



transportfocus 



**Strategy and
Business Plan**

2026/27 - 2028/29

We will be a powerful, independent voice for transport users – driving change on what matters most and holding providers to account.

We will do this by:

1

Aim 1: understanding the transport user experience

We will make sure we have an up-to-date understanding of user experience by regularly asking them what they think. We will prioritise understanding the experience of disabled users and people who are not currently able to access the transport services they need.

2

Aim 2: providing high quality, independent advice to governments and other policy makers, transport authorities and operators to help them make decisions in the best interests of users

We will use our unique role to independently represent passengers before decisions are made, making actionable recommendations grounded in a deep understanding of user experience and appreciation of what it is realistic to deliver. We will share and champion good practice where we see it.

3

Aim 3: holding transport authorities and operators to account

We will use user experience, operational data and feedback from users to challenge poor service. We will be transparent about how we are doing this and make our concerns clear in public if we believe users are being let down.

4

Aim 4: setting standards, monitor and report on performance

Where we have the responsibility to do so, we will set and monitor standards that improve user outcomes. We will engage with users in the development of standards and use our wider range of powers and influence to drive improvements

5

Aim 5: operating efficiently and effectively

We will make sure we focus our efforts on where they will have the most impact and operate to the highest standards.



Priorities

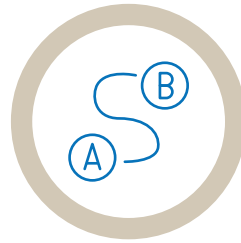
Our work will have the following priorities in 2026/7:



Priority 1: Improve transport in ways that matter most to users



Priority 2: Making transport safe and accessible for all users



Priority 3: Improve the way service providers minimise the impact of disruption on users



Priority 4: Make sure all user voices are listened to, including groups whose needs are often over-looked.



Our values

The values we developed together in 2025 will serve us well for the change to the Passenger Watchdog. We will keep discussing and sharing how they work in practice with new colleagues as they join us.

Trust

- We will earn trust by explaining our views and providing evidence to support them
- We will keep trust by being consistent, fair and transparent in how we work
- We will trust each other to do the right thing.

Respect

- We will listen and be open minded
- We will embrace diversity and inclusion
- We will work collaboratively with each other and stakeholders.

Independence

- We will act with integrity and stay committed to our mission
- We will always put the interests of transport users first
- We will lead by example and say what we think is right.

Positivity

- We will use our influence to achieve positive change for transport users
- We will approach challenges with positivity, curiosity and creativity
- We will keep developing and embrace mistakes as opportunities for learning.



How we work: core activity

In 2026/2027 we will prioritise improving our ability to identify and respond to issues, holding operators to account and producing actionable recommendations.

Working in partnership and listening to and understanding the concerns of others seeking to achieve similar improvements will be central to how we do this. Our relationships will recognise the importance of 'place' and working with English regional, Scottish and Welsh national stakeholders.

What we work on across Great Britain

The issues that we focus on will be determined by an up-to-date understanding of what matters most to users, alongside customer experience insight and data that shows how well this is being delivered. This year, we will develop our data capabilities to help us improve our understanding of operational performance.

Accessing reliable, affordable transport and being able to easily plan journeys and change between different transport modes is a challenge for many people. We will keep a consistent and enduring focus on accessibility and inclusion, and we will use our unique responsibilities to identify issues between modes and as part of end-to-end journeys.

We will do this through our ongoing engagement with transport providers, using data and user experience to illustrate the challenges they face, highlighting good practice and opportunities to do things differently.

Informed by these over-arching priorities, how we apply them in practice will vary by place and an understanding of where our intervention is most likely to make a difference.

Great Britain Focuses for 2026/2027:

- accessibility
- personal security
- user experience during disruption.





What we work on: nations and regions

Our core work will be delivered by engagement teams in England, Scotland and Wales supported by colleagues with specialist modal and technical knowledge.

Our remit only covers rail in Scotland and Wales, but we also deliver work on bus and other modes where additional funding is provided (as for *Your Bus Journey*). Where it is of interest, we will also share good practice from our wider bus and roads work with stakeholders in Scotland and Wales.

Transport users across the nations and regions of Great Britain largely value similar things, but we will make sure any variations are reflected in our work.

Similarly, both our remit, and the way transport is delivered varies across each nation and region and this will be reflected in both our engagement work and our specific priorities.

Scotland (our remit covers rail only)

We will work with the Scottish Government and a range of stakeholders to reflect the distinct context and priorities in Scotland. We expect to focus on:

- rail reform and our transition to the Passenger Watchdog
- understanding what matters most to rail users through our 'What Matters to Passengers' research, and using the Rail Customer Experience Survey to push for improvements on the most important issues
- using the 2025 Scotland Your Bus Journey survey results to drive improvements for bus users, and support them ahead of the 2026 survey
- thematic improvements for rail users, specifically: passenger experience during disruption, (following up our autumn 2025 work with ScotRail); rail accessibility, particularly turn-up-and-go passenger assist; and personal security, including how users report incidents.



