

# Press release: Independent experts set out ambitious vision for the Thames Estuary

The Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission has today (25 June 2018) published its [report](#) which sets out an ambitious vision and delivery plan for north Kent, south Essex and east London up to 2050.

The Commission's analysis shows that the Thames Estuary could generate an additional £190 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) and 1.3 million new jobs by 2050. It estimates that at least 1 million new homes will be needed to support this growth.

To unlock the area's untapped potential, the Commission proposes viewing the Estuary as a series of interconnected but distinct productive places. It identifies fifteen priority projects to deliver this vision, aligning with the following priorities:

- sectors – including expediting the delivery of the Medical Campus at Ebbsfleet
- connectivity – including extending Crossrail 1 from Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet
- communities – including establishing a Great Thames Park to celebrate and maximise the value of the area's natural assets
- delivery – including developing statutory Joint Spatial Plans in Kent and Essex, and empowering ambitious local authorities to deliver housing at scale and pace

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Communities, said:

The Thames Estuary has enormous untapped potential and we are determined to unlock this to drive both local and national economic growth.

The Commission has provided us with bold and ambitious set of recommendations, which we will consider in detail and respond to in due course.

Sir John Armitt, Chair of the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission, said:

Without concerted action, there is a risk that the Thames Estuary will fail to achieve its potential, at huge opportunity cost to local communities and the national economy.

The resounding message from the consultation that the Commission has undertaken is that there is ambition in the Thames Estuary to

deliver high-quality development and the best economic outcomes for people.

However, a 'business as usual' approach will not deliver growth at scale and pace; governance reform and new delivery models are needed.

Professor Sadie Morgan, Deputy Chair of the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission, said:

I think we have created an inspiring but deliverable vision for the Thames Estuary. It reflects the interconnected, but distinct places that make up the Estuary, and is rooted in the ideas and priorities of its communities and leaders.

This part of the country is uniquely placed to meet the challenges of the 21st century – a tapestry of productive places along a global river.

This has been an incredible journey, and I would like to thank the many people who have helped us along the way and brought our vision to life.

The government will consider options for working with local partners to achieve long-term, sustainable growth in the Thames Estuary, including:

- boosting productivity by strengthening Local Enterprise Partnerships and agreeing Local Industrial Strategies that build on local sector strengths
- driving housing delivery by supporting more strategic planning approaches and exploring options for ambitious Housing Deals
- ensuring that communities benefit from expected growth, including promoting use of the river and enhancing the Thames Estuary's natural environment.

The government would welcome strong, coordinated engagement from local stakeholders as it develops its full response.

## **Further information**

Since it was established in March 2016, The Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission has been working to develop an ambitious vision and delivery plan for North Kent, South Essex and East London up to 2050.

The Commission ran a call for ideas from July to September 2016. There were over 100 respondents, including public, private and third sector organisations, and members of the public. The Commission also held visits to the Thames Estuary, including along the river itself. Both the Commission and the government are grateful to all those who have provided input, and are committed to delivering a compelling vision and delivery plan in close

collaboration with a wide range of partners.

Sir John Armitt replaced the former Government Advisor on Local Growth, Lord Heseltine, as Chair of the Commission in October 2017. His appointment and that of Deputy Chair, Professor Sadie Morgan, were announced at Budget 2017.

The Commission announced its priorities, which included equipping people with the right skills and providing high quality housing, in December 2017.

Sir John Armitt is Chair of the National Express Group and the City & Guilds Group, Deputy Chair of the Berkeley Group and the National Infrastructure Commission. He is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Institution of Civil Engineers and City & Guilds of London Institute. He was awarded the CBE in 1996 for his contribution to the rail industry and a knighthood in 2012 for services to engineering and construction.

Professor Sadie Morgan is a co-founding director at the award-winning practice, dRMM Architects. She became the youngest and only third ever-female President of the Architectural Association in 2013. In March 2015, Sadie was appointed as Design Chair for High Speed Two (HS2) reporting directly to the Secretary of State. She is also a member of the National Infrastructure Commission.

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0303 444 1209

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## [News story: Northern transport investment to help create thousands of jobs](#)

Transport spending in the north over the next 3 years will be higher than in London and the south, new figures today reveal (25 June 2018).

