



# Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024



# Foreword



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Cabinet lead member for  
highways, transportation  
and flooding

As we unveil our Leicestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 (LBSIP24), it is clear that we are starting to make strides towards developing a 'best in class', sustainable and green passenger transport network across Leicestershire.

That is a network which seamlessly connects people with employment, education, leisure destinations and, most critically, with each other, particularly given the county's rural location.

Historically, the network has been heavily reliant on financial support for non-commercial services and traditional, scheduled bus routes.

But, over the years, the financial pressure on local authorities has increased, with driver shortages and the impact of the pandemic also a factor.

What has happened in recent months with the injection of increased funding from the previous Government is a 'game-changer' for passenger transport.

We have been allocated two-year revenue funding from the Department for Transport amounting to £7.6million – put simply, we now have a unique opportunity to lay the foundations for bringing that vision to reality.

Our new Local Transport Plan (LTP4), which we've been consulting on, aims to address forecasts of significant increases in many demographic measures, including the number of residents, new housing requirements and an ageing population which will have a greater reliance on public transport.

Our LBSIP24 will play a key role in achieving the LTP4 goals as it sets out our ambitious proposals for improving bus services across Leicestershire including:

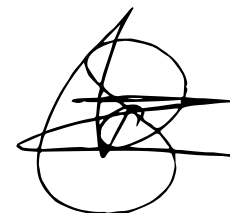
- Measures to improve bus service reliability and frequency.
- Reviewing the Leicestershire bus network to provide a mix of service types and better frequencies / later journeys to complement commercial provision.
- Introduction of new ticketing arrangements to make bus travel more affordable, particularly for young people.
- Improvements to bus service information using different operators' services and paying fares.
- Measures to improve integration between different bus services and between bus and rail and other travel modes such as cycling, walking and e-mobility.

- An expansion in the number of areas where Demand Responsive Transport services (DRTs) are available.
- Integrating school and commuter travel into services
- Encouraging and supporting the move to 'greener' fleets

We have been working with stakeholders, in addition to the Enhanced Partnership (EP), to develop our LBSIP24 which maximises commercial opportunities and reduces the need for financial support. It will also collaborate on public rights of way, cycle routes, active travel, and the rail network.

While we have been developing our LBSIP24, we have been making progress. We have started the network review, supported a free travel for young people offer over the Easter holidays and arranged a series of sustainable travel roadshows.

There are exciting times ahead - and I want YOU to join us on the journey.



# 1. Overview

Leicestershire is a vibrant, predominantly rural county with a mix of urban centres and rural settlements. A total of 80% of the county's land is used for agriculture and approximately 55% of the population live within rural parishes. The county has approximately 150 settlements with a population of less than 10,000, while our urban centres have populations ranging up to 65,000.

We view our extensive rural areas as a key part of our identity and important to the character and strength of our area. The landscape is beautiful and varied, and has an economy of its own, with nationally significant agriculture and food production.

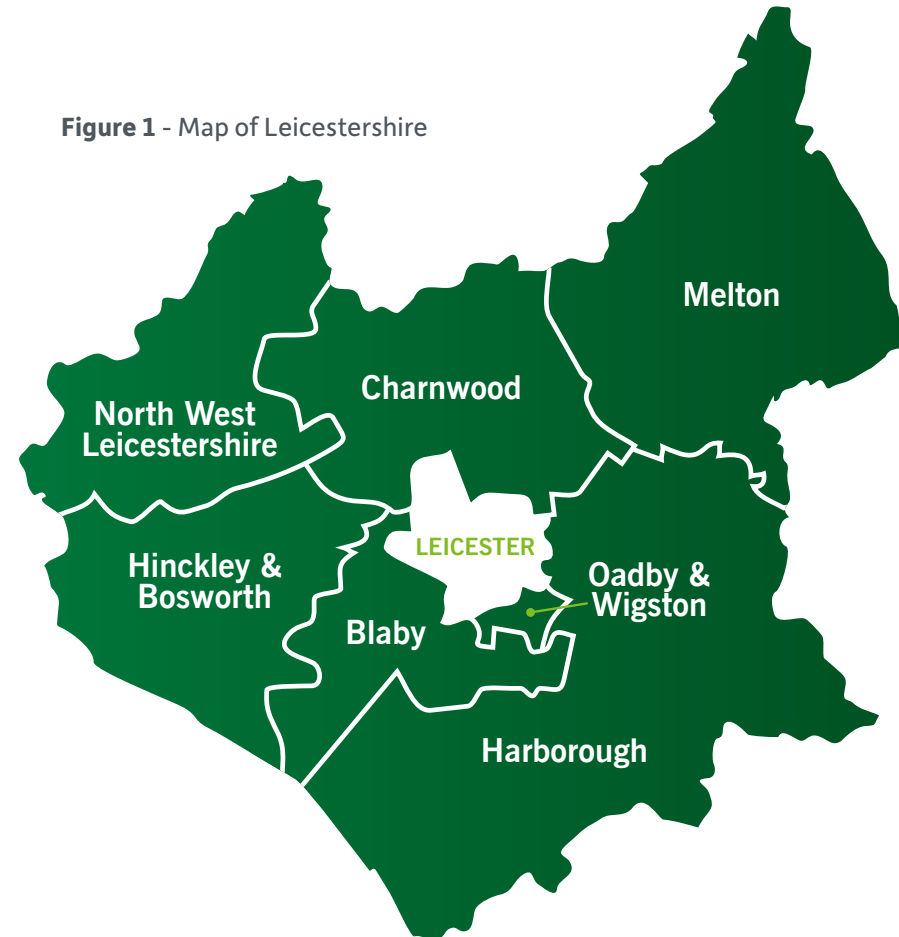
This range of communities and geographical layout requires a creative approach to meeting passenger transport and wider travel needs.



Our vision is for our communities to enjoy enhanced connections and make Leicestershire an attractive place to live, work and play. This includes the benefits people will enjoy from better air quality, reduced carbon emissions and reduced congestion. Current significant grant funding has given us an unprecedented opportunity to start making our ambitions a reality.



Figure 1 - Map of Leicestershire



Our Leicestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 (LBSIP 24) covers the area administered by Leicestershire County Council as a local transport authority (LTA) – see Figure 1. The LBSIP 24 has been developed by Leicestershire County Council in collaboration with bus operators in the county. It takes account of views expressed by residents and visitors to Leicestershire and other interested parties and organisations. It also takes into account discussions with neighbouring authorities, and community transport operators.

The focus of the LBSIP24 is strongly on growing the fare-paying customer market, with concessionary passengers also benefiting from many of the initiatives included. Due to the largely rural nature of the county, there is no real advantage of joining other authorities to become a multi-LTA BSIP at this stage. Operating as a single BSIP, it has the advantage of focusing on a manageable (though large) area and the needs of residents, employers, and visitors.

## Did you know?

Leicestershire covers an area of 1,250 square miles, with the city of Leicester at the centre of the County. The rate of population growth in Leicestershire continues to be above the regional and national levels. The total population in 2021 was 713,000 of which 17% were under the age of 15. The population of Leicestershire is projected to increase by 23% to 861,000 by 2043.

This is higher amongst all age bands in comparison to the East Midlands and England averages. The working age population is projected to increase by 5.3%, whilst the greatest cumulative change is projected to occur in the 65+ age group, accounting for roughly three quarters of growth. Leicestershire is predominantly a rural county, with 80% of the county's land being used for agriculture and approximately 55% of the county's population living within rural parishes. The county has approximately 150 settlements with a population of less than 10,000, and approximately 150 small villages with a population of less than 250 residents.

The delivery of the LBSIP24 is driven by a formal Enhanced Partnership (EP) between the council and Leicestershire bus operators which was formally in place by March 2022. The members of the EP are:

- Leicestershire County Council
- Arriva
- Centrebus
- CT4N
- First
- Diamond Bus
- Nottingham City Transport
- Stagecoach
- Trent Barton
- Vectare
- Wellglade Group (Kinchbus/Trentbarton)
- Two district/borough officer representatives



**Working together as Leicestershire Buses**

In developing the LBSIP24, the county council has engaged widely with multiple stakeholders to incorporate their views on improving bus services. This has built upon the existing collaborative partnership approach between the council and operators. The process has involved:

- Individual meetings with every operator
- All operator meetings
- Engagement with district councils
- Engagement with neighbouring local transport authorities (LTAs)
- Regular meetings with Department for Transport (DfT) representatives
- Engagement with technological suppliers to enhance knowledge and understanding
- Passenger Transport User Group
- Enhanced Partnership Forum
- Leicestershire County Council's intelligence gathered through service registrations received, public letters, petitions, and requests

The LBSIP24 is a flexible, live document which can adapt to change, evolving as details around funding availability and local conditions emerge. It does however give stability, consistency, and clarity of long-term vision to allow both the LTA and bus operators to commit to delivering a much-needed boost to bus services and usage. The LBSIP is formally reviewed annually by members, to ensure that it is still fit-for-purpose and that it takes account of levels of funding availability, technological developments and ongoing feedback from bus users and non-users.





The Enhanced Partnership members meet at least quarterly to review progress on the delivery of the LBSIP, EP plan and schemes, and agree actions needed to keep on or ahead of schedule. The EP also includes opportunity through a broad 'Enhanced Partnership Forum' for a wide range of other stakeholders to provide input and suggestions on how the BSIP should best be implemented.

