

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025



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 lives 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., 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.

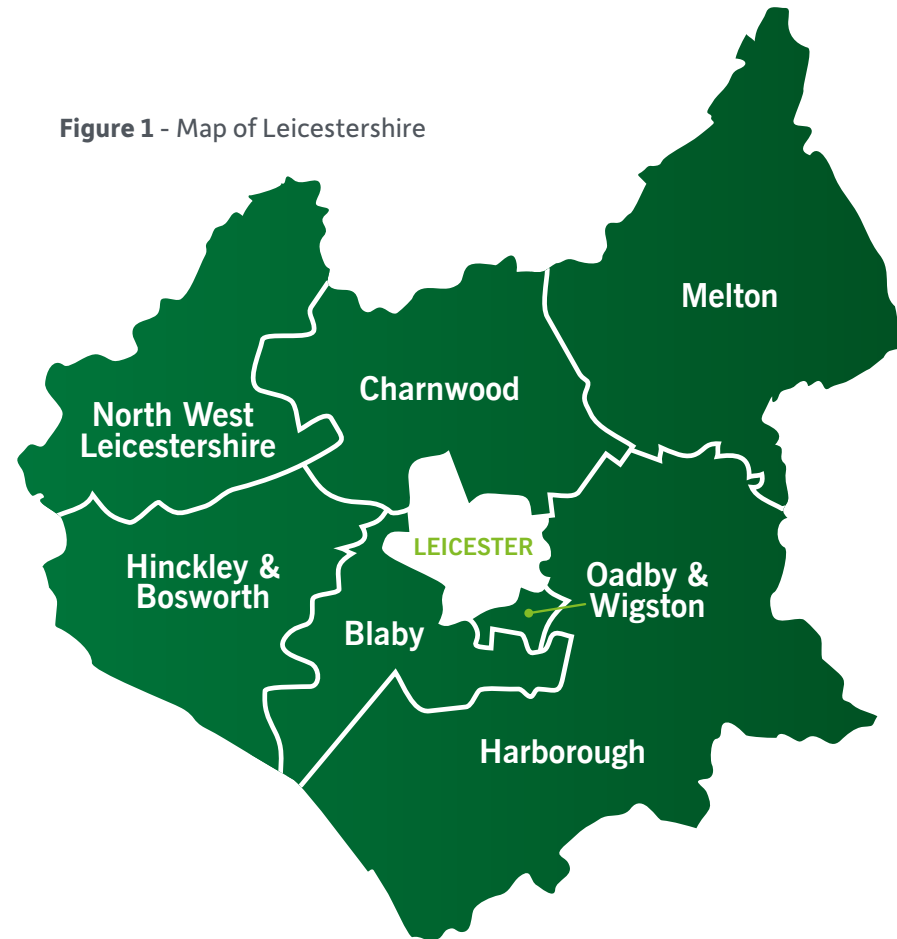


Our vision is for our communities to enjoy enhanced connections and make Leicestershire an attractive place to live, work and play. This includes the benefits people will enjoy from better air quality, reduced carbon emissions and reduced congestion.

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 2025 (LBSIP25) covers the area administered by Leicestershire County Council as a local transport authority (LTA) - see Figure 1. The LBSIP 25 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 considers discussions with neighbouring authorities and community transport operators.

The focus of the LBSIP25 is strongly on growing the customer fare-paying 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.

The delivery of the LBSIP25 is driven by an Enhanced Partnership (EP) between the council and Leicestershire bus operators which was formally agreed in March 2022. All operators of registered local bus services within Leicestershire are included in the EP with the core commercial and council-supported bus services being provided by:

- Arriva
- Centrebus
- First Bus
- Nottingham City Transport
- Stagecoach
- Wellglade Group (Kinchbus/Trentbarton)

Enhanced Partnership members meet a minimum of three times a year through an elected Board – consisting of the main commercial and supported service providers in the county – and a wider consultative Forum drawing in the smaller operators who provide cross-border services as well as district and borough council representatives and special interest groups.



The EP therefore provides the ongoing opportunity for multiple stakeholders to consider the actions needed to deliver the LBSIP25, the EP Plan and schemes made under it, provide relevant input and suggestions on their implementation, and articulate their views both individually and collectively on how to improve the bus service offer.

This structure is supported by:

- 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 meetings
- Leicestershire County Council's intelligence gathered through service registrations received, public letters, focused engagement sessions, petitions, and requests.

As such, LBSIP25 is a flexible, live document which can adapt to change, evolving as details around funding availability and local conditions emerge. At the same time it provides 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. This flexibility enables progress of the LBSIP to be regularly reviewed by EP members to ensure that outputs are still appropriate taking into account levels of funding, technological developments and ongoing feedback from bus users and non-users.



Partnership working across our region

Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council work closely together on areas of mutual interest to benefit the bus passengers in both areas:

- Fixed bus service change dates
- Park & Ride services
- Leicester / Leicestershire Flexi multi-operator ticketing scheme
- Representation from both authorities at enhanced bus partnership meetings
- Discussion and service planning with bus operators of cross-boundary routes. In 2025-26 this will include supporting the increase of services operating to a 15-minute frequency
- Upgrading bus stops to Real Time Information provision
- Promotion and marketing of bus service provision



The LBSIP25 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.



2. Our Bus Vision

The vision that sits behind the LBSIP25 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 LBSIP25 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 around the county and for travel into the city of Leicester. This will enable long-term clean growth, supporting delivery of the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan.¹

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, particularly 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 adopted a new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) in November 2024.

¹ www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Final-LL-SGP-December-2018-1.pdf

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

- Meet the current and future needs of all users in a coordinated 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

The key challenges which will need to be addressed through LTP4 up to 2043 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

One of the key Focused Strategies of LTP4 is the emerging Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS), which will help to enable our communities, both current and future, to have improved access to the societal and economic services and facilities that they might need to use as part of their daily lives. Services and facilities such as workplaces, schools, higher-education, healthcare, shops, leisure opportunities. Travel by bus continues to be a key sustainable mode in enabling travel choice, and as such the ETCS will provide the overarching strategy to further support the LBSIP25 vision and delivery of its outcomes under LTP4.

Further insight will come from the results of the Big Travel Survey held between November 2025 and February 2026. This interactive survey asked residents how they get around in their everyday lives to access healthcare, education, shops, leisure activities and workplaces. The feedback will help inform investment in future travel projects including bus and is the next stage in delivering LTP4.