The Department for Transport's analysis of future spending shows, between 2018 and 2021, it will be investing £831 per head on road and rail upgrades in the north-east, north-west and Yorkshire and the Humber – more than £30 more per head than London and the south at £799.

The figures emerged as Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg visited Liverpool Airport ahead of attending the Northern Transport Summit in Manchester, where she will say Heathrow expansion could lead to tens of thousands of jobs as businesses take advantage of the UK's improved connections with the rest of the world.

Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg said:

We are investing more than £13 billion to improve connections across the north between 2015 and 2020, getting people to their work, family and friends, quicker and easier than before.

This investment demonstrates the government's commitment to the Northern Powerhouse, which will help unlock economic growth and much-needed housing across the region.

And a new Heathrow runway will bring further benefits to the north, better connecting the region's airports with the UK's hub airport and opening up new trade opportunities which could deliver a further boost to the northern economy.

The [government last week confirmed that it is prepared to intervene to reserve slots at Heathrow for flights to airports in nations and regions around the UK](#) if expansion goes ahead. It would ensure flights to domestic airports are safeguarded, ensuring important links will remain in place. This is in addition to Chris Grayling's confirmation that 15% of the new capacity at Heathrow would be reserved for domestic flights.

On rail, more than £1 billion is being spent on improving the north's rail network with further investment through the Northern and TransPennine Express franchises to deliver room for 40,000 more passengers to travel on over 2,000 more services a week, with all trains replaced or refurbished by 2020. The government also [plans to invest a further £3 billion upgrading the Transpennine rail route](#), better connecting Manchester, Leeds and York. Rail passengers will also benefit from smart ticketing, reducing the stress of buying tickets at a station.

In addition, as part of the government's commitment to Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), [Transport for the North has been given £60 million to develop proposals for the scheme](#), alongside [investing £300 million to ensure HS2 can accommodate future NPR services](#).

On roads, last month, the last stretch of [motorway-standard road between Newcastle and London via the A1\(M\) and M1 was officially opened](#), providing quicker connections from the north-east, creating new opportunities for businesses. The final section of the M62 upgrade between Leeds and Manchester is expected to start construction in 2019/20, leading to quicker, safer and more reliable journeys.

Highways England will also start constructing a further 22 projects in the north over the next 3 years, including 3 upgrades on the M6 near Manchester, the A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool, dualling the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham and improving junctions on the M621.

## Other improvements

Other improvements to benefit the north include:

- innovative trials in York and Newcastle will see how wireless technology can help reduce congestion in cities with vehicles communicating with traffic lights
- in the long term, HS2 will enable quicker journeys around the north, as well as open up space on the existing rail line for commuter services
- Sheffield's ground-breaking new tram-train project – Supertram – is now in service on the existing tram network and from later this year it will use the rail network to give passengers quick and easy travel between Sheffield and Rotherham, cutting congestion and improving connectivity
- we are supporting the Tyne and Wear Metro, which connects Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland with Newcastle Airport, with £317 million for its reinvigoration and renewal programme, £229 million towards its running costs and, in the Budget, the Chancellor announced a £337 million direct grant to deliver a new fleet of trains for the Tyne and Wear Metro
- the A6 Manchester Airport Relief Road will also mean it will be easier for passengers to get to and from flights. This is one of 6 major local road schemes due to complete in the next three years. Stockport Town Centre Major Scheme, East Riding Road Maintenance and North Yorkshire Road Maintenance Scheme are under construction. Congleton Link Road and Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor could also be completed if

business cases are approved. A further 5 schemes are also expected to start by 2021 – Preston Western Distributor Road, Poynton Relief Road, A630 Parkway, [Middlewich Eastern Bypass](#) and [Jock's Lodge Junction](#)

<b>Spend per head by region</b>	<b>2018/19 to 2020/21 – total 3 years</b>
The middle (east of England plus East Midlands plus West Midlands)	864
The north(north-east plus north-west plus Yorkshire and Humber)	831
The south (London plus south-east plus south-west)	799

## **Roads media enquiries**

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020 7944 3021

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0300 330 3000

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## **[Statement to Parliament: Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Bill: updated analysis of amendments made for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws](#)**

I am today placing in the library of the House the department's analysis on the application of Standing Order 83L in respect of the amendments tabled during the progress through the House of Commons for the [Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Bill](#).

