

APPENDIX 1 - Transport Strategy for the South East Consultation Draft (October 2019)

The Consultation

The Executive Summary, full document and supporting technical documents can be found at: <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/transport-strategy/>

Transport for the South East is not seeking detailed feedback on individual challenges and schemes at this stage. Subsequent 'area studies' will be used to identify comprehensive packages of initiatives.

BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL Consultation Response

The consultation questions and proposed BFC responses (in **bold/reversed** text) are set out below, preceded by a short summary of relevant background information contained within the full document of the draft strategy.

Chapter 1: Context

Purpose of the Strategy

One of the key roles of a Sub-national Transport Body is to outline how it will deliver sustainable economic growth across the South East area it serves, whilst taking account of the social and environmental impacts of the proposals outlined in the strategy.

The Transport Strategy is to form a major step in the process of determining which policies, initiatives and schemes should be priorities for delivering sustainable growth across the South East area.

Mission

Transport for the South East's mission is to grow the South East's economy by delivering a safe, sustainable, and integrated transport system that makes the South East area more productive and competitive, improves the quality of life for all residents, and protects and enhances its natural and built environment. Its ambition is to transform the quality of transport and door-to-door journeys for the South East's residents, businesses and visitors.

Overarching Approach

Traditionally, transport planning has used a '**predict and provide**' approach to justify the need for future investment based on forecasting future demand and congestion on the transport network. This Transport Strategy involves a shift towards a '**decide and provide**' approach to transport provision. This means actively choosing a preferred future, with preferred transport outcomes as opposed to responding to existing trends and forecasts.

The Transport Strategy sets out how congestion could be alleviated through investing in public transport alternatives, developing integrated land use planning policies, adopting emerging transport technologies, and adopting demand management policies. The latter would involve users paying for more of their mobility they consume on a '**Pay as you Go**' basis with the potential to better managing demand across the network – using pricing mechanism across all vehicular modes, including by car, van and Heavy Goods Vehicles to incentivise travel at less busy times or by more sustainable modes.

Consultation Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the use of this 'decide and provide' approach?

Strongly Agree

Planning for People and Places

'Planning for vehicles' is not sustainable in the longer term. Instead, there should be a shift towards 'planning for people' and, ultimately, 'planning for places'.

Consultation Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that transport policy across the South East should evolve in this way?

Strongly Agree

Scenarios for the Future in 2050

Four Growth Scenarios for different versions of the future in 2050 have been evaluated. A combined 'best of the four', called the 'Sustainable Route to Growth', has then been selected as the best way forward. The key features of the Sustainable Route to Growth Scenario are:

- **The South East is less dependent on London and has developed successful economic hubs within its own geography**, which provide high-quality, high-skilled jobs for residents. This in turn creates a future where GVA per capita is significantly higher than it is today.
- **The benefits of emerging technology have been harnessed in an equitable way** to improve the accessibility of the South East area without undermining the integrity of its transport networks. This also has the effect of boosting economic growth while minimising transport's impact on the natural and built environment.
- **Concern for the environment has led to the widespread adoption of sustainable policies and practices**, including integrated land-use and transport planning, as well as targeted demand management measures including users paying for more of their mobility on a 'pay as you go basis'. This in turn provides a shift away from the private car towards more sustainable travel modes. It also reduces the need to travel (or, at least, the need to travel far) and ultimately delivers a cleaner, safer environment for residents.

Consultation Question 8: How important do you feel the key features of our 'Sustainable Route to Growth' scenario are for the future of the South East? (as follows)

- The South East is less reliant on London and has developed its own successful economic hubs: **Very Important**
- The benefits of emerging technology are being harnessed: **Very Important**
- Land-use and transport planning are better integrated: **Very Important**
- A shift away from private cars towards more sustainable travel modes: **Very Important**
- Targeted demand management measures, with more mobility being consumed on a 'pay as you go basis': **Fairly Important**
- The transport system delivers a cleaner, safer environment: **Very Important**

Consultation Question 9: Do you have any additional comments about our approach to developing the draft Transport Strategy?