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The LBSIP24 represents an ambitious but realistic step on the road to revitalising the Leicestershire bus network. With funding from Government, it will be able to deliver a brighter future for bus use in the county that will play a vital role in achieving Leicestershire's aspirations to be a low-carbon, clean growth area.

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## 2. Our Bus Vision

The vision that sits behind the LBSIP24 is one where the county's bus services are simply 'best-in-class'. Our future bus network will seamlessly connect people with employment locations, education and training opportunities, key services, other transport modes, leisure destinations and, of course, each other; in a way that is **reliable, affordable, environmentally friendly, easy-to-use, safe, and inclusive**.

The heart of our vision is a county where the bus is a realistic transport choice through building a bus network and support system that enables residents of and visitors to travel by bus wherever and whenever they need to in a convenient, seamless, and environmentally friendly way. We can't however successfully deliver this vision on our own. We need our residents to come on the journey with us, embrace the improved bus services and make every effort to leave the car at home.

The overall aim of the LBSIP24 is to increase bus usage (compared with pre-pandemic levels) across the county through improved, financially sustainable, higher standard services that better meet the needs of Leicestershire residents, employees, and visitors - making bus travel a preferred choice for travel around the county and travel into the city of Leicester. This will enable long term clean growth, supporting delivery of the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan.<sup>1</sup>

Within this overall aim, our objectives are to make the Leicestershire bus network:

- ✓ **A single system - a high-quality integrated and efficient system**
- ✓ **A clearer brand identity and a more holistic approach to marketing**
- ✓ **Greater co-ordination between operators' timetables**
- ✓ **Integration with other travel modes such as rail, cycling, walking and e-mobility**
- ✓ **Use of DRT to provide greater availability, particular in rural areas of the county**
- ✓ **Reliable - quicker journey times delivered more reliably and where possible, more frequently**
- ✓ **Core bus market for the future**
- ✓ **Easy to use - with the customer experience much easier in terms of getting information, using different operators' services, and paying fares**
- ✓ **More attractive and greener - through moving towards use of modern, lower emission (and ultimately zero emission) vehicles across the network**

Leicestershire County Council is currently in the process of developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP4). Our current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) runs until 2026 and is coming to the end of its life.

<sup>1</sup> [www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Final-LL-SGP-December-2018-1.pdf](http://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Final-LL-SGP-December-2018-1.pdf)



An updated LTP4 will enable the council to deliver transport solutions to benefit local communities, visitors, and users throughout the county. These will aim to:

- Meet the current and future needs of all users in a co-ordinated manner and enable travel choices
- Benefit all transport users including car drivers, freight, public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling
- Provide wider public health, economic and environmental benefits for local communities
- Provide the best value for money to taxpayers

Work has already been undertaken to identify some of the key challenges which will need to be addressed through LTP4 up to 2043 and these are:

- Leicestershire population to grow by 23%
- Need to accommodate 120,000 homes
- Largest population group is expected to be those aged 65 and over
- 29% increase in vehicle kilometres travelled across the county
- 69% increase in delay observed across the network
- 5.5% increase in carbon emissions impacting on air quality and community health
- 7% reduction in average speeds across the network
- Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events to enable reliable and resilient transport networks

Five core themes have been identified to form the structure and direction for LTP4 and these are:

- Enabling health and wellbeing
- Protecting our environment
- Delivering economic growth
- Enhancing our transport network's resilience
- Embracing innovation



Delivering a safe and connected transport network which is resilient and well-maintained to support the ambitions and health of our communities, deliver economic prosperity while safeguarding our environment.



These themes will underpin the overarching vision for the LTP4 which are:

- Focused strategies
- County Strategic Transport Investment Plan
- Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans
- Monitoring and evaluation processes for the delivery of LTP4

It is envisaged that an LTP4 Core Document will be adopted by September 2024, with further phased work through to 2026.

In addition to the development of the LTP4, the core document has considered the following council strategies:

- Our Communities Approach 2022 - 2026
- Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032
- Environment Strategy 2018-2030
- Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2035-2045
- Leicester and Leicestershire 2050; Our Vision for Growth
- Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy 2021-30

The LBSIP24 aligns with the emerging LTP4 thinking and there is a synergy across the complementary visions and objectives. Moving forward the LBSIP24 will support the development of Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans for the county.

The county council, in partnership with bus operators, produced its first BSIP in 2021. Although this provides a sound basis for the updated LBSIP24, there have been significant changes that have taken place over the past three years:

- Impact of Covid on the bus market
- Rising operational costs
- Sporadic nature of funding opportunities to deliver priorities
- Speed of delivery of the current Enhanced Partnership Scheme commitments

It is for these reasons that the LBSIP24 has been produced to consider these developments and evolve the plan to reflect them. The LBSIP24 (and the EP Plan and EP Schemes) will form daughter documents to the emerging LTP4 to ensure that they are embedded within the Leicestershire governance framework and culture.

All schemes, measures and initiatives being delivered will be monitored, measured, and evaluated to enable the Partnership to understand what works, what does not, and identify ways in which scheme delivery can evolve to ensure maximum positive impact for current and future bus users.

# 3. Current Offer for Bus Passengers

The public transport network plays a crucial role within the county as it provides connections to urban centres and market towns enabling access to services and facilities. This is a critical service for those members of the community who do not have access to a private vehicle or are unable to drive. Most notably, this is the younger generation who use the network to access education and employment, as well as the older generation to access health services and social amenities. The Enhanced Partnership has real ambitious aspirations as set out in our initial BSIP in 2021 to improve the offer to bus passengers, however this has been extremely challenging for the following reasons:

- Limited funding to enable the county council to step in and support commercial services when they have sought support to continue services or have registered to withdraw/significantly reduce provision
- Provision to rural areas has been restricted to minimalistic Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) provision - offering one or two journeys a week to one local centre
- Financial challenges faced by the county council which have limited the opportunities for developing promotional offers and infrastructure investment
- Poor satisfaction by the public
- Managing declining bus use impacted by limited council funding, a cost-of-living crisis, a pandemic and financial challenges faced by operators

Nationally, bus usage remains below pre-pandemic levels. Across Leicestershire, 8.6 million public transport passenger journeys were undertaken in 2023, despite facing a variety of challenges:

- A sparse population
- Many settlements isolated from traditional transport corridors
- High levels of car ownership
- Pockets of deprivation and ongoing funding constraints in comparison to other East Midlands LTA's

The primary providers of passenger transport services in Leicestershire are commercial organisations that operate local bus services on a profit-making basis. In terms of the bus network, in mileage, for Leicestershire that equates to 6 million miles of which 4.8million miles is commercial and 1.2 million miles are supported by the county council. However, in comparison, the size of the network is smaller when compared to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and a greater level of the network is supported in comparison.

The current Leicestershire Bus Network provision.<sup>2</sup>

It is generally in the interests of the people of Leicestershire for commercial bus networks to be attractive, efficient, and stable. Such networks can meet the needs of many people in providing a means of collective transport that reduces congestion on our roads, limits vehicular emissions and provides access to work and life opportunities.

<sup>2</sup> [www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Leicestershire-Network-Bus-Map.pdf](http://www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Leicestershire-Network-Bus-Map.pdf)



Facilitating and supporting an appropriate mix of services, working with communities and commercial and third-sector operators, is a key aim for the council, against a backdrop of a challenging funding situation. These are intended to meet statutory requirements, help Leicestershire County Council deliver on its strategic priorities and outcomes, and support the people of Leicestershire in accessing key services.

In general, Leicestershire has seen a downward trend in bus passengers over the last decade, from 15.1m in 2013/14 to 8.6m in 2022/23. The reduction in patronage that took place prior to the pandemic coincided with challenging decisions having to be made on the level of local authority support for non-commercial bus services. Post pandemic, patronage has continued to recover, with a million more trips in Leicestershire in 2022/23 than in 2021/22, as shown in Figure 2, although the rate of recovery in Leicestershire was slower than in neighbouring Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Reversing this trend of decline and moving on to grow bus use over the next decade is a key aim of the of the LBSIP24. At the same time, however, it should be noted that there are a number of commercial routes whose patronage was growing pre-Covid and there are lessons to be learned from such services.



**Figure 2 - Leicestershire Bus Passenger trends**  
(Based on DfT bus statistics Table BUS01e, as published March 2024)

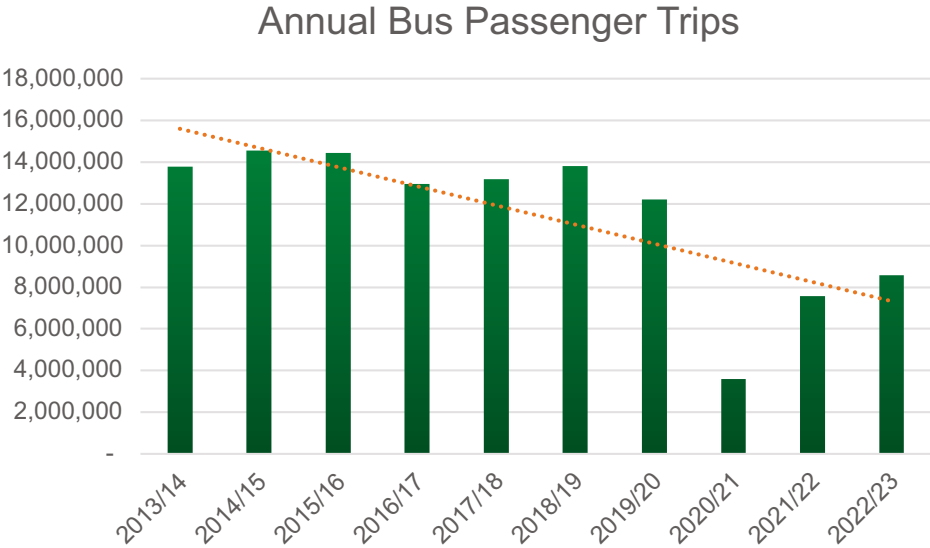


Table 1 shows that the proportion of passengers travelling with an English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) pass has fallen over the last decade (in line with the rise in age of eligibility). The annual number of concessionary travellers was 1 million lower in 2019/20 than in 2013/14. Between 2019/20 and 2022/23 the number of concessionary travellers almost halved from 3.9 million to 2 million.