Wales (our remit covers rail only)



We will work with the Welsh Government and a range of stakeholders to reflect the distinct context and priorities in Wales. We expect to focus on:

- rail reform and our transition to the Passenger Watchdog
- sharing insight into key priorities for rail users through our 'What matters to passengers' research, and using the Rail Customer Experience Survey to help push for improvements on the most important issues
- supporting Welsh stakeholders to develop their use and understanding of the new data being collected for the Your Bus Journey 2026 survey
- thematic improvements for rail users, specifically: passenger experience during disruption; rail accessibility, particularly turn-up-and-go passenger assist; and personal security, including how users report incidents.

England

Supporting and encouraging a 'place' based approach to transport will be a priority with all transport authorities across England (outside London). We will also develop new ways of working with a small number of transport authorities, to help us better represent users in the changing landscape created by English devolution.





Delivering our aims: understanding the transport user experience

To help us understand the transport user experience we will make sure we have access to the latest information about user experience across all modes we are responsible for. This includes our core tracker surveys and key reports:

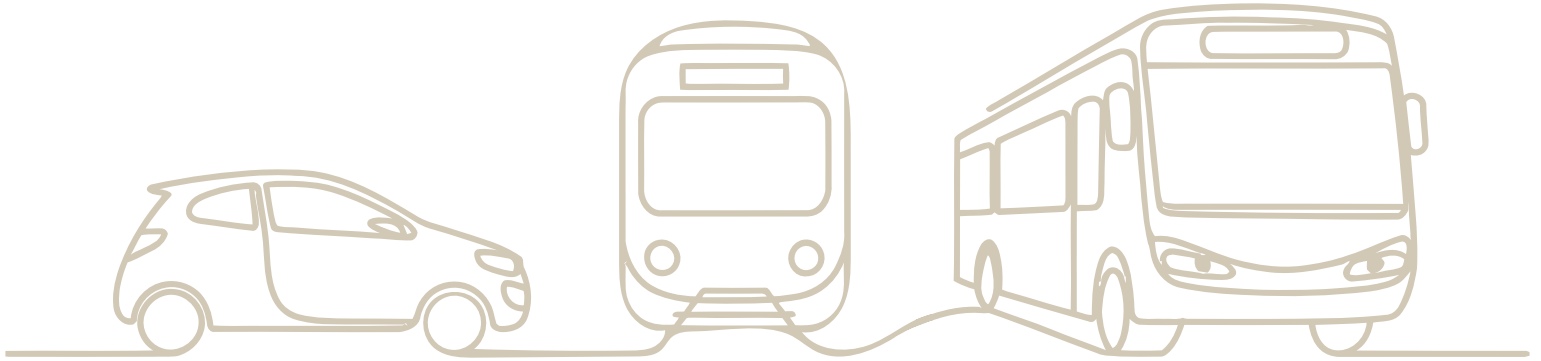
- Our six monthly rail official statistics report and commentary report - informed by the Rail Customer Experience Survey (England, Scotland and Wales)
- Your Bus Journey survey (England outside London)
- Strategic Roads User Survey (England)

Wherever possible we will breakdown results to show variations between different types of users and regions/localities reflecting our increasing focus on 'place'. We will particularly prioritise understanding the experience of users with protected characteristics, particularly disabled users, over-looked groups, particularly users on lower incomes, or those that are digitally excluded and unbanked. In some cases, we will support this with additional survey work.

As well as our core trackers we will also use additional surveys to understand the full range of different types of user experiences on England's motorways and major 'A' roads in. This includes our Motorway Services User Survey and our Logistics and Coach Survey.

As well as our survey work, we will also prioritise:

- mystery shopping and direct user feedback, including from colleagues and stakeholders to identify issues and test if something is working as expected
- the use of data to identify trends, spot good practice and challenge performance
- the use of data that highlights the experience of non-users as well users
- complaints as potential indicators of systemic issues
- artificial Intelligence to understand, predict and improve user experience
- selective use of qualitative research to understand issues in greater depth.



Delivering our aims: providing advice

To help governments and other policy makers, transport authorities and operators make decisions in the best interests of users we will:

- Target our advice at consultations and policies where we believe they will have the most impact on users - for example setting priorities for England's motorways and major 'A' roads or the new Great British Railways Business Plan
- Use our position and influence to make sure that disabled transport users are effectively consulted by transport authorities and operators
- Be a thought leader challenging Government, policy makers and operators to think differently about transport users in the future.



How we work: thematic activity

To support our core activity, we will also deliver longer-term projects that focus on a particular issue or theme. This work will produce recommendations that we then follow-up on to make sure they translate into benefits for users.