Proposed Response:

The shift away from the private car towards more sustainable travel modes will require major investment in extensive capacity increases to high-speed inter-urban and local public transport networks.

Chapter 2: Our Area

Chapter 2 provides extensive information describing the South East's (amongst others) employment, housing and transport characteristics and describes some of the challenges it currently faces.

Question 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the evidence set out in Chapter 2 of the draft Transport Strategy makes a strong case for continued investment in the South East's transport system?

Strongly Agree

Question 11: Please use the space below to provide any other comments you may have about the information set out in Chapter 2, or any additional evidence that you think should be included.

We continue to look towards TfSE to support the progress on the Southern Rail Link to Heathrow, which not only has a compelling economic/business case, but which also stands alone as a major carbon-reducing sustainable transport scheme. In addition to this existing rail links to Gatwick should also be highlighted for further investment.

Chapter 3: Our Vision, Goals and Priorities

Vision Statement: 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.

Consultation Question 12: To what extent do you support or oppose our vision for the South East?

Strongly Support

Consultation Question 13: Do you have any further comments on our vision?

The size of the 'step change' in connectivity and environmental quality will be key to achieving the vision. BFC would therefore expect the adopted strategy to be capable of generating substantial investment over its lifespan and beyond in the private and public transport network, as well as the communications network.

Goals

The draft Transport Strategy sets out three strategic goals that underpin the vision. These goals will help to translate the vision into more targeted and tangible actions.

Consultation Question 14: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the goals set out within the draft Transport Strategy?

- Economic: Improve productivity and attract investment to grow our economy and better compete in the global marketplace; **Strongly Agree**
- Social: Improve health, safety, wellbeing, quality of life, and access to opportunities for everyone; **Strongly Agree**
- Environmental: Protect and enhance the South East's unique natural and historic environment; **Strongly Agree**

The Strategic Priorities: Under each of the three goals, the Strategy sets out a number of specific economic, social and environmental priorities.

Consultation Question 15: To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are priorities which the Transport Strategy should aim to achieve?

Economic priorities:

- Better connectivity between our major economic hubs, international gateways (ports, airports and rail terminals) and their markets. **Strongly Agree**
- More reliable journeys for people and goods travelling between the South East's major economic hubs and to and from international gateways. **Strongly Agree**
- A more resilient transport network to incidents, extreme weather and the impacts of a changing climate. **Strongly Agree**
- More integrated land use and transport planning that helps our partners across the South East meet future housing, employment and regeneration needs sustainably. **Strongly Agree**
- A 'smart' transport network that uses digital technology to manage transport demand, encourage shared transport and make more efficient use of our roads and railways. **Strongly Agree**

Social Strategic priorities:

- A network that promotes active travel and active lifestyles to improve our health and wellbeing. **Strongly Agree**
- Improved air quality supported by initiatives to reduce congestion and encourage further shifts to public transport. **Strongly Agree**
- An affordable, accessible transport network for all that promotes social inclusion and reduces barriers to employment, learning, social, leisure, physical and cultural activity. **Strongly Agree**
- A seamless, integrated transport network with passengers at its heart, making journey planning, paying for, using and interchanging between different forms of transport simpler and easier. **Strongly Agree**
- A safely planned, delivered and operated transport network with no fatalities or serious injuries among transport users, workforce or the wider public. **Strongly Agree**

Environmental Strategic priorities:

- A reduction in carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 to minimise the contribution of transport and travel to climate change. **Strongly Agree**
- A reduction in the need to travel, particularly by private car, to reduce the impact of transport on people and the environment. **Strongly Agree**
- A transport network that protects and enhances our natural, built and historic environments. **Strongly Agree**
- Use of the principle of 'biodiversity net gain' in all transport initiatives. **Strongly Agree**
- Minimisation of transport's consumption of resources and energy. **Strongly Agree**

Consultation Question 16: Are there any other economic, social and/or environmental priorities which you feel the Transport Strategy should aim to achieve?

No Further Comments

Key Principles

The draft Transport Strategy sets out a number of principles that are used to identify the key transport issues and opportunities in the South East.

Question 17: To what extent do you support or oppose these principles?