Although the number of concessionary passengers increased slightly between 2021/22 and 2022/23, the proportion of concessionary journeys remains low at 24% of all passenger journeys, compared to 32% in 2019/20. While 24% is higher than the England average of 19%, the proportion of concessionary journeys in 2022/23 in Leicestershire was only 26% higher than the England average, compared to being 63% higher than the England average in 2013/14.



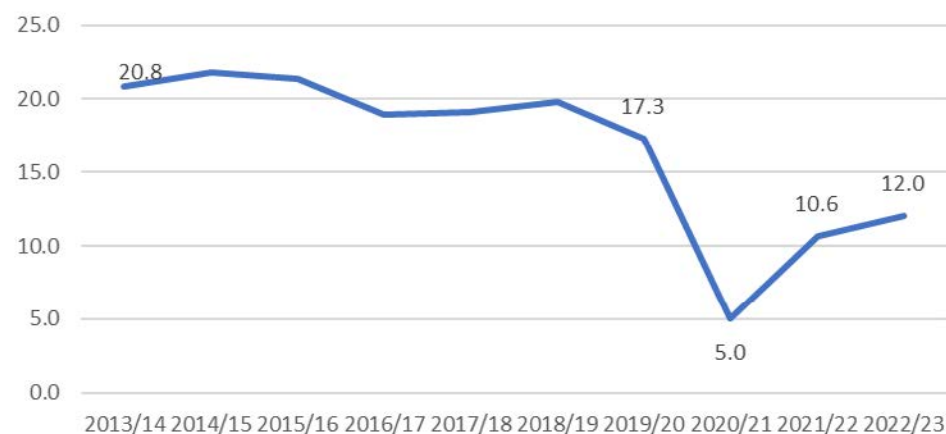
Year	Total passenger journeys (millions)	Of which ENCTS (millions)	%ENCTS	England % ENCTS
2013/14	13.8	4.9	36	22
2014/15	14.6	5.1	35	22
2015/16	14.5	5.3	37	22
2016/17	12.9	4.3	33	22
2017/18	13.2	4.4	33	22
2018/19	13.8	4.5	32	22
2019/20	12.2	3.9	32	22
2020/21	3.6	0.9	26	20
2021/22	7.6	1.8	24	20
2022/23	8.6	2.0	24	19

Over the past decade, there has been a decline in the number of bus passenger journeys per head of population in Leicestershire (Figure 3), reducing by 42% from just under 21 in 2013/14, to 12 journeys per person in 2022/23. The percentage decline in passenger trips was comparable to the figure for Nottinghamshire (38%) and Derbyshire (43%) over the same period.

Although the number of bus passenger journeys per head of population has increased post-Covid, the overall lower level of journeys reflects the changing pattern of travel demand as people tend to work from home more and online

shopping has increased. The reduction in demand for travel has resulted in a greater number of services requiring local authority support to keep going, which has led to falling service frequencies to cover the cost of a larger supported network, and ultimately the need to discontinue support for particularly poor performing routes so funds can be saved for others.

**Figure 3 - Bus Passenger journeys per head of population**





LBSIP24 offers the opportunity for real change to improve the reliability of bus services and offer an attractive alternative to the car.

### Supported Services

Emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, the county council continued to support the existing bus network at the same level, despite reduced patronage and extended existing local bus service contracts. However, in line with procurement regulations, these contracts were required to go through an open tender process. The council has also continued to provide support using DfT grant funding, including Covid Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG), Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) and Local Transport Fund (LTF), to support both the commercial and supported bus network.

The council recognised that the pandemic had an impact on travel habits and the challenges of uncertain patronage levels faced by operators. For this reason, the local bus service contracts were tendered on a minimum cost basis only, with the council taking the revenue risk. Contracts were tendered on a like-for-like basis, based on pre-Covid (February 2020) timetables to provide reassurance for the travelling public.

The contracts were awarded for a period of 24 months from 1st August 2022, with an option to extend for a further 12 months. During this time, all local bus service contracts will be reviewed as part of a county-wide review of provision in the context of the council's Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy - which was paused following the onset of the pandemic - and in relation to the post-Covid commercial network.

### The current supported service network:

Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
3 & 13	Loughborough Town	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
8A	Loughborough - Melton Mowbray	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
22B	Leicester - Birstall	Min Cost	Hourly	Saturday Only
23 & 25	Melton - Bottesford and Melton - Stathern	Min Cost	23 - Hourly 25 - Four journeys a day	Monday to Saturday
27	Thurmaston - Loughborough	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
30*	Famdon Fields	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
33	Market Harborough Town	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
44	Foxton - Harborough - Fleckney	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
58	Lutterworth - Market Harborough	Min Cost	1 Hour 30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
100	Syston - Melton Mowbray	Min Cost	2 Hourly	Monday to Saturday

\* Service 30 funded by Section 106 monies.

Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>154</b>	Loughborough - Leicester	Min Cost	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>747</b>	Leicester - Uppingham	Min Cost	2 Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>R0001</b>	Hinckley Estates to town	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>RTC30</b>	Catthorpe and Swinford - Lutterworth and Rugby	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day	Monday to Saturday (Excl. Wednesday)
<b>R0002</b>	Earl Shilton Estates - Earl Shilton Co-op	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day	Monday to Saturday
	Kirby Grange - Leicester and Glenfield	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>R0379</b>	Grobby Estates - Groby Centre	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday and Thursday
<b>R0003</b>	Barwell Estates to town	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>RTC393</b>	Ibstock - Barlestone	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday
<b>R26A</b>	Donisthorpe - Swadlincote - Ashby-de-la Zouch	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday
<b>RTC359</b>	Peatling Parva - Lutterworth	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>RTC392</b>	Stapleton - Barwell	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday and Saturday
<b>RTC12</b>	Batram - Coalville (Marlene Reid Centre)	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day	Tuesday to Saturday
<b>RTC15</b>	Thornton and Stanton Under Barton - Markfield	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday and Thursday
<b>RTC16</b>	Branston and Eaton to Grantham	Taxi DRT	One journey a day	Thursday
<b>RTC22</b>	Hemington - Castle Donington - Loughborough	Taxi DRT	Up to three return journeys a day	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>RTC23</b>	Whitwick	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day (Monday to Wednesday)  Bus route - Three morning journeys, three afternoon journeys (Thursday to Saturday)  One afternoon journey only on Saturday	Monday to Saturday
<b>RTC24</b>	Wilson - Castle Donington - Long Eaton	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day - Two on Wednesday	Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
<b>RTC300</b>	Hallaton, Glooston, Market Harborough	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday
<b>RTC302</b>	Foxton Locks Arnesby, Market Harborough	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday

Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>RTC307</b>	Norton - Juxta - Twycross - Atherstone	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday and Friday
<b>RTC309</b>	Bottleacre Lane - Loughborough	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday and Saturday
<b>RTC316</b>	Cotesbach - Lutterworth	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday
<b>RTC357</b>	Peatling Magna - Leicester	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday
<b>RTC365</b>	Gaddesby and Ratcliffe on the Wreake - Melton Mowbray	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Towards Melton Mowbray - Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday  Towards Syston - Monday, Wednesday, Friday
<b>RTC380</b>	Wartnaby and Ab Kettleby - Melton Mowbray	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday



Service Name/No	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>RTC382</b>	Barton - Carlton-Market Bosworth	Taxi DRT	Two return journeys a day	Monday, Wednesday, Saturday
<b>RTC389</b>	Cadeby - Market Bosworth	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday to Saturday
<b>RTC39</b>	Kirby Muxloe and LFE	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>RTC390</b>	Hugglescote - Coalville	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday and Saturday
<b>RTC4</b>	Kirby Grange and Botcheston - Leicester and Glenfield Co-op	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Thursday and Saturday
<b>RTC41</b>	Heather and Ibstock - Coalville	Taxi DRT	Mon to Fri three return journeys, one return journey on Saturday	Monday to Saturday
<b>RTC8</b>	Stoughton - Leicester City and Evington	Taxi DRT	One return journey a day	Monday to Saturday



## Commercial Network

Passenger travel habits changed as a direct result of the pandemic and there is no solid evidence that a new 'normal' has been reached in terms of demand for travel in the county. Patronage is still recovering from the impact of Covid, although it is unlikely to return naturally to pre-Covid levels. Concessionary usage is continuing to plateau and is currently at around 69% of pre-Covid levels.