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# Press release: HS2 launches plans for unprecedented 'green corridor' stretching alongside the railway

The scale of planned works will be largest ever undertaken by an infrastructure project in the UK, with a network of environmental projects stretching from London to the North of England.

Along the Phase One route, which covers 216km from London to the West Midlands, the green corridor will encompass:

- 7 million new trees and shrubs, including over 40 native species, specific to each location. The new native woodlands will cover over 9 square kilometres of land.
- Over 33 square kilometres of new and existing wildlife habitat – equating to an area the size of 4,600 football pitches. That's an increase of around 30% compared to what's there now.
- Tailor-made homes for wildlife, ranging from bat houses to 226 new ponds for great crested newts and other amphibians.
- Earthworks and landscaping which will re-use around 90% of the material excavated during construction.
- The potential to support community projects and develop amenity spaces such as access routes, public parks, open spaces and nature reserves.

Work on the pioneering initiative is expected to set new standards for how Britain and the rest of Europe builds the next generation of major infrastructure projects.

As the corridor is being delivered, HS2 is encouraging local people and organisations to get involved in everything from landscape design to tree planting. This includes supporting local environmental projects through its various community funds.

In a related announcement today, the government confirmed a £2 million extension to the HS2 Woodland Fund, so it can cover Phase 2a of the railway, from the West Midlands to Crewe. The fund is designed to help landowners near to the route directly create new native, broadleaf woodlands and restore existing ancient woodland sites. This is in addition to the extensive 'green corridor' plans and community funds that are already in place along the wider route.

Mark Thurston, Chief Executive of HS2 Ltd, said:

Alongside improving connectivity, boosting the economy and unlocking new jobs and opportunities, I'm determined to ensure that HS2 also works for the environment and local communities.

This starts by doing everything we can to reduce our environmental

footprint and minimise the expected impact of our construction work. Longer-term, we'll be leaving behind a network of new wildlife habitats, woodlands, and community spaces, helping to create a lasting legacy along the route.

We've already got to work by supporting a range of community projects and creating a series of new habitats, including planting over 230,000 trees so far. We'll be calling on local people and organisations to get involved as the 'green corridor' starts to take shape.

Nusrat Ghani, HS2 Minister, said:

Our unique and beautiful countryside is one of our nation's greatest assets. As we deliver the new high speed railway our country needs, for economic growth and better journeys for passengers, it is imperative we set a new standard for preserving, protecting and enhancing our diverse woodlands and wildlife.

HS2's Green Corridor is one of the most significant tree-planting and habitat creation projects ever undertaken in this country. To support that vision, the government is providing an additional £2 million for the Woodland Fund, to support native species and help more people enjoy more new green spaces than before.

The appearance of the green corridor will be tailored to the surrounding environment, with native tree species used to ensure that the new woodlands reflect the unique landscape and ecology of the different regions the line passes through.

As the corridor is gradually delivered, HS2 is encouraging local people and organisations to get involved. This includes supporting local environmental projects, through its various funds including the £45m Community & Environment Fund and Business & Local Economy Fund.

Full details are covered in HS2's official ['More Than a Railway' booklet and animation](#), both available on its website today.

## **Press and media enquiries**

For enquiries during office working hours, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm  
020 7944 6149

For enquiries outside of these hours and at the weekend  
020 7944 0550

The press and media enquiries line is for accredited journalists only

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# [Press release: UK responds to reports of regime incursions in southern Syria](#)

Minister Burt said:

I am deeply concerned by the reports of air and artillery attacks by the Asad regime against the de-escalation area in south-west Syria, leading to civilian deaths and displacements in recent days.

A military offensive by the regime in this area would constitute a flagrant violation of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreement reached by Russia, the United States and Jordan last November and which the UK has supported.

We urge Russia to uphold its commitments under this agreement and ensure the Syrian regime abides by the ceasefire. Failure to do so would undermine regional stability and risk a humanitarian crisis.

## **Further information**

- Follow Minister Burt on Twitter [@AlistairBurtUK](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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