- supporting sustainable economic growth, but not at any cost. **Strongly Support**
- achieving environmental sustainability. **Strongly Support**
- planning for successful places. **Strongly Support**
- putting the user at the heart of the transport system. **Strongly Support**
- planning regionally for the short, medium and long term. **Strongly Support**

Chapter 4: Our Strategy

Key Challenges: Six key journey types are identified in the draft Transport Strategy. It identifies the key challenges and opportunities for each of the six journey types and indicates the types of schemes and policy responses that will be needed to address these challenges. Subsequent area studies will be used to identify comprehensive packages of initiatives. They are not seeking detailed feedback on individual schemes at this stage, but want to make sure they have identified the key challenges and the broad types of responses that will be needed for each of the movement types.

Radial Journeys

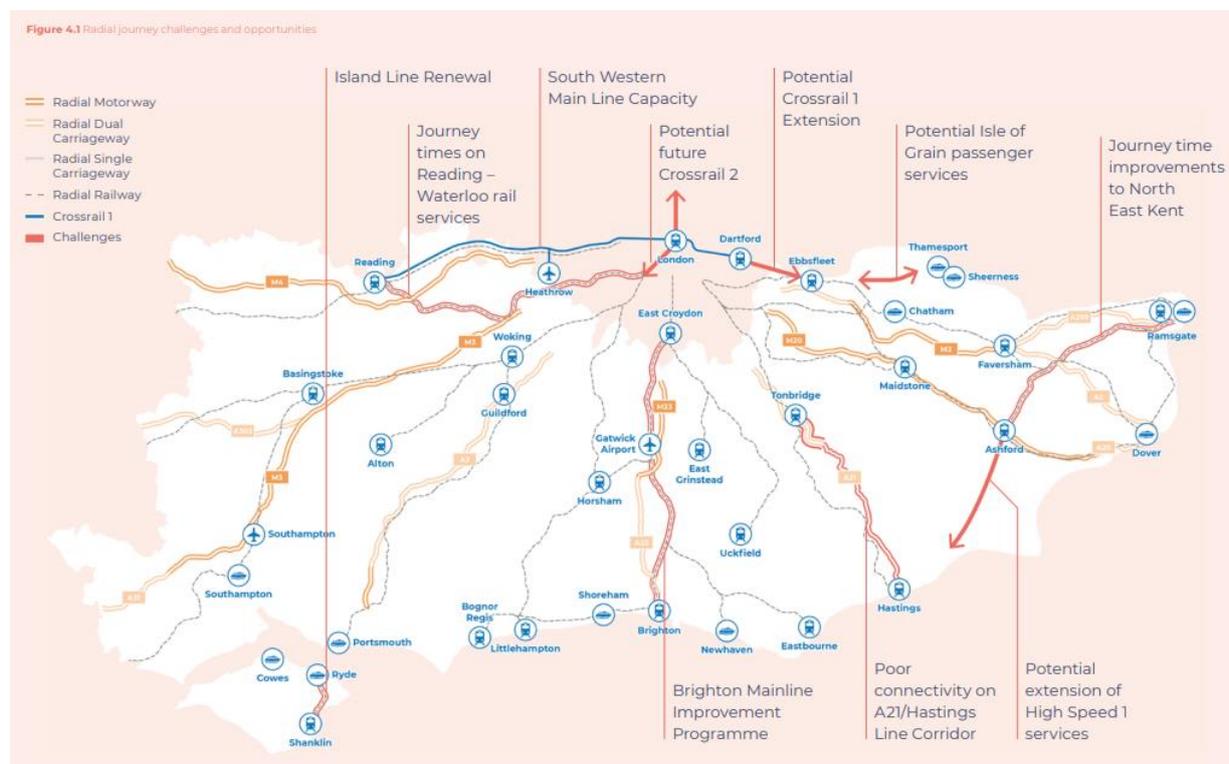


Figure 4.1 Radial journey challenges and opportunities

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- There are capacity constraints on several routes into London (many of which are only dual tracked, meaning longer distance services interact with London/suburban stopping service).

Journey times to London on the **Reading – Waterloo** Line are long compared to neighbouring corridors such as the Great Western Main Line (Challenge 1).