As a result of network reviews being undertaken across the county, there have been significant changes to the commercial bus network. The number of registrations submitted in 2021 was 252, in 2022 there were 267 and in 2023 there were 161. Service registration changes have included reducing frequencies and curtailing routes. In many cases, these changes have enabled operators to continue to provide a commercial service in the face of driver shortages.

Over the last year, the county council has stepped in to provide De Minimis funding to support nine predominantly commercial services under threat of withdrawal by the operator. The county council has been able to consider these requests with the receipt of BSIP+ funding, and in the context of its Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy, to ensure that passengers were not left without access to essential facilities and services.



The current commercial network (Inc De Minimis agreements):

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>X6</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Fosse Park - Hinckley - Coventry via M69	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly - Daytime Evening - Infrequent 2 hourly - Sunday	Monday to Sunday
<b>6</b>	Centrebus	Bottesford - Grantham (Muston diversion)	De-Minimis Subsidy	Every hour and 15 minutes Sunday - Hour and 30 minutes to 2 hourly	Monday to Sunday
<b>7 / 7A</b>	Arriva	Burbage - Hinckley - Nuneaton (Wykin & Hollycroft/ Burbage)	De-Minimis Subsidy	7 - Hourly to 2 hourly 7A - Hourly to hourly and 15 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>8</b>	Arriva	Hinckley - Lutterworth	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly to 2 hourly	Monday to Sunday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>11 / 11A</b>	Arriva	Coalville - Agar Nook (Agar Nook)	De-Minimis Subsidy	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>14 &amp; 15</b>	Centrebus	Melton Mowbray Town	De Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>15</b>	Arriva	Ravenstone - Coalville - Ibstock (Hugglescote - Ibstock, Ravenstone)	De-Minimis Subsidy	30 minutes Hourly - Saturday	Monday to Saturday
<b>16</b>	Arriva	Loughborough - Coalville (Whitwick - Thringstone)	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>22A</b>	Centrebus	Leicester - Birstall - Sileby - Barrow Leicester - Evington	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Friday
<b>28</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Coalville (Hugglescote - Thornton)	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Contract Type	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>56 / 56A</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Scraptoft - Thurnby (Scraptoft - Thunby)	De-Minimis Subsidy	56 - Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>84</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Lutterworth (Cosby - Lutterworth)	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Sunday
<b>X84</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Lutterworth	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly Sunday every 8 hours	Monday to Sunday
<b>125</b>	Diamond Bus	Leicester - Castle Donington	De-Minimis Subsidy	2 hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>129</b>	Diamond Bus	Ashby - Loughborough	De-Minimis Subsidy	2 hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>153</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Market Bosworth (Newbold Verdon - Market Bosworth)	De-Minimis Subsidy	Hourly	Monday to Saturday

## Commercial Services

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>X3</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Market Harborough	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>5 / 5A / X5</b>	Arriva	5 - Leicester - East Goscote 5A - Leicester - Melton Mowbray X5 - Leicester - Melton Mowbray	5 - 30 minutes 5A - 30 minutes X5 - Two school journeys per day one in morning one in afternoon, four journeys per day	5 - Monday to Sunday 5A - Monday to Saturday X5 - Monday to Friday
<b>6 / 6A</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Thurmaston	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>7 / 7A</b>	Arriva	Burbage - Hinckley - Nuneaton	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>16 / 16A / X16</b>	Arriva	Loughborough - Shepshed - Coalville	16A - One journey in afternoon X16 - One journey in morning	Monday to Friday



Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>27</b>	Arriva	Ratby - Leicester	Hourly	Monday to Sunday
<b>28</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Coalville	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>29 / 29A / X29 / 29B</b>	Arriva -	Leicester - Coalville - Swadlincote	29 - Hourly 29A - Hourly 29B - 2 hours X29 - Four journeys a day	29 - All week 29A and X29 - Monday to Saturday 29B - Sunday only
<b>31 / 31A / X31</b>	Arriva	31 / 31A - Leicester - Oadby X31 - Leicester - Kibworth	31 - 30 minutes 31A - 30 minutes X31 - Four journeys a day	31 / 31A - Monday to Sunday X31 - Monday to Friday
<b>44 / 44A</b>	Arriva	44 - Leicester - South Wigston 44A - Leicester - Wigston Magna	44 - 30 minutes 44A - 30 minutes	44 - Monday to Sunday 44A - Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>X45</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Magna Park	Six times a day	Monday to Sunday
<b>47</b>	Arriva	Leicester - South Wigston	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>48</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Wigston Magna	12 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>49</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Wigston Magna - Fleckney	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>50</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Fosse Park - Narborough	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>51</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Narborough Road - Braunstone	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>85</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Countesthorpe - South Wigston	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>104</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Fosse Park	15 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>127</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Loughborough - Shepshed - Coalville	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>158</b>	Arriva	Leicester - Hinckley - Nuneaton	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>65</b>	Arriva Midlands	Nuneaton - MIRA - Tamworth	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>99</b>	Catteralls	Rugby - Husbands Bosworth	Two journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>R2</b>	Centrebus	Melton Mowbray - Oakham	1 hour 30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>6</b>	Centrebus	Grantham - Bottesford	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>8A</b>	Centrebus	Loughborough - Melton Mowbray	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>22A</b>	Centrebus	Barrow - Sileby - Cossington - Birstall - Leicester - Evington	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>22E</b>	Centrebus	Evington - Leicester	Evening hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>29</b>	Centrebus	Essendine - Oakham	Two journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>29A</b>	Centrebus	Brooksby College - Oakham	Two journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>30</b>	Centrebus	Market Harborough - Southern Estate	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>40</b>	Centrebus	Circleline - Leicester - orbital	Hourly	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>832</b>	Centrebus	School service (Thurmaston - Birstall - English Martyrs School)	Two journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>866</b>	CT4N	Loughborough - Sutton Bonington UON Campus	Eight journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>13</b>	First	Leicester - Glenfield	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>13W</b>	First	Leicester - Glenfield	One journey a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>14</b>	First	Leicester - Kirby Frith	15 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>21</b>	First	Thurmaston - Blount Road - Leicester	20 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>74</b>	First	Leicester - Anstey	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>2</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough - Barrow - Sileby	1 hour 20	Monday to Saturday
<b>5</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough Town Service (Ravensthorpe Drive - Loughborough - Hazel Road Estate)	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>9</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough - Nottingham	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>11</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough Town Service (Thorpe Acre - Loughborough - Shelthorpe)	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday
<b>12</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough Town Service (Thorpe Acre - Loughborough - Shelthorpe)	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>Skylink Derby</b>	Kinchbus	Derby - East Midlands Airport - Loughborough - Leicester	15 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>Sprint</b>	Kinchbus	Loughborough University - Loughborough Rail Station	10 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>Welland Wanderer</b>	Lawson's	Cottingham - Market Harborough	Tuesdays only	Monday to Friday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>R1</b>	Mark Bland Travel	Oakham - Melton Mowbray	Hourly to two hourly, eleven journeys a day	Monday to Saturday
<b>R1</b>	Mark Bland Travel	Oakham - Corby	Hourly to two hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>9 / 19 / 19A / 19C</b>	Diamond Bus	9 - East Midlands gateway - EM Airport - Ashby - Burton 19 - Ashby de la-Zouch - Measham - Burton upon Trent 19A - Burton upon Trent - Mercia Park 19C - Moira - Burton upon Trent	9 - 30 minutes 19 - Hourly 19A - Two morning journeys, three afternoon journeys 19C - One journey a day	9 - Monday to Friday 19 - Monday to Friday 19A / 19C - Monday to Friday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>20</b>	Diamond Bus	Tamworth - Mercia Park	Three morning journeys Three afternoon / evening journeys	Monday to Friday
<b>220</b>	National Express Accessible Transport	Nuneaton - Bramcote - Wolvey - Hinckley	Wednesdays only, two journeys	Monday to Friday
<b>1</b>	Nottingham City Transport	Nottingham - Loughborough	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>GS1</b>	Sharpes of Nottingham	Hickling - Grantham	One return journey a day	Monday to Friday
<b>GS2</b>	Sharpes of Nottingham	Colston Bassett - Grantham	One return journey a day	Monday to Friday
<b>GS4</b>	Sharpes of Nottingham	East Bridgford - Radcliffe On Trent - Bottesford - Grantham	One return journey a day	Monday to Friday
<b>11</b>	Stagecoach	Hinckley town centre - Hollycroft Grange	30 minutes	Monday to Saturday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>X7 / 77</b>	Stagecoach	Northampton - Market Harborough	X7 - Hourly 77 - One Journey a day	X7 - Monday to Sunday 77 - Monday to Friday
<b>X7</b>	Stagecoach	Market Harborough - Leicester	Hourly	Monday to Sunday
<b>18</b>	Stagecoach	Kettering - Market Harborough	Hourly	Monday to Saturday
<b>148L</b>	Stagecoach	Leicester - Nuneaton	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>SVB 3 / 4</b>	Soar Valley Bus	3 - Ratcliffe on Soar - Loughborough 4 - Ratcliffe on Soar - Loughborough	3 - Two journeys a day on Thursday 4 - Two journeys a day on Thursday	3 - Thursday Only 4 - Thursday Only
<b>Skylink Nottingham</b>	Trentbarton	Nottingham - EMA - Coalville / Loughborough	15 / 20 minutes	Monday to Sunday

Service Name/No	Operator	Route	Frequency	Days of operation
<b>Skylink Express</b>	Trentbarton	Nottingham - Clifton - East Midlands Airport	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>my15</b>	Trentbarton	EM Airport - Old Sawley - Stapleford - Ilkeston	25 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>93</b>	Vectare	Grantham - Bottesford - Bingham	1 to 2 hours	Monday to Saturday
<b>93B</b>	Vectare	Grantham - Bottesford	Two journeys a day	Monday to Friday
<b>Novus Fosse</b>	Vectare	Fosse Park - Enderby - New Lubbethorpe - Fosse Park	30 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>Novus Direct</b>	Vectare	New Lubbethorpe - Leicester	20 minutes	Monday to Sunday
<b>2X</b>	Vectare	Leicester - Loughborough	One morning journey Three evening journeys	Monday to Sunday

## Public engagement

Satisfaction indicators from the National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) satisfaction survey were updated for 2023 covering public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, highway and transport services in local authority areas.