In addition to the development of 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

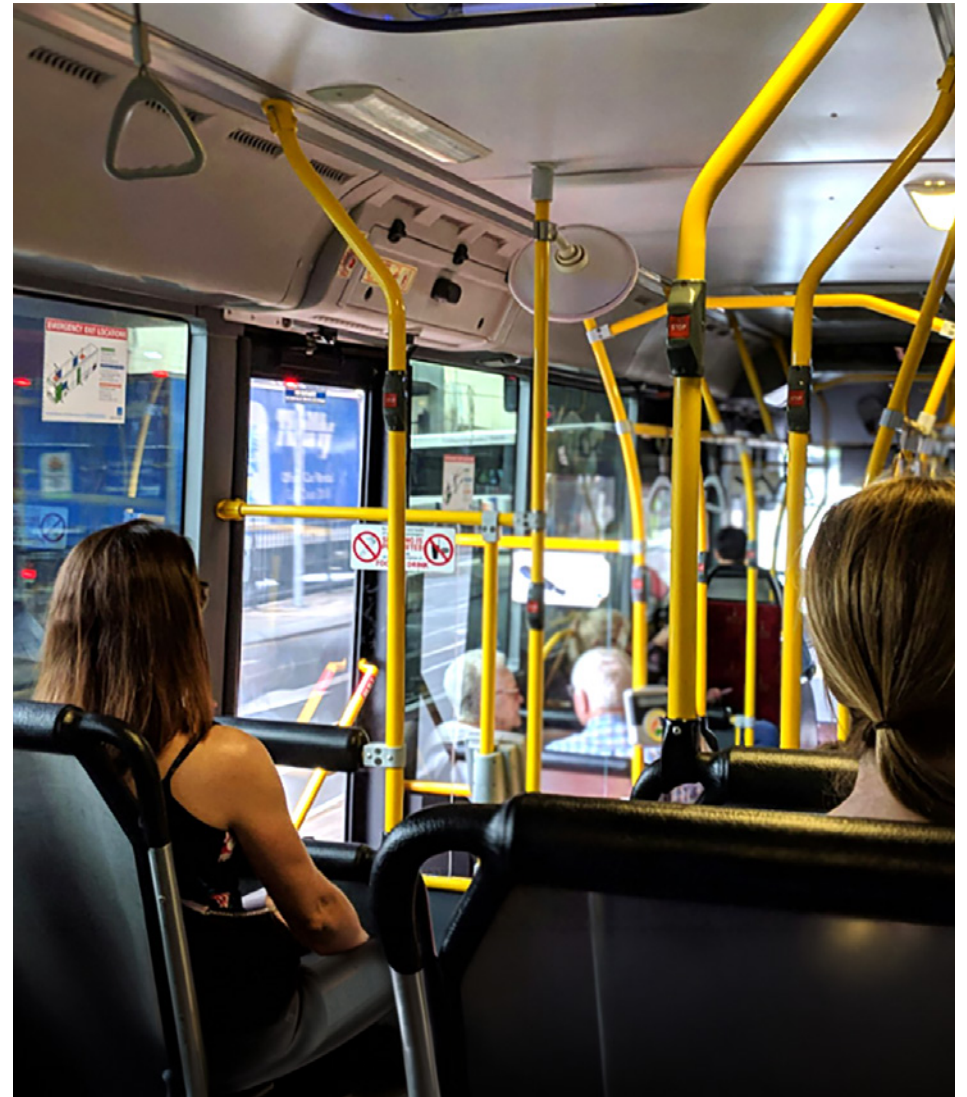
The LBSIP25 aligns with the emerging LTP4 thinking and there is a synergy across the complementary visions and objectives. Moving forward, LBSIP25 will support the development of Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans for the county.

The county council, in partnership with bus operators, produced its first BSIP in 2021. A refreshed version was produced in 2024. These continue to provide a sound basis for this updated LBSIP25 while reflecting the significant changes that have taken place in the intervening period:

- 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 LBSIP25 has been produced to consider these developments, report on the last 12 months' progress utilising the significant bus grant funding and evolve the plan to reflect them moving forwards.

All schemes, measures and initiatives being delivered will be monitored and evaluated to enable the Enhanced 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 and ambitious aspirations to improve the offer to bus passengers, however this has been extremely challenging for the following reasons:

- Limited long-term 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. Shorter-term agreements were put in place as, at the time, the future funding position was uncertain;
- Provision of expanded Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) - offering flexible, bookable bus travel. Managing this change and establishing the provision has been an extensive task during 2024-25;
- Financial challenges faced by the county council which have limited the opportunities for developing promotional offers and infrastructure investment;
- Poor satisfaction by the public.

Nationally, bus usage remains below pre-pandemic levels. **Across Leicestershire, 10.6 million public transport passenger journeys were undertaken in 2024**, despite facing a variety of challenges:

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

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.²

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.

² 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.

Every effort is made, in conjunction with bus operators, to make as much of the bus network fully commercially viable without the need for LTA financial support so that limited funds can be targeted where most needed. In a predominantly rural county like Leicestershire, this is often not possible and there are a range of ways services are financially supported:

- Section 106 funding from developers for transport needs of new settlements.
- “De-Minimis” support, which provides short term financial support of commercial bus services where the revenue is not adequate to cover full costs of the provision. The expectation of such funding is that the operator takes steps to move towards self-sufficiency.
- Commissioning a whole bus or DDRT service or paying for specific enhancements such as weekend or evening travel.

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 2023/24 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 LBSIP25. At the same time, however, it should be noted that there are several 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 2025)

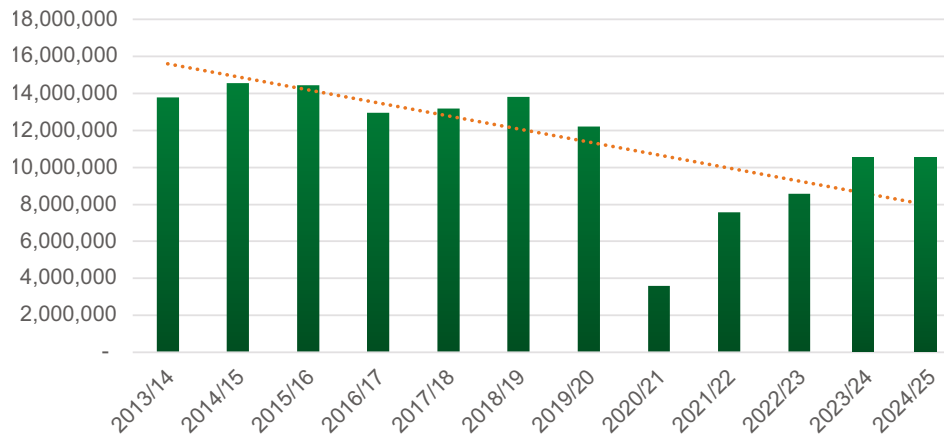


Figure 3 shows that the proportion of passengers travelling with an English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) pass has fallen over the last decade (in line with the rise in age of eligibility). The annual number of concessionary travellers totalled 1 million lower in 2019/20 than in 2013/14. 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 2023/24 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.



Figure 3 - Passenger journeys per head of population

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
2023/243	10.5	2.5	24	17
2024/25	10.6	2.3	22	17

Figure 3 also shows that, over the past decade, there has been a decline in the number of bus passenger journeys per head of population in Leicestershire. This has reduced by 42% from just under 21 journeys per person 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 and online more. Following the expansion of the bus network in 2025, we have seen a rise in patronage overall and in the ENCTS journeys.