- The **M3/South Western Main Line** Corridor provides important connectivity for freight traffic using the Port of Southampton, which is set to expand. This corridor has high capacity (including an eight-lane Smart Motorway and a four tracked railway). However, it is also heavily utilised and regularly suffers from congestion (Challenge 5).
- The M4/A4/Great Western Main Line Corridor has benefitted from significant investment in recent years (Crossrail, Great Western Main Line electrification, new rolling stock and enhancements to Reading station). However, with **Heathrow** set to expand, this already very busy corridor is expected to come under increasing pressure. There is a risk it could hold back the economic benefits arising from improved global connectivity delivered by expansion at Heathrow (Challenge 6).

Orbital and Coastal Journeys

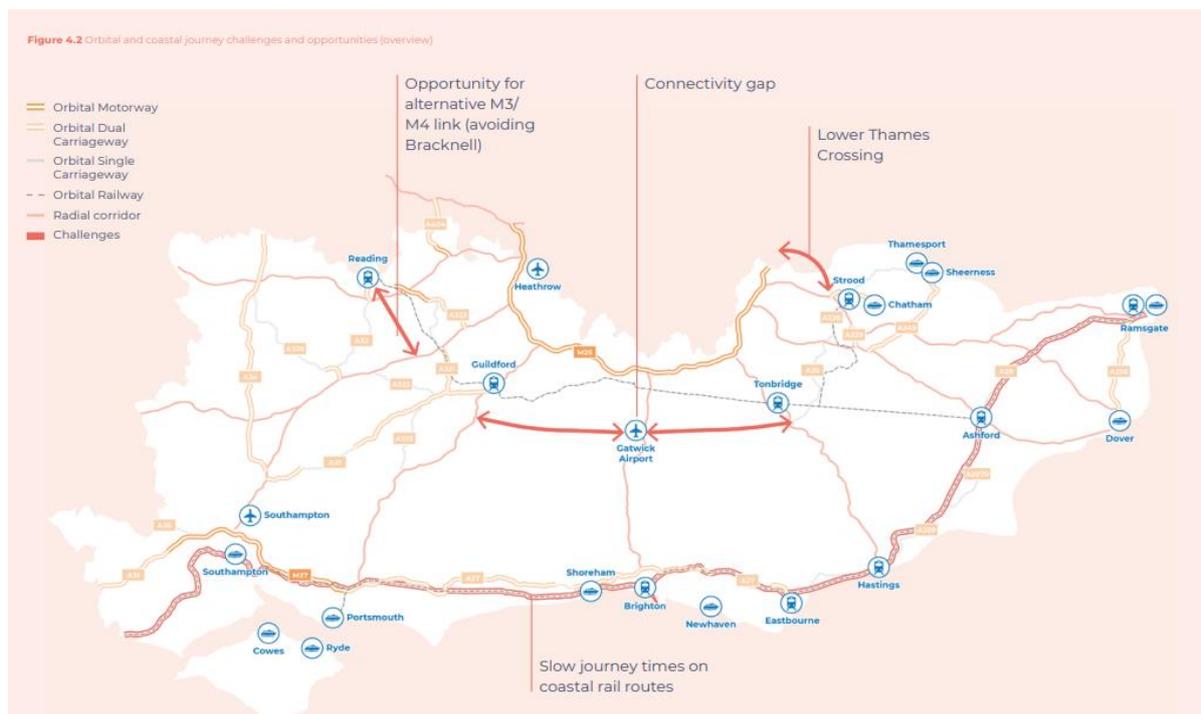


Figure 4.2 Orbital and coastal journey challenges and opportunities (overview)