Results from the 2023 NHT survey showed little change in satisfaction with local bus services since the previous year at 42% for 2023 (from 41.1% 2022 to 185 41.8% in 2023). However, this indicator had missed its 55% target. Satisfaction with bus services appears to have started to plateau following declining satisfaction levels since 2016 (64% satisfaction in 2016). In comparison with other English county councils, it has declined from the second quartile for 2022 to the third quartile in 2023.

‘Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (millions)’ increased in performance slightly (1.6 percentage points) from 9.38m in quarter one 2023/24 to 9.53m in quarter two 2023/24 and had met its 8.74m target. The temporary £2 cap on fares started at the beginning of January 2023. The Government hoped it would reinvigorate some of England’s bus services. It is likely the fare cap will have contributed to this gradual improvement in bus journeys over the past year. Although having increased significantly from a low of three million during the Covid-19 pandemic, in quarter four 2020/21, passenger numbers remain lower than the pre-Covid-19 pandemic level of 12-13m annual journeys. This indicator is in the fourth (bottom) quartile when compared to other English county councils for 2021/22.



## Enhanced Partnership and Passenger Transport User Group

Since the EP was established in 2022, its forum and board have been set up and have provided the organisational structure for the effective delivery of the original BSIP. This has seen the delivery of the following initial EP schemes:

- Passenger Charter adopted
- Bus Infrastructure Standards established
- Roll out of Euro VI vehicles on B4114 corridor

In March 2023, the first Leicestershire Bus User Group meeting was held, with the aim to give members the opportunity to help shape the future of bus service provision within Leicestershire. The initial focus of the group is to consider the projects and schemes contained within the BSIP and suggest those to be prioritised for implementation, subject to funding availability. The group receive updates on progress of the EP in implementing the BSIP and meeting its targets. It also reviews the Passenger Charter annually to ensure that it meets the needs of the travelling public.





### Rural Mobility Fund

In 2021, the county council submitted a successful Rural Mobility Fund bid and were awarded £1.3m. The funding was for a three-year trial of a modern on-demand transport service (DDRT) for the rural area between Leicester and Hinckley. The service consisted of three accessible minibuses that would operate subject to passenger bookings via an app on their phone, or by calling a direct line. This has provided an opportunity to trial a modern, rural DRT service as part of our work to explore the approach to supporting passenger transport services, particularly in respect of accessibility to jobs and services.

The trial DDRT service (FoxConnect) has seen the following:

- A steady increase in the number of passengers using the service since it started in October 2022, with an average of 1800 passenger journeys per month
- The number of passengers using the service throughout the week has remained consistent
- 3,400, 17- to 20-year-olds have used the service and 4,165, 60-to 69-year-olds have also used the service
- There are over 4,500 registered users on the service with an average of approximately 145 new users signing up to the service each month
- Over recent months, the service has seen the highest number of passengers journeys taking place between 3pm-4pm
- The service has averaged 2.96 passengers per vehicle hour over recent months
- The service generally averages between 1.1 and 1.2 passengers per booking
- Hinckley Bus Station has been the most popular destination for journeys on this service



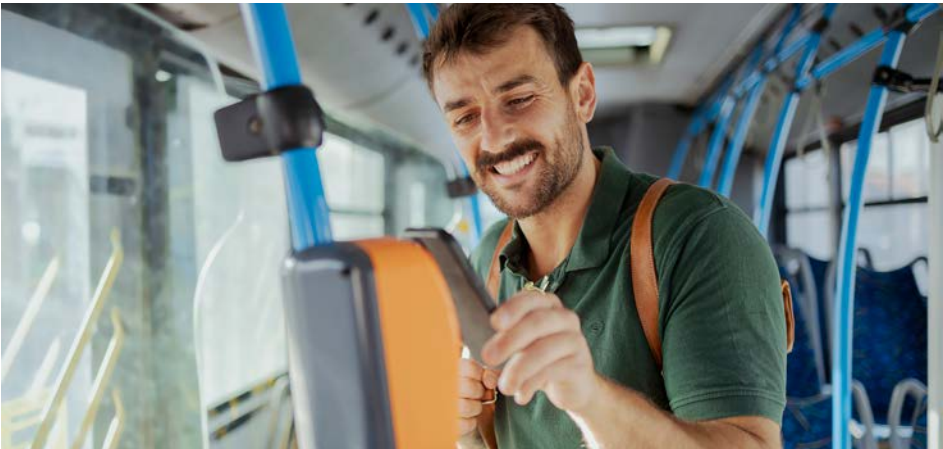
### Park and Ride

The latest update for the ‘Number of park and ride journeys’ showed an increase in journeys from the previous year, as shown in the table below:

Years	Q1 April to June	Q2 July to September	Q3 October to December	Q4 January to March	Total
2022/23	122,073	136,323	188,661	176,479	623,536
2023/24	165,243	179,527	207,135	188,522	740,427
% Change	35%	32%	10%	7%	19%

There has been a rise in patronage during each quarter in 2023/24 when compared to the same quarters in 2022/23. Quarters 1 and 2 showed a significant increase above 30%, with lower growth in quarters 3 and 4, resulting in an overall increase of 19%.

Despite this, the average quarterly journeys remained lower than the average quarterly pre-pandemic levels of 206,700 journeys between 2015 - 2019.



### Ticketing and Fares

As the fixed route bus route network is commercial, supported through De-Minimis payments or Minimum Subsidy contracts, operators have full control over bus fares, tickets, and other products. Fare scales for all operators are graduated so passengers are charged a higher fare the longer distance they travel.

In collaboration with Leicester City Council, ‘Flexi’ bus tickets offer unlimited travel on any bus service in the Greater Leicester ‘Flexi’ zone operated by the main five bus operators in the area. The Flexi zone extends from the city into parts of the county. A range of Flexi tickets is available for different age groups. For part-time commuters, a new ‘3 days in 7’ ticket has been introduced which allows the holder to use the ticket on any three days in each calendar week.

The Leicester EP digital best fare capping solution which was rolled out in April 2022 covers the Flexi zone area which extends into Leicestershire. Users ‘tap on’ and ‘tap off’ using a bank card or phone app, with payment then made automatically at the end of the day based on the cheapest fare available for the journeys undertaken across any operator. There is also a weekly ‘cheapest fare’ cap.

## Bus Promotional Campaigns

Season	Type of campaign	Details	Outputs
<b>Spring - 2024</b>	Free travel for under 16's	<p>Free travel for under 16's boarding in Leicestershire during Easter - 2 weeks (23.03.24 to 07.04.24)</p> <p>7 out of 8 operators participated in the scheme</p> <p>A number of different channels used to promote the scheme across social media platforms including dedicated page on operators website and Choosehowyoumove.co.uk and information circulated to a number of partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>Over 12,000 children/young people travelled during this 2-week period</p> <p>34,900 impressions were received across all posts promoting the scheme, with nearly 300 clicks through the CHYM webpage/news release. There were 111 shares, and the press release was viewed 2,050 times on the website</p>

Season	Type of campaign	Details	Outputs
<b>Summer - 2024</b>	Get around by bus this summer - £2 fare and group tickets promotion	<p>15th July 2024 Encouraging Leicestershire residents to travel by bus to events and activities happening across the county this summer</p> <p>A dedicated webpage offering inspiration on things to do by bus with links to operator website</p>	n/a
<b>Autumn / Winter 2024</b>	Additional journeys / services / fares	<p>Halloween</p> <p>Xmas events / light switch on</p> <p>Light night shopping</p> <p>Social - late evening</p>	