During 2025/26 several important thematic projects completed and have produced clear recommendations for transport authorities and operators to implement. These include our work on bus shelter design, plus user experience during disruption and revenue protection on rail.

Following up these, and other recommendations we have previously made, now forms part of our core policy work. This will be pursued at a national or regional or level depending on where most appropriate.

Thematic projects for this Business Plan period include:

Project	Progress expected in 2026/27	
	Transport Focus outputs	Desired user outcome
Lorry driver rest-stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of 12-month progress report, an industry round table, publication of a Year three report and further research on the impact of National Highways investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved quality and consistency of driver rest-stops• Parking capacity that meets demand• Improved safety and security for drivers.
Logistics and coach businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of 2025–2026 survey results and additional qualitative research, including case studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logistics and Coach survey shows an increase in user satisfaction.

<p>Road user accessibility: EV charging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with decision makers and key influencers to share the need for a time bound action plan • Accompanied charging trips with disabled EV users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved availability, quality and consistency of the accessible EV charging provision across the Strategic Road Network.
<p>Road user accessibility: Motorway Service Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of survey findings with operators, publication of the 2026 survey results highlighting experience of disabled users, holding an accessibility focus event that will cover the achievements of industry accessibility working group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled users experience consistently accessible, reliable facilities across all motorway services • Disabled users get the support they need from staff to ensure a great visit to the services • Motorway Services User Survey shows an increase in user satisfaction.
<p>Walkers, wheelers, cyclists and horse riders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of summary report in Spring 2026 • Publication of new insight report (to be confirmed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved maintenance of current active travel assets • Improved data on the quality of active travel assets • Users more satisfied with assets • Increased usage of these assets.
<p>Bus accessibility good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of examples of good practice through meeting with local transport authorities • Publication of good practice report (To be confirmed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More transport authorities that raise the profile and status of accessibility within their work and plans. • Services that provide disabled people with a more positive experience of bus travel, that they can be confident in.

<p>Rail accessibility (turn-up-and-go passenger assist)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of three interlinked insight projects aimed at improving the turn-up-and-go experience for disabled passengers: • Digital mystery shopping and journey-mapping study • The confidence gap, understanding why disabled passengers avoid using turn-up-and-go and understand the experience of those who do use the service. • Publication of turn up and go report on above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality and consistent of turn-up-and-go assistance. • Improved passenger confidence in using turn-up-and-go assistance. • Reporting of delivery of turn-up-and-go assistance.
<p>Personal security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of new Rail User Customer Experience data and Your Bus Journey data in relation to personal security. We will pay particular attention to any trends relating to women, disabled people, young people, and different ethnic groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved passenger perceptions of personal security.
<p>Improving the road user experience of diversions caused by roadworks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of recommendations to National Highways for improving road user experience of diversions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road user satisfaction with the experience of diversion routes during roadworks improves.
<p>Improving the rail user experience when affected by service disruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver engagement plan following January 2026 disruption publications, plus hold a disruption ‘summit’ • Carry out detailed on the groundwork with Northern (summer 2026). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger experience improves among those caught up in disruption, including a greater sense that the railway cares about them.



What comes next: preparing Transport Focus for the future

The work set out in this Business Plan reflects what we will deliver as we transition from our current role into the new Passenger Watchdog as set out in the Railways Bill.

The timing of our new role will be determined by the passage of legislation through Parliament, with the earliest we expect these powers to come into effect being from the start of January 2027/2028

To help prepare for this change we will deliver a programme to enable the new responsibilities and functions given to the Passenger Watchdog.

This includes the following main elements:

- transfer of the rail consumer standards from the Office of Rail and Road (ORR)
- transfer of sponsorship of the Rail Ombudsman from the ORR
- establishment of a new data function
- establishment of a new bus monitoring, reporting and analysis function.

The organisation will develop substantially throughout the next business plan period, and we will prioritise the following as part of this growth:

- improving delivery and planning of our work
- strengthening organisational resilience
- improving our impact, capacity and culture.



How we will measure our success

We do not deliver any services that directly impact users so we will measure our success in two different ways.

What we said we said we would do

- Outputs: We will track our progress in delivering what we committed to. If there are any challenges or delays where possible we will identify if these were because of 'internal factors' (for example resource pressures) or 'external factors' (for example delays from other organisations).

What has been achieved for transport users

- Intermediary outcomes: These are typically actions, changes in policy or the commitment of resources to address an issue we have identified that we expect will improve user experience but do not of themselves do that.
- Outcomes: These are often far outside our control, but we will report if progress is being made for users and whether we believe our actions contributed to this.



London office

10th Floor
 25 Cabot Square
 London E14 4QZ
 Telephone: 0300 123 0860

Manchester office

7th Floor Piccadilly Gate
 Store Street
 Manchester M1 2WD
 Telephone: 0300 123 2140