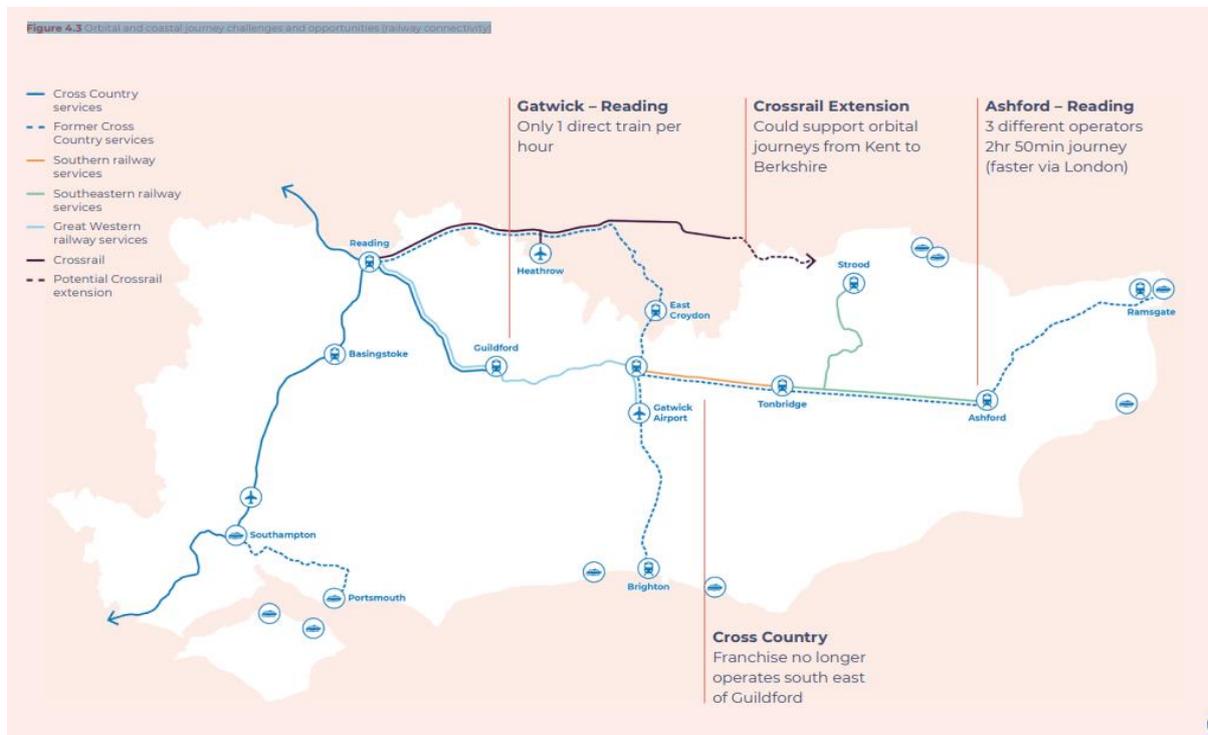


Figure 4.3 Orbital and coastal journey challenges and opportunities (railway connectivity)

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- M25 congestion.
- **Constraints on road corridors that pass through urban areas** (Challenge 1).
- Cross-Country connectivity has declined on this corridor (intercity rail services from the Midlands and North of England used to run as far south and east as Gatwick Airport, Brighton, Ramsgate and Portsmouth). Furthermore, there are some parts of the orbital and coastal rail network that suffer from severe crowding in peak hours. **The quality of the railway infrastructure on orbital and coastal corridors** therefore presents a barrier to economic development on these corridors (Challenge 2).
- There are some bottlenecks on orbital links between the **M3 and M4** (Challenge 4).
- Some high capacity orbital links pass through urban areas such as **Bracknell**, which impacts negatively on air quality, safety and quality of life (Challenge 5). **[Note on Figure 4.2 ‘Opportunity for M3/M4 Link (avoiding Bracknell)’]**.

Inter-Urban Journeys

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- Some **inter-urban routes fall below standard** (Challenge 1).
- **Bus services risk deteriorating** on inter-urban routes if congestion rises and face competition / congestion from car trips and reduced financial support (Challenge 2).
- **Gaps in rail routes** on inter-urban corridors. (Challenge 3)
- **Road safety hot-spots.** (Challenge 4)

Local Journeys

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- **Conflicts between different road user types.** (Challenge 1)
- Poor air quality in some urban areas and **along some corridors.** (Challenge 2)