## New Developments and Evolving Bus Demand

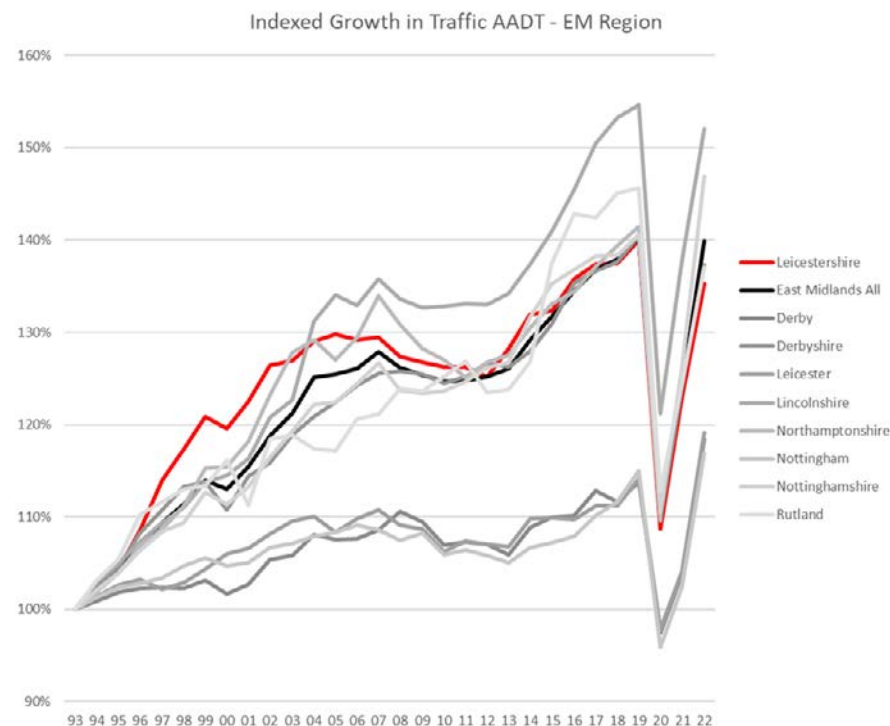
Leicestershire is experiencing significant growth challenges for new residential and commercial developments coming forward over the next 20 years. To encourage alternative modes and offer greater travel choice, it is essential bus services are provided from an early stage of occupation to enhance behaviour change opportunities. Enabling this starts at the earliest stages of spatial planning through work by district councils to develop Local Plans; it is important that Local Plans seek to allocate new development in places that already are or have the ability to be served by frequent reliable bus services and provide the policy foundation to seek to secure developer contributions towards service improvements as appropriate. Local Plans provide the basis for the county council to engage with district councils as part of the planning process to understand specific opportunities and proposals for developments to be integrated into the bus network at the most appropriate time.

Where appropriate Section 106 funding (a developer contribution) is requested towards public transport services and infrastructure. (In addition to any Local Plan policies, the county council has its own policies and strategies in relation to seeking developer contributions, that don't just cover public transport, but wider transport and non-transport matters). Such requests can often compete with other requests for highway enhancements, education, health, and community facilities. S106 contributions towards public transport measures therefore cannot be guaranteed. However, every effort is made to secure developer contribution towards provision and promotion of sustainable travel.

## Congestion and Traffic Levels

Congestion and increasing traffic volume is a major issue for bus services.

The figure below highlights the annual average daily traffic levels in the county from 1993 to 2022 in comparison to other East Midlands authorities. While noting the impact of Covid, Leicestershire has seen a 35% in traffic growth between 1993 and 2022. Analysis shows, that on average from 1993 to 2022, every road in Leicestershire carries approximately 17% more than the average East Midlands road. The resulting greater levels of traffic flow on existing roads have a significant impact on the operation of the bus network and increases the strain across the road network.





## Baseline Spending Profile

The baseline spending on the Leicestershire bus network is:

	Revenue 22/23	Capital 22/23	Revenue 23/24	Capital 23/25	Source of funding	Notes
<b>Supported Services</b>	£3,588,699	£0	£3,671,822	£0	LCC budgets, BSOG, S106, DfT RMF, DfT Local Transport Fund	Net cost of supported services. Includes LBS, Park & Ride, DRT, Rural Mobility Fund
<b>Concessionary fares reimbursements</b>	£3,705,039	£0	£2,754,512	£0	LCC budgets, DfT Supported Bus Service Grant	Includes concessionary travel reimbursements and all associated spend
<b>Other fares support / ticketing</b>	£0	£0	£35,585	£0	BSIP+	Youth fares incentives
<b>Bus infrastructure</b>	£203,098	£170,568	£196,210	£141,585	LCC budgets - revenue S106 - capital	Includes revenue costs for real time passenger info, bus shelter cleaning and maintenance
<b>Zero emission buses</b>	£0	£0	£0	£0		

### Driver Recruitment

Since the impacts of Covid, the recruitment and retention of bus drivers has proved challenging for operators. This appeared to be an issue across England as the economy rebalances after the pandemic. However, improvements have been seen during 2023 with Leicestershire bus operators now stating that the previous issue of scarce driver resource has eased.



### Bus Fleet and Stop Infrastructure.

There are currently 3318 marked bus stops and 823 bus shelters in the county. Due to the financial pressures on the county council, there has been limited budgets available to introduce bus infrastructure improvements. There has been a programme to upgrade bus stops within the Central Leicestershire area (RTI and totems) with funding support from Leicester City Council. This has demonstrated excellent partnership working and commitment to delivery with a neighbouring local authority. Based on data provided by our operators, the average age of a bus operated in Leicestershire is 7.7 years old, in comparison to the 2023 English average of 8.4 years. As shown in table 2, most operators' fleets meet Euro VI emissions standard, indicating a shift to a cleaner and greener fleet.

Table 2 - Emissions Standards

Euro category	No. of buses
Euro 2	0
Euro 3	4
Euro 4	29
Euro 5	98
Euro VI	195
Euro VI Retrofit	149
Battery Electric	116

## 4. Improvement Programme to 2024/2025

Our 2021 BSIP sets out an ambitious programme of proposals which, if funded from the National Bus Strategy, would have helped to kick start improvements to the passenger transport network for the council. Despite not receiving the initial tranche of funding the following proposals were further developed using existing resources within the EP.

In May 2023, the county council was awarded BSIP+ funding with the intention to target actions that the council and its EP expect will deliver the best overall outcomes in growing long-term patronage, revenues and maintain service levels, while providing essential social and economic connectivity for local communities. The funding has been specifically aimed at sustaining services for the one-year period and making improvements to continue sustainability beyond 2024/25.

A light-touch revision of the Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS) has taken place. The purpose of revising the PTPS is to ensure that the Authority can:

- Adapt the transport provision in-line with fluctuating funding levels
- Provide a flexible network that can adapt according to the changing passenger transport landscape
- Deliver a public bus network which provides value for money, while appropriately aligning with the Government's National Bus Strategy (NBS)
- Consider other initiatives that could improve services and underpin the ambitions of the LBSIP24

The funding from the DfT for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 provides a unique opportunity to make real improvements to the passenger transport network and services over the next two years. The position after this funded period is less certain, and it is, therefore, necessary to ensure that the council can adapt its support to services according to the prevailing budget situation.

As a result of the BSIP+ grant funding, the council is now able to consider a different approach to the supported bus service network. This will involve working with operators directly and through the EP to redesign a passenger transport network for Leicestershire:

- Designed to complement and support the existing commercial network
- Increase accessibility
- Provide more direct, attractive routes by bus
- Extend the use of Flexibus models and DDRT
- Consideration could also be given to enhancing existing commercial services where appropriate, such as longer operating hours to facilitate shift work at a major employment centre
- Plan services to maximise potential of multi-modal journeys (bus-train-cycle-walk)

The LBSIP24 BSIP+ grant funded programme is as follows:

Theme	Project	Description	Outcome	Budget £000k
Bus service support	Assist operators to stabilise and strengthen the commercial network.	Implement clear, fairer, de-minimis subsidy agreement with operators.	Strengthen existing commercial network.	£500
	Review and redesign County bus network.	Work with operators to review and reshape the passenger transport network across Leicestershire. Developing a 'hub and spoke' model that connects rural communities with small and larger settlements. This would consist of a range of traditional commercial and supported bus services, flexible bus services, DRT and DDRT.		£3,800
	Explore the feasibility of using Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT).	Implement DDRT to complement main bus route network - identify zones as part of county-wide network review and feed into other modes of sustainable travel. Building on the best practice developed from our Rural Mobility Fund DRT pilot scheme implemented in 2022.	Affordable bus network for LTA.  Enabling greater connectivity and journey choice.	
Fares and ticketing	Work with operators to trial discounted travel for younger people.	<p>A task and finish group has been established within the EP to deliver improvements to ticket and fare offers.</p> <p>A calendar of future promotions/events is currently under development so there will be a rolling programme of campaigns.</p> <p>An example of which was a targeted campaign for under 16 travel for free for 2 weeks in April 2024. Over 12, 616 trips were made using this offer during the campaign.</p>	<p>Remove barriers to cost of travel.</p> <p>Promote independent travel.</p> <p>Reduce car use.</p> <p>Introduce customers of the future to bus travel.</p>	£150



Theme	Project	Description	Outcome	Budget £000k
Fares and ticketing	Work with operators to standardise youth fares.	Engage with operators through EP to develop programme to reduce inconsistency of fare products for under 19's.	Remove barriers to cost of travel. Promote independent travel. Reduce car use. Introduce customers of the future to bus travel.	£200
	Explore and develop appropriate ticketing schemes moving towards capped fares that work across all payment methods.	Work with operators and neighbouring LTAs to identify schemes to move to full tap-on/tap-off multi-operator ticketing. Build on 'brokerage' solution promoted by Transport for the West Midlands and Midlands Connect.	Remove barriers for passengers, making travel easier. Further promotion of onward travel opportunities. Grow patronage numbers.	£0
Marketing	Develop Leicestershire bus branding offer.	A branding task and finish group has been established by the EP. Based on the existing successful Choose How You Move brand. Designs are under development and will be considered by EP stakeholders. The aim will be to roll it out across all infrastructure and information materials.	Clear consistent branding improving passenger experience.	£182
Bus Passenger Experience	Develop rail interchange marketing and information offer.	EP to engage and support rail operating companies in developing information to support onward bus travel.	Clear consistent branding improving passenger experience.	£68
Bus priority infrastructure	Mobility and interchange hub design.	Identify locations for hubs - provide information and infrastructure to link sustainable modes of travel.	Remove barriers to multi modal travel.	£300