4. Progress

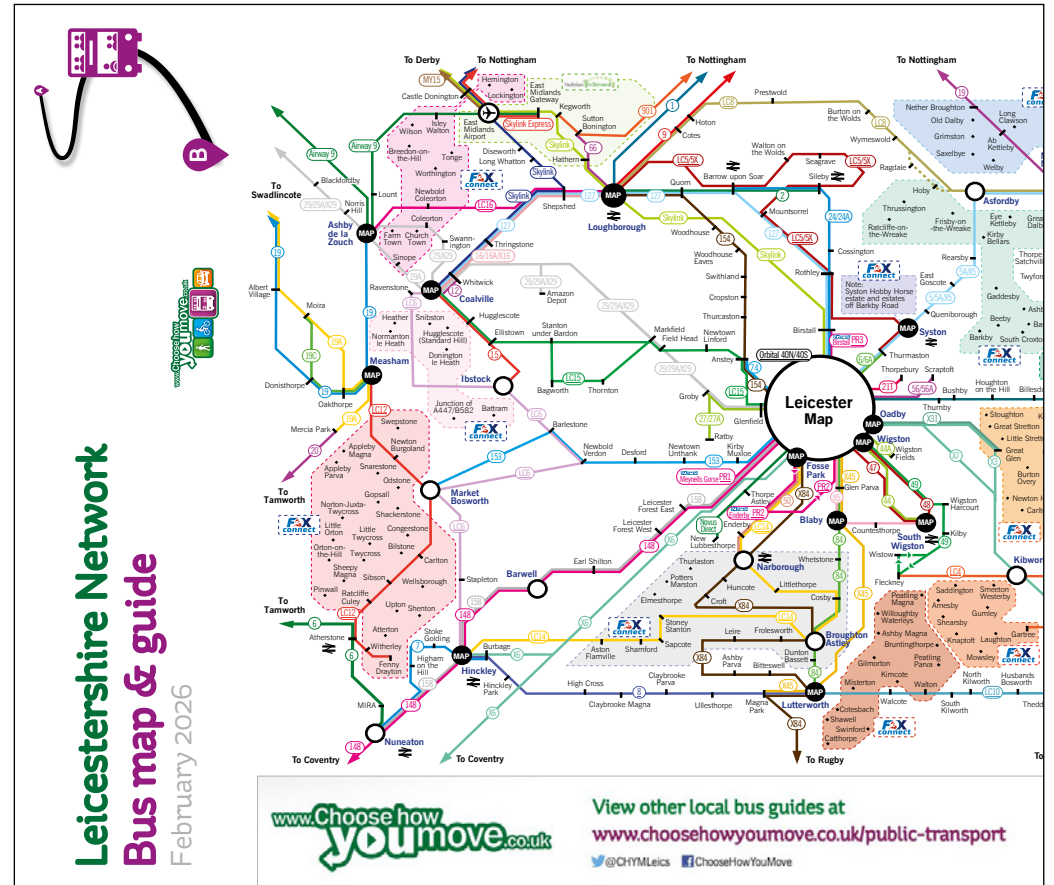


LBSIP25 offers the opportunity for real change to improve the reliability of bus services and offer an attractive alternative to the car.



Passenger Transport Network Review 2024/25 (PTNR)

Following the initial allocation of BSIP bus grant funding, and utilising S106 developer contributions, the council began to review the existing network and work with stakeholders to design new services to better meet the needs of passengers. This involved an expansion of DDRT provision from one zone up to 11 zones, including the successful Rural Mobility Fund-supported trial service in South West Leicestershire, and revised routes. Some pilot services were also requested by residents and will provide evidence of actual demand following an initial year of operation.



In 2025, our achievements included:



Fab Free Fares
summer promotion
saw an increase of
46%
in journeys taken by bus



Over **60,000**
journeys taken
on the FoxConnect
network since
January 2025

Over **6,000**
passengers have
downloaded the
FoxConnect
app so far

We've
launched **11**
FoxConnect zones



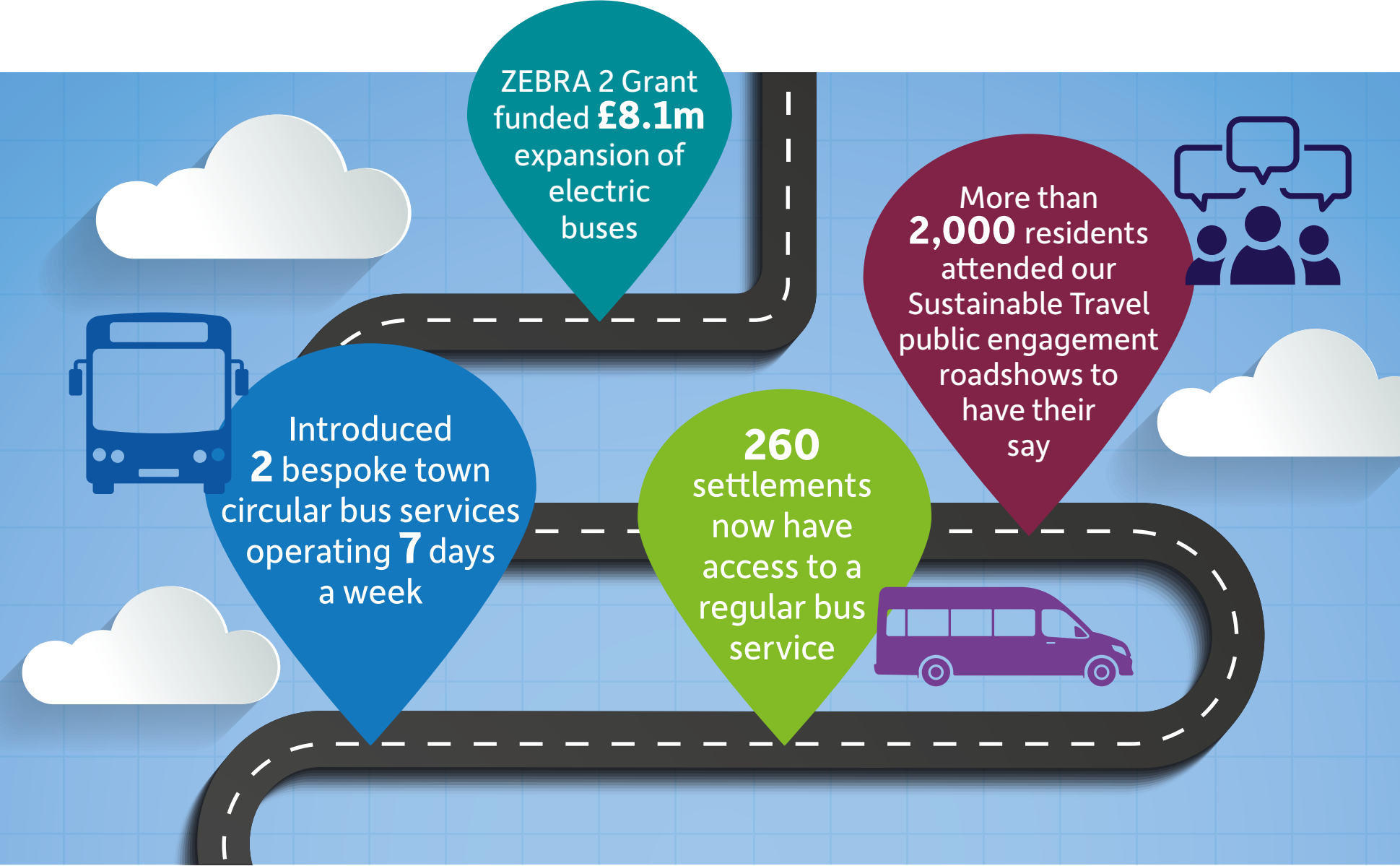
Provided free
travel for young
people during the
Easter holidays
countywide

