

19th Floor, Studio 3, Alpha Tower,  
Suffolk Street, Queensway, Birmingham, B1 1TT

E: [MCAdmin@Midlandsconnect.uk](mailto:MCAdmin@Midlandsconnect.uk)  
W: [www.midlandsconnect.uk](http://www.midlandsconnect.uk)  
Tw. [@MidsConnect](https://twitter.com/MidsConnect)

First Floor, South Annexe, Pera Business Park,  
Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 0PB

E: [info@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:info@emcouncils.gov.uk)  
W: [www.emcouncils.gov.uk](http://www.emcouncils.gov.uk)  
Tw. [@EMCouncils](https://twitter.com/EMCouncils)



# OUR SHARED VISION FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS

**TfEM & Midlands Connect** have a shared vision for the East Midlands. In addition to promoting the rollout of electric vehicle charging points and alternative fuels such as hydrogen, we are working together to promote eight key strategic investment priorities that will contribute to the Government's 'Net Zero' and 'Levelling Up' agendas, and help to address the historic underfunding of the East Midlands:

- Midland Main Line Electrification
- Nottingham-Leicester-Coventry Rail Connectivity
- HS2 to the East Midlands & Leeds
- A46 Growth Corridor & Newark
- A50/A500 Growth Corridor
- A5 Growth Corridor
- Improving Safety & Reliability on the A1
- Improving Connectivity across the EMDevCo/EM Freepport areas





*At Midlands Connect we are committed to working closely with TfEM to help deliver growth opportunities and better connections. Investment in this region's transport will have a remarkable benefit to the whole country and create a positive ripple effect to boost the development of industry, skills and infrastructure. Taking forward these joint priorities will help lay the groundwork for improved connectivity across the Midlands, unlocking the potential of major economic hubs such as EMDevCo and the two Freeports - opening the region's businesses to the world.*



**Sir John Peace, Chairman of Midlands Connect**

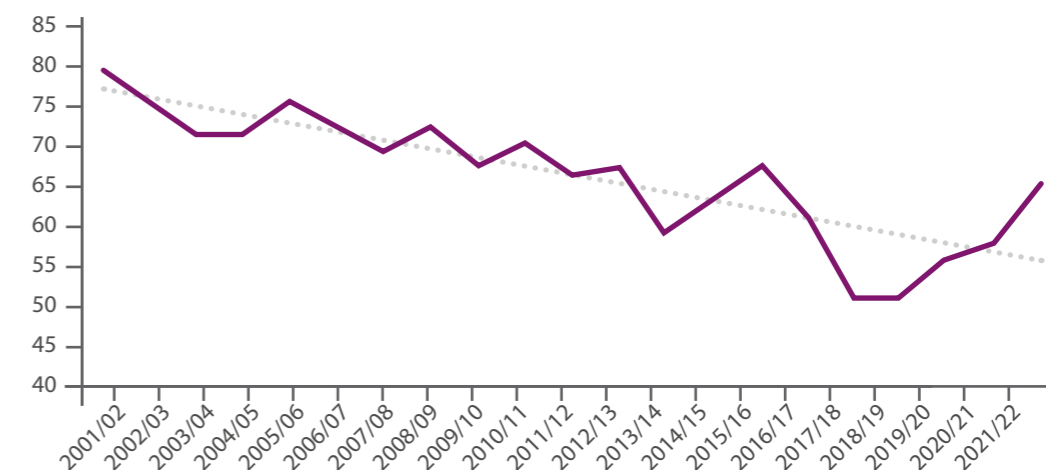
*The East Midlands has a strong track record in delivering high levels of housing and employment growth in the national interest over many years. But with better connectivity we could do so much more. The eight strategic priorities TfEM and Midlands Connect have jointly identified will unlock growth across the region and allow our towns and cities to thrive – contributing to the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda. Delivery of these priorities will also contribute to increasing the level of national spending on transport in the East Midlands towards the UK average.*



**Sir Peter Soulsby, Chair of TfEM**

### Transport Spend per capita in the East Midlands

100 = UK Average (& trend)



Source: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-expenditure-statistical-analyses-2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-expenditure-statistical-analyses-2022)





## Midland Main Line Electrification (MMLe)

MMLe will reduce the running costs of the railway, improve reliability and punctuality, reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality. Electrification would also enable HS2 trains from London and Birmingham to serve Derby, Nottingham and Chesterfield by the early 2040s as proposed by the Government's Integrated Rail Plan (IRP).