- **Poor integration in some areas.** Pressure on bus services, particularly in rural areas. (Challenge 3)
- **Bus services have come under significant pressure** in recent years, particularly in rural areas (Challenge 4)
- **Affordability of public transport.** (Challenge 5)

Journeys to International Gateways and Freight Journeys



Figure 4.4 Key freight and international gateway corridors

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- The potential impact on surface transport networks from the planned expansion of **Heathrow Airport**. It is critically important that **viable public transport alternatives** are put in place to enable access to and from Heathrow Airport by other means than the car. Gatwick Airport also has expansion plans within the existing airport estate by bringing its emergency runway into use. (Challenge 1)
- Difficulties **decarbonising Heavy Goods Vehicles**. (Challenge 7)
- The UK leaving the European Union (i.e. **“Brexit”**). (Challenge 8)

Journeys in the Future

The technologies that are arguably most likely to succeed are those that respond best to the challenges and trends outlined above. The “Future Transport Strategy” categorises these technologies into the four following groups: • Connected, which encompasses the movement of data between people, other people, vehicles, assets and systems; • Autonomous, which includes any technology that replaces ‘mundane’ human tasks with technology; • Alternative Fuels, which includes the decarbonisation of energy production, storage and consumptions; and • Shared, which describes the sharing of services that traditionally were ‘owned’ by individuals.

Challenges Relevant to Bracknell Forest? –

- Gaps in electric and digital infrastructure.

- Risk some parts of the South East will be 'left behind'.
- Risk new technologies may undermine walking, cycling and public transport.
- Risk new technologies may lead to further fragmentation.
- There is a risk that the uptake of internet shopping will generate more freight traffic
- Alternative fuel private vehicles won't solve the congestion problem. Although the switch to electric cars may reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, it will not reduce traffic levels on the network.

Consultation Question 18: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the key challenges relating to each of the journey types have been correctly identified?

Proposed response for each journey type with relevance to Bracknell Forest follow:

- Radial Journeys **Strongly Agree**
- Orbital and Coastal Journeys **Strongly Agree**
- Inter-Urban Journeys **Strongly Agree**
- Local Journeys **Strongly Agree**
- Journeys to International Gateways and Freight Journeys **Strongly Agree**
- Journeys in the Future: **Strongly Agree**

Consultation Question 19. Please use the space below to make any additional comments on the key challenges that have been identified, or to explain any additional challenges that you think need to be addressed.

BFC sees difficulties encountered in funding, finding routes and gaining planning permission for high quality light rail/bus transit schemes to meet inter-urban and local public transport travel demand as an additional challenge. There needs to be positive change in government backing and investment for such schemes.

Consultation Question 20: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the initiatives we have outlined to address the challenges that have been identified for each journey type?

Proposed response are below:

Initiatives and Responses (Executive Summary)

Radial

Initiatives –

- **Invest in rail improvements to speed up journey times to London**, particularly by utilising spare capacity on High Speed 1 and investing in parts of the railway that serve High Speed services (Challenge 1).
- Facilitate an increase in radial journeys by public transport, particularly to/from Outer London and to/from **Heathrow Airport** (Challenge 6).

Responses –

- Improve connectivity to Maidstone, North Kent, **Reading – Waterloo** and Hastings corridors. Improve resilience of Strategic Road Network.

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

Orbital

Responses –

- Holistic demand management initiatives that address road congestion while avoiding displacement effects from one part of the network to another. Enhancements where **orbital rail routes cross radial rail routes**. Reinstate cross country services (Challenge 1).
- Reduce the exposure to the adverse environmental impacts of road traffic on orbital corridors that pass **through urban centres.....**, which may include lowering speed limits, reallocating road space to cleaner transport modes, and/or supporting the uptake of cleaner technology such as **Electric Vehicles** (Challenge 5).

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

Inter-Urban

Responses –

- Support schemes proposed and prioritised locally for government’s National Roads Fund for the Roads Investment Plan (2020 – 2025), Large Local Major Schemes, and for the Major Network.
- Increase support for inter-urban bus services.
- Deliver better inter-urban rail connectivity.