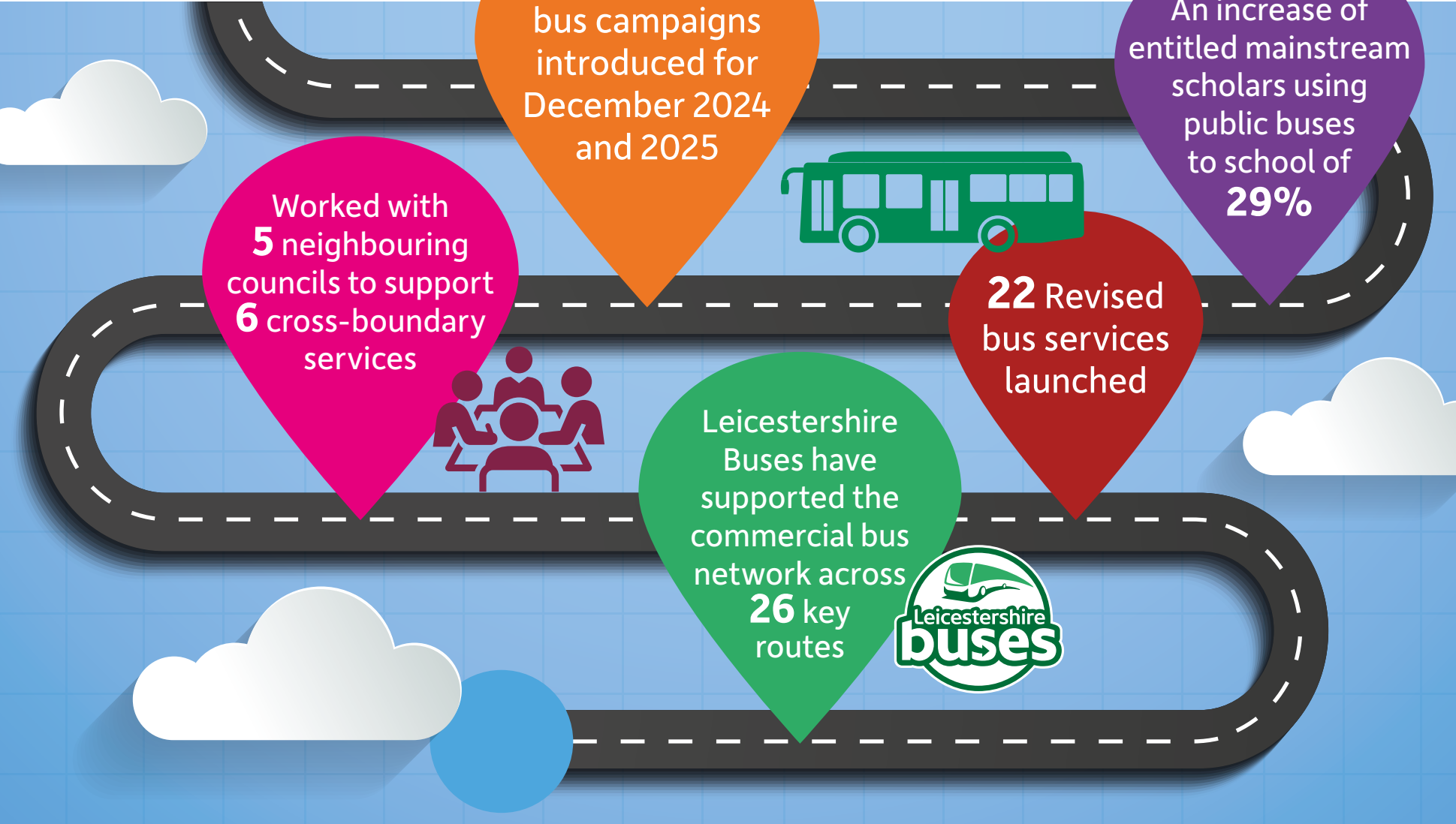
FREE
bus travel
FOR UNDER 16s



FREE Fare
Super Saturdays

promotion saw a
14% increase in
passenger journeys





The PTNR was undertaken as a priority to achieve improvements in 2025 through reviewing and re-designing the bus network across the county through a phased approach. Phases 1 to 3a/b focussed on services in and to key market towns as well as widening the FoxConnect offer to provide better connectivity from rural settlements to nearby towns and service areas, whilst Phases 4 and 5 are aimed at supporting enhancements to the commercial network. Full details of the improvements delivered under each phase are on pages 22-24.

Phase	Area	Review	Network Launch
1	Melton	Spring/Summer 2024	January 25
2	Rural Charnwood & Harborough	Autumn/Winter 2024	March 25
3a	Harborough town services and South West Leicestershire	Autumn/Winter 2024	June 25
3b	North West Leicestershire & Charnwood town services	Autumn/Winter 2024	July 25
4	Hinckley and Coalville	Spring 2025	August 25
5	Blaby, Oadby & Wigston	Winter 2025	April 26

For 2025-26, each phase will be revisited in conjunction with the operators to identify any specific or wider issues affecting the performance of the service that have not been previously identified or resolved through regular contract monitoring or user feedback.

The current supported service network

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
LC1	Centrebus Ltd	Melton - Oakham	Mon - Sat
LC3	Centrebus Ltd	Melton - Grantham	Mon - Sat
LC4	Centrebus Ltd	Fleckney - Foxton - Market Harborough	Mon - Sat
LC5	Centrebus Ltd	Loughborough - Sileby - Thurmaston	Mon - Sat
LC6	Centrebus Ltd	Coalville - Hinckley	Mon - Sat
LC7	Centrebus Ltd	Leicester - Uppingham	Mon-Sat
LC8	Centrebus Ltd	Melton - Loughborough	Mon - Sat
LC9	Centrebus Ltd	Grantham / Bottesford - Nottingham	Mon-Sat
LC10	Centrebus Ltd	Market Harborough - Lutterworth	Mon - Sat

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
LC11	Blands Rutland Ltd	Market Harborough - Corby	Wed, Sat
LC12	Arriva Midlands	Witherley - Measham	Mon - Sat
LC14	Arriva Midlands	Fosse Park - Hinckley	Mon - Sat
LC15	Arriva Midlands	Leicester - Coalville	Mon - Sat
LC16	Arriva Midlands	Ashby-de-la-Zouch - Loughborough (Package with LC12)	Mon - Sat
Harborough Connect (HC1,2, 3 & 4)	Centrebus Ltd	Harborough Connect including evening	Mon - Sun
Melton Connect (MC1,2, 3,4 & 5)	Centrebus Ltd	Melton Connect - Melton Town (Loop Number 1-5)	Mon - Sun
2	Kinch	Loughborough - Sileby	Mon -Sat
2	Kinch	Loughborough - Sileby	Sunday
2	Kinch	Great Central Railway - Windmill Road	Mon - Sat