There is a major industry opportunity to use the MMLe project to develop a permanent skilled electrification workforce and to deploy new technology to minimise costs and avoid rebuilding bridges and tunnels. This will be particularly important through Derbyshire where the integrity of the 'Stephenson Bridge' is key to maintaining the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site designation.

The MML remains the only mainline route not to be fully electrified. After pausing the project in 2015 and then cancelling it in 2017, the Government's 2021 Integrated Rail Plan re-commits to electrify the MML to Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield by the early 2030's. This will enable EMRs new Aurora Class intercity trains to run in electric mode, providing that the wires south of Bedford are upgraded from 100mph to 125mph.

## Nottingham - Leicester - Coventry Rail Connectivity

Leicester and Coventry are two important and rapidly growing Midlands cities just 25 miles apart without a direct rail connection. Passengers from Leicester must get off one train at Nuneaton, change platforms and board another, resulting in a slow, inconvenient service. Because of this, just 3% of trips between Coventry and Leicester are made by rail, compared to 30% of trips between Coventry and Birmingham.

In May 2021, Midlands Connect published an initial business case for improvements at Nuneaton, creating space for services to pass through the station area, alongside plans to improve line speed along the route. Journey times would be cut significantly, with trips from Coventry to Leicester falling from 54 to 38 minutes, with trips from Coventry to Nottingham down to 70 minutes from 108 minutes. Midlands Connect and local partners have taken the scheme as far as they can with local funding. Further development and delivery will now require investment from the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP), which has yet to be agreed by Government.

## HS2 to the East Midlands & Leeds

The Government's Integrated Rail Plan fundamentally changes the original HS2 proposition for the East Midlands but could still represent a historic investment in the regions rail network. The Eastern Leg from Birmingham will now terminate at East Midlands Parkway (EMP), with HS2 trains continuing to Derby, Nottingham, Chesterfield and Sheffield via the conventional rail network. This will significantly reduce journey times, particularly to Birmingham, and give direct HS2 connectivity to Derby and Nottingham.

Routing HS2 trains onto the conventional network will require capacity upgrades in addition to electrification. Further work will also be required to understand the impacts of HS2 on existing services (including on the East Coast Main Line) and the opportunities to make use of any released capacity on the Midland Main Line south of EMP. Improving regional and local rail connectivity across the East Midlands post HS2 remains a priority for TfEM and Midlands Connect.

Looking forward, the Government has made a commitment in the IRP to extend HS2 services to Leeds, which also remains a key priority for TfEM and Midlands Connect. There are several options for how this can be delivered via existing or new lines with differing implications and opportunities for the East Midlands. The Government is keen to identify a preferred option – but funding delivery will require resources in addition to the £96b earmarked for the IRP.

## A46 Growth Corridor & Newark

The A46 forms a nationally significant trade route linking the Humber and East Midlands Freeports with Bristol, identified by Midlands Connect as the 'Trans-Midlands Trade Corridor'. Delivery of the A46 Newark Northern Bypass remains TfEM's top strategic road priority. The A46 around Newark from Farndon to the interchange with the A1 and A17 has been a 'bottleneck' for many years which has caused congestion, pollution and safety issues.

National Highways have identified a preferred route for an enhancement to the A46 around Newark including improving the junctions with the A1 and A17. The scheme will enable ambitious plans for growth and development in an around Newark to be fully realised, including a recently agreed 'Town Deal'. It would also improve connectivity to the Lincolnshire Food Hub and the Lincolnshire Coast to support the 'Levelling Up' agenda across the County. But delivery funding has yet to be agreed by Government. Further south, Midlands Connect has also prioritised the A46 around Syston for investment in RIS3 to ease congestion and help support sustainable growth to the north of Leicester.