Theme	Project	Description	Outcome	Budget £000k
<b>Bus priority infrastructure</b>	Develop scheme designs for identified pinch points for buses.	<p>A list of pinch points on the Leicestershire network that lead to significant bus delays is being developed through collaboration across the EP.</p> <p>Feasibility studies will be undertaken to develop bus priority interventions.</p> <p>Funding from the Local Transport Fund will help support the delivery of the infrastructure identified in the future.</p>	Prioritise bus movements making it a more efficient and attractive mode of travel.	£250
<b>Improvements to bus fleet</b>	Work with operators to support the adoption of electric vehicles and other greener technologies.	<p>Bid for appropriate funding when opportunities arise.</p> <p>Develop tender process/specifications to ensure green technology implementation.</p>	Develop greener fleet to support net zero ambitions.	£100
<b>Bus service support</b>	Build a data management system to improve management of bus network.	Collation of key data sets in one place for performance management.	<p>Monitor contract performance.</p> <p>Improve contractual compliance.</p> <p>Shape network development.</p>	£100
	Enhancement of Park and Ride provision.	Continue to work with city council to ensure current Park and Ride is operational. Identifying opportunities to develop service, such as links to health care locations.	<p>Promotion of sustainable travel.</p> <p>Reduce congestion.</p> <p>Supports net zero ambitions.</p> <p>Grow patronage levels.</p>	£89

Theme	Project	Description	Outcome	Budget £000k
<b>Bus Service Support</b>	Travel accessibility audits.	Audits to assess the success of passenger transport initiatives. Providing an evidence base to support the development of future BSIPs and funding opportunities.	Develop knowledge and understanding of the bus network and active travel.	£100

## Zebra Funding

Leicestershire County Council's successful ZEBRA 2 bid has secured £8.7m in grant funding from the DfT. This will support the introduction of 46 new battery electric vehicles across 10 routes, plus the associated depot charging infrastructure. It also has secured commitment from the partner operators (Arriva and Kinchbus) to invest an additional £15m in these services, totalling a £23.7m capital investment in Leicestershire's passenger transport network. The continued transition to greener fleets is also heavily dependent upon further ZEBRA funding rounds, or equivalent funds, being made available in future years by Government, to continue to support the transition to greener fleets.



# 5. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 to 2035

Section 4 of the LBSIP24 established the significant work programme that the EP has embarked on, while acknowledging that this will be a rolling programme from 2024 onwards. This section sets out the partnership delivery proposals beyond 2025 to 2035, where there is partial clarity on the likely levels of capital and revenue funds, which seek to:

- Align with the National Bus Strategy
- Increase stability and sustainability of the local commercial network
- Enhance viability of supported passenger transport network with greater commercial potential
- Provide greater access to public transport in Leicestershire as well as improved journey choice
- Offer better value for money for the investment in passenger transport services
- Provide operators with greater confidence to invest in upgrades to fleet (bringing environmental benefits)

Through the EP the following programme has been developed that will help to address the challenges faced and meet the ambitions of the LBSIP 24.



## Project Description: DDRT

Expansion of Digital Demand Responsive Transport services in any appropriate areas to increase accessibility across the county.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Flexible and accessible services designed at community level.	Improves connectivity and onward travel, in particular rural communities. Allows arterial bus routes to operate more direct services with quicker journey times.	Provides a realistic alternative for modal shift.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Building on the knowledge and experience achieved through the RMF funded FoxConnect trial, we will be looking to work in partnership with Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire to build on their existing DDRT back-office functions to allow a seamless roll-out of DDRT services across Leicestershire.
- ✓ Removing barriers for use of DDRT along cross-boundary corridors and replacing existing taxi DRT services with digital alternatives.



## Project Description: Invest in the County Bus Network Branding

Continued support for the brand recognition project.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Ability to identify network for promotional offers and marketing purposes. Solidifies enhanced partnerships' approach where commercial and subsidised services display the county EP branding.	Passenger confidence in service quality with clear routes for enquiries.	Coherent and consistent bus information.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Working with EP partners in an established task & finish group to brand the county bus network and improve the Leicestershire Choose How You Move sustainable travel brand and integrated public information provision.

## Project Description: Develop the Youth Travel offer

Building on best practice develop a standardised package of measures to enable more young people to travel on the bus network.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Services designed with youth travel at the forefront can reduce the need for private car usage and reduce social isolation in rural areas.	The promotion of independent travel can assist parents/carers as much as young people in the county themselves. Integrating scholar transport with the public bus network can lead to greater efficiencies for fleet/driver resource and LTA revenue support.	Provides a realistic alternative for modal shift.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Implementation of new working practices with both internal and external partners to ensure maximum integration of scholars onto the bus network.
- ✓ Discussions regarding investment into independent travel training are taking place in addition to planning for more presence in the county's schools to promote travel behaviour change.
- ✓ Trialled free travel for youths countywide to test whether cost is a barrier to use during the Easter school holiday period.

## Project Description: Enhance Sustainable Travel Opportunities

Supporting our successful Choose How You Move programme we will look to invest in measures to encourage behaviour change.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
<p>Greater ability to undertake mutli-modal journeys.</p> <p>Projects where the LTA works with community transport providers, community groups and other stakeholders, such as the NHS, can result in service integration which can benefit the physical and mental health of residents through walk-cycle-bus-rail travel.</p>	<p>By creating sustainable travel hubs around the county, where lockable bike/scooter storage is available and onward travel information is improved, there could be improvements in linking walk-cycle-bike-rail journeys.</p>	<p>Services integrated with other modes of travel.</p>

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Planning is taking place to combine all sources of available funding such as LTF, BSIP+, S106 and LUF when carrying out the countywide bus network review to ensure a holistic approach to scheme proposals.

## Project Description: Publicity/Promotion & Education Improvements

To continue to invest in access to information provision. This will help to inform and encourage the use of the bus network and active travel.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
<p>Improvements to online information/functions can increase knowledge around bus service and sustainable travel in general.</p> <p>Promotional trials including ability to feedback will allow passengers to feed into the effectiveness of services.</p>	<p>Educating existing and potential DDRT users to remove barriers to trial and use.</p> <p>Provide bus travel information in a variety of ways including improved on-line information while retaining paper formats for those without access or ability.</p>	<p>Coherent and consistent information.</p>

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Progressing with structure and work allocation changes to the Sustainable Travel team to include more emphasis on passenger interaction and feedback.

## Project Description: Bus stop provision & infrastructure

To develop opportunities to enhance existing infrastructure and move towards a standardised approach.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Safe and comfortable waiting facilities with high standards of travel information and advice will assist passengers to use public buses without difficulties or discomfort.	Increase patronage, providing opportunities for services to be more viable.	Coherent and consistent bus information.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ The phased network review will incorporate reviews of passenger waiting facilities across all routes with improvements implemented subject to available funding.



## Project Description: Develop cross-boundary working

Continue with collaborative working with partners/stakeholders to deliver seamless travel opportunities.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Transport users do not consider travel in terms of county boundaries. Greater cross-boundary working between LTA's will allow the pooling of resources and sharing of ideas/issues resulting in more fluid and effective journeys for passengers.	Improve customer journey experience.	Stabilise the network across the county.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Regular meetings are now taking place with those local authorities with shared boundaries to maximise efficient and integrated service planning.
- ✓ Liaising with Leicester City, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, and North Northants to explore options, maximise scholars on public buses and avoid duplication of routes and projects.

## Project Description: Fares & Ticketing

Work with partners to increase the range of ticket products and offers.

How this project benefits bus users	How this overcomes challenges	How this meets the needs of Bus Back Better
Affordability and potential benefits for regular use and/or concessions for type of use above the ENCT's.	Cost-effective travel and/or travel which rewards usage may attract new usage and solidify existing patronage.	Stabilise the network across the county.

### Progress to date:

- ✓ Currently identifying the scope in this area for further investigation. This may include promotional ticketing for regular commuters, employer funded benefits for multi-modal travel, investigating the feasibility of companion concessions, and route/area specific schemes where potential for passenger growth is identified such as leisure/social bus travel as a viable alternative to the private car.

There is a considerable amount of work required both to develop the above programme and to establish income streams by 2025. Given existing funding constraints there is greater potential to deliver capital projects within the plan than those reliant on ongoing revenue funds. This is due to additional income availability which is likely to be required to fund existing ongoing statutory and discretionary work areas, such as concessionary fares and the existing supported bus network.