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
3	Kinch	Loughborough Baxter Gate & Loughborough Tynedale Road	Mon - Sat
19	Centrebus Ltd	Nottingham - Melton Mowbray	Mon - Fri
19	Centrebus Ltd	Nottingham - Melton Mowbray	Saturday
24	Centrebus Ltd	Leicester - Birstall	Saturday
24A	Centrebus Ltd	Barrow / Sileby Extension	Mon -Fri
154	Centrebus Ltd	Leicester City Centre - Loughborough	Mon- Fri
154	Centrebus Ltd	Leicester City Centre - Loughborough	Saturday
154	Centrebus Ltd	Leicester City Centre - Loughborough	Sunday
8	Arriva Midlands	Hinckley - Lutterworth	Mon - Sun
11	Arriva Midlands	Coalville - Agar Nook	Mon - Sat
12	Arriva Midlands	Coalville - Whitwick	Mon - Sat

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
15	Arriva Midlands	Coalville - Ibstock	Mon - Sat
27/28	Arriva Midlands	Leicester - Ratby	Mon - Sat
29/29S	Arriva Midlands	Leicester - Swadlincote/ Coalville - Swadlincote	Mon - Sat
56 & 56A	Arriva Midlands	Scraptoft - Thumby	Mon - Sat
84	Arriva Midlands	Leicester - Lutterworth	Mon - Sun

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
X84	Arriva Midlands	Rugby - Lutterworth - Leicester	Mon - Sat
153	Arriva Midlands	Leicester - Market Bosworth	Mon - Sat
93A/B	CallConnect	Bottesford - Grantham	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 1	Centrebus Ltd	North and East Melton Borough	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 2	Centrebus Ltd	South Melton Borough	Mon - Sat



Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
FoxConnect DDRT zone 3	Premier Taxis	Houghton / Tilton on the Hill	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 4	Premier Taxis	Great Glen / Rolleston	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 5	Centrebus Ltd	Langtons / Drayton / Stockerston	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 6	Centrebus Ltd	Bruntingthorpe / Catthorpe	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 7	Centrebus Ltd	Saddington / Gartree	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 8	LA Travel	Heather / Battram	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 9	LA Travel	West H&B Borough	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 10	Centrebus Ltd	East H&B Borough	Mon - Sat
FoxConnect DDRT Zone 11	LA Travel	NW Leicestershire	Mon - Sat
PR1/PR2/PR3	Roberts Coaches	Meynell's Gorse / Enderby / Birstall Park & Ride	Mon - Sat
R1	Blands Rutland Ltd	Melton Mowbray - Oakham - Uppingham - Corby	Mon - Sat

Service	Operator	Route	Frequency
LC6A	Anwar	Ravenstone - Coalville	Mon - Sat
LC15A	Coalville Cabs	Bagworth - Groby	Mon - Fri
LC15B	Coalville Cabs	Coalville - Glenfield	Mon - Sat
RTC24	Drive 4 it Taxis	Wilson - Melbourne - Castle Donington - Long Eaton	Tue, Wed, Fri
RTC301	Highfield Associates	Barwell - Earl Shilton - Dadlington	Various
RTC309	Take Me/ADT Taxis	Bottleacre Lane - Loughborough	Tues, Fri
RTC39	Kirby Cars	Kirby Muxloe and LFE	Mon, Wed, Sat
RTC392	Premier Taxis	Stapleton - Barwell	Thu, Sat
RTC4	Kirby Cars	Leicester - Glenfield	Mon - Sat
R0520	Spinney Hill Taxi LTD	Church Langton and Thorpe Langton School transport	Mon - Fri

PTNR

Phase 1 improvements

- Re-designed town bus service operating as 5 loops seven days a week to serve new housing developments, GP and hospital sites, industrial estates and places of interest that were previously not served.
- All services timed to maximise transport to school and colleges.
- Additional villages added onto the Melton – Loughborough service maximising onward connectivity to Grantham, Nottingham, Leicester and Oakham.
- Two DDRT FoxConnect zones introduced to replace the under-used larger bus services, allowing for the flexible booking of transport between 06:30-19.00 Monday-Saturday.
- Service introduced to re-establish the market town link between Melton Mowbray and Oakham via rural settlements.
- Larger buses at school/college times retained to cater for non-entitled scholar movements cross-boundary with DDRT operating for non-scholar movements throughout the day.
- Supporting trials for the service development on two commercial services through to Nottingham to assess the demand and to build patronage.

Phase 2 improvements

- Five new FoxConnect DDRT zones introduced serving a total of 67 settlements, the majority of which had either no public transport or only limited lifeline taxi DRTs previously.
- New trial weekday, evening and Sunday services for Quorn, Barrow, and Sileby residents to Loughborough. A Sunday service for Anstey, Thurcaston, Cropston, Swithland, Woodhouse Eaves and Quorn residents to both Leicester and Loughborough.
- A single operator for the Leicester to Birstall service on Mondays to Saturdays – including a Saturday provision for Wanlip Lane – to remove passenger confusion and simplify fares.

Phase 3 improvements

- All supported services re-designed to maximise scholar travel opportunities
- X2 towns with enhanced coverage, enhanced frequency services.
- Increased access to rail stations, medical facilities and schools in towns.
- Rural Mobility Funded trial FoxConnect zone passenger feedback taken on-board to introduce an additional fixed route scholar/commute service at peak times to complement the DDRT provision.
- Evening service trial in Market Harborough town.
- Over 65 settlements received access to DDRT flexible services with free travel for all for a month following launch.

Phase 4 improvements

- One-year trial of a new service connecting Hinckley and Coalville following public feedback.
- Improved punctuality, simplified routes, additional peak trips and revised frequency to reflect passenger usage applied across the commercial network with some De Minimis subsidy from the council.
- Diverted route to serve a new development in Hugglescote.
- New links to Ashby Retail Park and Coalfield Way Industrial Park.

Phase 5 - changes due in April 2026

Blaby, Oadby and Wigston are areas where the public transport provision is high comparable to the rest of the county. Therefore, these changes focus mostly on extensions to existing services as well as improvements to passenger information and infrastructure.

- New service for Newton Lane residential development at Wigston Meadows.
- Route extension to Fosse Park which will also provide a new scholar facility to Countesthorpe Academy.
- New service for south of Glen Parva.



Sustainable Travel Roadshows

- Hosted sustainable travel roadshows across each district, per network review phase.
- The roadshows were in-person events in key town centres.
- We delivered in-person advice and support on all travel choices in the area, with a focus on bus information.
- The events were a place for people to collect printed material like supported service timetables, commercial timetable booklets, walking and cycling maps, as well as information around ongoing travel and transport schemes.
- An important aspect of the roadshows was to showcase the different types of travel and transport available in the area, enabling travel choice and encouraging active travel.

“

This is a complete game changer for me as a wheelchair user who rarely drives independently as I can't get my wheelchair out the car myself.