Rail services between Lincoln and Nottingham are infrequent and slow and do not offer an attractive alternative to the car. The IRP raises the prospect of replacing the 'enduring constraint' of the 'flat crossing' at Newark between the Lincoln-Nottingham Line and the ECML (also enabled by the A46 improvement), which would allow for more regional services. In the shorter term, there is an opportunity to raise the line speed from 50mph to 75mph by enhancing planned re-signalling, which would make better use of rolling stock (including the Lincoln-London Azuma trains) and help make rail travel more competitive.

# Electrification

# HS2





## A50/A500 Corridor

Running from Derby to Stoke, this 56-mile corridor is home to around a million people and half a million jobs, many in globally significant firms like Toyota, JCB, Rolls Royce and Alstom. However, at several pinch points, the A50/A500 corridor is slow and unreliable, with average rush hour speeds below 20mph.

Improving transport reliability and shortening journey times will open up job opportunities to a wider pool of skilled workers and give businesses more reliable access to suppliers and international markets. Access to the A50 is also crucial to unlocking East Midlands Intermodal Park adjacent to Toyota's manufacturing facility, one of the three key sites in the East Midlands Freeport proposition.

Working with partners, Midlands Connect has developed a phased programme of interventions along route which if delivered, will provide the capacity, resilience and reliability required to unlock sustainable growth, increase productivity and support the transition to electric and hybrid vehicles. TfEM & Midlands Connect are keen to work with the Government and national bodies like National Highways to find ways to progress these interventions, to ensure the businesses and communities along the route can reach their potential.

# Corridor

## A5 Growth Corridor

The A5 through Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire is a key freight route and an alternative to the M6. It is also driving major housing and employment growth – including the MIRA Enterprise and Technology Park, DIRFT near Daventry and Magna Park in Lutterworth. But congestion and safety are major problems because of the sub-standard nature of much of the road and as a result the route requires major investment.

The Government has recognised the strategic importance of the route in its RIS2 investment programme and allocated funding to develop a strategic enhancement to the A5 between the M69 and the M42 (Hinkley to Tamworth) for delivery in RIS3(2025-30) – although a preferred route has yet to be published by National Highways.

Midlands Connect has also identified the junction between the A5 and A426 at Gibbet Hill as an early priority for investment to allow new employment sites to come forward.

# Invest

## Improving Safety & Reliability on the A1

The A1 corridor is a nationally significant freight artery linking the North and Scotland with London and the South East. The route is particularly vital for connections to major ports on the East Coast, including Felixstowe, Grimsby, Immingham and then Dover (via the M25). The A1 corridor also has a key economic role within the East Midlands, particularly for agri-food, logistics, manufacturing and tourism, with very significant levels of proposed housing (up to 100,000 units) and employment growth - in addition to the potential 'Step Fusion' Facility at the West Burton Power Station site in Nottinghamshire.

In sharp contrast to the motorway standard sections immediately to the north and south, the A1 through the East Midlands is a dual carriageway 'A' road characterised by sub-standard junctions and right turn movements, accident blackspots and a lack of resilience or alternative routes during closures. There have been 201 closures of the A1 in the East Midlands (in at least one direction) over the past 5 years, some of which have lasted up to 10 hours.

National Highways (Midlands) have made available funding to improve lane markings and signage in an effort to reduce accidents. Midlands Connect has also identified an opportunity to improve the A1/A52 junction at Grantham. But a more strategic approach is required to enhancing the route to improve reliability and resilience and bring the road up to a standard reflecting its national and regional economic role.

# Safety

## Improving connectivity across the EMDevCo/ EM Freeport areas

EMDevCo is a company owned by five local authorities in the East Midlands that brings together the ambition of partners from business, academia, and government. The East Midlands Freeport is one of only eight such designations made by the Government across the country and the only 'Inland' Freeport based around the freight operation at East Midlands Airport.

EM Freeport and EMDevCo support four key growth locations that sit between the cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham: East Midlands Airport & Gateway industrial cluster; East Midlands Intermodal Park; Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station and Toton & Chetwynd Barracks. Together, these locations have the potential to deliver transformational levels of employment growth and new models for living and working, fit for the 21st century.

However, the area has a congested road network and very poor levels of public transport provision. Previous proposals for improving connectivity were based around an HS2 Hub station at Toton – but this is no longer a Government priority. A new connectivity strategy will need to be developed, funded and implemented that can unleash the economic potential of these four growth locations.

# Connectivity