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

Local

Responses –

- Develop high-quality public transport services on urban corridors, such as **Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit**, where there is a viable business case.
- Improve air quality on urban corridors by, for example, lowering speed limits, reallocating road space to **cleaner transport modes**, and/or supporting the uptake of cleaner technology such as **Electric Vehicles**.
- **Prioritise vulnerable users**, especially pedestrians and cyclists, over motorists.
- Invest (or encourage others to invest) in integrated **passenger information systems** to provide passengers with dynamic, multi-modal travel information.
- Develop integrated **transport hubs** (bus, rail, park and ride, new mobility and cycle parking), integrated ‘Smart Ticketing’, and integrated timetables, where feasible.
- Lobby Government to protect and enhance funding for **socially necessary bus services** in rural areas.
- Advocate for a real term **freeze in public transport fares**.
- Improve the accessibility of transport infrastructure and public transport services by investing in **accessibility improvements** and by ensuring streets and public places are accessible to all.

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

International Gateways

Responses (Plan Shows Southern and Western Rail Access ‘Links’)

- improve public transport access to Heathrow Airport through delivering the Heathrow Airport **Western and Southern rail access schemes** and improvements in public transport access to Gatwick Airport.

- **Demand management policies** to improve the efficiency of the transport network for road freight and to invest in sustainable alternatives.
- Improve the efficiency freight vehicle operations through adoption of **new technologies**.

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

Journeys of the Future

Responses –

- Future proof **electric and digital infrastructure** (standards, etc).
- Incorporate **Mobility as a Service** into public transport networks.
- Encourage consistency in roll out of **smart ticketing systems**.
- Develop a **Future Mobility Strategy** for the South East.

Proposed Response: **Strongly Agree**

Consultation Question 21: Do you have any additional comments on the journey types which form part of our draft Strategy, including any of the initiatives we have identified for each of the journey types

Radial Journeys: BFC notes that improvements to the connectivity of the Reading – Waterloo corridors appears to be included in the Executive Summary as a ‘Response’ but not included in the Main Report as an ‘Initiative’. We would like to see the status of potential improvements to this important link clarified within the Strategy.

Orbital Journeys and Journeys of the Future: Supporting the uptake of cleaner technology and future proofing electric and digital infrastructure is an immediate need and should therefore apply to all journey types. This especially applies to meeting government targets for growing the UK’s electric vehicle fleet for which a substantial increase in electric vehicle charging points both at private and public locations is of paramount importance. More should be done by central Government to push the private sector into providing the infrastructure which they would ultimately secure revenue funding from. Local Authorities are not energy suppliers however BFC is happy to continue facilitating the provision of EV charging point on Council owned car parks where feasible.

Consultation Question 22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with these performance indicators?

Economic, Social and Environmental performance indicators; **Strongly agree**

Consultation Question 23: Do you have any comments about the implementation of the Strategy including the performance indicators, our role and/or the future funding challenges?

Bracknell welcome TfSE’s plan to commission further work around key route corridors across the South East and strongly recommend that these corridor studies include some the on the major BFC / Thames Valley road corridors including the A329/A322(M4 to M3), A3095, A33, A34 and the A4

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal is a long and complex document and difficult to comment on at present.

Consultation Question 24: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal represents a thorough assessment of the draft Transport Strategy? **Tend to Agree**

Consultation Question 25: Do you have any additional comments regarding the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal **No**

Consultation Question 26: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the draft Transport Strategy provides the mechanism that will enable Transport for the South East to achieve our mission of growing the South East's economy by delivering a safe, sustainable and integrated transport system that makes the region more productive and competitive, improves the quality of life for all residents and protects and enhances its natural and built environment.

Tend to Agree

Consultation Question 27: Are there any additional comments that you would like to make that are relevant to this consultation on the draft Transport Strategy for the South East?

BFC's main concern is over the deliverability of such an ambitious strategy. Government policy will be critical to this, as the different bodies involved in planning and delivering transport across the South East will need to be brought into harmony. Funding will need to be guaranteed and channelled at an early stage, not only into individual schemes, but also into over-arching initiatives aimed at generating faster and more reliable public transport systems, the infrastructure for a largescale switch to electric vehicles and the integration of transport information across modes.