FoxConnect Passenger

”

FoxConnect information sessions

- To support people with the transition to the digital, on-demand transport option, we hosted drop-in sessions for people to find out about the FoxConnect service.
- The team travelled to local villages, clubs and organisations to deliver in-person information about the service.
- Over 1,400 people have turned up to find out more about the service.
- The sessions offered 1-1 support with account set-up and app demonstrations.
- People could come along for an in-depth tutorial or to collect printed materials like, zone maps, leaflets and FAQs.

Over **2,000** people turned up to have their say, learn more, and get involved

35 Sustainable Travel Roadshows

68 FoxConnect Information Sessions

Promotional material



Free bus travel every weekend in August*.
That's fab.




*Selected services only



FOX connect
Free bus travel every Saturday in August.
That's fab.




Harborough area bus guide

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Passenger satisfaction

Satisfaction indicators from the National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) satisfaction survey were updated for 2024 covering public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, highway and transport services in local authority areas.

Results from the NHT Survey 2024 showed little change in satisfaction with local bus services since the previous year at 43% for 2024 (from 42% 2023). This indicator had missed its 56% target. Satisfaction with bus services appears to have started to plateau in recent years. In comparison with other English county councils, it remains in the third quartile in 2024.

In addition to the data received from the NHT survey, and regular feedback collected by our transport inspectors, the council implemented a targeted satisfaction exercise direct with bus passengers using LCC-supported services in January 2026. The survey will be repeated every 6 months to provide a snapshot of satisfaction levels across the individual services in the network; this information can be fed into discussions with EP operators as a standard element of monitoring the effectiveness of the network in meeting the needs of regular bus passengers as well as enabling any trends about specific aspects of the service to be identified for adjustment or intervention as necessary.



96% of survey respondents were happy with the overall standard of service provided and 82% were satisfied when comparing responses by category and ratings.



How would you rate your journey?



Bus Service No.

Date

Circle your age range

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+ Prefer not to say

Circle your rating

Poor = 1 - 5 = Excellent

Punctual	1	2	3	4	5
Accessible	1	2	3	4	5
Comfort	1	2	3	4	5
Affordable	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Standard of Service	1	2	3	4	5

Comments



Passenger Transport User Group and EP Task and Finish Groups

Since the EP was established in 2022, it continues to provide the organisational structure and governance for effective delivery of the council's BSIPs. In March 2023, the first Leicestershire Bus User Group meeting was held with the aim of giving members the opportunity to help shape the future of bus service provision within Leicestershire.

The initial focus of the group was to consider the projects and schemes contained within the BSIP and suggest those to be prioritised for implementation. Now rebranded as the Passenger Transport User Group, it receives 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.

The Fares, Ticketing & Promotions T&F group has rolled out several successful campaigns during 2024/25 encouraging both an increase in bus travel and an awareness of bus provision. Campaigns included free travel for all, summer by bus, Easter holiday free travel for young people, and free festive travel enabling residents and visitors to attend events in their area by bus instead of using a car.

The Branding and infrastructure T&F group has launched “Leicestershire Buses” as the core branding for the supported services operating under the Leicestershire EP. Work is also on-going to make improvements to the council's Choosehowyoumove website, simplify bus service information for passengers and carrying out an audit of all bus stop infrastructure across the county to identify opportunities to upgrade and renew facilities at stops.

Two new Task & Finish (T&F) groups were established in 2024 and continue to work on specific projects:

- 1. Fares, Ticketing & Promotions**
- 2. Branding & Infrastructure**



Cross-boundary working

Throughout 2025, work with neighbouring councils has been a priority to provide bus passengers with a network of services where a county boundary does not restrict travel choice.

We have worked with Leicester city, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, North Northants and Lincolnshire councils to share both the planning, funding support and promotion of bus routes. This positive partnership working will continue into 2026 and beyond.

As there is high demand for bus travel into Leicester from county areas, we will continue to work with our city colleagues to continue support for:

- Park & ride provision
- Orbital bus services
- Travel information available on the ChooseHowYouMove website
- Printed bus service information
- Projects in partnership with commercial bus operators
- Fares promotions
- Improvements to bus stops and shelters
- Safeguarding withdrawn facilities



A smarter way to travel in Leicester and Leicestershire

Bus guide - Valid from 2 February 2026

Route LC9 Nottingham - Grantham
via Barrowby Gate - Bottesford

Route 93A Bottesford - Grantham via Barrowby Gate

Route 93B Bottesford - Grantham via Barrowby

Note: This is a temporary 6-month service for passengers, whilst both Leicestershire and Lincolnshire County Council look to find a longer-term solution.

- 93a/b service supported by Leicestershire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council

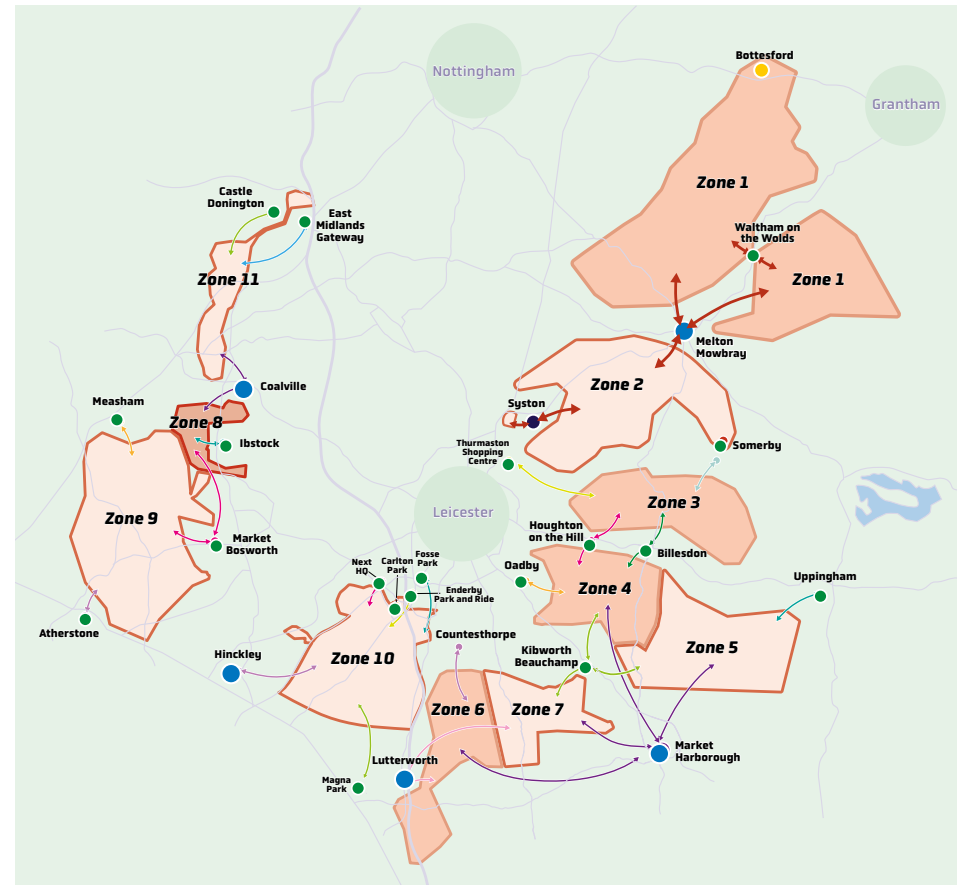
Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) - flexible transport solutions for the county

Building on the successful Rural Mobility Fund pilot that enabled the launch of FoxConnect in October 2022 and saw the first ever DDRT provision for Leicestershire, the council has worked throughout 2025 to introduce a further 10 new zones across the county.