The council's financial ability to both sustain and further develop the bus network and to introduce fare discounts appears to be challenging unless it can introduce new sources of income. The following options for income generation will continue to be developed and explored:

- Invest to save projects to reduce operational costs
- Reduce costs of existing ongoing revenue commitments
- Developer support
- Employer support
- Operator contribution
- Government support

Beyond 2030, there is no visibility on potential funding streams, but what is clear is that any investment should be focussed on the following areas:

- ✓ **Mitigate the impact of rising operational costs**
- ✓ **Seek opportunities to reduce rising fares**
- ✓ **Invest in ticketing and real time system upgrades**
- ✓ **Target services for employment and housing growth sites**
- ✓ **Integrate and enhance previous investment in the bus network**
- ✓ **Integrate scholar and social care transport with the public bus network where feasible**
- ✓ **Work with community transport providers and community groups to identify creative solutions at a local level**

Delivery of the LBSIP24 is completely contingent on Leicestershire County Council being able to draw on additional funding from central Government. This will complement the existing expenditure by both the council and local bus operators that deliver the current bus offer. Table 3 provides a summary of the estimated additional funding requirement from central Government, over an initial 3-year period and over a 10-year period.

Table 3 – Funding requirements

Delivery cost for schemes following LBSIP24 objectives	First 4 years	10 year total
	2025 / 26 - 2028 / 29 £000	2025 - 2035 £000
Service level and network coverage	52,873	132,181
Bus priority	28,966	72,415
Lower and simpler fares	1,040	2,600
Ticketing	400	400
Waiting and interchange facilities	11,522	17,816
Bus information and network identity	1,100	2,750
Bus fleet	3,506	8,766
Accessibility and inclusion	400	1,000
Longer term network transformation	1,328	3,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>101,135</b>	<b>241,098</b>



## 6. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

The LBSIP24 has agreed achievable targets covering the key performance metrics as follows:

### Passenger growth

Proposals for a revised network will be based on the actual usage across the network during the financial year 2023/24. A new baseline and future targets for passenger growth will be set following the implementation of a newly designed network in 2025. Continued support of the commercial bus network will progress and will be subject to enhanced monitoring via a revised De Minimis Subsidy agreement process.

Revision of the De Minimis subsidy support process has taken place in advance of the countywide bus network review. This has been an essential project involving revision of the terms and conditions for commercial service support. This area of subsidy requires attention to manage the process and bring things back to a clear understanding and purpose that the authority may need to support commercial services temporarily to stabilise them during times of reduced usage. Ensuring appropriate agreements and targets are in place, may include sliding scale subsidies and commitments between the authority and bus operator for publicity and promotion.

De Minimis subsidies should not be seen as a long-term solution. Moving forwards through partnership working, the intention is to look to re-design and trial new initiatives where existing services are unable to reach commercial status.

### Customer satisfaction

The baseline position has been based on outputs from the National Highway and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey (NHT Survey) for 2019 (the last complete year unaffected by Covid). Table 4 provides the customer satisfaction data. Leicestershire County Council subscribes to this annual survey, which includes several questions on public satisfaction with different aspects of bus services, as well as overall satisfaction with local bus services.

Table 4 - Customer Satisfaction

Performance Indicator	Year	All passengers
Customer satisfaction (all indicators)	Baseline 2021-22	100
	2022-23	101
	2023-24	103
	2024-25	105
	2025-26	107
	2026-27	109
	2027-28	111
	2028-29	112
	2029-30	113
	2030-31	114
	2031-32	115



To improve the way in which we seek passenger satisfaction data 2024 onwards, we intend to utilise transport inspectors to carry out standard inspections/contractual checks. In addition to contractual checking, inspectors will also carry out a programme of passenger satisfaction surveys on-board buses. Existing passengers may not be those who are contacted to complete the NHT survey, and we need to reach the actual service users at a local level to assess satisfaction from existing users.

Journey times

It is proposed that average bus journey times for different times of day (e.g., morning peak, interpeak, afternoon peak) for each service are examined for ‘neutral months’ twice per year (e.g., March and September). Where possible, this will be based on GPS bus journey time data and the baseline will be set by data from September 2023 and March 2024. Table 4 shows journey time data.

Table 4 - Journey times

Performance Indicator	Year	Routes covered by BSIP journey time interventions
Average journey time (morning and evening peak periods)	Baseline 2021-22	100
	2022-23	97
	2023-24	95
	2024-25	95
	2025-26	95
	2026-27	95
	2027-28	95
	2028-29	95
	2029-30	95
	2030-31	95
	2031-32	95

Reliability

In addition to the implementation of transport inspectors, who will be responsible for monitoring service reliability, the intention is to work closely with EP operators to set targets for improvements on any routes where reliability is affected either short or long term. This will include increased planning and monitoring of road closures and diversions, events, and inclement weather conditions (where advanced warnings are available) to adapt bus services and reduce disruption to passengers.

There are three measures that are equally important:

- **Punctuality - reflects how well buses run to the timetable (which is developed in the knowledge of regular delays)**
- **Reliability - concerns whether a bus arrives at all**
- **Consistency of journey time - concerns how much journey times vary between uncongested and congested conditions**

As with journey times, it is proposed that, where possible, this will be based on GPS journey time data (as per Table 5) and the baseline will be set by data covering the financial year 2023/24.

Table 5 - GPS Journey time data

Performance Indicator	Year	Routes covered by BSIP journey time interventions
<b>Customer satisfaction (all indicators)</b>	Baseline 2021-22	100
	2022-23	101
	2023-24	103
	2024-25	105
	2025-26	107
	2026-27	109
	2027-28	111
	2028-29	112
	2029-30	113
	2030-31	114
	2031-32	115
<b>Reliability (% of cancelled service runs) all day</b>	Baseline 2021-22	100
	2022-23	95
	2023-24	90
	2024-25	85
	2025-26	80
	2026-27	75

Performance Indicator	Year	Routes covered by BSIP journey time interventions
<b>Reliability (% of cancelled service runs) all day</b>	2027-28	70
	2028-29	65
	2029-30	60
	2030-31	55
	2031-32	50
<b>Reliability (average journey time differences between peak and interpeak services)</b>	Baseline 2021-22	100
	2022-23	97.5
	2023-24	95
	2024-25	92.5
	2025-26	90
	2026-27	87.5
	2027-28	85
	2028-29	82.5
	2029-30	80
	2030-31	77.5
	2031-32	75

The authority will work closely with all EP partners to ensure effective use of the Bus Open Data Service (BODS) is in place across all bus operators in the county and aid any operator who is currently not utilising the BODS provision.

Mission standards for the bus fleet - All buses used on the Leicestershire registered local bus network will meet Euro VI emission standards (or equivalent) by the end of 2024-25.

Targets	2018/19	2019/20	Target for 2024/25	Description of how each will be measured
<b>Journey time</b>	Not available	Not available	5% reduction in average journey time within 2 years on routes subject to bus priority measures under Schemes R1-1 and/or R2-1	Average journey times and journey time variability will be established and monitored for all routes across the county. This will utilise data from GPS-based AVL systems that are fitted to most operators' buses.
<b>Reliability (punctuality)</b>	63.0% <sup>3</sup>	Not available	5% improvement over baseline measurement	Percentage of services departing between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late.
<b>Passenger numbers (annual passenger trips)</b>	13.81m	12.73m <sup>4</sup>	13.37m <sup>5</sup>	Passenger trip numbers will be reported by operators quarterly (to give an annual figure over four quarters) using the exact same methodology as used to report numbers to DfT (as used in Government's annual bus statistics Table BUS0109a). This will ensure values are comparable with past years.
<b>Average passenger satisfaction (overall)<sup>6</sup></b>	58.8%	58.0%	61.4%	Satisfaction (very or fairly satisfied) with local bus services (overall) will be measured through the annual National Highway and Transportation Survey (NHT). Infill surveys will be undertaken for 6-monthly reporting. NHT survey is with the general public rather than just bus users, so includes non or prospective bus users as well – so gives significantly lower numbers than Transport Focus surveys with current bus users.

<sup>3</sup> From national bus statistic BUS 0902 (Non-frequent bus services on time)

<sup>4</sup> Adjusted from actuals to take March 2020 numbers affected by COVID-19 lockdown

<sup>5</sup> Based on estimated baseline annual figure for 2021-22 of 12.73m passengers (which will be calculated at the end of the year as set out in Section 3). Targets will be adjusted in line with baseline figure at that point.

<sup>6</sup> Based on NHT survey with sample of members of the public rather than just bus passengers.

Programme development will be monitored and reported through the following:

- Quarterly EP Panel and EP Board meetings
- Annual LBSIP24 progress reports - published on the county council's Choose How You Move website
- Department for Transport annual monitoring work, including Bus Connectivity Assessments

Once the programme for 2025 to 2030 is more fully developed, with greater certainty over funding and cost estimates, it is proposed that consultation with operators will take place to implement a revised EP scheme and plan. As with the previous scheme this will contain an agreed range of binding commitments for all partners to meet with detailed projects and targets for each.



Beginning with the county-wide network review, the overall focus for planning and management of the public transport network for the county moving forwards will be based on the following:

- Community level route planning - Detailed consideration of passenger wants/needs to maximise the potential for new patronage
- A network which has increased accessibility, connectivity and the flexibility to meet new demand
- Regular performance monitoring with effective contract management to increase passenger satisfaction across the board
- Further increased partnership working with transport operators, building on the successes of the EP
- Continual public engagement, publicity and promotion of sustainable travel. Listen effectively to passengers and community groups to create an inclusive county bus network
- Effective support of the commercial bus network through De Minimis subsidy with an emphasis on individual service improvement plans and subsidy schedules
- Commitment to continually review and improve public transport information and waiting facilities
- Encourage usage through attractive fares and promotions

