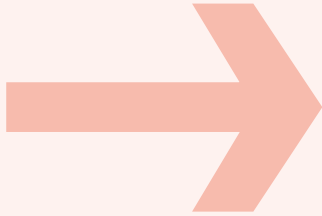


Action 1 – Embed social inclusion across all TfSE stakeholder groups

TfSE will provide a mechanism for local authorities containing significant areas with high levels of deprivation to share evidence, best practice, and make the case for appropriate and effective funding, including for enhanced digital connectivity and the transport accessibility impacts of spatial planning.

Advocacy and promotion

To achieve the objectives set out within the Strategic Investment Plan, and deliver the schemes and interventions it presents, interventions which both influence and achieve wider levelling up outcomes should be prioritised.

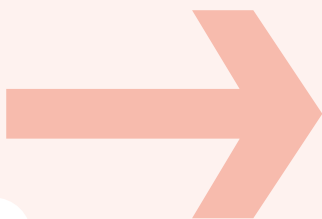


Action 2 – Ensure social inclusion is effectively prioritised

Incorporate social inclusion considerations within analytical framework and assessment tools utilised to assess the Strategic Investment Plan.

Guidance and policy development

Local authorities have an obligation to develop Local Transport Plans as a mechanism to both maintain and improve transport. The policy priorities, interventions and schemes developed within these plans will be integral in aligning to both regional and national levelling up outcomes. Furthermore, Local Transport Plans will require the delivery of supplementary Equality and Health Impact Assessments, in order to identify, assess and mitigate specific considerations.

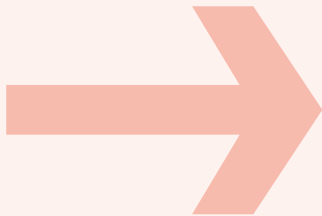


Action 3 – Support the incorporation of social inclusion into Local Transport Plans

Through the TfSE's proposed Centre of Excellence, support local authorities in how to incorporate social inclusion into the development of Local Transport Plans, and support the development of supplementary Health and Equality Impact Assessments.

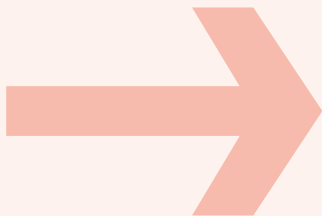


Long term management of the region's deprived areas will remain critical. TfSE will work with our partners to undertake effective monitoring of Levelling Up outcomes and to maintain a workable strategy to manage national-level commitments.



Action 4 – Develop appraisal and evaluation guidance

Develop appraisal and evaluation guidance for the application of the Department for Transport's Levelling Up Toolkit, as well as supporting the monitoring and evaluation of aligned policies and schemes.



Action 5 – Develop our evidence base to incorporate social-inclusion

Develop our evidence base to incorporate specific data on social inclusion.



Next steps

Reflecting our status as the Sub-national Transport Body for the south east we will work with our delivery partners and other stakeholders to implement the actions included in this policy position statement. We will tailor our approach to the mode, scale, and level of development of each prioritised intervention.

We will use our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to report our progress against these actions on an annual basis.

Contact us

For more information contact us via tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk or 0300 3309574



You can reach us at:

Transport for the South East
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
BN7 1UE

tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk

[@TransportfSE](https://twitter.com/TransportfSE)