Passengers can book via the app or via a dedicated telephone booking line. All services operate Monday-Saturday between 06:30 - 19:00.

So far...

- 50,200 journeys have been made across all FoxConnect zones between January - November 2025
- 11 Zones servicing 201 settlements in the county
- More than 60 settlements can now access FoxConnect where previously there was no public transport access
- 6,000 registered Foxconnect app users
- 1,400 residents have engaged in the targeted FoxConnect support sessions
- Positive feedback received from previously isolated residents in support of the flexible nature of the service provision.



Park and Ride

The council continues to work in partnership with Leicester City Council to jointly fund the provision of Park & Ride services operating from 3 county sites providing travel into the city. Following re-tender in 2025, the contract now operates as a subsidy contract with the operator taking on more responsibility for enhancing the journeys and setting the fares. The usage data for these services is 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
2024/25	231,717	244,988	257,263	215,994	726,588
% Change	35%	32%	10%	7%	16%

There has been a rise in patronage each year and patronage has recovered to pre-pandemic levels averaging 206,000 per quarter.



Ticketing and fares

The fixed route bus network is supported through De-Minimis payments to commercial operators or either contracted as Minimum Subsidy or minimum cost contracts. Operators have full control over bus fares, tickets, and other products for all service types except for minimum cost contracts.

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 the weekly 'cheapest fare' cap.

New developments and evolving bus demand

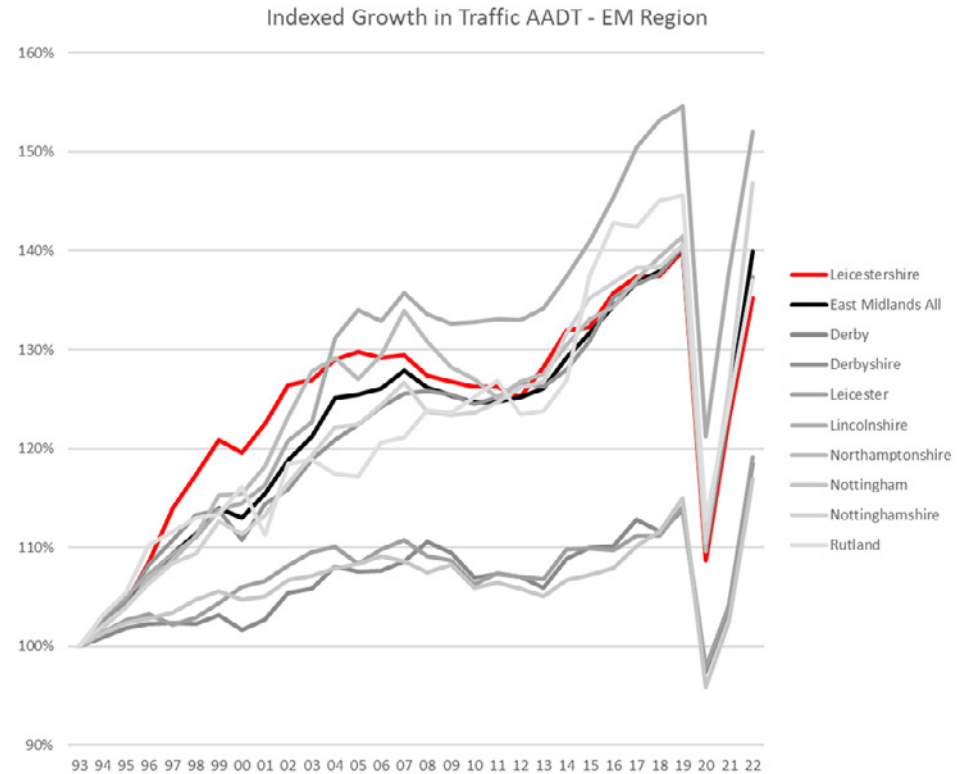
Leicestershire is experiencing significant growth challenges for new residential and commercial developments coming forward over the next 20 years. To encourage alternative modes and offer greater travel choice, it is essential bus services are provided from an early stage of occupation to enhance behaviour 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, either Section 106 funding (a developer contribution) is requested towards public transport services and infrastructure, or the developer is obligated to procure the bus service directly in consultation with the county council. 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 are major issues 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% 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 23/24	Capital 23/24	Revenue 24/25	Capital 24/25	Source of funding	Notes
Supported Services	£3,671,822	£0	£3,760,057	£0	LCC budgets, BSOG, S106, DfT RMF, DfT Local Transport Fund	Net cost of supported services. Includes LBS, Park & Ride, DRT, Rural Mobility Fund
Concessionary fares reimbursements	£2,754,512	£0	£4,373,510	£0	LCC budgets, DfT Supported Bus Service Grant	Includes concessionary travel reimbursements and all associated spend
Other fares support / ticketing	£35,585	£0	£234,294	£0	BSIP+	Youth fares incentives
Bus infrastructure	£196,210	£141,585	£497,367	£82,671	LCC budgets - revenue S106 - capital	Includes revenue costs for real time passenger info, bus shelter cleaning and maintenance
Zero emission buses	£0	£0	£0	£0	ZEBRA	

Bus fleet and stop infrastructure

There are currently 3,398 marked and active bus stops and 833 bus shelters in the county. Due to the financial pressures on the county council, there has up to now been limited budget available to improve or introduce new bus infrastructure.

There has been a programme to upgrade bus stops within the Central Leicestershire area with Real-Time Information (RTI) and totems with funding support from Leicester City Council; a further 75 stops will be added to this programme in 2026. This demonstrates 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.

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

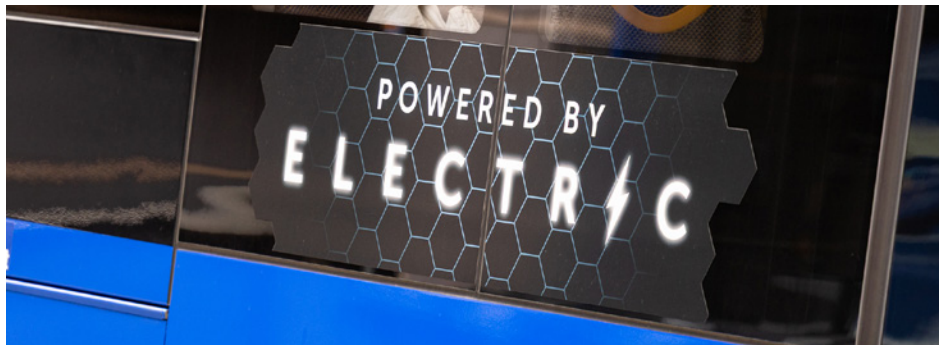


As shown in the table above, most operators' fleets meet Euro VI emissions standard, indicating a shift to a cleaner and greener fleet.

Securing Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) second round funding of £8.1m in 2024 enabled the council to part-fund 25 new electric double-decker buses that entered service in spring 2025 on trunk routes between Loughborough, Melton Mowbray and Leicester and 22 electric single-decker buses that entered service in Loughborough in early 2026.



Following receipt of the capital element of the Bus Grant, the council has embarked on a countywide conditions audit of all bus stops which will feed into a bus stop infrastructure improvement plan for delivery in 2026 onwards.



5. Improvement Programme

In 2023, 2024 and 2025, the council was awarded short term BSIP+ and one-off bus grant funding to invest in projects that 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 in the short term whilst making improvements to continue sustainability beyond 2025/26.

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 LBSIP25

As a result of the grant funding, the council has been able to consider a different approach to the supported bus service network. This has involved 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
- Enhance 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-cycle-walk)

Following the recent announcement of Local Authority Bus Grant funding (LABG) for 2026/27-2029/30, work will begin in early 2026 to formulate an expanded improvement programme.

The amounts of revenue and capital funding that the council has been awarded under this multi-year funding settlement are shown below.

LABG	2026/27	2027/78	2028/29	2029/30
Revenue	£4,757,939	£4,757,939	£4,757,939	NIL
Capital	£2,697,513	£2,751,735	£2,805,956	£2,860,177

The LBSIP25 BSIP grant funded programme for 2025/26 is as follows

Schemes	Coverage	Revenue (£000)	Capital (£000)
LTA delivery/admin costs	Delivery/admin costs	433	-
Bus service support/network development development	Sustaining existing services	8,570	-
Improved information, marketing	Communication, stakeholder engagement, branding, marketing and fare promotions	474	30
Development of future proposals	Bus Franchising - feasibility - external resource	45	-
Ticketing equipment/systems	Ticketing - Youth identity card scheme	30	-
Simpler/more affordable fares	Ticketing - feasibility of enhancing flexi zone jointly with Leicester City	200	-
Vehicles	Community transport fleet and Greener Fleet investment	-	220
Bus stops/stations/interchanges	Bus interchange hubs, expansion of totems and upgrades/enhancements	-	2,816
Bus priority infrastructure	Mobility/interchange hubs design, bus stop infrastructure improvements, pinch points design and service reliability improvements	-	80
Other infrastructure	Contract management system, data portal and improved access to bus stops	-	-

6. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 to 2035

Section 4 of the LBSIP25 established the significant work programme that the EP has embarked on, while acknowledging that this will be a rolling programme from 2025 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 LBSIP25.



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.	<p>Improves connectivity and onward travel, in particular rural communities.</p> <p>Allows arterial bus routes to operate more direct services with quicker journey times.</p>	Provides a realistic alternative for modal shift.

Progress to date:

- ✓ Delivered 11 zones. Launched a new FoxConnect booking app. Put in place a new local telephone booking line.
- ✓ Replaced existing taxi DRT and under-utilised fixed bus services with a 6-days a week and 12-hour DDRT provision

Next steps:

- Review provision and adapt services to meet identified need.
- Monitor customer satisfaction levels.
- Continue to support the transition from fixed route services to bookable provision.

Project Description: Invest in the County Bus Network Branding

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

Progress to date:

- ✓ Worked 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.
- ✓ Introduced the Leicestershire Buses brand and logo on vehicles and service information.

Next steps:

- Continue to update all public bus information to showcase the Leicestershire Buses branding, both in paper form and online.
- Introduce branded bus stops at all county council-maintained locations and at those served by commercial services where EP operators approve.

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
<p>Services designed with youth travel at the forefront can reduce the need for private car usage and reduce social isolation in rural areas.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Provides a realistic alternative for modal shift.</p>

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.

Next steps:

- Continue to promote bus travel targeted at young people via schools & colleges.
- Work with the Task & Finish group to identify potential fares standardisation and campaigns to further benefit younger travellers.
- Further adapt the network to service education establishments.

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 multi-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 LTG, BSIP and S106 when carrying out the countywide bus network review to ensure a holistic approach to scheme proposals.

Next steps:


- Follow up the bus network review through a countywide audit of all bus stops including identifying locations and scheme proposals for interchange hubs.
- Formulate a capital scheme improvements plan for 2026 focusing on bus stops and paths to access bus stops.
- Work with district councils to identify local works to improve access to bus travel.

Project Description: Publicity/Promotion and 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.

Next steps:


- Utilise new LABG funding to establish a resource dedicated to the improvement of information standards.
- Work with the Task & Finish group to identify specific improvements to physical and digital information.
- Improve the Choosehowyoumove website.

Project Description: Bus Stop Provision and 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.

Next steps:

- Formulate all feedback and audit outcomes to roll-out a bus stop infrastructure improvement plan for 2026 onwards.
- Implement bus interchange hubs across the network at key connectivity points.

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
<p>Transport users do not consider travel in terms of county boundaries. Greater cross-boundary working between LTAs will allow the pooling of resources and sharing of ideas/issues resulting in more fluid and effective journeys for passengers.</p>	<p>Improve customer journey experience.</p>	<p>Stabilise the network across the county.</p>

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.

Next steps:


- Establish cross-boundary communication and planning into standard processes.
- Identify any feasible cross-boundary projects for 2026 onwards.

Project Description: Fares and 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 ENCTS.	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.

Next steps:

- Work with the Task & Finish group to identify any trial ticketing initiatives.
- Work with Leicester City to further expand the Flexi zone ticketing offer.

7. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

LBSIP25 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 redesign 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

As a way of improving the method in which we seek passenger satisfaction data from 2024 onwards, we have introduced transport inspectors to carry out a range of standard contractual, service performance and other checks. The 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.

Use of the Transport Focus survey will also be included in the annual collation of passenger feedback commencing in 2026.

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 5 - 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 punctuality checks by the transport inspectors, 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 6 - GPS Journey time data

Performance Indicator	Year	Routes covered by BSIP journey time interventions
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	
Reliability (% of cancelled service runs) all day	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
Reliability (% of cancelled service runs) all day	2027-28	70
	2028-29	65
	2029-30	60
	2030-31	55
	2031-32	50
Reliability (average journey time differences between peak and interpeak services)	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	

Table 7 - Reliability measures

Targets	2018/19	2019/20	Target for 2024 onwards	Description of how each will be measured
Journey time	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.
Reliability (punctuality)	63.0% ³	Not available	5% improvement over baseline measurement	Percentage of services departing between 1 minute early and 5 minutes late.
Passenger numbers (annual passenger trips)	13.81m	12.73m ⁴	13.37m ⁵	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.
Average passenger satisfaction (overall)⁶	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. The 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.

³ From national bus statistic BUS 0902 (Non-frequent bus services on time)

⁴ Adjusted from actuals to take March 2020 numbers affected by COVID-19 lockdown

⁵ 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.

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

Table 7 shows how each of the performance indicators will be monitored and reported. The council 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.

Programme development will be monitored and reported through the following:

- EP Forum and EP Board meetings
- Annual LBSIP25 progress reports - published on the county council's Choose How You Move website
- Department for Transport quarterly and annual monitoring work, including Bus connectivity assessments

Once the programme for 2025 to 2030 is more fully developed now that there is 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 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.

